Measuring success in anti-slavery partnerships:
building the evidence base through action research

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The Dark Figure* documents UK neighbourhoods affected by modern day slavery.

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Introduction

Multi-agency partnership work is frequently said to be critical in developing coherent national and local responses to slavery, but until recently relatively little guidance has been available on what partnerships should do and how they should conduct their work. The 2017 Rights Lab and Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner report *Collaborating for Freedom*[1] identified a gap in the evidence available to partnerships in identifying and delivering effective anti-slavery interventions.

This report provides an overview of reflections from a series of five action-research workshops involving a total of sixty-seven (67) frontline practitioners from anti-slavery partnerships across the East and West Midlands of England. The workshops enabled researchers from the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham to work alongside colleagues from the police, local authorities, academia, and NGOs to identify opportunities to improve the evidence base for local partnership interventions.

The workshops began with an introductory session held in central Birmingham at the end of January 2018. During the first workshop, forty-eight (48) practitioners worked with the research team to identify four themes that they felt were a priority for improving evidence:

- **Victim / survivor care pathways**
- **Partnership contributions towards prosecutions**
- **Governance and performance management**
- **Local and national integration of anti-slavery responses**

Each of these themes were examined in greater depth in subsequent action-research workshops. This final report summarises our findings from these workshops through the lenses of four questions posed during each workshop:

- **What does success look like for local anti-slavery partnerships?**
- **What are priorities for improving measurement?**
- **What is stopping us measuring what matters?**
- **How do we move the evidence base forwards?**

We asked these questions in group settings that provided space for reflecting on current policies, practices, barriers and enablers to addressing evidence gaps, as well as potential solutions. We are grateful to all our participants for their generous and candid contributions to discussions. We are also indebted to the Birmingham-Nottingham Strategic Collaboration Fund for funding the workshops as part of the 'building evidence-based local policies to address modern slavery' project.

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[1] https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1186/collaborating-for-freedom_anti-slavery-partnerships-in-the-uk.pdf

Delegates list – all workshops

Name	Organisation
Agnes Zmuda	Emmanuel House
Alison Gardner	University of Nottingham
Amy Goulden	Nottingham City Council
Andrea Nicholson	University of Nottingham
Andy Peacock	Nottingham City Council
Baldish (Bali) Sohal	Black Country Womens Aid
Bernard Aziegbe	Nottingham Arimathea Trust
Carole Brooke	University of Warwick / Lincoln Abolition Group
Chipo Mwale	Birmingham City University
Clare McKenzie	Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham
Daniel (Dan) Howitt	Nottinghamshire OPCC
Dave Walsh	De Montfort University
Davina Blackburn	Coventry County Council
Donna Pryor	West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network
Emma Foley	British Red Cross
Errolinda Ward	University of Nottingham
Hazel Walker	Lincolnshire County Council
Helen Earp	Warwickshire OPCC
Henry (Harry) Dick	Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit East Midlands
Ian Bates	Derbyshire County Council
Jason Grove	Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit West Midlands
Jeffrey Bryant	CPS Proceeds of Crime Unit
Jo Barber	West Midlands SPOC
John Hunter	Birmingham City Council
Juliana Semione	University of Nottingham / Salvation Army
Karen Samuels	City of Wolverhampton Council
Karen Saunders	Public Health England
Katherine Lawson	Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
Katriona Lafferty	Dudley MBC
Kayleigh Stevenson	Department for Work and Pensions
Khizra Dhindsa	West Midlands Police
Lara Bundock	Snowdrop Project
Laura Pajón	University of Derby
Liisa Wiseman	Adavu Project
Lindon Evans	Staffordshire Police
Louise Gore	Jericho Foundation
Lucy Ellender	Local Government Association
Lynsay Birkett	Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit
Matt Etchells-Jones	Nottinghamshire OPCC
Michelle Collins	Derbyshire County Council

Mike Ebbins	Nottinghamshire Police
Minerva Hartley	Nottingham City Council
Nancy Szilvasi	Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People
Natasha Swift	Addaction
Neville Rowe	Sandwell Council
Nicky Pitsillos	Department for Work and Pensions
Nigel Oseman	Hope for Justice
Paul Fell	Northamptonshire OPCC
Paul Reid	CPS West Midlands
Phil Poole	West Midlands Police
Phil Rowley	Staffordshire Police
Piotr Pula	Hope for Justice
Purjinder (Pop) Gill	Derbyshire County Council
Rebecca Hurlock	West Yorkshire OPCC
Richard Davies	Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit West Midlands
Richard Long	Warwickshire Police
Robin Brierley	West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network
Ruth Van Dyke	St. Mary's University
Samantha Ireland	Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority
Sarah Fearn	Nottinghamshire Police
Shelley Ward	Childrens Services - Solihull MBC / Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People (PVVP) Board
Steffan Williams	National Crime Agency
Stephen Gabriel	Sandwell Council
Steve Cook	Department for Work and Pensions
Tiffany Macedo-Dine	Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit
Timothy (Tim) Cuthbert	Nottinghamshire Police
Tracey Brookes	Staffordshire Police

Dr. Errolinda Ward, Research Associate with the Rights Lab, University of Nottingham and Dr. Alison Gardner, Associate Director of the Rights Lab and Assistant Professor of Local Governance and Anti-Slavery Policy, University of Nottingham

Summary of findings

1. What does success look like?

a) **Success for local multi-agency partnerships is likely to involve strong outcomes across the whole system of anti-slavery activity,** ranging from prevention to discovery and enforcement, respite and recovery for victims and survivors, and creating sustainable resilience. Partnership goals need to be shared, and include the development of improved processes such as governance and information-sharing, as well as monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes across the system.

b) **One urgent area for improvement is victim and survivor care.** Again, a systemic view is necessary, with effective information-sharing between national and local systems and input from survivor voices. It was recognised by participants that victim care is frequently law enforcement led, and that police are sometimes unable to provide for survivors' diverse needs. An enhanced victim care response would benefit from a more developed inter-agency approach, making full use of coordination tools such as multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), as well as resources in communities.

c) Ultimately modern slavery responses should be **embedded in mainstream service provision, rather than being treated as a 'specialism'.** This will improve consistency of responses from first responders, and help to ensure that the quality of response experienced by victims does not depend on their location.

2. What are the priorities for improving measurement?

a) **Outcomes for victims.** There is a need to improve the sharing, collection and application of evidence relating to the whole pathway of victim and survivor experience. Within this, it is important to monitor long term as well as short term outcomes and use both qualitative and quantitative forms of measurement.

▪ We found scenario-based approaches to be helpful in a partnership context to mapping existing victim care pathways and to identify barriers and constraints on multi-agency action.

▪ Victim and survivor perspectives are essential to improving outcomes. It was felt that most statutory agencies are not yet systematically seeking feedback from survivors to improve service responses.

▪ The fragmented nature of the existing UK victim pathway, with both locally and nationally-directed elements, means that it is important to track individuals' progress through the system. This will assist in understanding what types of interventions are effective in promoting recovery.

b) **Outcomes for prosecutions.** Our prosecution workshop indicated that there was a strong link between effective victim / survivor care and successful prosecution outcomes. This includes building confidence through keeping victims and survivors informed and engaged,

empowering them with the opportunity to make decisions and pursuing compensation through the 2002 Proceeds of Crime Act.

- It is also important to construct the wider evidence picture (such as financial, business and communications data) in order to support or sometimes even replace the emphasis on victim testimony. 'Victimless' prosecutions were being pursued in some force areas. Information sharing processes were also essential to enable inter-agency co-operation and decision-making, albeit with attention to the implications for disclosure of evidence.

c) **Processes of governance.** Strong governance is needed to support partnership working and to create shared focus. In addition, effective governance processes are needed to underpin the collection of evidence and performance management.

- We discussed some examples of action plans created by anti-slavery partnerships, and the importance of developing shared objectives, supported by an action plan. Some partnerships used a process known as Management of Risk in Law Enforcement (MoRiLE) to prioritise and monitor actions.

- All practitioners noted that an impediment to monitoring progress in anti-slavery partnerships can be a failure to identify someone to coordinate and collect information. Establishing who is collecting and recording data is a priority for measuring success.

- Data needs to be collected with a purpose, and applied to create improvements. Examples included the proactive use of data to inform performance measurement, for example the use of RAG (Red, Amber, Green) monitoring systems.

- Our discussions and sharing of governance processes helped to capture lessons learnt and assisted the development of a partnerships checklist as well as a performance management guide, both hosted on the Rights Lab and Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner anti-slavery partnership toolkit: https://iasctoolkit.nottingham.ac.uk/

d) **Processes of central / local integration.** It was recognised that there are a wide range of agencies engaged in responding to modern slavery at national, regional and local levels. Good horizontal and vertical communication processes are therefore essential to avoid duplication, and maximise the impact of interventions. There is a need to unblock perceived barriers around data sharing to enable more effective tracking of individuals at risk (for instance, children who are persistently absent from school or frequently moved). Mapping of available services locally and regionally will also assist with connecting fragmented systems and engaging relevant partners.

3. What is stopping us measuring what matters?

a) This question provided opportunity to discuss barriers and enablers to building the anti-slavery evidence base, including processes and outcomes as described above. The table presents an overview of the main barriers and enablers identified by our participants[2].

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[2] Enablers are ways to overcome barriers.

Barriers	Enablers
Lack of shared agendas - e.g. prosecution for law enforcement agencies versus safeguarding for non-law enforcement agencies.	Need to develop a shared vision for success. Examples of good practice in multi-agency approaches, such as MARAC, or Manchester's Operation Challenger.
Difficulty gaining victim / survivor engagement in prosecutions.	Victim confidence in care and other service provision leads to victim confidence in prosecution.
Actionable time frames and targets for each agency can differ and create tensions.	Help partners to understand roles and how their contribution matters; shared measures and goals.
Resources (demand is outstripping supply).	Clearly defined governance structures can help create resource efficiencies. Examples include West Midland's Liberate Plan, Derbyshire's MSP Action Plan using RAG status; Align appropriate resources with demand and priorities.
Lack of whole journey visibility / monitoring - viewed as a risk to providing effective victim care, because of inability to follow-up with victim.	National standards and processes for victim care. Tools to aid monitoring and secure formal sharing of information (e.g. Information systems platforms such as ECINS)
Not all partners yet engaged e.g. NHS are not yet first responders. Lack of understanding of partner contributions.	Front-line staff training. Regional coordination (suggested for victim care and support, sharing of best practice, triage on primary investigation, multi-agency provision of victim-focussed resources). Local coordination (tasking with priorities, multi -disciplinary teams).
Lack of trust between partners (as a result of previous experiences as well as perceptions e.g. on what can and cannot be shared / Official Secrets Act).	Developing trust between partners through specific points of contact (SPOCs), disclosure discussed / understood, data sharing, relationship-building (e.g. CPS and Police), early engagement, multi-agency safeguarding visits, critical friends, developing a culture of partnership work, shared understanding of contributions / membership, business engagement with prevention in focus.

4. How do we move the evidence base forwards?

a) **Use a systemic approach to design and monitor our responses to slavery,** thinking about responses in terms of prevention, discovery, respite and recovery and sustainable resilience against slavery.

b) **Surface and test the theories of change behind the interventions that we choose**. We utilised a logical framework approach (Logframe) with practitioners for this purpose. The Logframe can be used as a vehicle for engaging partners in clarifying objectives, linking activities to expected outcomes, and identifying risks and assumptions. It is also a useful tool for reviewing progress.

c) **Deploy a wider range of tools and approaches for monitoring and evaluation**, including whole-journey monitoring, mapping all actors in the field (stakeholder mapping) actively involving survivors and frontline practitioners, and gathering quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

d) **Challenge the myths on data sharing**. Practitioners felt that clarifying agencies ability to exchange data will result in more information sharing by service providers and greater consistency in data recording. This would provide clearer statistics and help to inform effective service provision by reflecting a more accurate picture of slavery.

5. Policy recommendations

a) **Monitor the progress of victims and survivors beyond and outside the NRM process,** creating capacity for whole survivor journey monitoring.

b) **Strengthen legislation and standards to underpin implementation and monitoring.** Our practitioners pointed to the significance of Lord McColl's current victim support bill[3]; implementing consistent national standards for victim care, and encouraging more effective use of existing powers through continued training for frontline agencies and service providers.

c) **To enable survivor engagement, increase resources in areas of existing under-provision,** including legal advice, translation, and accommodation for survivors.

d) **Increase resources for prosecution** including expanding investigation teams, witness protection and CPS resource to assist survivor compensation cases.

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[3] https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaveryvictimsupport.html

e) **Encourage good governance:** Build the coordination of multi-agency partnerships and data collection into people's jobs.

f) **Diversify measures of success:** Use a wider range of qualitative and quantitative evidence and success measures to assist in understanding slavery.

g) **Improve information standards:** Encourage greater consistency in data capture, and more information-sharing between agencies.

Conclusions

The shared insights gained during the workshops resulted in new knowledge and tools to measure success and move the evidence base forwards in anti-slavery partnerships. Many of the examples and case studies have been included within the anti-slavery partnership toolkit, recently launched by the Rights Lab and the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (https://iasctoolkit.nottingham.ac.uk/).

There are no simple answers to combatting modern slavery. Partnerships are integral to dealing with the complexity of modern slavery and human trafficking. Creating opportunities for learning in partnership, knowledge exchange and relationship-building are steps in the right direction to collaborating for freedom.

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