

Policy Brief- Appendix

Modern Slavery PEC Survivor support research portfolio

Project Synopses

Placing Survivor Wellbeing on the Policy and Evidence Map (STAR-WB)

Dr Minh Dang

Survivor Alliance, and Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Professor Caroline Bradbury-Jones

University of Birmingham

Dr Sian Thomas

University of Birmingham

Dr Juliana Rinaldi-Semione

Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Dr Nicola Wrights

Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Vicky Brotherton

Head of Policy Engagement and Impact, Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Nancy Esiovwa

Survivor Alliance

Jarrai Barrow

Survivor Alliance

Kristen Johannes

Survivor Alliance

Project partner

Survivor Alliance

This research project was conducted by the University of Birmingham, the University of Nottingham, and Survivor Alliance, examining access to psychological assistance for adult survivors of modern slavery in England and Wales. The aims were to establish if survivors are receiving their entitled psychological assistance under the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (ECAT), understand how it is provided, and identify barriers to access and impacts on wellbeing.

The study used a Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment (MWIA) methodology involving a desk-based literature review, development of a Community Profile to map the demographics, social indicators and health determinants of the population affected by the issue of study as well as, stakeholder convenings to provide information to those affected. For this study, a

scoping review was conducted including online surveys with 90 adult survivors who had been or were in the NRM and 26 service providers, as well as six online stakeholder workshops. Four of which had a total of 30 survivors of modern slavery and two with a total of 10 direct service providers based in England and Wales.

Three peer researchers were included within the research teams and were involved in the [Peer Research Development Programme](#) as part of this project. The peer researchers were involved in reviewing literature, developing, and disseminating surveys, and facilitating workshops.

The study found that many survivors' needs were not met due to long waiting times, restrictive eligibility criteria, and lack of culturally competent and trauma-informed services. Further findings revealed that barriers to accessing support prohibited individuals in their journey to recovery. These included practical issues like location and transport costs, lack of childcare, language barriers, and immigration status. The research also found that psychological assistance alone was insufficient; housing, legal advice, interpreters are also vital for wellbeing. Harmful policies including asylum procedures and lack of long-term housing negatively impact mental health.

The report emphasises the need for timely, appropriate, and survivor-informed support. The report also presents findings from developing and evaluating a Peer Researcher Development Programme to increase survivor participation in research.

Improving Support for British Survivors of Modern Slavery

Dr Carole Murphy

Principal Investigator Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse, St Mary's University, Twickenham

Dr Alicia Heys

Wilberforce Institute, University of Hull

Dr Craig Barlow

Criminologist and Independent Consultant in Forensic Social Work, Craig Barlow Consultancy and Training

Lousie Gleich

Joint Modern Slavery Policy Unit, Justice and Care & Centre for Social Justice

Sophie Wilkinson

Bakhita Centre, St Mary's University

Project partners

Wilberforce Institute, University of Hull
Joint Modern Slavery Policy Unit

A research team led by St Mary's University Twickenham, in collaboration with the Wilberforce Institute at the University of Hull and the Joint Modern Slavery Policy Unit, worked to examining the experience of British nationals with lived experience of modern slavery in the support and criminal justice systems; to identify barriers to support faced by British nationals; and to highlight interventions to support their recovery.

The research used desk-based and empirical data collection methods to enable triangulation of secondary data. The research drew on a review of existing literature about British nationals as potential victims of modern slavery, and a review of legislation and case law to understand how legal processes affect British nationals. For primary data collection, a

survey was completed by 56 practitioners, including professionals from police, criminal justice, local authorities, and service providers. There were 32 semi-structured interviews with practitioners from a range of geographical areas in England and Wales, alongside seven in-depth interviews with adult British survivors whose exploitation had begun in childhood before continuing onto adulthood. Areas covered by the interviews included South Yorkshire, North Wales, Northumbria, Essex, Hull, Southend, West Midlands, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Swansea, Berkshire, and London. Survivor participants were accessed through snowball sampling. Due to its scope, this study is only applicable in the UK context.

Interviews were designed and analysed using the domains developed in the Systemic Investigation, Protection and Prosecution Strategy (SIPPS) protocol, which provides a framework for gathering and organising evidence and analysing emergent patterns of relationships and behaviour in five different contexts: (1) home/environment, (2) behaviour, (3) education/training/employment, (4) psychological health, and (5) physical health. SIPPS was used to understand the contexts of survivor's lives before, during, and after exploitation.

A significant finding was that opportunities to identify and protect vulnerable British nationals were frequently missed by professionals prior to and during exploitation. This was especially common when individuals were exploited in criminal activities, with criminal justice practitioners often viewing them as offenders rather than victims. British survivors typically had complex vulnerabilities, like mental illness, insecure housing, and substance misuse that increased exploitation risks but were not recognised.

When identified as modern slavery victims, British nationals faced barriers accessing support through the UK's National Referral Mechanism (NRM) due to confusion among professionals about their entitlements under other systems such as social care and housing. There were also particular challenges around legal aid and mental health care. The project concluded that British victims need tailored, long-term recovery pathways focused on resilience and reducing re-exploitation risks, based on understanding individual experiences, needs and statutory entitlements.

Improving Participation and Outcomes for Children Following Modern Slavery

Professor Patricia Hynes

Principal Investigator
Sheffield Hallam University, (formerly University of Bedfordshire)

Dr Helen Connolly

University of Bedfordshire

Laura Durán

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK)

Patricia Durr

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK)

Elias Matar

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK)

Pandora Haydon

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK)

Project partners

University of Bedfordshire

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK)

This research project was conducted in partnership with the Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice at Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Bedfordshire and Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK). The aim was to identify which outcomes of care and protection are most important from the perspective of young people, and what the pathways towards these outcomes may look like through survivor-led research.

The participatory research workshops were held across three locations in England and Scotland with young people between 15 and 25-years-old to reflect care leaver entitlements up to age 21 or 25 if in higher education who had experienced trafficking and arrived in the UK. Altogether, 31 young people participated in the workshops across 20 sessions. Participants were accessed through three voluntary sector organisations that operated outside funded service provisions associated with NRM referrals for children.

The workshops provided a child-centred and trauma-informed space for young people to identify their experiences and priorities and were therefore designed using a toolkit approach, including a wide range of arts, talking, storytelling, and multimedia-based activities. These techniques explored themes of protections, recovery, inclusion, and empowerment. The work was framed by participatory and trauma informed methodologies and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Alongside this engagement, there was an international scoping review of academic and grey literature around the processes and outcomes of key themes of protection, recovery, and empowerment, referencing best practice across other complex social issues, such as violence against children and child sexual exploitation. The scoping review implemented a three-standard approach to the exploration of: (1) UK academic literature on outcomes generally for children and young people with experiences of trafficking, (2) UK academic literature specifically on the broad thematic areas of study – participation, inclusion, protection, empowerment, and recovery – in children and young people, and (3) international academic literature within systematic reviews of human trafficking and trafficking-associated issues, after which was compared to literature around ‘what works’ in cognate topics. Seven electronic databases (PsychInfo, Medline, SocIndex, ERIC, CINAHL, Cochrane and Campbell Collaboration) were searched using specific search terms.

Key findings acknowledged limited inclusion of children’s views within research and in policy and service design and delivery, especially with limited focus on positive outcomes for children and young people who have experiences or are at risk of modern slavery. Young people, the UK literature review, and submissions to the global call for evidence identified structural, systemic and discriminatory barriers to achieving positive outcomes, with immigration, asylum, criminal justice system and support were pointed out as most significant. The project also enabled young people to identify 25 outcomes that were important and meaningful to them and were set out according to the four General Principles of the UN Convention, along with 86 associated indicators. They also identified what they would need to see for positive and meaningful change to happen in their lives through a Positive Outcomes Framework anchored in their own words, ideas, and priorities.

Modern Slavery Core Outcome Set (MSCOS)

Dr Sharli Paphitis

Principal Investigator, King's College London

Dr Sohail Jannesari

Research Assistant, King's College London

Rachel Witkin

Independent Anti-Trafficking Practice Consultant & Helen Bamber Foundation

Dr Minh Dang

Survivor Alliance, and Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Project partners

Survivor Alliance

Helen Bamber Foundation

The MSCOS was conducted by a team of researchers from King's College London, the Helen Bamber Foundation, Survivor Alliance, the University of East London, and the University of Nottingham.

The project aimed to develop a standardised set of core outcomes that should be measures and reported on in interventions, services, and policies for adult survivors of modern slavery, allowing for better evaluation and comparison of different approaches.

The core outcomes set was developed through an expansive set of methods and consensus-driven participatory research process. The project began with extensive outcome generation through three literature reviews on quantitative, qualitative, and grey literature related to modern slavery interventions. These reviews extracted outcomes assessed across existing research and programme evaluations. Additionally, the research team conducted 46 primary interviews with survivors and held three exploratory workshops with stakeholders to identify any further outcomes. In total, this initial phase generated over 1300 candidate outcomes. The research team then refined his list by removing duplicates, merging similar outcomes and categorising into domains. This resulted in a condensed list of 71 unique outcomes.

Next, the team conducted a three-round online E-Delphie survey to gain consensus amongst international experts on which of these 71 outcomes should be included in the final core outcome set. The E-Delphi experts included academics, policymakers, service providers, and people with lived experience of modern slavery. In the first E-Delphi round, participants provided open feedback on the outcome descriptions and suggested additions. Round two and three involved rating and re-rating the importance of each outcome for inclusion based on aggregated ratings from the prior round. The E-Delphi process resulted in 14 top-rated outcomes. Finally, the team held an in-person consensus workshop with diverse stakeholders to further discuss, rank, and arrive at consensus on the final core outcome set. Based on workshop discussions and anonymous ranking, seven outcomes were selected for the final outcome set.

The seven outcomes were identified as the following: (1) secure housing, (2) safety from traffickers, (3) long-term support, (4) trauma-informed services, (5) life purpose and self-actualisation, (6) access to healthcare, and (7) access to education. Descriptors were developed for each outcome with survivors, which included qualitative indicators with the potential for development of implementable standards. These are outline in the [MSCOS Toolkit](#).

Survivor-Informed Long-Term Support for Trafficked Children

Dr Maggie Grant

Principal Investigator, University of Stirling

Dr Maria Fotopoulou

Co-Investigator, University of Stirling

Dr Paul Rigby

Co-Investigator, University of Stirling

Professor Margaret Malloch

Co-Investigator, University of Stirling

Dr Kieran Taylor

University of Stirling

Scot Hunter

University of Stirling

This research was conducted by the University of Stirling, looking into the support available for children who had experienced trafficking and migrated to Scotland. Most evaluations of support provision focus on the needs immediately or shortly after identification, and once children and young people move beyond this stage, the spotlight on them fades. Considering this, the study sought to extend this timeframe to explore short, medium, and long-term experiences of support and recovery. The aim was to improve understanding of what constitutes sustainable support over a longer timeframe, with the purpose of offering valuable insights to those working with children and young people, both in the UK and internationally.

The project looked to explore how young people, practitioners and other stakeholders defined 'recovery' as well as their perspectives on the support that is available and needed at the different stages of the recovery process. Data was collected by the Scottish Guardianship Service (SGS) and offered detailed information on young people with experience of being trafficked in Scotland that was not available through the NRM process. These case files were regularly updated by child Guardians and support workers after contact and appointments with the young people. Case files spanned across a 11-year period until October 2022. Information gathered from the files of 166 young people who had all received positive conclusive ground NRM decisions.

The study involved interviewing nineteen people aged between 17-24 who had experienced trafficking and been in the UK between three and five years, or longer. Since the young people were also invited by SGS to participate in the interviews, it is assumed that their records were also included in the case file analysis. Participants were asked to reflect on their needs and how these changed over time, evaluating the support they received and explored what the terms 'recovery' and 'support' meant to them. The interview focused on experiences of services rather than exploitation and how these perspectives changed over time.

The project also included semi-structured interviews carried out online with 11 practitioners like guardians, lawyers, and social workers. Participants were asked about their roles as well as the support provided by their employing agency or service; perceptions of challenges and benefits of multi-agency working; perception of needs for children and young people at short-, medium- and long-term stages; and finally, their definitions of 'recovery' particularly within the context of children and young people.

The research found that recovery for trafficked young people is a long process involving the inter-linked factors of safety, identity, community, and autonomy. The findings suggest that physical safety is the minimum; broader safety also includes stability, predictability, and lack

of uncertainty about immigration status. The asylum process in particular was found to be deeply traumatising and a major barrier to recovery. The stress of interviews, waiting for decisions, uncertainty over status affects all aspects of life. The study highlights the importance of trusting relationships, consistency and reliability when working with trafficked children, and that multi-agency coordination is necessary to ensure availability of suitable services nationwide.

Impacts of Lack of Legal Advice on Adults with Lived Experience of Modern Slavery

Dr Jean-Pierre Gauci

Principle Investigator, Senior Research Fellow, British Institute of International and Comparative Law

Dr Noemi Magugliani

Co-Investigator, Research Fellow, British Institute of International and Comparative Law

John Trajer

British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL)

Project partner

Unseen UK

This research project was conducted by the British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) and partnered with Unseen UK to explore the impacts of limited access to legal advice for adults who have experienced modern slavery in the UK. This research set out to understand the full range of issues where legal advice may be required, as well as experiences of accessing advice in these areas. Moreover, it sought to assess how the quality of legal advice not only contributes to specific legal outcomes, but how it also impacts the wellbeing of people with lived experience of modern slavery.

The research deployed a process-tracing methodology and used a mixed methods approach consisting of desk-based research, involving legal and policy analysis; a survey from a broad range of stakeholders including NGOs (both offering non-legal and legal support), local authorities, barristers and law centres, and other public authorities, such as police and immigration officials; focus group discussions and consultations with survivors based in England and Wales; and a roundtable discussion with stakeholders. The project was codesigned by both BIICL and Unseen UK, which was based on an equitable partnership model with the involvement of ten adults with lived experience of modern slavery who were recruited as project consultants.

The study found that people with lived experience of modern slavery often have complex and intersecting legal needs, yet they face significant challenges in accessing legal advice. These challenges stem from issues around the supply of legal aid, lack of awareness of rights, and difficulties obtaining support to access advice in practice. The quality of legal advice was found to be a critical factor affecting well-being, with key determinants being the technical expertise of the provider, taking a holistic approach, effective communication skills, and timeliness.

The findings also suggest that the lack of quality legal advice can negatively impact people with lived experience of modern slavery across all areas where they interact with the justice

system. This includes identification procedures, immigration and asylum processes, access to compensation, involvement in criminal cases, family legal issues, and accessing mainstreaming services. In addition to the practical implications, not having access to good legal advice can directly harm recovery and wellbeing by prolonging uncertainty, anxiety, financial hardship, and vulnerability.

Evaluating the Provision of Distributed Technology to Adults with Lived Experience of Modern Slavery

Professor Simeon Yates

Principle Investigator, University of Liverpool

Dr Gianfranco Polizzi

University of Liverpool

Dr Jeanette D’Arcy

University of Liverpool

Rebecca Harris

University of Liverpool

Patricia Barrera

University of Liverpool

Catherine Cullen

International Organization for Migration UK (IOM)

Bronagh Andrew

Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA)

Project partners

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA)

Migrant Help UK

This research project was conducted by the University of Liverpool to explore the impact of providing technology to adult survivors of modern slavery in the UK.

The project adopted a mixed methodology approach, combining qualitative semi-structured interviews and a Delphi review survey. The qualitative interviews involved two phases. Firstly, interviews were conducted with 18 representatives from various civil society organisations that support survivors of modern slavery in the UK. Organisations were purposively sampled to maximise diversity in terms of location, type of organisation, and whether they provide National Referral Mechanism (NRM) services or other support outside the NRM. The interviews explored how organisations support survivors through digital technologies, challenges faced, and views on survivors’ use of technology.

Secondly, interviews were conducted with 11 adult women who have lived experience of modern slavery and were accessed through partner organisations International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA). These survivors had received digital technology and training provisions. The interviews examined survivors’ use of digital technologies in everyday life and accessing support services, including benefits and challenges.

The project found that digital access is increasingly essential for survivors to use support services and carry out everyday tasks. The results showed that technology helps survivors

find community, build independence and skills. However, project findings also showed that provision of devices and internet to survivors is inconsistent, relies on uncertain funding, lacks monitoring, and is often temporary.

Both internet safety and digital skills training are needed to reduce risks and support online service use. Currently, this training is informal, varies across providers, and lacks a balance between individualised and formal options. While organisations value digital systems for efficiency, it was found that survivors were often unaware of the NRM despite being in the support system, indicating issues around informed consent.

Full list of recommendations by report

- [Improving support for British survivors of modern slavery](#) (September 2022)

Theme 1: Missed opportunities to identify and protect vulnerable British nationals, before and during exploitation, especially common for those exploited in criminal activities.

1.1 Improve modern slavery and human trafficking assessment tools.

I. The diverse nature of victims and emergent patterns of modern slavery requires assessments that explore the full history, nature and context of a person's exploitation, patterns of exploitation over time, as well as current circumstances and future pathways. Lists of modern slavery indicators are inadequate. Promising approaches include structured professional judgment protocols. The Child and Family (CAF) framework for assessment is a well-established protocol for an integrated risk and needs assessment.

II. Local authorities should collaborate with their local police service to develop local modern slavery problem profiles detailing patterns, fluctuations, suspected and confirmed perpetrators, potential and confirmed victims, nature and pattern of exploitation and network analyses to enhance local safeguarding activity.

1.2 Local Authorities' Safeguarding Adult Boards and Child Safeguarding Partnerships should coordinate creation of harmonised and integrated multi-agency safeguarding policies and procedures with clear guidance about modern slavery and exploitation which also include young people in transition between child and adult services.

I. When the police and local authority receive a Reasonable Grounds (RG) decision from the Single Competent Authority (SCA), a strategy meeting should be held to plan and conduct joint or single agency modern slavery investigations. Data concerning decision making and outcomes should be recorded and shared to support the development of problem profiles, and anti-slavery strategic and tactical planning.

II. British nationals who are modern slavery victims must be provided with the period of recovery and reflection set out within the NRM, allowing them safe conditions in which to consider their options, including whether to participate in an investigation of potential modern slavery crimes against them. During this time, they should have access to shelter, legal advice, counselling, and medical care.

1.3 First Responders and other frontline professionals likely to encounter potential victims of modern slavery should receive training which specifically addresses the experience of modern slavery for British nationals.

I. Development and implementation of a national tiered training programme is required for frontline professionals covering patterns of abuse and exploitation of British nationals, perpetrator behaviours and modus operandi and environmental factors, recording and reporting, NRM duties and safeguarding processes. This should be integrated into a wider training programme for frontline professionals based on the existing tiered training frameworks for supporting adults and children¹²³.

1.4 Improve and regularly review the NRM referral forms to reflect the differences between patterns of exploitation of British nationals, and identify necessary supporting evidence, sources, and processes for subject matter access between agencies.

I. It is well established that various forms of slavery and the challenges faced by those who are working to assist and support victims are highly specific to the regions, populations, cultural and socio-economic contexts in which they occur.

1.5 Critically review and improve training of SCA decision makers concerning characteristics of victims and perpetrators of domestic slavery and trafficking and the application of the relevant statutory definitions.

I. Specific training is required for professionals with statutory duties to intervene or investigate suspected trafficking focusing on the characteristics of domestic modern slavery, patterns and contexts of trafficking and exploitation. This includes how British victims may present, including as potential criminal suspects¹²⁴.

1.6 Joint Agency Investigation skills training for professionals with statutory safeguarding duties e.g., social workers and police officers and their managers/supervisors.

I. Capacity building complex case simulations are effective for senior managers, leaders and lawyers (including magistrates and the judiciary). These should address activities of organised crime groups and networks, patterns of domestic modern slavery, forced and compulsory labour, slavery and servitude and should include online exploitation, forced criminality of children and vulnerable adults (e.g., forced begging, “deets and squares”¹²⁵ and identity fraud, “cuckooing,” prostitution and online sexual exploitation/cyber enabled exploitation). Examples of such training are common in complex investigations, disaster response and terror attacks using the HYDRA system.

1.7 Development and validation of specialist training for professionals who are likely to have significant roles in the pursuit and prosecution of perpetrators, including medical and forensic examination, providers of expert evidence, lawyers and legal advisers in the civil, family justice and criminal justice systems¹²⁶.

I. Joint Agency Investigation skills training for professionals with statutory safeguarding duties e.g., social workers and police officers and their managers/supervisors.

[Theme 2: British national survivors of modern slavery often have complex vulnerabilities and needs. Support needs¹²⁷ to be provided to build resilience and prevent re-exploitation.](#)

Recommendations

2.1 A public health approach to modern slavery is needed which will prioritise prevention and early identification as well as supporting victims.

I. At a national level this requires a review of legislative protections for survivors and a reframing of the national policy approach away from a view dominated by ‘border protection’ towards a focus on prevention and the recovery and protection needs of victims including from criminalisation. At a regional/local level these components include community awareness and resilience, multi-agency modern slavery partnerships (with funding and/or staff from Police and Crime Commissioners, police or local authority) and shared operating protocols.

II. Survivors as experts by experience should be consulted at all stages of the policy process, in a timely manner, and subject to adequate remuneration¹²⁸.

2.2 Recovery and support planning within the MSVCC must include access to education, training and stable employment.

I. Education, vocational training and employment are important in developing resilience to re-victimisation and improving long term recovery.

II. Many British national survivors have experienced disruption to their primary and secondary education which increased their vulnerability to exploitation or occurred because of their exploitation. Problems with literacy and numeracy negatively impact upon self-esteem and ability to apply for, access, or navigate services. Attainment of skills and qualifications builds self-esteem and resilience and improves opportunities for survivors to access community services and to establish positive roles, relationships, and support networks. Support plans must include access to education, training and employment that reflects the individual’s recovery needs.

2.3 Survivors must be actively involved in planning their recovery with case workers.

I. Some of the survivor participants in this study had, prior to their exploitation, attained higher education and qualifications and several understood their entitlements, systems and services but had particular problems where there is a perception that support is tied to cooperation with the authorities.

The length or level of support is likely to be inadequate when not tailored to the needs of victims, particularly taking into account gender difference.

2.4 Psychological and mental health care for survivors requires an integrated approach to care.

I. Funding should be made available automatically to all victims within the MSVCC who would like it to assist them in accessing specialist therapeutic services.

[Theme 3: Barriers to survivors accessing specialist support through the NRM due to confusion amongst professionals about entitlements](#)

Recommendations

3.1 When an adult potential victim has consented to be entered into the NRM, the First Responder should be required to make a referral to the local authority in which the person has been found and/or is living, under The Care Act 2014 (s12)¹²⁹.

II. If the person has declined to enter the NRM they should be asked for consent to for a referral to the local authority. Similarly, the local authority Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board should be notified to consider the need for statutory adult safeguarding enquiries (Care Act 2014 s42).

3.2 The Home Office and DLUHC should collaborate to develop a national structured professional judgement and decisionmaking framework for modern slavery recovery needs assessment and support planning for use by NRM/MSVCC providers and local authorities.

I. Potential victims within the MSVCC should have one integrated recovery support plan on which local authorities and MSVCC service providers work together. The recovery support plan should be based upon integrated multi-disciplinary needs assessment that differentiates between levels of complexity of need and case co-ordination. Existing and effective models have been developed and have proven successful in the context of mental health (Care Programme Approach – CPA), Family Justice (Family Drug and Alcohol Courts). These systemic, problem-solving approaches to complex issues have a proven track record and are transferable to the context of modern slavery recovery pathways.

II. Local policies and procedures, informed by local and national problem profiles and other data must be developed and used to inform safeguarding protocols, risk assessment and assessment of need. Existing models for assessment and intervention that are relevant include the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families, The SIPPS framework used in this research, and The NRM Handbook (OSCE).

3.3 MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) systems should be in place for potential victims of trafficking in every local authority area.

I. The Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner¹³⁰ has previously recommended (March 2017) that a MARAC be held for everyone who is entered into the NRM and should be instigated once there is an indication that someone may be exploited in modern slavery. This report supports that recommendation.

3.4 Improve collaboration with civil and criminal justice practitioners including the Magistrates courts, communities, local businesses, and faith groups.

I. Local modern slavery partnerships should be set up with funding or staff provided by the police, Police and Crime Commissioner or local authority in every force or authority area to facilitate cooperation and collaboration between NGOs, MSVCC and statutory bodies.

II. A range of resources and guidance to inform strategic and policy development is available within the Anti-Slavery Partnership Toolkit¹³¹.

3.5 Every local authority should have a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) designated lead on modern slavery. Local authority SPOCs should work in regular contact with MSVCC subcontractors running safe houses or outreach support in their area.

I. Where a victim who has originated in one local authority area but is found and identified as a victim in another area, the local authority in which the person is found should take responsibility for their safety and care. Where more than one local authority, police area or health service has had previous involvement with the person, agencies should collaborate to agree roles. They should also agree which agencies will be responsible for which aspects of the safety and support plan and who will take the lead in co-ordinating the plan.

3.6 Potential victims with positive Reasonable Grounds decisions should be exempt from the “Local Connection” requirement for social housing.

I. Proposed regulations to exempt domestic abuse victims from this requirement should be expanded to include victims of modern slavery who are otherwise eligible for local authority housing. Until that time, guidance should be provided, similar to that relating to victims of domestic violence, which strongly encourages local authorities to exempt victims of modern slavery from their residency requirements who have escaped exploitation in another local authority area.

II. Potential victims, victims with positive RG and positive CG decisions who are homeless currently or need to move to another area in order to reduce the risk of re-exploitation must be accommodated in safety in an environment that is appropriate to their needs according to their modern slavery experiences, contexts, and recovery needs.

III. If the local authority is unable to provide suitable accommodation, it must work co-operatively with the MSVCC service providers to find suitable temporary safe-house accommodation.

3.7 A clear system of reparation payments and victim compensation is required¹³².

I. At present routes to legitimate claims for compensation or reparation for victimisation through trafficking and modern slavery are confusing and difficult to access. The government should heed the advice of the independent review of the MSA and reconsider the introduction of a civil penalty.

II. Better access to compensation and reparation payments¹³³ will enable and empower survivors to make decisions about their own treatment and recovery needs and enable them to meet their independent living and recovery needs themselves including accessing therapeutic services, education, and training.

3.8 The MSVCC should have funding to assist survivors in meeting the costs of re-engaging with family, social support networks and faith communities and to attend appointments for courses of treatment or support services and training and education programmes begun prior to entering the NRM.

I. British national survivors may have children or have been separated from their children or wider family. Parents of children who are experiencing hardship and at risk of, or recovering from exploitation may be entitled to support, including financial assistance, under the Children Act 1989 s17¹³⁴.

123 Van Dyke and sector experts (2022) ‘Training Framework for the Prevention, Identification, Support and Care of Child Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and Information and Resources to Support the Training’. Skills for Care and Development <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/bakhita/training/support-and-care-of-child-victims.aspx>; Bundock, L and Hodges, K. (2020) ‘Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking’. Skills for Care <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/bakhita/training/identification-care-and-support.aspx>.

124 See appendix 3 and 4. 125 “Deets and Squares” refers to a scam involving children and young people. “Deets” is slang for bank details and a “Square” is a credit or debit card. Young people are enticed into becoming ‘money mules’ by handing over their bank details to fraudsters in exchange for money, making them accessories to the fraudsters’ crime.

126 See appendix 3 and 4 in full report.

127 Respondents in this study identified substance use as particularly problematic for British nationals, although survivors from other nationalities may also present with substance use issues. See A Few Doors Down: The link between substance use and modern slavery (2018) Salvation Army and Black Country Women's Aid

(https://issuu.com/salvationarmyuk/docs/a_few_doors_down_-_the_links_between_substance_use_and_modern_slavery)

128 Survivor Alliance, Nothing about us, without us. Survivor involvement in Anti-Slavery Policy Making: Guidance for policy makers. Available at:

https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1395/rights_lab_survivor_involvement_guide_final_2020.pdf

129 See appendix 5.

130 Supporting Adult Survivors of Modern Slavery to Facilitate Recovery and Reintegration and Prevent Re-exploitation (2017) <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1261/long-term-support-recommendations.pdf>.

131 Anti-Slavery Partnership Toolkit, <https://iasctoolkit.nottingham.ac.uk>.

132 See appendix 6.

133 Direct Payments: If a person or someone they care for receives help from social services, they can apply for direct payments. These enable the person to choose and buy the services they need themselves, instead of getting them from the local council.

134 See appendix 5 in full report.

- [Outcomes for young people with lived experience of modern slavery](#) (October 2022)

Based on evidence generated in this study through participatory workshops with young people, academic and practice-based evidence, recommendations are:

- The UK Government and devolved administrations must ensure that all decisions about children in their individual cases and in the development of law and policy are made with their best interests as the primary consideration.
- The UK Government and devolved administrations must ensure mechanisms are in place for the meaningful participation of child victims in policies and interventions that affect them. These include providing childfriendly information, undertaking Child Rights Impact Assessments on emerging policies, building in a monitoring and impact evaluation process following the implementation of those policies and developing meaningful consultation with young people.
- The UK Government and devolved administrations must ensure that child victims of trafficking are always treated as children first and afforded their rights to the protection and care they need.
- The UK Government and devolved administrations must ensure children identified as potential victims of slavery and trafficking are promptly assigned an independent legal guardian.
- The UK Government and devolved administrations must commit to supporting positive outcomes for child victims in care, education and immigration as well as measuring the impact towards positive outcomes of the National Referral Mechanism.
- The UK Government and devolved administrations should consider operationalising the Positive Outcomes Framework in a pilot study to measure the effectiveness of current policies in achieving positive outcomes for identified child victims.
- The Home Office must ensure the immigration and asylum system does not retraumatise children.
- The Home Office must ensure that current barriers to the recovery and achievement of positive outcomes for child victims are removed. Procedures must not place children at risk of further exploitation nor undermine their rights with an emphasis on their transition into adulthood.
- The Ministry of Justice must ensure all child victims can access a solicitor who has the expertise to properly represent them in the complex areas of immigration, criminal justice, child welfare and protection law. Local authority children's services with the full support of the Department for Education and equivalents in the devolved administrations must provide quality care for migrant child victims to ensure they are afforded specialist support and the same opportunities as other young people.

- Local authority children's services must enable psychological and physical recovery for child victims, particularly in the provision of safe accommodation and access to mental health services.
- Statutory chief officers and safeguarding partners in each local authority area must ensure they develop relationship-based practice that builds trust with children as fundamental to their ability to have their voices heard and for them to feel safe.
- All professionals working with children and young people who have been identified as trafficked must ensure a positive non-discriminatory practice and use non-discriminatory and non-stigmatising language when working with them.

- [Core outcomes for adult survivors of modern slavery](#) (February 2023)

1. The MSCOS should be referred to as the minimum standard set of outcomes to be used in research, service and intervention design, evaluation and development, and policymaking
2. Researchers, policymakers and service providers should use the MSCOS to think about interventions holistically. This means considering all MSCOS outcomes in intervention development and evaluation. If an intervention for survivors doesn't cover all the MSCOS outcomes, policymakers, researchers and service providers should either consider amending it or partnering with services or interventions that do. This will necessitate cross-departmental working in government and collaborations across NGOs.
3. Researchers and service providers should use the MSCOS to think about interventions on many different levels, including the individual, organisational, governmental and societal levels. Service providers, researchers and policymakers should consider the importance of structural factors in intervention evaluations.
4. Survivors need to be provided with secure and appropriate safe accommodation to support their recovery, wellbeing, and reintegration. Government providers should consider supporting the creation of survivor-managed safe houses.
5. Professionals working with survivors should understand the key principles of relational ethics and use these to help build more meaningful, trusting relationships.
6. Service providers and policymakers should acknowledge that access to medical treatment and education are structural issues. They should design interventions that address the structural racism and financial deprivation that many survivors endure.
7. Service providers, policymakers and researchers should avoid thinking about survivor outcomes based on a linear short-term, medium-term and long-term progression. Rather, stakeholders should accept that needs and support can fade out and come back into relevance over many decades. Services should, therefore, be accessible at any time during a survivor's life.
8. Projects, services, evaluations, interventions and policymaking on human trafficking and modern slavery should involve survivors as early in the process as possible.
9. Survivors should be appropriately compensated for participation in research, policy, or NGO work, and all financial information relating to any project with survivor involvement should be transparent.
10. Service providers could consider directly integrating MSCOS into their survivor support initiatives, for instance in needs assessments and goal setting.
11. The MSCOS should be supplemented with relevant outcomes from the Outcome Longlist based on contextual factors and survivor demographics
12. All stakeholders should be wary about using the term recovery as it is a contested term. Ideally, 'recovery' should always be used alongside other terms such as healing, restoration and reintegration, understood as a cyclical and non-linear
13. Researchers should acknowledge that achieving consensus is difficult process for many participants. They should prepare stakeholders by providing suggestions on how to make tough decisions, drawing on lessons from previous consensus projects.

14. Researchers and service providers should use the MSCOS to think about interventions more broadly. This means considering all MSCOS outcomes in intervention development and evaluation.
15. When service providers and researchers are working with individual level outcomes, they should be careful that they do not disproportionately burden survivors. They should involve setting self-development goals and work targets for other stakeholders.
16. All MSCOS outcomes should be measured at consistent, regular timepoints regardless of someone's circumstances or years since their trafficking experience
17. Survivors should be involved in and remunerated for conducting research and NGO activities (including service and intervention design, evaluation and development), as well as inputting into policy. Involvement should be on their terms, with roles reflecting people's different experiences and life circumstances. As part of this, survivors should be offered an extensive induction process as well as mental health support for the project duration.
18. Service providers, policymakers and researchers should consider facilitating the creation of survivor research advisory boards. However, board members should be provided with appropriate support, structure and clear exit procedures.
19. Outcome set developers should acknowledge that the consensus position can change in response to major global events in the trafficking sector and should eventually become redundant if an outcome set is widely accepted and implemented. They should, therefore, provide paths for new and pre-existing stakeholders to adjust outcomes, for example through a community of practice.
20. Core outcome set projects should create a community of practice to help develop understanding of the outcome set, explore practical implementation and evaluation, and adjust outcome sets in response to major global changes in the trafficking sector.

- [Scotland: survivor-informed support for trafficked children](#) (July 2023)

Policy and Practice Implications

One of the key aims of this study was to add to social policy and social work knowledge of the short, medium and long term needs and experiences of trafficked children and young people and the services designed to support them. The findings from the data have a number of implications for the development of knowledge in this area:

- The UK and Scottish Governments must ensure that a child protection framework of support and processes take priority over NRM referrals. OSCE (2022) indicate that any NRM should build on existing national child protection systems, where a child's best interest is at the centre of decision making in line with state obligations under the UNCRC.

- The Home Office must ensure that decision making processes are timely. Immigration status is crucial in allowing young people to make plans and organise their lives. Ensuring decision making is timely is imperative to recovery.

- The Scottish Government and other funding bodies need to ensure that services are properly resourced to provide adequate and appropriate levels of support. Limited provisions work against building trusting relationships and can often impact on the effectiveness of engagement and subsequently longer-term outcomes for young people. Continuity and consistency are vital in establishing trusting relationships as a pre-condition for recovery. The Scottish model of guardianship support for all separated children, regardless of NRM decisions, combined with provision of support post-18 for care experienced young people, provides this. Identification and support in Scotland is not conditional on a positive NRM decision and reflects the importance of the child protection and support framework and process as indicated in the first recommendation.

- Clear collaborative objectives that over-ride the organisational priorities of any one agency need to be reinforced.

- **Young people require support – including education, financial, accommodation and mental health support - that goes beyond specific services related to trafficking in order to meet their longer-term needs and support longer-term recovery.** These are presently available in Scotland under child-care and throughcare and aftercare provisions and professionals need to ensure equal access to services across the country, supported by additional training where necessary.

- **All statutory and non-statutory bodies working with separated and trafficked children need to ensure that the focus remains on children’s needs rather than particular national groups.**

Professionals have ongoing concerns about the patterns of over-representation of specific nationalities in processes of identification. Ongoing training regarding patterns of arrivals, the importance of assessment within a child protection framework utilising possible trafficking indicators, and the need for a multiagency response (including cross border) are all important factors regarding the focus on needs.

- [Mental wellbeing for survivors of modern slavery](#) (July 2023)

Recommendation 1: Clarify the psychological assistance entitlement.

The current Modern Slavery (s49) Statutory Guidance does not currently define psychological assistance or psychological recovery. The specific guidance on psychological health and counselling is limited. As of July 2022, the Statutory Guidance did not make reference to trauma or wellbeing. To both survivors and service providers, it was unclear what is covered under the entitlement in specific terms, and what survivors’ options are if the provision of services does not meet an individual’s needs. Explicitly defining vocabulary and how they should be interpreted will help ensure there is a shared understanding of what provisions are required to meet this entitlement.

We welcome the update to the Statutory Guidance in January 2023 that includes a new Recovery Rate that “can be used to assist a victim in accessing health, fitness, or wellness classes, to help fund additional weekly transport and communication costs, or flexibly towards other recovery related costs.”

Additional clarification to the wait times and duration of support are needed. The guidance does not indicate how to determine what qualifies as a reasonable wait time, nor does it indicate the length of time a survivor may have access to psychological assistance. This makes it difficult for survivors and service providers to determine if survivors have received their minimum entitlements or need to request additional resources to extend the provision of psychological assistance.

Recommendation 2: Ensure survivors supported in the NRM are provided with information throughout on the services available to them in a language they can understand.

A lot of information is provided to individuals about the support available through the NRM at the initial assessment stage. Service providers and survivors indicated that there can be information overload at this stage and it needs to be repeated throughout a survivor’s journey in the NRM. In line with Article 12(d) of ECAT, this information needs to be provided in languages that people can understand. In addition to translated materials, materials in English also need to contain less jargon.

Recommendation 3: Enable survivors’ access to mental wellbeing activities and support.

Both survivors and service providers indicated that the practices they use to support their psychological needs go far beyond the treatment of mental illness diagnoses. Dismantling barriers to this access and providing funding for these activities is critical. The barriers identified by survivors to accessing mental wellbeing support include a lack of awareness of the support available and practical issues such as language barriers and location. Funding for transport and interpretation services for these activities would enable greater access.

Recommendation 4: Evaluate the appropriateness of service provision on survivors’ mental wellbeing at various stages of their NRM journey.

In addition to the Initial Risk Assessment and the Recovery Needs Assessment, seek survivor feedback on, and assess the appropriateness of, psychological assistance received whilst in the NRM prior to conclusion grounds decisions. As demonstrated in the findings, survivors and service providers highlighted the need to distinguish between whether psychological assistance was offered and whether it met the needs of survivors. Such an assessment needs to be undertaken at the individual level as well as at the service-level, as part of existing monitoring and evaluation processes.

Recommendation 5. Ensure provision of all ECAT entitlements, especially housing, and that provisions meet Slavery and Trafficking Care Standards.

Highlighted in our stakeholder workshops was the importance and interconnectedness of all ECAT entitlements to mental wellbeing. Appropriate and secure accommodation was the most prominent, but the importance of other entitlements was also raised, particularly in relation to material assistance, legal advice and access to interpreters. But it is not only the access to an entitlement that is important; the quality of the provision is equally important. If the provision does not meet the Slavery and Trafficking Care standards, it can cause harm or leave survivors without an understanding of their rights and entitlements.

Recommendation 6. Reduce timeframes for NRM decision-making to provide greater stability for survivors' wellbeing.

The end of year report on NRM statistics for 2021 found that the median decisionmaking timeframe was 448 days, an increase from 338 days in 2020 (Home Office, 2022b). The report noted that there were significant resource pressures within the Single Competent Authority (SCA) during 2021 which impacted on these timeframes (ibid.). Participants highlighted the negative impact on survivors of the uncertainty caused by lengthy waiting times for NRM decisions. Service providers also stated that the lack of clarity over when a decision would be made meant that hampered their ability to work with survivors to plan for their future in a safe and structured way.

Recommendation 7. Extend 'priority need' housing status to survivors with a positive Conclusive Grounds decision who are eligible for assistance.

The impact of accommodation on survivor wellbeing was a key theme in both the survivor and service provider workshops. Examples are given in the findings above of where survivors felt that accommodation provided during the NRM process or within the asylum system was not secure or appropriate to their needs. However, even those with access to the housing system due following a positive Conclusive Grounds decision or grant of refugee status find themselves at risk of homelessness or in unsuitable and/or short-term accommodation which prevents them from moving on in their recovery. Extending 'priority need' housing status to survivors with a positive Conclusive Grounds decision, in the same way that the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provided this status to victims of domestic abuse, would provide a clearer pathway to appropriate housing assistance.

Targeted research on survivor support

- [Survivors' experiences of accessing legal advice, and impact on recovery and outcomes](#) (January 2023)

For the Ministry of Justice

1. Free legal advice should be made available for people with lived experience of modern slavery as a standalone entitlement, encompassing the whole range of legal issues individuals might need advice on. Currently, access to pre-NRM advice has been proposed as an 'add-on' service for individuals already receiving legal aid on an immigration or asylum issue. Instead, free legal advice prior to entering the NRM should be available to all individuals based on their experiences of modern slavery, while legal aid should also be extended to cover issues of identification within the NRM and applications for criminal injuries compensation. Such advice should be independent, timely, and equally accessible for all people with lived experience of modern slavery irrespective of nationality, immigration status, or other characteristics (such as exploitation type). We recommend that the Ministry of Justice reconsider the appropriateness of means testing where clients present with indicators of lived experience of modern slavery, in line with the views of practitioners consulted in this and other research.

2. The legal aid funding structure should be revised to ensure that lawyers are not disincentivised from taking on claims by people with lived experience of modern slavery. Such revisions should include a reconsideration of standard fixed fees, which this and other research has shown are too low to allow legal representatives to adequately address the complex legal needs of people with lived experience of modern slavery. These fixed fees should be replaced by hourly rates. Moreover, greater flexibility should be introduced into the legal aid contracting process to allow the

market to respond to a critical need for qualified advisers in specialised areas (such as modern slavery) when the need arises, even if this is outside of the standard tendering cycle (which currently only allows for organisations to enter into legal aid contracts every few years).

3. Adequate training and mentoring opportunities for providers of legal services should be ensured. Such training should cover relevant substantive and procedural issues, as well as interpersonal skills, including trauma-informed responses and interviewing skills that are relevant for engaging with, and supporting disclosure from, people with lived experience of modern slavery. This training, together with a competency-based assessment, should be integrated within existing accreditation requirements for all areas of civil and criminal legal aid where a need for legal advice may arise for people with lived experience of modern slavery. Additional training opportunities should be made available on a voluntary basis and should be publicly funded.

4. Data on the availability and uptake of modern slavery-related legal advice should be collected by the Ministry of Justice and regularly analysed and monitored by relevant decision-makers to better understand access to justice for people with experiences of modern slavery. Such data should be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, indicating not only the number of people with lived experience of modern slavery that have received legal advice, but also, amongst other things, the areas in which such advice was received. Any such data should be publicly available for scrutiny by researchers, NGOs and other interested parties.

5. Views of people with lived experience of modern slavery should be sought and actively taken into account when revisions to legal aid structures and processes are deliberated.

For the Home Office

6. Greater collaboration between legal advice providers and frontline organisations operating MSVCC services should be promoted, including through partnerships that incorporate feedback sessions and mutual training opportunities. This will improve the identification of legal needs and timely, supported referrals to appropriate (independent) legal services, while also promoting a model of holistic legal advice provision that places the wellbeing of the client at its centre. Formal partnerships may also encourage specialisation by legal aid firms if they can expect steady referrals of modern slavery cases.

7. Frontline organisations should receive additional support (including training and financial support as necessary) in order to implement these measures, owing to the wide range of care responsibilities they already assume. Training for support workers should include how to prepare and support clients for meetings with solicitors and how to negotiate expectations on both sides.

For Support Workers and the Legal Community

8. The legal advice provided should consider the significant and complex needs experienced by some people with lived experience of modern slavery, particularly due to: cultural disorientation, lack of trust, trauma and wider mental health issues, language barriers, and other factors. People with lived experience of modern slavery may need to be assisted by support workers to effectively access and benefit from the legal advice provided. Legal representatives should also be encouraged to manage the expectations of clients – clearly explaining the legal process, relevant timeframes, their own role, and the responsibilities of the client at the outset – and should be subject to clearer complaints processes to ensure ongoing communication and greater accountability in the quality of the service provided.

- [Impact of providing technology to survivors of modern slavery](#) (June 2023)

Policymakers

- More opportunities are needed for funding the work and initiatives of civil society organisations supporting survivors. We recommend that the UK Government allocates increased funding to support the provision of digital technology and data by organisations to survivors as well as opportunities for digital training. An avenue to explore for policymakers, in addition to providing more funding, could be

the facilitation of donation of recycled digital devices from the private sector (e.g. technology companies) to civil society organisations supporting survivors.

- In terms of provision of digital technologies, we recommend policymakers to implement as part of the NRM, and provide guidance to organisations for, a minimum digital requirement for survivors that would consist of at least one smartphone, one laptop and a data package for survivors. A useful instrument for producing this guidance could be the Minimum Digital Living Standard measure that is currently being developed by the University of Liverpool in partnership with Loughborough University and others (see Blackwell et al., 2023 for further details). As for digital training for survivors, guidance should also be produced and shared with all organisations supporting survivors, including both those that deliver some form of digital training and those who currently do not, with clear emphasis on the type of training required (see recommendations for organisations below for further details). In order to produce such guidance, examples of best practice in terms of digital training programmes offered to survivors should be considered.

A starting point could be the STAR programme offered by IOM (2022), as recommended by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (2022) for providing centralised employment support. Another example of good practice could be the ConnectingScotland programme launched by the Scottish Government (see Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, 2023), which includes a package provision of digital devices and digital skills training. This means that the guidance produced by policymakers should incorporate signposting to existing support services – including, also, Good Things Foundation’s national data bank and device bank as well as ‘Learn My Way’ training resources.

- In order to help organisations to better manage their workload, as well as for survivors to monitor their own progress and be more actively involved throughout the NRM process, we recommend policymakers explore the creation of an online portal for both organisations and survivors that needs to be highly secure and safe to use (see also recommendations for organisations below).

- Funding and guidance should be provided by policymakers with a view to supporting organisations to provide information on their websites in multiple languages, especially when it comes to the types of support services that they provide. Such a measure, which would alleviate language barriers experienced by survivors, should also apply to the design of the online portal suggested above. Support organisations

- To aid survivors’ reintegration into society, we recommend organisations explore the use of a centralised online portal (see also recommendations for policymakers above). This should be highly secure and safe to use and could include links to vetted external support services such as mental health websites, as well as features that enable survivors to refer themselves to such services. The portal could also provide access for survivors to access their own details and monitor their own progress once they enter the NRM. This will give survivors an element of control over their own recovery and help them in developing independence. Survivors could each be allocated with login credentials to manage their own progress. The portal could incorporate a traffic-light feature that identifies those survivors that are least and most vulnerable and/or at risk of re-trafficking.

- Organisations should be committed to taking a balanced approach to digital support and training. This would include providing access to both structured digital training as well as individualised and tailor-made support aimed at equipping survivors with the skills and knowledge they need in the digital age, with a focus on online safety. On the one hand, structured training aimed at developing survivors’ more functional skills (e.g., to apply for jobs or search for information) and knowledge of online safety should be provided. On the other hand, informal ad-hoc guidance (e.g., one-to-one meetings or informal drop-in sessions) should also be made available by organisations so as to support survivors in terms of troubleshooting, if and when needed.

- Organisations should provide both formal and informal training (see above) in ways that are supervised by a specific body that may be established through the MSVCC and equivalents in the devolved administrations, whose responsibility would be to have oversight and ensure consistent provision of such training.

