Partnership for
Conflict, Crime &
Security Research

PREPARING FOR IMPACT

How we can overcome barriers and cultivate a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect to achieve impact on survivor support

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FOREWORD

Dame Sara Thornton – Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner

Survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking often have complex support needs and it is important that survivor support policy and practice is informed by evidence and research. My Strategic Plan 2019-2021 set out the importance of getting value from research and innovation. In particular, I set out my ambition to using my convening powers as Commissioner to help bridge the gap between research, policy, and practice. I therefore am very pleased to partner with the UK Research and Innovation Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security (PaCCS) to undertake this important project.

This review reveals the substantial amount of academic research on support for survivors of modern slavery, as well as an appetite for quality evidence among policy makers and practitioners. It also highlights the commitment of all involved. However, while the review found examples of research informing policy and practice, this is not happening as often as it should. Policy and practice is then developed without a sound evidence base. And as the author insightfully argues, the greatest cost of this failure is borne by survivors.

The review sets out practical recommendations to overcome barriers and achieve further impact from research. Researchers, policy makers and practitioners all have a role to play and I hope that this review will be of value to them in their current work and in future research projects. The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC) which was established in 2019 has significant research funding over the next five years. I commend this review to the Modern Slavery PEC and would urge the adoption of this review's recommendations and the encouragement of a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect in all its work.

AUTHOR AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

About the author

Juliana Semione was selected as a policy researcher with the Partnership for Conflict, Crime & Security Research to undertake this review during a placement with the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. Her experience as both a researcher and a survivor support service provider allows her to understand the complexities of both worlds–and the opportunities for them to complement one another.

Juliana is a doctoral candidate in the School of Politics and International Relations and a research associate in the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham. Her doctoral research explores the question, 'What is freedom from slavery?' Her ongoing work in the Rights Lab examines and facilitates community-driven responses to modern slavery as a part of the Lab's Communities and Society Programme. She has also developed a programme in collaboration with The Salvation Army that provides community-based support to survivors.

Originally from California, she is a member of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force. Juliana holds a BA in journalism from Biola University and an MA in global ethics and human values from King's College London. She is also an Associate of King's College.

The Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS)

The Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS) was established by Research Councils UK (now UK Research and Innovation, UKRI) in 2008 as the Global Uncertainties Programme with an aim of delivering high quality, cutting edge research to help improve our understanding of current and future global security challenges. PaCCS presently focuses on the core areas of conflict, cybersecurity, and trans-national organised crime. Our team works to support research, to build connections amongst our research community, and to explore the results of UKRI-funded research projects in our core areas, with the aim of facilitating knowledge translation and research impact. PaCCS has supported collaboration by bringing together researchers from across disciplines to work together on innovative research projects. By creating opportunities for knowledge exchange between government, industry, and the third sector, activities funded under PaCCS continue to deliver impact beyond the academic community.

The partnership is supported by a Research Integrator (Tristram Riley-Smith) based at the University of Cambridge. This placement with the Office of the Anti-Slavery Commissioner is part of the Research Integrator's workstream linked to Transnational Organised Crime: Deepening & Broadening Our Understanding, a PaCCS programme.

GLOSSARY

Grey literature	A broad term that describes non-academic publications, usually produced by government agencies, NGOs, or other organisations
Impact	In the UK's academic context, 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'[1]
Modern slavery	Modern slavery is a serious crime in which individuals are exploited for little or no pay. Exploitation includes, but is not limited to, sexual exploitation, forced or bonded labour, forced criminality, domestic servitude and the removal of organs. The term 'modern slavery' includes human trafficking offences. 'Human trafficking' will sometimes be used when quoting an interview or source, or when it more accurately describes the context of a specific point.
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRM	The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK government's framework for identifying potential victims of modern slavery and referring them to support. Potential victims are referred to NRM support services and eventually receive a 'conclusive grounds' decision on whether the government views them as victims.
Policymaker	A public sector professional who is in a position to directly influence policy or to make policy decisions
Practitioner	In this review, 'practitioner' is used to describe survivor support providers or other professionals–including the police–in their capacity to engage with survivors
Researcher	An individual who is an academic professional with formal affiliation to a university or academic institution
Stakeholder	A stakeholder is an individual who is in a position to apply the findings or recommendations of research. In this review, stakeholders are practitioners and policymakers. Stakeholders are sometimes referred to in other literature as 'evidence users.'
Survivor	A survivor is an individual who has been the victim of a modern slavery crime but is no longer in modern slavery. The term 'victim' will sometimes be used when quoting an interview or to refer to an individual who is still in a situation of modern slavery. 'Survivor' and 'victim' are not universally defined and researchers and stakeholders sometimes use these words interchangeably.
VCC	Victim Care Contract

[1] Research England, 'REF Impact,' UKRI: https://re.ukri.org/research/ref-impact/ (accessed 21 May 2020).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overarching purpose of this review is to build a figurative bridge between researchers on one side and stakeholders on the other. The guiding research question was, *is the evidence base on support for survivors of modern slavery informing policy and the work of practitioners in the UK?*

The research consisted of a literature review and interviews with 56 researchers and stakeholders. While these activities did reveal concrete examples of research making an impact, there are also examples to the contrary. It is clear that there is room for improvement; survivor support research is not informing policy and practice as often as it should. Yet many stakeholders communicated an appetite for quality evidence and an eagerness to put it into practice.

This review opens with a brief discussion of the literature review and the selection of nine case studies. A discussion of the findings follows. Six barriers to impact–and viable solutions for overcoming them–are identified: access, feasibility, funding, preconceptions, relevance, and time. A commitment to three values is found to underpin impact for researchers and stakeholders; for research to translate to impact more consistently, researchers and stakeholders must cultivate a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect. When researchers and stakeholders themselves are committed to solutions and marked by these three values, they will find themselves and their field prepared to overcome barriers and achieve impact.

The resulting recommendations for how research can achieve further impact on support for modern slavery survivors in the UK are listed below:

Recommendations

Addressing barriers to impact

1. **Plan for impact from the beginning.** Both researchers and stakeholders should make a discipline of this. It builds a secure impact pathway in addition to pre-empting some barriers to impact.
2. **Respond to issues on the ground.** Useful research is driven by issues and questions familiar to frontline practitioners. Researchers and stakeholders should both heed this recommendation when designing and commissioning research. Furthermore, when designing and conducting research, they should not discount the insights of non-government organisation (NGO) practitioners who can often draw on many years of survivor support experience. This recommendation further requires an understanding of one another's worlds.
3. **Be realistic and specific.** Researchers and stakeholders should take account of any real, relevant limitations of the policy or practice landscape. Researchers should be specific and realistic when writing recommendations and advocating for changes so that those recommendations have real-world pathways to implementation. Stakeholders should be both clear and honest about limitations–including budgetary limitations–giving researchers the opportunity to ground recommendations in reality.
4. **Make research accessible to stakeholders.** Researchers should be proactive in removing barriers that prevent stakeholders from accessing research. Researchers should consider utilising open access publishing, providing travel bursaries for on-site follow-up events, choosing event locations that are convenient to the target audience, or hosting virtual events.

5. **Share findings strategically.** Researchers should identify specific organisations or individuals who are positioned to apply the research findings or implement recommendations. Researchers should also consider ways to tailor their findings to each audience they identify. Both of these efforts may well benefit from consultation with stakeholders and other researchers.
6. **Receive the questioning of frameworks and processes with an open mind.** Practitioners and policymakers should be especially open-minded when research calls into question longstanding frameworks or processes. Though these may not be easily changed, it is important to researchers that stakeholders entertain new possibilities so that limitations and opportunities can be explored meaningfully. These conversations may be sparked by the findings of specific research projects, but are often long-term and conceptual.

Cultivating a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect

7. **Take proactive steps to understand each other's worlds.** Researchers and stakeholders should devote time to making sense of each other's work and the context within which it is set. This should especially happen before and between research projects. It requires will from both parties.
8. **Gain first-hand experience of anti-slavery work.** Researchers and stakeholders should develop both subject matter expertise and a personal interest in anti-slavery work. This is particularly important to credibility from the perspective of NGO practitioners. Consider volunteering, asking to visit NGO offices, engaging professionally with survivor support networks, and reading grey literature with a charitable eye.
9. **Communicate throughout the research process.** Engagement over specific research projects should flow in both directions between researchers and stakeholders. Communication should be purposeful and it should take place consistently before, during, and after a research project.
10. **Share emerging findings.** Researchers should share emerging findings with relevant stakeholders during a research project rather than waiting until a final report is ready. This can allow stakeholders to begin acting on findings, and may also allow them to help researchers understand what recommendations could realistically be achieved in light of those findings.

LIST OF CASE STUDIES

BACKGROUND

Is the evidence base on support for survivors of modern slavery informing policy and the work of practitioners in the UK? This guiding question has relevance to researchers and stakeholders alike. For researchers it is a question of whether their work is having any effect on the anti-slavery landscape and, if so, what that effect is. For stakeholders it is a question of if and how they are engaging with the evidence base provided by researchers, and whether that evidence base is informing their survivor-facing policies and practices.

The purpose of this review is to help bridge a metaphorical gap between the worlds of researchers and stakeholders. In the context of survivor support in the UK, researchers often undertake work to evaluate support programmes, discover survivors' perspectives, or test a policy against the problem that policy is meant to address. Almost always, that research produces recommendations for how practice or policy could be altered. Stakeholders generally understand the value of research and support it in principle–sometimes they even support it financially. In interviews, stakeholders from across the public and third sector repeatedly affirmed their appetite for good information. But academics and stakeholders sometimes operate under very different sets of constraints, values, resources, and accountabilities. Without a bridge, impact can fall into the gap between these two groups when, for one reason or another, findings from research do not have any effect on policy or practice. When impact is unrealised, both researchers and stakeholders are left at a disadvantage. And when programmes and policies continue in spite of–rather than in light of–sound findings, the greatest cost is borne by survivors.

This review describes common barriers to impact and proposes ways through them. It also shows how some researchers and stakeholders have successfully bridged the gap between their worlds to achieve impact. It is clear that both stakeholders and researchers share responsibility for translating research to impact, and this review must be read in that spirit.

This review is the result of a 97-item literature review and interviews (in person, virtual, and via email or phone) with 56 individuals from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Interviewees were career academics, police, civil servants, third sector professionals, and individuals with professional experience in multiple sectors. This research was conducted between January and May 2020. The literature review included 32 items submitted by 16 individuals in response to a call for research, which the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner circulated to 156 stakeholder email addresses in late January and which was included in several stakeholder newsletters. It spanned the period between 2009 and 2019.

SURVEYING THE SURVIVOR SUPPORT LANDSCAPE

This project involved two distinct research activities: a literature review and interviews with researchers and stakeholders. The two objectives of the literature review were, first, to determine what academic literature exists within the UK on the topic of support for modern slavery survivors and, second, to inform the selection of specific pieces of research as case studies for further discussion during interviews. The purpose in selecting specific research for discussion was to better understand the experiences of researchers and stakeholders who have attempted to translate research to impact.

Identifying the academic literature

This section consists of an abridged literature review. An expanded version can be found in Appendix B. The literature review spanned nearly four months, during which time nearly 100 items were examined. Grey literature was accounted for but, in light of the guiding question, only academic literature was reviewed in detail. 'Grey literature' describes non-academic publications, usually produced by government agencies, NGOs, or other organisations. For this review, a piece of research was considered academic if it was authored or co-authored by a researcher. In most cases, it also met at least one of the following criteria:

- It was published in a peer-reviewed journal
- It was published by a university
- Its methods were clearly reported
- It made clear its relationship to specific theories
- It made clear its relationship to other written works

Four themes emerged from the literature review:

- Support needs of survivors
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- Factors that limit the potential benefit of support services
- Immigration related concerns

These will be discussed briefly in this section.

Literature concerning survivor support necessarily addresses survivors' support needs. Frequently cited support needs were healthcare (including mental health), accommodation, and legal support. This is a non-exhaustive list. An acknowledgement that survivors often have complex and intersectional needs sometimes appeared alongside these discussions.[2]

As the policy mechanism by which all four UK nations provide support services to survivors, the NRM features prominently in the literature. The NRM in England and Wales is delivered by different contractors and subcontractors than in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Most literature focused on the NRM concerns the specific support it provides (or does not provide) to survivors from the point of referral onwards. The four nations are not equally represented in academic

[2] An individual has 'complex' needs when they have more than one support need. 'Intersectional' describes needs arising from the effect of multiple forms of discrimination. These can relate to gender, race, and class, or many other aspects of someone's social and political identity.

literature; participants are often survivors who access NRM support in England or practitioners who deliver the NRM in England.

Factors that limit the potential benefit of support services also emerged. These factors prevent practitioners from delivering the fullest support possible to survivors, prevent survivors from accessing support, or prevent survivors from experiencing the full benefits of the support services they access. Common limiting factors are a language barrier, survivors not having the right to work, various instabilities in survivors' lives, survivors not having identification documents, accommodation concerns, and survivors being unaware of services available to them.

Immigration concerns were also a common thread through multiple pieces of research. Survivors from outside the European Economic Area frequently face specific challenges related to their immigration status. Right to work, leave to remain and, sometimes, asylum claims are all interrelated.

While much more could be said about these themes, it is important to remember that the purpose of the literature review was, broadly, to provide the context in which ensuing conversations about impact would be situated.

Existing research and future research face at least two common challenges which are substantiated by the literature reviewed and by the researchers and stakeholders interviewed during this research project. Those challenges are a constantly shifting policy landscape and a lack of follow-up engagement with survivors who have accessed support. The policy and legislation that set the context for all survivor support literature are the NRM–introduced in 2009–and the Modern Slavery Act (2015). Both are subject to change and the NRM, in particular, has seen several reforms. A general absence of follow-up engagement with survivors after they leave a support service leaves researchers and stakeholders with only a limited ability to understand the long-term effects–the impact–of their work. These challenges are discussed in greater detail in Appendix B.

'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery'[3]

A case study demonstrating adaptation to a changing landscape

'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery' was published in January 2020 and authored by Hannah Lewis, Gwyneth Lonergan, Rebecca Murray, Emma Tomalin, and Louise Waite. 'The research involved a multi-method approach to investigate anti-modern slavery practice and activities undertaken by faith-based and secular organisations, and statutory and civil society figures, primarily in England. The research also included a comparative element with key informant interviews in Spain and the Netherlands."[4]

The 'Faith Responses' project was funded in 2016 and began in earnest in 2017. However, the project had been in development from as early as 2014–after the NRM was introduced in 2009 but before the Modern Slavery Act (2015) was passed. Hannah Lewis described impact planning for the research as constantly changing, citing both an official review of the NRM and

[3] Hannah Lewis et al., 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery', January 2020: https://jliflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Faith-reponses-to-modern-slavery-2020-Uni-Sheffield-and-Leeds_LowRes.pdf.
[4] Ibid., 6.

the enactment of the Modern Slavery Act as creating significant change in the anti-slavery landscape during the lifetime of her team's project.[5]

The Government's 2017 commitment[6] to adhere to the Human Trafficking Foundation's *2018 Survivor Care Standards ('Standards')* in future Victim Care Contract (VCC) services was another significant change in the landscape, but this particular change created a 'major impact pathway' for the team well before publication of their research.[7] The *Standards* is a set of principles and best practices designed to professionalise survivor support in the UK and 'ensure that … certain standards can be expected in the way support is delivered prior to, during and beyond the recovery and reflection period.'[8]

Lewis's research team approached Kate Roberts, editor of the *Standards,* and proposed what became Standard 1.1.5: 'Freedom of thought, religion and belief,' 'bringing to the standards their learning from their research into the role of faith based organisations in addressing slavery and supporting its survivors.'[9] The Standard states, 'Services should be provided equally to [survivors] of any religion, belief, or none,' and gives general guidance for faith-based organisations on how to support survivors who wish to engage with religious support whilst taking care not to 'persuade someone to join a religion, cause or group.'[10]

The inclusion of this standard sets the stage for Lewis's team to realise further impact in both practice and policy. In respect to practice, the *Survivor Care Standard*s are freely available online and are intended to inform the work of NRM and non-NRM service providers alike. The research team are actively engaging with key practitioner groups to explore practical ways their respective programmes can be brought into alignment with the freedom of belief standard. In respect to policy, 'Faith Responses' has already achieved some impact by directly informing the *Standards,* which the government has committed to uphold as a 'minimum standard for victim support.'[11]

The researchers' goal with the 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery' report was to 'investigate the roles of faith-based organisations … in responses to modern slavery in the UK.'[12] The report listed nine recommendations for a variety of stakeholders, with the key one being 'for organisations, projects and services working to support people exiting modern slavery to implement the Human Trafficking Foundation … Slavery and Trafficking Survivor Care Standards, including 1.1.5 on Freedom of thought, religion and belief.'[13] The research team's ability to adapt to a changing landscape allowed them to make an impact prior to publication, which in turn gives them sound footing for pursuing future impact on practice because they can appeal to the standing of the *Standards* as they continue to engage with practitioners over the merits of their findings.

[5] Hannah Lewis, interview, 31 March 2020.
[6] *Hansard,* 6th ser., vol. 630, col. 512: https://www.parliament.uk/documents/publications-records/House-of-Commons-Publications/BV_Commons_Vol_630.pdf.
[7] Hannah Lewis, interview, 31 March 2020.
[8] Kate Roberts, Emma Terry, and Rachel Witkin, eds., *The Slavery and Trafficking Survivor Care Standards 2018*, 3rd ed. (Human Trafficking Foundation, 2018), 12: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599abfb4e6f2e19ff048494f/t/5bc07787ec212d8f5b833504/1539340180026/HTF+Care+Standards+%5BSpreads%5D.pdf.
[9] Kate Roberts, email, 10 March 2020.
[10] Roberts, Terry, and Witkin, *Survivor Care Standards*, 12.
[11] *Hansard,* 6th ser., vol. 630, col. 512.
[12] Lewis et al., 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery', 5.
[13] Ibid., 6.

Selecting case studies

Initially, the intention was to choose selections from the academic literature that fell into three categories, and to discuss those selections with relevant researchers and stakeholders in interviews and over email correspondence. Those categories were:

- Research that had impact
- Research that created buzz but had not achieved impact to date
- Research that had achieved no impact

Impact is 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.'[14]

Interviews with researchers revealed that placing a piece of research into one of those three categories is less straightforward a task than it at first appeared. For instance, sometimes research has an impact but it is not the impact researchers expected or it does not follow directly from any specific recommendations that were made. Other times, stakeholders will welcome a piece of research and declare their intention to apply its findings (this is one way research can be said to create 'buzz'), but researchers may not know if this is ever followed through.

It quickly became evident that examples of research in the first two categories are relatively easy to find–especially in the second, where awareness and discussion around specific pieces of research has been stirred but there is no evidence that impact has resulted from that 'buzz.' Responses to a call for research did include research that was said to have no impact, but it proved difficult to rule out impact entirely. This was partly due to the fact that, once research is disseminated, researchers cannot possibly know who has accessed it or if they have applied its findings. Furthermore, stakeholders may have different definitions of impact than researchers do.

Twenty items representing diverse sectors, regions, nations, institutions, and survivor support specialisations were identified as potential case studies. These items included research from the literature review (including programmes and policies featured in the literature) and survivor support programmes or policies for which no literature had yet been identified.

Concerning research from the literature review, researchers and stakeholders familiar with the items were interviewed. They were asked about the extent to which the research had made an impact, about their experience working with one another, and about their view on how impact is best achieved.

Concerning survivor support programmes or policies for which no literature had yet been identified, stakeholders close to each item were interviewed. They were initially asked whether research had informed the programme or policy being discussed or if research had been consulted in its creation. Any research that they cited was then reviewed. It emerged that only one of these items had been informed by academic research and another had consulted academic literature outside the survivor support subject area. It must be noted that the reason some of these programmes and policies had not been informed by academic survivor support research was that none existed at the time they were developed.

[14] Research England, 'REF Impact,' UKRI: https://re.ukri.org/research/ref-impact/ (accessed 21 May 2020).

Researchers and stakeholders responded to inquiries about all but one of the items. The remaining 19 items were discussed in interviews with a total of 56 individuals, and these interviews form the bulk of evidence for this review.

Nine of these items demonstrated scenarios where research had made some degree of impact. An exhaustive list of these nine items' characteristics would be impossible, but a sample demonstrates their diverse qualities:

- Had an impact
- Impact is difficult to determine
- Was a qualitative study
- Was a quantitative study
- Described or outlined a survivor support programme
- Evaluated a survivor support programme
- Considered noteworthy by researchers
- Considered noteworthy by stakeholders
- Funded by a research council or university
- Focused on child survivors
- Focused on adult survivors
- Focused on the public sector
- Focused on the third sector
- Focused on the NRM
- Focused on support outside the NRM
- Commissioned by the government
- Commissioned by a specific programme

The case studies featured in this review are listed in order of appearance below.

1. 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery'[15]
   Demonstrating adaptation to a changing landscape
2. Evaluations of the Independent Child Trafficking Guardians programme
   Demonstrating a positive working experience between civil servants and researchers
3. PROTECT
   Demonstrating impact planning from a project's inception to completion
4. 'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis'[16]
   Demonstrating engagement with stakeholders during the research process
5. 'Between Two Fires: Understanding Vulnerabilities and the Support Needs of People from Albania, Viet Nam and Nigeria who have experienced Human Trafficking into the UK'[17]
   Demonstrating different perspectives on impact
6. 'A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the ITA Intervention in Oxford and Reading'[18]
   Demonstrating the importance of engagement between researchers and stakeholders after a study is completed
7. Alex Balch and 'Bright Future: An Independent Review'[19]
   Demonstrating the value of understanding, from a researcher's perspective
8. Laura Pajón's work on modern slavery investigations and multi-agency partnerships

[15] Lewis et al., 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery'.
[16] Andrea Nicholson et al., 'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis' (University of Nottingham Rights Lab, July 2019): https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/beacons-of-excellence/rights-lab/mseu/mseu-resources/2019/august/the-modern-slavery-victim-support-bill-a-cost-benefit-analysis.pdf.
[17] Patricia Hynes et al., '"Between Two Fires": Understanding Vulnerabilities and the Support Needs of People from Albania, Viet Nam and Nigeria Who Have Experienced Human Trafficking into the UK' (University of Bedfordshire, IOM UN Migration, and the Institute of Applied Social Research, 2019): https://www.beds.ac.uk/media/266832/between-two-fires-finalreport-29062019.pdf.
[18] Nadia Wager and Angel Wager, 'A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the ITA Intervention in Oxford and Reading: Report for the Office of Thames Valley Police Crime Commissioner', October 2016: https://thamesvalley.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Victims/Cost-benefit%20analysis%20final%20version.pdf.
[19] Alex Balch et al., 'Bright Future: An Independent Review' (University of Liverpool, June 2019): https://assets.ctfassets.net/5ywmq66472jr/36Svz3uAtl7j9i7LE8c5vr/d25d5184773e8e77effae94f2034c5cb/COP21157_Bright_Future_Report_6_2__-_FINAL_2_July_2019.pdf.

Demonstrating the value of understanding, from stakeholders' perspectives

9. Development of the 'Glasgow Model'
Demonstrating the values of collaboration, understanding, and respect between researchers and stakeholders

FINDINGS

Overview

Is the body of academic research on survivor support making a difference? There are concrete examples of research making an impact on policy and practice. Some of the case studies in this review offer explicit examples. Researchers and stakeholders also spoke about additional research, not featured here by name, which has made an impact. But there are also examples to the contrary, where research has not made so clear an impact or where stakeholders have not consulted research when designing programmes, policies, or practices. It is clear that there is room for improvement; survivor support research is not informing policy and practice often enough despite many stakeholders communicating an appetite for quality evidence and an eagerness to put it into practice.

So what are the mechanics of translating research into impact in the UK's survivor support landscape? This section begins with a discussion of six specific barriers to impact and closes with a discussion on the necessity of an underpinning culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect.

The six common barriers to impact are:

- Access
- Feasibility
- Funding
- Preconceptions
- Relevance
- Time

These barriers often weighed on the individuals who had encountered them, but no barrier was viewed as insurmountable–if only in retrospect. These will be discussed in detail. It is clear that collaboration, understanding, and respect are fundamental to overcoming barriers in any meaningful way.

Three core values characterise a landscape that is fertile for impact: collaboration, understanding, and respect. Researchers and stakeholders from across sectors voiced these values explicitly–and usually with enthusiasm. These values can and must be operationalised. Some of the proposed solutions to barriers are themselves ways of operationalising these values. But to think of values merely as practices is to miss the point; collaboration, understanding, and respect must characterise the culture of the survivor support field. Their conspicuous absence occasioned some of the cautionary tales and disappointments that researchers and stakeholders shared. Cultivating a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect is the most vital undertaking that lies ahead for researchers and stakeholders who wish to expand the field's capacity for impact.

Barriers to impact and ways through them

Researchers and stakeholders discussed six main types of barriers to impact: access, feasibility, funding, preconceptions, relevance, and time. These will each be explored below, illustrated with specific examples and practical solutions. Researchers and stakeholders both carry responsibility

for the problems and solutions presented here–the solutions often being rooted in collaboration, understanding, and respect.

Access

Researchers trade in knowledge and so do not often find themselves in a situation where access to research is a challenge. This means they can overlook the difficulties non-academic stakeholders face in accessing research. Access problems are usually related to the means of research dissemination.

Academic research does not cross stakeholders' desks as often as grey literature. Stakeholders said that the Home Office and NGOs are much more effective than researchers at bringing attention to newly published literature. Additionally, universities were said to be characterised by a 'you know where to find us' attitude.[20] Whereas NGOs and the government will distribute their reports across vast networks, academics largely seem to expect stakeholders to reach out when they need evidence rather than proactively communicating it.[21]

One solution offered by researchers and stakeholders was that researchers should participate in existing, cross-sector networks. The Human Trafficking Foundation was repeatedly named as an example of an anti-slavery network that communicates effectively and would be a useful network for academics to participate in since stakeholders already regularly look to it for evidence.

Another dilemma is that civil servants and other stakeholders often do not have access to academic journals. Whereas researchers and NHS employees have access to some academic publications through their institutions, civil servants and most practitioners do not. So journal articles remain inaccessible to them behind a paywall. Stakeholders should encounter this problem with less frequency as researchers observe requirements from a growing number of funders to publish their articles on open access platforms.

Feasibility

Another barrier to impact is the feasibility of recommendations. Feasibility can be tied to other barriers. For example, lack of funding for implementation can render a recommendation unfeasible. But even with adequate resources in place the feasibility of a recommendation may be undermined by it being unrealistic.

The underpinning values of collaboration and understanding can help researchers craft realistic recommendations. One way researchers can put these into practice is by understanding the limitations and constraints that stakeholders work within. This includes the government and policies in place at the time.[22]

Some stakeholders suggested that researchers would see greater impact from their work if they took a more solutions oriented approach rather than being oppositional. Being oppositional can put stakeholders on the defence, is contrary to collaboration (often to understanding and respect as well), and can undermine relationships. 'Research written in an adversarial way isn't as helpful,' one civil servant shared.[23] When asked what further advice she would offer to researchers, she said that officials will not be surprised by criticism but that they desire for

[20] Stakeholder 26, interview.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Stakeholder 2, interview.
[23] Stakeholder 13, interview.

researchers to engage with them by asking questions, listening to the answers, and building a relationship.[24] One practitioner agreed that research may fall flat if it is framed in an oppositional manner. She said, 'We can all see that the landscape is changing but … people have become very positionally locked. They want to prove this or prove that. What they're not interested in, or maybe it's too difficult, is how you might work with the system rather than attack it. It seems we've got locked into a narrative around the NRM - everyone you talk to begins with the position that the government isn't kind to people but it's not a useful narrative. That's an example.'[25]

Once researchers have written feasible recommendations, they should approach strategic organisations or individuals with those recommendations. Understanding who it is that has authority and capacity to implement recommendations will increase the likelihood that research will ultimately have an impact, whereas advocating for impact with individuals who do not have the authority to implement recommendations can be a frustrating and fruitless experience for all parties. Researchers should consider which civil servants, advisors, ministers, and practitioner leaders are in decision-making positions.

Stakeholders have a role to play in this as well. They should be honest when they observe researchers reaching out to individuals who may be less strategic than others, and should make introductions where appropriate. Furthermore, when commissioning research, public sector and third sector organisations should commit relevant individuals to steering committees or other governance roles so that researchers have regular access to the individuals who are in positions to implement recommendations. Reflecting on why one piece of research did not translate to impact, a researcher said that strong relationships had formed between the stakeholders and research team but that those stakeholders' levels of authority within their own organisation possibly limited their 'convincing power within the organisation.'[26]

Funding

Academic research is expensive

Practitioners from one organisation recently sought an independent academic evaluation of their programme. However, when they approached universities for the evaluation, the quotes for the financial cost were five digits–far too high for the programme's budget. The organisation's leadership felt that such a large sum of money could be better spent in ways that would directly impact the survivors and other groups who access the organisation's programmes.[27] In this case, practitioners with an appetite for academic evaluation and an openness to recommendations proactively approached academic institutions but were ultimately deterred by the high cost of the service.

One solution that may have helped address this is a sliding scale of costs, or a menu of possible research activities.[28] This would operationalise understanding; stakeholders could be clear about their aims for a research project and researchers could respond with ideas about what is realistic. Researchers and stakeholders should seek to understand each other's aims and constraints, and should further seek compromise in the interest of obtaining new knowledge and impact.

A related issue is that researchers are often under professional pressure from their universities to generate research income. But practitioners wishing to commission research do not have the

[24] Ibid.
[25] Stakeholder 19, interview.
[26] Researcher 7, interview.
[27] Stakeholder 12, interview.
[28] Stakeholder 33, interview.

budgets to compete with the funding opportunities afforded by large research councils, which can run into six or seven figures. According to one researcher, 'voluntary organisations can't compete with the size of grants from a [research] council or the government, so they aren't seen as useful for research income.'[29] He recommended that researchers approach this proactively by engaging university leadership, arguing the value of conducting research for 'practice audiences.'[30]

Implementing recommendations is expensive

Multiple stakeholders pointed to the financial cost of implementing research recommendations as a barrier to impact.

One civil servant appealed to the research community for evidence on 'interventions that work. … Be really, really specific.'[31] But she also acknowledged that 'interventions that work can be very expensive, so practitioners and organisation will need to have that balance.'[32] Even the best, most evidence-based recommendations are constrained by the budgets of the stakeholders who are attempting to implement them.

An organisation in England commissioned research and began holding training events as a result, implementing findings from the research. Individuals from across multiple sectors attended the first few events, which were well received. However, the organisation is 'struggling to find funding' to host further events despite clear interest from potential attendees, especially in the statutory sector.[33]

One charitable organisation has commissioned or co-commissioned evaluations of two different programmes. After the first evaluation, the organisation encountered limitations in their team's capacity to implement recommendations that fell outside 'business as usual,' as well as financial limitations.[34] An individual close to both programmes shared his advice for stakeholders who find themselves in the same situation. 'Being pushed into a corner, we had to be creative and think, what *can* we do that's in line with the recommendations? And it turned out to be cost effective, sustainable, and has had impact,' he said.[35] He encouraged organisations to refer to their purpose, vision, and aims, and to consider what they can do to implement the 'spirit' of recommendations even if resources preclude implementing recommendations to their full extent.[36]

Funding may not extend to impact activities

For researchers, a key difficulty as it relates to impact is that their research may not extend to impact activities. One piece of research was commissioned by a law enforcement agency. The funding the researcher received covered only the expenses necessary to carry out the research and write a final report. Despite the researcher's interest in the findings being applied, there were no financial resources to enable further engagement with the stakeholder. She said, 'The reality is, as researchers we got a very small amount of money for the amount of work [this project] was. … You have to either move on when it's over, or if you stay with it, it is detrimental to yourself keeping commitments to organisations that aren't funding you to do so.'[37]

[29] Researcher 13, interview.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Stakeholder 10, interview.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Stakeholder 31, interview.
[34] Stakeholder 17, interview.
[35] Ibid., emphasis added.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Researcher 6, interview.

Researchers should consider no-cost, relatively non-time intensive means of pursuing impact; in some cases an email or phone call could prompt stakeholders to revisit the works they commissioned, and to do so on their own time. This is demonstrated in the case study on page 34.

Another way to address a lack of funding for impact activities is for researchers to turn to additional sources of funding that are specifically aimed at achieving impact, such as Impact Acceleration Accounts and policy fellowships.[38] Universities may have their own impact acceleration funds as well.

Finally, planning for impact funding from the beginning of a project can prevent this barrier from occurring in the first place. Stakeholders should be prepared to fund impact activities–including the time required to carry them out–and researchers should advocate for this in grant applications and in negotiations with organisations commissioning research.

Preconceptions

Preconceptions can be an uncomfortable topic to explore, but it is clear that preconceptions among both researchers and stakeholders can pose barriers to impact. Sometimes those preconceptions are ones that must be resolved through individual reflexivity or introspection, but others can be addressed openly. Several patterns of thought emerged over the course of this research. They are grouped into two categories below–the first category concerns preconceptions about the Civil Service and the second concerns researchers.

Preconceptions concerning the Civil Service

Researchers and stakeholders discussed challenges they have faced around working with the Civil Service.

One challenge is that personnel changes occur frequently in the Civil Service. This is something individual civil servants may have little control over but can nonetheless disrupt impact. Researchers can be left with no connection when a personnel change occurs, though they may have committed time to cultivating one. Researchers and stakeholders with whom a civil servant has a relationship should be informed when the individual moves on and should be introduced to the new individual in post. Furthermore, that individual should be briefed on the background of relevant research. The responsibility for this might be shared by the civil servant leaving the post and by their line manager.

Another difficulty that can result from personnel changes is a loss of institutional knowledge or awareness of research. Institutional relationships and buy-in were among the casualties of personnel changes cited by researchers. Researchers and practitioners may have to frequently renew, or begin again, their efforts to press for impact where they already committed time and resources to doing so. In some cases, civil servants who took up research related work streams where the previous individual in post left off did not know why a particular ongoing project had been funded or what its original potential for impact had been.

Another challenge is that the civil servants in posts relevant to modern slavery policy are not always subject matter experts. Subject matter expertise is discussed further in the case study below. In fairness, it should be noted that researchers studying survivor support are not always modern slavery experts, either.

[38] Researcher 1, interview.

Finally, some civil servants broached the topic of defensiveness, acknowledging that research findings can be difficult to receive. This is especially true when relevant Civil Service offices are not engaged during a research project but are targeted by research findings, or when the findings do not align with what was expected despite engagement during the project. One civil servant had this advice for her peers, 'You've got to be open to hear what's being said. That's one of the most difficult challenges. You need to be open to hearing what researchers are finding without being defensive.'[39]

Evaluations of the Independent Child Trafficking Guardians programme

A case study demonstrating a positive working experience between civil servants and researchers

There have been three academic evaluations of the Home Office's Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG) programme, formerly known as Independent Child Trafficking Advocates, in England and Wales. Researchers and civil servants co-authored the reports. Additionally, the ICTG programme evaluation has been overseen by an advisory panel of researchers and NGO practitioners.

Two researchers and a stakeholder from within the Civil Service spoke about their experience of working together during the ICTG evaluations. The researchers acknowledged that challenges can arise between these two groups but their overall message was clear; their experience of working with civil servants during the evaluation process was positive.

When asked whether they encountered difficulties working with civil servants who were not subject matter experts, one researcher answered by referring to a second common challenge: personnel changes. She said, 'I think that goes back to turnover and how quickly people move on.'[40] In the context of the ICTG project, there was 'such a willingness to know, so it wasn't as binary as being or not being a subject matter expert. And that goes back to honesty - people being honest about what they know and don't know. It was very collaborative. I sometimes felt there was missing knowledge, but sometimes I also learned things. … There will be times when policymakers don't know things, but none of us know everything. There was certainly a will to learn.'[41]

A civil servant who was involved with the evaluation process sympathised with the common critique of civil servants as non-experts in specific subject matter. Her assessment of the problem and its solution aligned with the researcher's perspective above. 'It goes back to the point of people changing roles,' she said. 'I think that's why engagement with the sector is so important. … I can see how that can be frustrating for NGOs and subject matter experts but if they're patient with us and explain their perspective and concerns it helps us understand what can be done from a policy perspective.'[42]

So what advice can the researchers offer for policymakers and researchers working together? 'Collaborate' was their immediate response.

[39] Stakeholder 21, interview.
[40] Researcher 12, interview.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

They elaborated by highlighting the importance of honesty. No one knows the whole truth but everyone can be honest, and knowing the difference between the two is important.[43] 'Researchers can't sit on the moral high ground and tell civil servants how to be moral in complex policy territory,' one researcher went on to say, '[and] you have to, as a civil servant, appreciate the complexity that researchers bring. … There are a lot of decent people trying to do the best thing and I am no better or no lesser than the others. Human trafficking is multifaceted. There is no dimension that doesn't have complexity to it.'[44] His colleague echoed this and added, 'We got that with the civil servants we worked with and that was the heart of it. "Honesty" distils the experience well.'[45]

Preconceptions concerning researchers

Stakeholders–particularly practitioners–shared challenges around working with researchers.

Stakeholders said that researchers can be reticent to present their work in simple, non-academic language that is policy and practice friendly. Stakeholders speculated that researchers can feel uncomfortable at the thought of simplifying their work because they fear doing so will make their work appear less robust, or because of a fear for professional reputation. Researchers acknowledged these are sometimes considerations.

Not simplifying research can preclude impact for two reasons: first, because overly technical or highly specialised language can intimidate stakeholders and prevent them from attempting to apply research at all, and second, because stakeholders genuinely may not understand the content, precluding any attempt at application of it. 'It's not ok to say, "This is too complicated, you won't understand it,"' one practitioner said. 'It's academics' job to do the high-level technical stuff and translate [that] into what everyone will understand. Write simply.'[46] Understanding any terminology, specialised concepts, or significant documents or publications that shape the parlance of specific audiences can further assist researchers in writing more effectively.

Further to this, researchers are sometimes perceived as reluctant to publish their work in professional journals or other 'populist forums.'[47] Researchers acknowledged that this is grounded in some reality. They are 'driven to publish in high-impact academic journals rather than professional journals, which you can get criticised for at work.'[48] To overcome this, researchers must simply be responsive to the clear appetite–evidenced throughout this review–for accessible knowledge. Too often researchers can 'sit on and not share research,'[49] but if they desire impact they must reach the right people in the publications those people are reading.

Relevance

Another barrier that plagues academic research is its relevance–or lack thereof. 'It's very rare that researchers reach out with information that is relevant,' according to one stakeholder.[50] Another said that research is often 'so theoretical that it doesn't translate' in a way her

[43] Researcher 11, interview.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Researcher 12, interview.
[46] Stakeholder 8, interview.
[47] Stakeholder 28, interview.
[48] Researcher 6, interview.
[49] Stakeholder 28, interview
[50] Stakeholder 13, interview.

organisation needs it to.[51] One practitioner said she 'absolutely' has times when she searches for academic research but that research useful in her specific line of work is scarce.[52] Another voiced her belief that much academic research on survivor support is not worthwhile reading because it does not address 'issues on the ground,' but said she is 'genuinely interested in good information' that is both academically robust and relevant. [53]

The solution to this partly lies in a commitment to understanding at the research design stage. Stakeholders did acknowledge that one of the roles of academic work is to answer theoretical questions. However, researchers who believe they are answering very pragmatic questions can still sometimes miss the mark. Researchers 'should ask survivors and practitioners what questions they want answered–what [are] the most interesting questions to them?'[54] Here, stakeholders can contribute to the solution by helping ensure researchers are connected to the most appropriate individuals within policy structures or practice organisations. Researchers should also create opportunities for survivor involvement and stakeholders should be open to how they can connect researchers and survivors, acknowledging that both parties have a responsibility to engage with survivors ethically, respectfully, and professionally.

From there, academics can 'look for overlap with the bigger, abstract questions. If [they] do this at the beginning, practitioners will see the research as more useful.'[55] When the time comes to disseminate findings, researchers can further secure the relevance of their work by drawing clear connections between those more 'abstract' aspects of the research and the elements that stakeholders are particularly interested in.

Time

Time is a scarce resource. This is one of the most persistent barriers to impact. Researchers seemed all too well aware of it and several practitioners put it as bluntly as this: 'People don't have time to read the research.'[56]

In some cases practitioners are under pressure to implement a practice or policy and the specific timescale they are working to does not permit time to consult an evidence base or consult researchers. Policymakers and NGO practitioners both offered specific examples of having been in this situation. One stakeholder said, 'Sometimes there's very little time to do an evidence review. A quick turnaround is necessary. That's just how it works.'[57] But it is not just specific projects that preclude time for reading research. Often, stakeholders simply do not have time to read reports due to the daily demands of their jobs.

It may seem a stubborn problem, as it is rooted in workflows, resourcing, and organisational cultures. But brevity is the most effective tool researchers can use to overcome this barrier to impact. One stakeholder said she had 'a short attention span and little time.'[58] She finds it most effective when a researcher reduces their findings to 'bullet points and main conclusions.'[59] She was not the only stakeholder to call for concise, pithy communication. Others suggested short

[51] Stakeholder 36, interview.
[52] Stakeholder 34, interview.
[53] Stakeholder 19, interview.
[54] Stakeholder 8, interview.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Stakeholder 18, interview.
[57] Stakeholder 13, interview.
[58] Stakeholder 27, interview.
[59] Ibid.

video presentations, one-page briefings (especially when tailored to their work), straightforward executive summaries, and in-person presentations short enough to fit into meeting agendas.

Time can be a factor in stakeholders' ability to attend research dissemination events, as well. Here, a solution is born out of the recent social distancing and stay-home orders; hosting events and meetings with an option to attend virtually eliminates both travel time and the associated costs.[60]

A wider context for barriers to impact

Much of what has been said above reflects what literature on impact has said before. One systematic review of 'publications which offer advice to academics or policymakers on how to engage better with each other' discovered 'a remarkably consistent set of tips over time and across disciplines.'[61] That set of tips is also remarkably similar to the barriers and solutions discussed above. Paul Cairney and Kathryn Oliver summarise these tips from the wider literature in eight themes:

1. Do high-quality research
2. Make your research relevant and readable
3. Understand the policy process, policymaking context, and key actors
4. Be 'accessible' … engage routinely, flexibly, and humbly
5. Decide if you want to be an 'issue advocate' or 'honest broker'
6. Build relationships (and ground rules)
7. Be 'entrepreneurial' or find someone who is
8. Reflect continuously: should you engage, do you want to, and is it working?[62]

There might be some comfort in this: the anti-slavery world is not so unique that researchers and stakeholders encounter exceptional barriers to impact and must reinvent the wheel to solve them. Furthermore, the solutions identified by anti-slavery researchers and stakeholders largely align with those that have borne fruit for others.

A culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect

Throughout the course of this research, the overwhelming message from researchers and stakeholders was that collaboration, understanding, and respect make the landscape fertile for impact. These values can pre-empt barriers to impact on some occasions, can provide the right conditions for successful solutions when barriers cannot be avoided and can even reduce the recurrence of some barriers over time. Without these underpinning values, researchers and stakeholders who are operating according to the barriers and solutions above–however successfully–are only responding to issues as they arise rather than shaping a culture where impact becomes the norm. Researchers and stakeholders must undertake the cultivation of collaboration, understanding, and respect. If impact is to become more common in the field of survivor support, then the culture of the field must be characterised by these values.

This section explores collaboration, understanding, and respect in turn, though it must be said that these do not often exist in isolation from one another but usually grow intertwined. It describes how researchers and stakeholders can articulate their commitment to these values

[60] Researcher 6, interview.
[61] Paul Cairney and Kathryn Oliver, 'How Should Academics Engage in Policymaking to Achieve Impact?', *Political Studies Review*, 2018, 1–17: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1478929918807714.
[62] Ibid. This list is taken from a longer list with additional citations.

through the behaviours and choices they make in their relationships with one another. There are many examples of researcher-stakeholder relationships that demonstrate mutual collaboration, understanding, and respect; these examples should be lauded and emulated.

Collaboration

In its simplest form, collaboration is researchers and stakeholders working together. Operationally, collaboration is more than making a formal agreement to work together. It is more than an exchange of funds for a mutually agreed research output. And it is more than scheduling regular meetings. It is working together, deciding together, acting and adapting together, all toward a mutual aim. Communication and ongoing engagement are two behaviours that demonstrate a commitment to collaboration. Researchers and stakeholders must take initiative and respond to the other's initiative in turns, but engagement must be intentional–something both parties commit to maintain.

Stakeholders should be involved in research from the beginning–that is, from the very design of the research questions and project details. One stakeholder cited 'co-problematisation' as a benefit of engaging at this stage. Co-problematisation is the process of researchers and practitioners deciding together what their question is and what they would like to solve or achieve.[63] Engagement at the beginning of a research project can secure buy-in from stakeholders, which makes the use of the evidence (that is, impact) more likely when the study is completed.

PROTECT

A case study demonstrating impact planning from a project's inception to completion

Outputs from the 'Provider Responses, Treatment, and Care for Trafficked People' ('PROTECT') project comprised 12 papers and a final report published in 2015 with 20 contributors. PROTECT was led by Louise Howard (King's College London) and Cathy Zimmerman (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine) and managed by Siân Oram (King's College London).[64]

The aim of PROTECT was to 'provide evidence to inform the NHS response to human trafficking, specifically the identification and safe referral of trafficked people and the provision of appropriate care to meet their health needs.'[65] A non-exhaustive list of PROTECT impact achievements to date includes:

- A nationally disseminated video produced by NHS England to educate healthcare professionals about modern slavery
- The development of an online module for midwives on responding to modern slavery, at the request of the Royal College of Midwives

[63] Stakeholder 28, interview.
[64] The PROTECT final report can be found at Siân Oram et al., 'Provider Responses Treatment and Care for Trafficked People: Final Report for the Department of Health Policy Research Programme: Optimising Identification, Referral and Care of Trafficked People within the NHS (115/0006)', May 2015: http://clok.uclan.ac.uk/14394/1/PROTECT%20Final%20Report.pdf.
[65] Oram et al., 24.

- Participation in a Department of Health consultation that ultimately resulted in a legislative amendment requiring patients to be refunded for NHS charges incurred prior to being identified as a potential victim of trafficking[66]

The impact Howard, Zimmerman, Oram and their team have had is partly down to planning for impact from the beginning of their project. The PROTECT steering committee and advisory group included co-investigators and representatives from NGOs and from the Department of Health. Oram advised not only appointing individuals who can support the research once it is underway, but who can help 'design [research] so it will be practically useful. … who can help you think about impact and dissemination from the start.'[67]

Oram described myriad activities through which the PROTECT team shared their findings after the report was completed. The impact of written outputs was increased by securing open access publishing for most of the PROTECT papers (this means there is no paywall for readers) and producing a set of briefings specific to different sectors. She commented though that, while 'written outputs' certainly have their place and provide the bulk of information, 'in-person presentations are important in getting the research on people's radar and communicating key messages.'[68] Key dissemination activities included a House of Lords launch event with potential evidence users and presentations to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery and the NHS England National Safeguarding Steering Group.

Reflections from PROTECT stakeholders indicate that the team's start-to-finish impact planning was not only successful, but was a part of the project's appeal. Cornelius Katona, medical and research director at the Helen Bamber Foundation, said it is important that practitioners can see the relevance of research whilst it is being undertaken and that 'the potential for change in practice can be spelled out. [Researchers and practitioners should] have that vision at the beginning, a provisional answer to how it would change practice.'[69] This is where Katona sees room for early-stage engagement between researchers and practitioners. For him, PROTECT is an example of this working particularly well. Referring to some of PROTECT's findings that address barriers to survivors accessing clinical support, Katona said the study addresses questions 'that really matter.'[70] PROTECT is 'a good example of a study where its potential to do good was evident from the start and [the team] also had a good dissemination plan.'[71]

Early engagement can also broaden the perspectives of researchers and help them to produce more effective research. Reflecting on her own experience, one researcher said, 'inclusion and partnership also helps the researcher to understand the challenges and sensitivities of the planned project, allowing for nuanced adaptation that can make a real difference to design through to outcomes.'[72]

Engaging with stakeholders during a project can help researchers plan strategically for impact and may even produce novel impact pathways. Researchers should engage frequently with a

[66] Siân Oram, email, 19 March 2020.
[67] Siân Oram, interview, 23 March 2020.
[68] Siân Oram, email, 19 March 2020.
[69] Cornelius Katona, interview, 7 May 2020.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Researcher 14, email.

stakeholder who has commissioned research, but it is equally important for researchers to engage with interested stakeholders even when they have not commissioned the research. The most common type of engagement discussed at this stage was sharing emerging findings.

'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis'[73]

A case study demonstrating engagement with stakeholders during the research process

'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis' ('CBA') was authored by Andrea Nicholson, Katarina Schwarz, Todd Landman, and Arianne Griffith from the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham. It provides a cost-benefit analysis of Lord Ian McColl's Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill, which was introduced to Parliament in 2017. The Bill seeks to expand statutory support for survivors of modern slavery. 'The Bill passed all necessary stages in the Lords but Parliament was dissolved in November 2019 before it reached a second reading in the Commons. On January 13, 2020, Lord McColl reintroduced the bill.'[74]

It was at the launch event for another research report, 'A Game of Chance? Long-term support for survivors of Modern Slavery,' that Nicholson met Lord McColl. 'A Game of Chance?' recommended 'conducting a cost benefit analysis to establish the social return on investment of longer-term support provision'[75] and Lord McColl said that a CBA would be useful as he championed the Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill. Depending on its conclusions, a CBA could complement the moral impetus of the Bill by making the case that passing the Bill would be fiscally shrewd. Nicholson took the initiative to offer the Rights Lab's services in providing a CBA and Rights Lab leadership welcomed the undertaking. Despite the research team's initial prediction that the costs of enacting the Bill would actually outweigh the benefits (thus both nulling the usefulness of the CBA for Lord McColl's purposes and curtailing the Bill's chances of success), the researchers found that the Bill would have produced 'a net direct and indirect benefit of between £10.4m and £25.1m' to the state if it had been enacted in 2017.[76]

The research was not sponsored by Lord McColl but was an independent Rights Lab project. Nicholson was motivated to support the progression of the Bill through Parliament because the Bill proposes more robust support for individuals and 'fills a well-criticised gap in the [Modern Slavery Act].'[77] Landman's personal motive was his three decades of human rights work, which not only made him curious about the question at hand but gave him a 'toolkit of approaches to answering it.'[78] Institutional motivations included the University of Nottingham's obligations as a 'public goods provider' and the Rights Lab's interest in making an impact whilst building relationships with stakeholders.[79] In short, it was an 'inherently good thing to do.'[80] It is safe to say that these motivations were satisfied.

The CBA was launched in July 2019. Lord McColl has, on multiple occasions since, expressed his gratitude for the CBA and has appealed to it in Parliamentary debates in both houses. The

[73] Nicholson et al., 'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis'.
[74] Todd Landman, email, 7 April 2020.
[75] Carole Murphy, 'A Game of Chance? Long-Term Support for Survivors of Modern Slavery' (St. Mary's University Twickenham: The Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, June 2018), 4: https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/modern-slavery/docs/2018-jun-a-game-of-chance.pdf.
[76] Nicholson et al., 'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis', 4.
[77] Andrea Nicholson, Todd Landman, and Katarina Schwarz, interview, 6 April 2020.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

Bill is still under consideration. But the CBA had an accelerated impact that the team could not have foreseen, and it hinged on their willingness to engage with additional stakeholders in the midst of the research process.

Duncan Lewis Solicitors approached the team in April 2019 asking for a 'witness statement for … the landmark judicial review case *NN & LP v Secretary of State for the Home Department.* This case challenged the Home Office's [NRM] policy to limit support and assistance to victims of modern slavery and human trafficking to 45 days following a [positive conclusive grounds decision].'[81] The research team then 'turned its report findings into a witness statement' that was submitted as evidence.[82] They devoted as much time as necessary to discussing the research with members of Duncan Lewis's legal team.[83]

Duncan Lewis argued for needs-based support but the Home Office defended the 45-day limit on support by arguing that needs-based support 'had resource implications that potentially affected many hundreds (possibly thousands) of people.'[84] The researchers' witness statement 'was extremely useful' in making a counterargument because it demonstrated 'that the direct financial benefits of support outweighed the costs, and highlighted the importance of providing ongoing support to victims on a needs basis to avoid destitution, homelessness, and chronic mental health conditions. … It was actually more cost effective to provide victims of trafficking with the support they needed.'[85]

In June 2019 the case was settled and 'the Home Office conceded that their 45-day policy [was] unlawful and incompatible with the [European Convention Against Trafficking] and that support should be provided in reference to the individual's needs rather than by any reference to how long the individual has been supported. … The Home Office further committed to formulating a sustainable needs-based system for supporting victims of trafficking.'[86]

Engagement before and during a project sets the stage for impact but continued engagement after a report is completed is crucial for seeing impact realised. Continuing to engage after a final report with recommendations is produced allows researchers and stakeholders to navigate implementation together, taking initiative where each has capacity and helping one another overcome any difficulties that may arise.

Importantly, engagement after a project can also ensure that both parties understand the impact that the research is having. Six times over the course of interviews, researchers and stakeholders had conflicting views on if or how specific research recommendations had been implemented, even when the two parties had worked together to produce the research. In some cases, the stakeholders believed that specific reports had made an impact on their work but the researchers who authored the reports believed there had been none. In other cases, these perspectives were reversed. Engagement between these researchers and stakeholders, had it continued after the

[81] Ahmed Aydeed on behalf of Duncan Lewis Solicitors, 'Letter Re: Rights Lab, University of Nottingham', 18 March 2020.
[82] Todd Landman, email, 7 April 2020.
[83] Karen Staunton, email, 13 May 2020.
[84] Ahmed Aydeed on behalf of Duncan Lewis Solicitors, 'Letter Re: Rights Lab, University of Nottingham', 18 March 2020.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Duncan Lewis Solicitors, 'Home Office concedes that their 45 day policy for providing support for victims of trafficking is unlawful,' Duncan Lewis Solicitors: https://www.duncanlewis.co.uk/news/Home_Office_concedes_that_their_45_day_policy_for_providing_support_for_victims_of_trafficking_is_unsatisfactory__(28_June_2019).html.

research was completed, could have harmonised their perspectives and, perhaps, allowed for even more fruitful impact plans.

'Between Two Fires: Understanding Vulnerabilities and the Support Needs of People from Albania, Viet Nam and Nigeria who have experienced Human Trafficking into the UK'[87]

A case study demonstrating different perspectives on impact

'Between Two Fires' was produced jointly by researchers at the University of Bedfordshire and the International Organization for Migration UK (IOM), with Patricia Hynes (University of Bedfordshire) as principal investigator and Patrick Burland (IOM) as co-investigator and project coordinator. The report was published in March 2019.

The 'Between Two Fires' research team set out to understand 'the causes, dynamics and "vulnerabilities" to human trafficking in three source countries – Albania, Viet Nam and Nigeria – plus the support needs of people from these countries who have experienced trafficking and are now in the UK.'[88] They found that individuals who 'set out on migration pathways in an attempt to address their own "vulnerable" positions and fulfil their basic needs' are often the ones who 'encounter various structural and exploitative circumstances that render them "vulnerable" due, in part, to the political climate surrounding migration.'[89] The report delineates 12 specific findings, each paired with at least one recommendation for one or all of the countries included in the study.

The ambition of this project was to have impact on NGO practice and on government policy within all four countries. Hynes said that the team has 'seen concrete examples of impact' in the three source countries but that impact in the UK 'has been harder to achieve.'[90] It was, indeed, difficult to ascertain the impact this research has had in the UK. Although its UK recommendations may not have been implemented to date, various individuals did report that 'Between Two Fires' has indeed made a difference.

The findings actively inform Burland's ongoing IOM work–work which is based out of IOM's London office. IOM learned from 'Between Two Fires' that people from the three source countries studied were often becoming vulnerable and being exploited because they were facing differing forms of social stigmas against them; Burland's current project is an outcome of that learning. However, due to the priorities of the donor, the learning had to be applied and adapted to new target countries' contexts (Ethiopia and Indonesia). Additionally, the research provided an opportunity to test an analytical model developed by IOM. 'Between Two Fires' helped to validate that model and IOM has incorporated feedback from the team into planned applications of the model. 'Between Two Fires' has shaped and improved IOM's understanding of migrant vulnerability.[91]

Two civil servants close to the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF), which funded 'Between Two Fires,' spoke about the impact of the research. First, follow-on research was approved as part of the MSIF Phase 2. The Follow-on research seeks to put the 'Between Two

[87] Hynes et al., '"Between Two Fires": Understanding Vulnerabilities and the Support Needs of People from Albania, Viet Nam and Nigeria Who Have Experienced Human Trafficking into the UK'.
[88] Ibid., 8.
[89] Ibid., 19.
[90] Patricia Hynes, email, 9 March 2020.
[91] Patrick Burland, interview, 2 April 2020.

Fires' findings into practice.[92] It is a project to further understand the importance of social norms and stigma as a driver of vulnerability and on the reintegration of victims. 'The fact that the research led to us approving a project that sought to put the findings of the research into practice is a clear impact,' they said. 'If the criteria for impact is a big policy change then this may be setting the bar too high.'[93] Second, they believe that 'Between Two Fires' has achieved impact in the UK. They said, 'sharing the research with [government] colleagues and those at post was beneficial in increasing understanding of vulnerabilities to trafficking and modern slavery. We shared the research and hosted a presentation by the researchers.'[94]

'A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the ITA Intervention in Oxford and Reading'[95]

A case study demonstrating the importance of engagement between researchers and stakeholders after a study is completed

The Independent Trauma Advisors (ITA) programme was piloted by the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) 'to facilitate [victims'] access to services with a view to both ensuring their safety and enhancing their long-term well-being.'[96] *Nadia Wager (University of Huddersfield) was the lead researcher on this report.*

Wager's cost-benefit analysis (CBA) of the ITA programme was a two-year project. The project had a steering committee that included key partners from the area. In terms of impact, 'the idea was that the findings should have impact immediately,' according to Wager. The makeup of the committee meant that solutions to problematic research findings could be implemented 'straight away,' rather than waiting for the report to be completed. Wager gave examples of improvements to victim support that were implemented during the course of the project. The research also created buzz among stakeholders and gained some media attention.[97]

After the project was finished and the committee disbanded, Wager said she did not know if the report itself made a difference. 'I don't know how the CBA got used and to me that was quite an important part,' she said. Wager was not only curious about impact because of the professional expectation that academics will achieve impact and report it to their universities, but because she originally took on the project 'out of a personal commitment to make things better and improve the lives of others.'[98]

Shona Morrison, head of policy and commissioning in the PCC's office, said she and Wager continued to speak after the report was written. Nonetheless, she and Wager had different levels of awareness of the CBA's impact. Morrison characterised the CBA as 'largely useful in that it provided the business case for commissioning the Willow Project … across Thames Valley.'[99] The Victims First Willow Project 'works with victims and their families to provide

[92] Stakeholder 14, email.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Stakeholder 15, email.
[95] Wager and Wager, 'A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the ITA Intervention in Oxford and Reading: Report for the Office of Thames Valley Police Crime Commissioner'.
[96] Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner, 'Modern Slavery,' Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner: https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/victims-first/modern-slavery/.
[97] Nadia Wager, interview, 22 April 2020.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Shona Morrison, email, 20 April 2020.

crisis intervention, advocacy and long term practical and emotional support'[100] and was commissioned 'on the basis of' Wager's findings.[101] It came to a close in March 2020 but the PCC's office has commissioned the Specialist Service for Adult Victims, which began in April 2020 and builds on the Willow Project.[102] Morrison added, 'in terms of the type of intervention, [the CBA] also encouraged us to include the provision of operational support to police due to the number of victims this provided access to, most of whom are unlikely to have willingly self-referred for help to a service like this (as they often do not recognise themselves as victims of exploitation).'[103]

Wendy Walker, contract manager in the PCC's office, sees room for improvement. She suggested the CBA itself, although very useful, 'probably didn't influence decision making as much as it could have,' and feels this is demonstrative of an underlying pattern, in which a lot of research that is done can have little and sometimes no impact. 'Using research effectively and efficiently is lacking,' she said.[8] For Walker, discussion of the CBA's impact highlighted a lack of engagement with researchers after projects are completed–not just in the case of the CBA but also with other commissioned research. She said, 'I do think that once the research has been completed, we probably don't always discuss the implications of the findings appropriately. We're not always going back to researchers to question and be curious. I don't know if that's all our fault as the customer or if the researchers could do more to come back to us and be curious.'[104]

Walker said her office would welcome follow up from researchers, who could check on the status of the recommendations they had made, ask whether their findings had informed policy, or ask if recommended 'next steps' had been taken.[105] Morrison added, 'We are always … happy to discuss findings further with researchers – and we have on many occasions.'[106]

Understanding

For research to have impact, researchers and stakeholders must understand each other's worlds. One example of this is a pilot, recently launched by the Home Office and the Rights Lab, which pairs researchers and civil servants in a buddy scheme. Though there is onus on both parties, it usually requires more work of researchers to understand the world of stakeholders than the other way around. But that effort can create a direct line to impact. One researcher's advice to her peers was, 'try to understand [stakeholders'] reality and what is useful to them. Understand their complexities or your findings will never be useful.'[107] One stakeholder gave an example of a research team who exemplified this. She said, 'The great thing about them was that they knew the policy area already. They really understood the service they were helping us evaluate. That

[100] Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner, 'The Willow Project marks its first year in supporting victims of exploitation,' Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner: https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-events/thamesvalley-pcc-news/2019/10/the-willow-project-marks-its-first-year-in-supporting-victims-of-exploitation/.
[101] Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner, *Modern Slavery National Network Meeting,* (1 October 2019), slides: https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50269/Appendix%202%20-%20Modern%20Slavery%20National%20Network%20Meeting%20Oct%202019%20-%20TV%20OPCC%20Presentation.pdf.
[102] Shona Morrison, email, 28 May 2020 and https://thamesvalleypartnership.org.uk/home/pcc-announces-contract-for-a-new-adult-specialist-service.
[103] Shona Morrison, email, 20 April 2020.
[104] Wendy Walker, interview, 8 April 2020.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Shona Morrison, email, 28 May 2020.
[107] Researcher 2, interview.

meant that their recommendations hit the nail on the head and picked out what the key issues were.'[108]

Alex Balch and 'Bright Future: An Independent Review'[109]

A case study demonstrating the value of understanding, from a researcher's perspective

Bright Future is a Co-op programme created in partnership with the charity City Hearts. The programme 'offers paid work placements and a guaranteed job interview to survivors of slavery'[110] through its multiple charity and business partners. Alex Balch (University of Liverpool) led the research teams that published an independent interim review in 2017 and the final review in 2019. Gary Craig, Kate Roberts, Alexandra Williams-Woods, and Abby Williams co-authored the final review.

Phill Clayton and Kirsty Hart, from City Hearts, discussed the positive qualities of the research team behind the independent review of the Bright Future programme. When the Bright Future partnership commissioned the review, they said, it was important that the researchers selected for the project were in good standing in the field. Happily, Alex Balch and the team he assembled were also 'personable' and 'very accessible.'[111] Pragmatically speaking, some of them were local to City Hearts's base in Liverpool. Perhaps more fundamentally, they aligned 'with the vision and purpose behind the research,' engaging with it as more than 'just an academic contract. … You don't just want good CV expertise, you want passion [in researchers].'[112]

For Balch, this final quality is not a happy accident or a quirk of personality, but the outcropping of a commitment to understand, first-hand, the anti-slavery world. Balch volunteered with City Hearts as a befriender in another of the charity's programmes for about two years prior to his Bright Future research ever taking shape, and it exposed him to the perspectives of anti-slavery practitioners and survivors. Balch volunteered because he considered it 'unnatural' to have no lived experience with the people or community he would eventually be writing about; it came down to being 'genuine.'[113] He does not view his volunteer experience as a piece of research in itself but says it was motivated by a desire to be 'personally invested, rather than a researcher who [comes in], says how things are, and leaves.'[114]

The morning that Balch invested each week not only brought a sense of personal satisfaction but translated to work he could stand behind. Reflecting on the programme evaluation, Balch said that his volunteering experience gave him familiarity with the programme's client base and what challenges they face (City Hearts clients may go on to participate in Bright Future), making the research 'usable' rather than 'abstract.'[115] Other members of the research team did not have the personal experience with City Hearts that Balch did. This is important, he said,

[108] Stakeholder 22, interview.
[109] Balch et al., 'Bright Future: An Independent Review'.
[110] Ibid., 6.
[111] Phill Clayton and Kirsty Hart, interview, 29 April 2020.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Alex Balch, interview, 26 March 2020.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

'because together we were independent and could be objective to provide transparent and constructive criticism in order to improve the programme.'[116]

Indeed, the recommendations are making an impact. Hart, City Hearts's Bright Future project coordinator, shared the work that is underway to implement many of them.[117]

Stakeholders must also understand how a researcher operates, though researchers acknowledged that they can support stakeholders in this by taking the initiative to explain the research process. The research process may be different for each project, depending on the researcher's experience, resources, and any relevant university processes or constraints. Especially when commissioning research, stakeholders should be clear upfront about what they hope to gain from the project. Researchers should respond by being 'absolutely honest about what is possible and what is not.'[118] If a researcher overpromises and under-delivers, this not only poses a threat to trust and undermines collaboration, but it may limit the robustness of findings and recommendations–thereby limiting the potential for impact.

It should be noted that some stakeholders do have research backgrounds. Further, some of them author grey literature that may utilise research methodologies and stakeholder organisations may have their own research ethics processes. Likewise, some researchers have backgrounds in policy or as practitioners. In terms of understanding the worlds of research, policy, and practice, the dichotomy between researchers and stakeholders is not always rigid.

Sometimes understanding can be literal. It may come down to word choice. One researcher acknowledged that academics and non-academics may sometimes feel they are 'speaking different languages,' but collaboration can help resolve this during the research project so that the report and other final outputs are usable. She said, 'it's back to collaboration–the feeling that the two of you are working on the same side. … Being able to communicate backwards and forwards is quite key.'[119] Open dialogue creates an environment wherein stakeholders should feel free to ask for clarification where researchers may not be communicating 'in a way that's translatable to practice.'[120]

Laura Pajón's work on modern slavery investigations and multi-agency partnerships

A case study demonstrating the value of understanding, from stakeholders' perspectives

Laura Pajón is a lecturer and doctoral candidate at De Montfort University. She is also the coordinator for the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Modern Slavery Action Group.

Pajón's growing body of work is concerned with understanding police processes and proposing evidence-based improvements that can help secure prosecutions, safeguard victims, and disrupt modern slavery crimes.[121] This is not only the focus of her research but a key component of her role in the multiagency partnership she coordinates. Her work necessitates

[116] Alex Balch, email, 27 May 2020.
[117] Phill Clayton and Kirsty Hart, interview, 29 April 2020.
[118] Researcher 13, interview.
[119] Researcher 6, interview.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Laura Pajón, email, 20 March 2020.

regular engagement with police. Though she has no professional policing experience, it was clear from speaking to several police stakeholders that Pajón understands their world with depth and nuance. This results from intentionality on her part and on the part of the police she works with. It creates an ideal climate for her research to be well received and to translate to impact.

Cristina Huddleston was working in the serious crime directorate in Essex Police when she met Pajón and made her an advisor. Pajón 'spent a long time understanding [the police] and learned to speak our language,' quickly earning the respect of even senior individuals.[122] 'It's like she'd been one herself,' Huddleston said. 'It's hard to tell a detective at a certain stage in their career that they could do something differently, more effectively. It's a fragile thing,' but Pajón did so and was 'grounded, respectful, to the point, appreciative of the different profiles she was presenting to.'[123] It is a rare thing, Huddleston said, for a student to engage at a specialist operational level of policing and get 'buy-in' from the police to work alongside them. But Pajón 'brought something of interest, recognised a weakness, and presented a solution,' that was deeply informed by her understanding of the policing world.[124]

Tim Lindley, from Leicestershire Police, began working with Pajón when she was named partnership coordinator–a newly created role at the time. 'For people like me,' he said, 'anything new we're attempting is better if there's an academic behind it who can give empirical evidence from start to end.'[125] Further, for research to have an impact in modern slavery policing practice, Lindley said researchers need to 'find a way to get embedded in the practice of it. … Have a role in the process.'[126] They need to not only know about the practice but be able to internalise it. Police must be willing to enable this. Lindley said police must let researchers 'involve themselves day to day,' perhaps not in every detail but sufficiently to give them the exposure and context to support the objectives of the research.[127]

Lindley sees Pajón's position as coordinator as an 'ideal' example of this. The coordinator 'sits in the centre of communication' for all the organisations involved. 'She sees the pitfalls in communication, people's reluctance to get involved, and is also able to steer ideas, see ideas form, see them follow through'[128] – which contributes to an evidence base on the partnership's success, by a researcher who intuitively understands the stakeholders' environment.

Huddleston had similar advice for stakeholders working with researchers. It begins with viewing researchers as 'colleagues.'[129] 'You both have a purpose and are working for the same aims,' she said. 'Make them a part of your team. … like you're adding a recruit to your team.'[130] Memos of understanding, research ethics processes, or other pertinent agreements can outline the boundaries and particular considerations, but they should also be the basis for 'automatic trust.' In this context, Huddleston encouraged stakeholders to 'bring researchers into your world and understand their world. Make them feel part of the day-to-day team. … Give them access to you, your space, your data (as agreed).'[131] Huddleston gave Pajón a pass

[122] Cristina Huddleston, interview, 29 April 2020.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Tim Lindley, interview, 27 April 2020.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Cristina Huddleston, interview, 29 April 2020.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

so that she could come and go to the force's office 'as she pleased.' Huddleston's thinking was, 'This is her base, too, for as long as the project lasts.'[132]

Pajón had this advice for researchers: 'Try to be the one who's learning rather than expecting them to learn from you.'[133] She seems to live by the advice she offers. 'Laura is very grounded and knowledgeable when it comes to police,' Huddleston said. 'You don't often come across that.'[134]

Respect

Researchers and stakeholders who spoke about respect usually linked it explicitly to relationships between individuals rather than to relationships between organisations. This is perhaps natural, since it is individuals who take the actions that create–or break–trust and it is individuals who feel the effects of this. Respect can be demonstrated in the nature and dynamics of relationships. It can originate in individuals' mind-sets or attitudes and may even be formalised in an agreement like a memorandum of understanding.

Multiple researchers and stakeholders emphasised the importance of fostering relationships as equals. In the words of one police practitioner, the 'absolute starting point is to treat [researchers] as your equals. … Turn it into an equal working relationship.'[135]

One civil servant described research that had impacted both policy and practice. When asked what the researcher had done that made the research particularly easy to implement, she replied, 'It's mutual respect, people not telling us how to do our job. We respect academics and what they bring to the table and vice versa.'[136]

Another way individuals can demonstrate their commitment to respect is by investing in a relationship and not treating the other party solely as a means to an end. One researcher said, '[in] service evaluations I have conducted for other services, gaining access to data or participants is typically difficult. However, I didn't encounter any barriers with [this particular] study. This was partly because we went to great lengths to build a trusting relationship with the two service providers.'[137] Establishing trust shows respect because it demonstrates a commitment to the other party and to what is important to them.

Development of the 'Glasgow Model'

A case study demonstrating the values of collaboration, understanding, and respect between researchers and evidence users

Paul Rigby (Stirling University) worked closely with Glasgow's child protection team to research child trafficking in Glasgow and to plan and implement a child protection response to child trafficking. His research has significantly impacted both policy and practice since 2009.

[132] Ibid.
[133] Laura Pajón, interview, 26 March 2020.
[134] Cristina Huddleston, interview, 29 April 2020.
[135] Stakeholder 26, interview.
[136] Stakeholder 21, interview.
[137] Researcher 6, email.

Glasgow's child protection response is known as the 'Glasgow Model' and is informing practice throughout Scotland.[138]

Moira McKinnon and Sheila Murie are the principal officer and senior officer with the lead for child trafficking, respectively, from the Health and Social Care Partnership's child protection team. They spoke about how Rigby's research impacted practice and about what it was like to work with him. For some time Rigby was a member of the child protection team. Working collaboratively with Rigby 'influenced practice development. … Not having Paul [on the team], we have a gap in our ability to look at things from a research focus.'[139] Rigby now continues to engage as a member of the child protection committee's child trafficking strategy group, which McKinnon chairs.

McKinnon and Murie said that the Glasgow research allowed the child protection team to engage with frontline practitioners and explore 'what they thought the issues were.'[140] McKinnon said that the practitioner-informed research influenced the training, practice, and guidance her team put in place, and that it continues to influence their work. There were several, sequential research projects and 'each piece of work helped us inform practice,' she said.[141]

When asked what made Rigby and his research particularly easy to work with, McKinnon said, 'Paul was a member of our team, a colleague. We were challenged by Paul on a number of occasions. That was a benefit to the team. … Our working relationship with him supported difficult conversations we had to have. It was mutual respect. And it was his understanding of the work of the team, and understanding our challenges. You have to think hard about how you engage with colleagues when you're having conversations that challenge practice. He understood our team's roles and responsibilities, how we functioned, and how we linked into direct practice.'[142]

Rigby's contributions as a researcher have been further strengthened by his professional background in social work. McKinnnon and Murie highlighted his understanding of salient issues and his internalised recognition of the importance of responding to trafficking in the city during the early days of developing the Glasgow Model.

When asked for his advice to evidence users on how to best engage with researchers, Rigby's response complemented McKinnon and Murie's. Given that anti-slavery research is still in its 'early days' in the UK, Rigby said,

> an action research approach is vital. I was in a lucky position in Glasgow as I was a researcher embedded in a policy and practice development team and not long out of [social work] practice. This meant that I could instantly feedback ongoing findings and practice actually changed before the original research was published in 2009. The Scottish Government have been excellent in including me in a number of advisory groups, not only as a researcher but independent of both government, local authorities and third sector organisations. What we have also found is that it's the debate around evidence and practice that is useful - and as

[138] Glasgow's current inter-agency guidance on supporting and protecting exploited or trafficked children can be found in the 'Child Trafficking & Exploitation Inter Agency Guidance' at: https://www.glasgowchildprotection.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=12917&p=0.
[139] Moira McKinnon and Sheila Murie, interview, 7 May 2020.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.

> long as both evidence users and researchers acknowledge there is no magic bullet, the exchange of knowledge is invaluable.[143]

It requires commitment and intentionality to cultivate a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect. But those who work to shape this culture will see the fruits of their effort in impact. It is clear that both researchers and stakeholders share the responsibility for this, just as it is clear that they–and the survivors at the heart of their work–will reap the rewards.

[143] Paul Rigby, email, 29 April 2020.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The overarching purpose of this review is to build a figurative bridge between stakeholders on one side and researchers on the other. It asked the question, *is the evidence base on support for survivors of modern slavery informing policy and the work of practitioners in the UK?* and found that, while concrete examples of impact do exist, researchers and stakeholders agree there is room for improvement.

This review opened with a brief discussion of the literature review and methodology. It then turned to the main topic of impact in the Findings section, which was divided into two parts. The first discussed common barriers to impact and ways through them. The second discussed a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect that underpins impact. Nine case studies featured throughout the review to help illustrate findings. Time and again, the researchers and stakeholders interviewed during this project expressed a keen intention to continue practicing solutions and cultivating values that had given them success in the past and, in cases where success had evaded them, a keen interest in learning from others. This review has set out those solutions and values.

If translating research to impact is to become routine in the survivor support field, then the field must be characterised by proactive solutions in the face of barriers and by a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect. Researchers and stakeholders must now commit–together–to specific solutions and to these underpinning values. When researchers and stakeholders themselves are marked by these commitments, they will find their work and their field marked by impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing barriers to impact

1. **Plan for impact from the beginning.** Both researchers and stakeholders should make a discipline of this. It builds a secure impact pathway in addition to pre-empting some barriers to impact.
2. **Respond to issues on the ground.** Useful research is driven by issues and questions familiar to frontline practitioners. Researchers and stakeholders should both heed this recommendation when designing and commissioning research. Furthermore, when designing and conducting research, they should not discount the insights of NGO practitioners who can often draw on many years of survivor support experience. This recommendation further requires an understanding of one another's worlds.
3. **Be realistic and specific.** Researchers and stakeholders should take account of any real, relevant limitations of the policy or practice landscape. Researchers should be specific and realistic when writing recommendations and advocating for changes so that those recommendations have real-world pathways to implementation. Stakeholders should be both clear and honest about limitations–including budgetary limitations–giving researchers the opportunity to ground recommendations in reality.
4. **Make research accessible to stakeholders.** Researchers should be proactive in removing barriers that prevent stakeholders from accessing research. Researchers should consider utilising open access publishing, providing travel bursaries for on-site follow-up events, choosing event locations that are convenient to the target audience, or hosting virtual events.
5. **Share findings strategically.** Researchers should identify specific organisations or individuals who are positioned to apply the research findings or implement recommendations. Researchers should also consider ways to tailor their findings to each audience they identify. Both of these efforts may well benefit from consultation with stakeholders and other researchers.
6. **Receive the questioning of frameworks and processes with an open mind.** Practitioners and policymakers should be especially open-minded when research calls into question longstanding frameworks or processes. Though these may not be easily changed, it is important to researchers that stakeholders entertain new possibilities so that limitations and opportunities can be explored meaningfully. These conversations may be sparked by the findings of specific research projects, but are often long-term and conceptual.

Cultivating a culture of collaboration, understanding, and respect

7. **Take proactive steps to understand each other's worlds.** Researchers and stakeholders should devote time to making sense of each other's work and the context within which it is set. This should especially happen before and between research projects. It requires will from both parties.
8. **Gain first-hand experience of anti-slavery work.** Researchers and stakeholders should develop both subject matter expertise and a personal interest in anti-slavery work. This is particularly important to credibility from the perspective of NGO practitioners. Consider volunteering, asking to visit NGO offices, engaging professionally with survivor support networks, and reading grey literature with a charitable eye.
9. **Communicate throughout the research process.** Engagement over specific research projects should flow in both directions between researchers and stakeholders.

Communication should be purposeful and it should take place consistently before, during, and after a research project.

10. **Share emerging findings.** Researchers should share emerging findings with relevant stakeholders during a research project rather than waiting until a final report is ready. This can allow stakeholders to begin acting on findings, and may also allow them to help researchers understand what recommendations could realistically be achieved in light of those findings.

APPENDIX A: KNOWLEDGE CONSOLIDATION

A comprehensive next step for the antislavery field

There was a repeated call across interviews with both researchers and stakeholders for the formation of a strategic infrastructure that could both consolidate knowledge and aid the translation of research into impact. Knowledge consolidation would involve the curation of grey literature and academic research, made available on a public platform. The translation of research into impact would be facilitated by an individual or team who engaged actively with researchers and stakeholders to support specific impact delivery–such as the implementation of specific recommendations.

In its capacity to consolidate knowledge, such an infrastructure would meet the following needs:

- Bringing literature together systematically
- Helping stakeholders understand how different pieces of research relate to one another or compare to one another
- Providing a single platform from which all relevant evidence is accessible
- Bringing together evidence in a public, multi-agency platform

In its capacity to translate that consolidated knowledge into impact, individuals dedicated to that objective would be resourced to:

- Facilitate practical guidance for translating research into impact, including producing how-to guides
- Identify what recommendations are repeated in multiple reports
- Oversee implementation projects within stakeholder organisations, where appropriate
- Understand the ongoing or evolving needs of stakeholders
- Be aware of forthcoming, active, or recently completed research projects
- Facilitate and sometimes initiate the exchange of knowledge among researchers and stakeholders to reduce redundant work and maximise resources and expertise

Four specific models for such an infrastructure were identified by researchers and stakeholders. They were:

- The development of a centre of excellence for modern slavery
- More strategic use of the existing Policy and Evidence Centre on Modern Slavery and Human Rights (Modern Slavery PEC)
- The development of a What Works centre for modern slavery
- The appointment of a modern slavery knowledge broker or knowledge brokering body

This is no small ‘next step’ for the anti-slavery field. The creation of an effective and sustainable knowledge consolidation model would not be easy and would require substantial investment upfront. It would further require sufficient, ongoing resourcing. But there is substantial opportunity for return on investment, as impact.

An effective knowledge consolidation model would equip researchers to synthesise existing evidence with emerging evidence. It would further empower researchers to develop the kinds of agile research designs and agile recommendations that researchers and police practitioners especially saw a need for. Agility extends the life of research by enhancing its relevance and feasibility.

The organisation or body of individuals overseeing the knowledge consolidation platform would be ideally positioned to provide researchers and stakeholders with navigational direction through the one of the biggest challenges faced by UK survivor support research: the constantly shifting landscape. At present, the shifting plates of the landscape include policy, practice, and external forces. The NRM, Victim Care Contract, and Modern Slavery Act are policies that directly affect practice; when one plate shifts, so does another. Two external forces acting upon the survivor support landscape at the time of writing are Brexit and COVID-19.

Anyone attempting lasting impact on survivor support must be able to cope with this shifting landscape, but it is unreasonable to expect any but the most specialised researchers and stakeholders to hold all of these matters in mind at all times, or to be aware of each movement. A knowledge consolidation model, however, would naturally provide the advantage of a bird's-eye view over the antislavery landscape–including policy, practice, and external forces; its curators could speak to these issues, as relevant, for new and ongoing research projects.

APPENDIX B: LITERATURE REVIEW

The two objectives of the literature review were, first, to determine what academic literature exists within the UK on the topic of support for modern slavery survivors and, second, to inform the selection of specific pieces of research as case studies for further discussion during interviews. This is an expanded version of the literature review featured in the main body of the review.

Identifying the academic literature

The literature review took place over nearly four months, during which time nearly 100 items were examined. Grey literature, or non-academic literature, was accounted for but in light of the guiding question only academic literature was reviewed in detail and further consulted. A piece of research was considered 'academic' if it was authored or co-authored by an academic researcher. In most cases, it also met at least one of the following criteria:

- It was published in a peer-reviewed journal
- It was published by a university
- Its methods were clearly reported
- It made clear its relationship to specific theories
- It made clear its relationship to other written works

Four themes emerged from the literature review:

- Support needs of survivors
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
- Factors that limit the potential benefit of support services
- Immigration related concerns

Support needs of survivors

Literature concerning survivor support necessarily addresses survivors' support needs. Attention is frequently drawn to healthcare (including mental health), accommodation, and legal support needs. Some research focused on a specific need in isolation from a specific support service ('Characteristics of trafficked adults and children with severe mental illness: a historical cohort study' being one example).[144] But much of the time support needs were discussed in the context of a specific support provision and a specific support provider.

An acknowledgement that survivors often have complex and intersectional needs sometimes appeared alongside these discussions.[145] A report concerning migrant workers made it clear that 'factors are linked and … risks work concurrently to aggravate the exploitation suffered.'[146] And in her study exploring decision-making for women with complex needs–including those subjected

[144] Siân Oram et al., 'Characteristics of Trafficked Adults and Children with Severe Mental Illness: A Historical Cohort Study', *The Lancet Psychiatry* 2, no. 12 (18 October 2015): 1,084-1,091: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(15)00290-4.

[145] An individual has 'complex' needs when they have more than one support need. 'Intersectional' describes needs arising from the effect of multiple forms of discrimination. These can relate to gender, race, and class, or many other aspects of someone's social and political identity.

[146] Alex Toft et al., 'Protecting Migrant Workers from Exploitation in the EU: Workers' Perspectives', Severe Forms of Labour Exploitation – Workers' Perspectives (European Agency for Fundamental Rights, September 2017), 50, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/united-kingdom-selex-ii-report_en.pdf.

to commercial sexual exploitation–Kathryn Hodges describes the 'complex and varied' support needs of survivors, which can include multiple serious mental health and physical health concerns, among others.[147]

The National Referral Mechanism

Although some survivors have shared positive experiences from their time within the NRM, the majority of academic attention garnered by the system is critical.

One recurring criticism of the NRM is the lengthy wait victims can face between being referred into the NRM and receiving a conclusive grounds decision, and the harm that wait can cause. One study reported that 'participants waited between four months and two years for NRM decisions, considerably longer than the [government's] 45 day target decision making period.'[148] Participants drew a direct correlation between their quality of mental health and the length of time they waited for a conclusive grounds decision, as well as the outcome of that decision.[149]

On the other end of a survivor's experience of the NRM is the so-called cliff edge. This is how researchers and practitioners alike commonly refer to the statutory 45-day limit on support following a positive conclusive grounds decision. It is oft-cited as a grievance of practitioners, researchers, and survivors who argue that 45 days does not provide enough time for an individual to recover from their experience as a modern slavery victim and to successfully transition out of NRM support–which may have included such crucial features as a case worker, accommodation, and therapy, as appropriate. A significant development that postdates much existing literature was the 2019 court ruling that deemed the 45-day support cut off was 'in breach of the government's international obligations under the European Convention Against Trafficking.'[150] Emerging findings from the report 'The Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill: A Cost-Benefit Analysis' were consulted by Duncan Lewis Solicitors when they argued the case. As a result of the final ruling, survivors with a positive conclusive grounds decision are no longer limited to 45 days of support. Transition timelines out of NRM support are now determined through the Recovery Needs Assessment process.[151] This is both an example of how NRM reforms contribute to a shifting landscape and of research having an impact on survivor support. The latter is described in greater detail in the case study on page 31. The Recovery Needs Assessment process is a significant but recent development. Its long-term effects are yet be observed but it is positioned to change how survivors' post-NRM experiences are understood.

Where the delivery of NRM services is concerned, a lack of clarity and basic information among statutory and third sector parties has been reported. There is a related lack of consistency in initial victim identification and in support service delivery.[152] This lack of clarity is related to the NRM's dynamic nature, which is discussed further in the section titled 'The shifting landscape,' below. The state of affairs in Wales is a notable counterexample of this. A report conducted by an independent consultancy firm demonstrated that most key stakeholders were able to articulate

[147] Kathryn Hodges, 'An Exploration of Decision Making by Women Experiencing Multiple and Complex Needs' (Anglia Ruskin University, 2017), 22–23: https://arro.anglia.ac.uk/703503/1/Hodges_2017.pdf.
[148] Lewis et al., 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery', 21.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ahmed Aydeed on behalf of Duncan Lewis Solicitors, 'Letter Re: Rights Lab, University of Nottingham', 18 March 2020.
[151] Home Office, 'Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) Version 1.0' (Home Office, 27 September 2019): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/834857/recovery-needs-assessment-v1.0ext.pdf.
[152] Murphy, 'A Game of Chance? Long-Term Support for Survivors of Modern Slavery', 4.

the process clearly for both child and adult survivors as a result of training coordinated across the country and a clearly articulated survivor care pathway.[153]

Additionally, there are accounts of victims experiencing NRM-related processes as re-traumatising. One example is linked to the fact that a survivor with a positive conclusive grounds decision is not guaranteed leave to remain in the UK; for some non-British nationals, time in the NRM may involve 'engagement with unsympathetic state actors, particularly in [UK Visas and Immigration] interviews that contribute to increased trauma, stigma and feelings of shame.'[154]

Factors that limit the potential benefit of support services

Another feature of the literature is a discussion about factors that limit the potential of existing support services and, by extension, limit their benefit to the survivors being supported ('service users'). These are obstacles that prevent practitioners from delivering the fullest support possible to a survivor, prevent survivors from accessing certain support, or prevent survivors from experiencing the full benefits of the support services they access. Common factors that limit success are:

- A language barrier between service users and practitioners
- Service users not having the right to work
- Various instabilities in service users' lives
- Service users not being in possession of identification documents
- Accommodation concerns for service users
- Service users' lack of knowledge regarding the services available to them

The list above is not exhaustive and it should be noted that many of these barriers may exist alongside one another. In a study examining the experiences of mental health professionals supporting victims and survivors, records documented that many trafficked patients were living in situations of social, legal, and economic instability — particularly with regards to accommodation and immigration status — and that this posed a range of problems for mental health professionals. For example, patients being moved to accommodation outside of the service catchment area presented challenges to providing continuity of care and risked disrupting relationships between patients and professionals.[155] It is further worth noting that all of these factors are likely to impact upon a survivor's experiences outside the context of their relationship to service providers, as well.

A review of Bright Future, a programme that offers survivors 'paid work placements leading to a non-competitive job interview,' revealed that in some cases survivors had 'borderline language capability' and this caused 'some difficulties in communication for managers.'[156] Three survivors also identified their level of language skills as a barrier to 'feeling part of the community.'[157] In this case, survivors were experiencing social limitations as a result of their struggle with English fluency.

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[153] Cordis Bright, 'Effectiveness of Anti-Slavery Training and Survivor Care Pathway: Final Evaluation Report', 8 August 2016, sec. 14.11: https://cordisbright.co.uk/admin/resources/160808-anti-slavery-training-survivor-care-pathway-en.pdf.
[154] Murphy, 'A Game of Chance? Long-Term Support for Survivors of Modern Slavery', 4.
[155] Jill Domoney et al., 'Mental Health Service Responses to Human Trafficking: A Qualitative Study of Professionals' Experiences of Providing Care', *BMC Psychiatry* 15 (17 November 2015): https://bmcpsychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-015-0679-3.
[156] Balch et al., 'Bright Future: An Independent Review', 3, 14.
[157] Ibid., 28.

These factors are framed as obstacles to success faced by both the survivors who need to access services and by the practitioners delivering services. But solutions to these barriers cannot be the responsibility of survivors and would often be beyond the capabilities of practitioners. These are, mostly, outcomes of wider systems in place at local, regional, or national levels.

Immigration related concerns

Many of the barriers listed above can be experienced by survivors regardless of their nationality, but survivors from outside the European Economic Area frequently face specific challenges related to their immigration status. Right to work, leave to remain and, sometimes, asylum claims are all interrelated. There is not scope in this review to explore immigration related concerns in depth, but these challenges are very real.

Participants in one study described 'the damaging effects of uncertainty and lengthy periods waiting for decisions on immigration status.'[158] Some of those participants had made asylum claims and some were EU citizens who nonetheless 'struggled to secure permanent residency to gain access to welfare and housing.'[159]

A report produced by Kalayaan, a charity that works with migrant domestic workers in the UK, is just one piece of research evidencing the myriad ways that the right to work–or lack thereof–can impact upon the lives of survivors. The report demonstrates that, in addition to social, financial, emotional, and mental health concerns, not having the right to work can expose individuals to risk of destitution and further exploitation.[160]

Challenges to existing and future literature

Existing research and future research face at least two common challenges which are substantiated by the literature reviewed and by the researchers and stakeholders interviewed during this research project. Those challenges are a constantly shifting landscape and a lack of follow-up engagement with survivors who have accessed support. The challenges each have implications for impact.

The shifting landscape

The UK policy and legislation that set the context for survivor support literature are the NRM–introduced in 2009–and the Modern Slavery Act (2015). Nearly all survivor support literature published since 2009 is in reference to one or both of these. This extends even to independent evaluations of non-NRM services.

The NRM continually shapes the landscape. Reforms to the NRM do not necessarily align with the Victim Care Contracts, which span several years each. The NRM, as a policy mechanism designed and overseen by the Home Office, can be reformed without requiring legislative change (the Recovery Needs Assessment, described earlier, is an example of such a change). As such, what one piece of research may mean when it refers to 'the NRM' may be significantly different to what another piece of research, written at a different time, means when referring to 'the NRM.'

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[158] Lewis et al., 'Faith Responses to Modern Slavery', 21.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Avril Sharp and Natalie Sedacca, 'Dignity, Not Destitution: The Impact of Differential Rights of Work for Migrant Domestic Workers Referred to the National Referral Mechanism' (Kalayaan, October 2019), 25–29: http://www.kalayaan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Kalayaan_report_October2019.pdf.

Throughout this research project it was clear that researchers and stakeholders alike had varying degrees of familiarity with the current iteration of the NRM, depending on how frequently they engage with survivors, The Salvation Army, or its subcontractors and depending on whether their own roles were connected to NRM provisions.[161] Additionally, the Modern Slavery Act (2015) has been the subject of reviews and Parliamentary debates. Perhaps the most prominent development as it pertains to survivor support is Lord McColl's 2017 introduction of his Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill (the Bill has since been reintroduced and is still under consideration). So even these two pillars of context can shift over time. This is not a criticism but an observation that there are few constants in the survivor support landscape, and so researchers and stakeholders must remain attentive and flexible.

Existing survivor support literature also has two distinct, relatively new blind spots: the realities of Brexit and the new Victim Care Contract. The real effect of Brexit on various sectors and policies remains largely unknown. Though anyone whose work centres on modern slavery issues will have their own concerns and predictions about how Brexit impacts immigration policy and other policy priorities related to survivor support, no one can respond to the realities until they emerge. So Brexit can leave many researchers and stakeholders uneasy and uncertain about the unknown. Brexit has also foiled impact for some research already–especially in instances where impact depends upon policymakers who are now hesitant or unable to act until Brexit becomes better defined.[162] The next Victim Care Contract is slated to be awarded to a contractor and subcontractors by the time this review is published and, by autumn 2020 will have taken effect, replacing the contract held by The Salvation Army since 2011. Any specific differences in service provision between the current contract and the forthcoming contract remain unknown at the time of writing. As any differences in service provision begin to be delivered and are brought into the lived experiences of survivors and the professionals who support them, the landscape will necessarily change.

The fact that the anti-slavery landscape is shifting does not mean that existing literature ceases to be useful whenever a change occurs. But it is important that researchers and stakeholders think critically about the context of any existing piece of research, taking into consideration how policies and practices may have changed since it was written. Perhaps, some of these changes will even be the result of findings from that very research.

Research that can synthesise existing evidence with emerging evidence and can propose agile solutions–solutions that acknowledge the changing nature of the modern slavery landscape–will be well positioned to make lasting impact. Knowledge consolidation in the anti-slavery field could help generate such research, as discussed in Appendix A.

Follow through with survivors

One persistent gap in the literature is knowledge of what happens to survivors after they leave a support service. This gap exists in literature regarding both NRM and non-NRM services. Researchers and practitioners alike find it difficult to keep in touch with survivors beyond the period of support. It is clear that there are a variety of reasons for this.

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[161] NRM guidance for England and Wales can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms/guidance-on-the-national-referral-mechanism-for-potential-adult-victims-of-modern-slavery-england-and-wales. NRM guidance for Northern Ireland and Scotland can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms/national-referral-mechanism-guidance-adult-northern-ireland-and-scotland. At the time of publishing, these resources had last been updated on 22 January 2020.

[162] Researcher 5, interview.

A non-comprehensive list includes:

- Survivors' wishes to no longer be contacted
- Survivors moving from one location for support to another (sometimes while within the NRM)
- Survivors transitioning from NRM to non-NRM or post-NRM support
- Ethical considerations around pursuing a research relationship with survivors after they leave a support service

Several individuals expressed the desire for a longitudinal study of survivors' journeys in the UK. That is, a study that not only captured survivors' experiences at one point in their journey (for example, whilst receiving support) but followed up with those survivors to understand how their experiences progressed and even what happens to survivors after they leave support services.

There are various reasons such a study is appealing. One is that a longitudinal study would allow researchers and stakeholders to know whether the immediate impact of research has long-term effects, and if they are positive or negative. A stakeholder might amend a policy or practice according to research, but the best chance they have of understanding the effect of that impact is usually evaluations (i.e., surveys) with survivors while those survivors are still accessing a service. Whether those policies and practices benefited survivors in the long-term generally remains unknown.

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