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Bakhita Centre for Research on  
Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse

Applied Research, Education and Training

# What Looks Promising for Tackling Modern Slavery: A review of practice- based research

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# Foreword

by Dame Sara Thornton



Modern slavery is a shocking violation of an individual's human rights, dignity and agency. As the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, I have a UK-wide remit to encourage good practice in the detection, investigation and prosecution of modern slavery offences and the identification of victims. In my Strategic Plan 2019-2021, I underline the importance of research and innovation and the need to bring together researchers, policymakers and practitioners to improve the evidence base on modern slavery and ensure that usable research has an impact on policy and improves survivor support and outcomes. Within this we must ensure that survivor experiences shape these policies and the trusted relationships between practitioners and survivors can support this.

This report uncovers the wealth of evidence that practitioners have developed in the delivery of support services, in ensuring that survivors can navigate complex criminal justice and immigration systems, in developing capacity amongst front-line professionals and crucially in embedding survivor voices at the heart of their practice. The report also finds that charities and service providers act as change agents by positively impacting the operational practice of other organisations including by enhancing survivors' collaboration with the police, helping to build a bridge to disclose information which may help to identify other victims, aid criminal investigations and participate in prosecutions.

Understanding what works from the survivor-centred and trauma-informed approaches of experts highlighted in this report is essential and evidence from practice-based evaluations and research must be shared in an accessible way with other practitioners and with researchers and policymakers.

This report represents a significant step towards the embedding of practitioner expertise within the systems and structures designed to support victims and survivors to recovery and to independence.

**Dame Sara Thornton**  
Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner

# Executive Summary

In discussion with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, this review of research was commissioned by the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse (BCRSEA) (formerly the Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery) at St Mary's University to identify 'what looks promising' based on a number of robust practice-based evaluations and research reports as outlined below. This document is intended to help inform policy and practice using materials not published in academic journals. It is intended to identify strengths that can be shared and built upon.

The reports reviewed for 'what looks promising' indicated that academics, researchers and practitioners have had an impact on policy design and delivery and have used the findings from their practice-based research to argue for changes in policy and practice. The role played by STOP THE TRAFFIK (STT) in putting the responsibility for company directors (or persons controlling the company business) to sign off on an annual statement or report about modern slavery in their supply chains on the policy agenda in the UK, Australia and Canada was highlighted. Moreover, the evidence supplied by Carole Murphy's Report, *A Game of Chance?*, which was used to validate Lord McColl's Victim Support Bill, was noted.

As well as the role that practice-based research can play in policy development, this review identified 'what looks promising': in the delivery of support services; in terms of criminal investigation and prosecution; in relation to cultural mediation; in terms of prevention; in developing awareness and capacity amongst front-line professionals; in encouraging systemic change; and in embedding survivor voice, service user engagement and evaluation in NGO practice.

A review of the evaluations of the work of Re-Place project (Housing for Women), Caritas Bakhita House, the Snowdrop Project, the Victim Navigator Pilot<sup>1</sup> and the Hana Centre that supports women affected by prostitution<sup>2</sup> revealed a number of common aims, principles, and processes. The evidence of commonalities and of positive outcomes in terms of improved well-being and independence for survivors of modern slavery and adults with vulnerabilities create a broad framework that can guide good practice.

The five NGOs shared a number of aims. These aims were:

- to ensure physical and mental safety,
- to improve well-being,
- to build resilience,
- to increase adults with vulnerabilities' and survivors' confidence and support them towards empowerment and independent living

Key principles that underpinned how the NGOs and their staff operated included:

- being victim/people-centred
- being trauma informed.
- building and establishing relationships of trust
- providing holistic support
- being non-judgemental
- caring for and caring about service users/guests/clients
- supporting people in their choices (agency)
- seeking to empower
- monitoring outcomes

1 The Victim Navigator Pilot has been developed by the NGO Justice and Care.

2 The name of this organisation was anonymised in this published article.

A number of common processes were identified that demonstrated how principles were translated into practice. These included:

- utilising a case work approach
- being flexible and responsive towards multiple and changing needs
- being solutions focused so staff have the ability to be creative rather than constrained by established practice or provisions
- working in partnership with external stakeholders to ensure holistic provision
- engaging with adults with vulnerabilities and survivors at their own pace
- offering support that tends to be open-ended, not time bound
- provision of opportunities for vulnerable adults and survivors to have agency

A key finding of this review of practice-based research by BCRSEA affiliates is the role that some NGOs play in facilitating survivor engagement with police, and supporting a criminal investigation and prosecution. NGOs that support survivors of modern slavery can help reduce survivors' fear of police and help build a bridge that enables them to disclose information that can be used to identify other victims, aid a criminal investigation, and participate in a prosecution.

'What looks promising' is the inclusion of an organisational objective to help survivors share intelligence with police and for the NGO to work in partnership with the police. In addition, the NGOs partnership approach with police was focused around encouraging victim-centred practices within police forces. Moreover, these NGOs accepted that police were integral to achieving criminal justice for survivors and that their experience of modern slavery meant they had important information and intelligence which would benefit police who have the responsibility to tackle this crime.

Interviews with NGO staff and police officers provides robust evidence about the value of their partnership and the way it enhances survivors' collaboration with police around a case of modern slavery. Survivors' voices shed light on their fears of the police but also what the police or NGO does to make these encounters possible and successful.

There is less evidence from this review of reports produced by BCRSEA affiliates about what looks promising in terms of prevention. However, the recent organisational evaluation of STT provided evidence of what works in terms of prevention which involves partnerships around data sharing and use and engaging with businesses about risk in supply chains. STT helped develop the Traffik Analysis Hub (TA Hub) which is now an NGO in its own right. The TA Hub brings together information from across multiple sectors, including NGOs, law enforcement partners and financial services, and enables an intelligence-led approach to pro-actively tackle human trafficking with global reach. In addition, STT has worked on prevention campaigns in the UK and abroad in collaboration with local partners based on data collected, analysed and shared with them. STT's work with Whitbread exemplifies an approach to prevention based on raising businesses perception of risk of modern slavery, in this case, in hotel and restaurant and construction sites.

Training of front-line professionals to build capacity and to improve the identification of victims of modern slavery, to ensure victims were safeguarded, to enhance support through referral pathways, and to build partnerships, was evidenced in the evaluations of the Snowdrop Project, the Victim Navigator Pilot and STOP THE TRAFFIK. There is some evidence that this training does lead to changes in how professionals respond to cases of modern slavery.

An important finding of the review is that NGOs act as change agents and can affect strategic and operational practice with organisations they partner with. In addition, they have helped facilitate systemic changes in resources available to tackle modern slavery and in providing more transparent pathways to access services.

Finally, the review points to the importance of survivors' voice, service user engagement and the evaluation of programmes intended to prevent modern slavery, to support survivors and/or to aid criminal investigations in order to learn from survivors and to build more effective responses.

## Moving Forward: Recommendations

A number of recommendations emerge from the robust findings presented in this report which is the result of an analysis of independent and objective practice-based research.

- The common aims, principles, and processes that emerged from evaluations of NGOs providing support services to survivors of modern slavery and vulnerable adults can be used to create a broad framework that can guide good practice. Moreover, it can be used to create training materials drawing on examples from the report.
- Seeking independent and objective evaluations of activities and the outcomes achieved provides robust evidence of what is working, for whom, and what areas of practice need to be improved. Practice-based research provides the sector with an opportunity for learning and improving practice, as well as providing evidence that may be relevant to policy design and policy implementation.
- NGOs providing services to survivors of modern slavery and to people with vulnerabilities should develop robust systems of data collection so they can monitor both activities and outcomes for those they work with.
- Listening to survivors and service users should be embedded in practice going forward as it ensures support meets the individuals' needs and allows for agency. Moreover, it provides opportunities to understand what is meaningful from survivors'/users' perspectives and to identify gaps in provision.
- The development of professional standards for organisations supporting survivors of modern slavery presents the opportunity to improve the knowledge and skills of those working with survivors. The current short course/Master's level module offered at St Marys University on *Identification, Support and Care of Victims of Modern-Day Slavery* is available to professionals working with survivors of modern slavery and meets Tier 3 of the Skills for Care *Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking*.
- The Skills for Care *Training Framework* also seeks to improve the knowledge and skills of professionals who may encounter victims but are unlikely to interact beyond identifying them (Tier 1) and those who are 'First Responders' who have a duty to provide care, support and advice to victims of modern slavery and may have a responsibility to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism (Tier 2). The transformation of these core skills and knowledge into courses that are available to professionals is a recommended action. The Salvation Army has expressed interest in the development of courses that meet Tier 2 standards with the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse. BCRSEA is currently exploring accreditation and funding for the development of such a course in order to improve professional practice.
- Evidence included in this report demonstrated the critical role that NGOs can play in acting as a bridge between survivors of modern slavery and the police. Moving forward it is recommended that more NGOs that support survivors of modern slavery consider developing a trusted relationship with the police so they can play this bridging role. They can help allay survivors' fears, help them understand the criminal justice process, help them engage with a criminal investigation and help alleviate distress that might arise in seeking criminal justice.

# Introduction

The Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery (CSMS) was established in 2015 as part of St Mary's University's commitment to respond to the growing scale of human trafficking and slavery in the UK and across the globe. It has built a strong network of partners with law enforcement, universities, the government and in particular with the voluntary sector. The aim is to build bridges between the worlds of academia, policy, and practice.

Academics, researchers and practitioners affiliated to the Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery (CSMS) (now the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse) have undertaken a range of research in relation to modern slavery and vulnerable adults over the last five years. A number of these practice-related evaluations have been commissioned by, and produced for, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the sector.

Evidence for the evaluations was collected from documents and data produced by the NGOs, which related to programme objectives and design, and data from monitoring programme activities and also outcomes particularly for those using the services. Evaluations involved interviews with key informants and stakeholders such as survivors of modern slavery, adults with vulnerabilities, staff (paid and voluntary), local authorities and police officers. On-line surveys were also conducted for some evaluations as well as feedback from training provided to front-line professionals.

In discussion with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, this review of research was commissioned by BCRSEA to identify 'what looks promising' based on a number of robust practice-based evaluations and research reports as outlined below. This document is intended to help inform policy, practice and guide grant decision making by using materials not published in academic journals. It is intended to identify strengths that can be shared and built upon.

# Methodology

The approach taken for 'what looks promising' was focusing on what worked in relation to: (i) the prevention of modern slavery, (ii) the support and protection of vulnerable adults and survivors of modern slavery, and (iii) supporting criminal investigations. Particular attention was paid to the commonalities found in organisations that were supporting vulnerable adults and survivors, and those who were supporting victims of modern slavery to collaborate with the police on a criminal investigation.

The findings of 'what looks promising' are based on:

- Dr Carole Murphy and Dr Carlie Goldsmith, *Re-Place Independent Evaluation*, St Marys University, January 2016
- Emily Foale and Colleen Theron, *All that glitters is not gold: shining a light on supply chain disclosure in the jewellery sector*, Ardea International, 2017
- Dr Carole Murphy, Dr Carlie Goldsmith, Anne-Marie Barry and Dr Kathryn Hodges *Independent Review of Caritas Bakhita House*, Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St Mary's University, August 2018
- Dr Carole Murphy, *A Game of Chance? Long-term support for survivors of Modern Slavery*, Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St Mary's University, 2018
- Dr Kathryn Hodges and Sarah Burch, 'Multiple and Intersecting Experiences of Women in Prostitution: Improving Access to Helping Services', *Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence*, 4:3, April 2019
- Dr Carole Murphy and Dr Carlie Goldsmith, *An Independent Evaluation of the Snowdrop Project*, Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St Mary's University, London July 2019
- Robin Brady and Ruth Van Dyke, *STOP THE TRAFFIK's Organisational Evaluation: Final Report*, STT, January 2020
- Dr Ruth Van Dyke, *Improving Our Response to Modern Slavery & Exploitation: supporting Chinese women*, Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St Mary's University with Caritas Bakhita House, Rahab and Tamar. May 2020
- Dr Ruth Van Dyke and Dr. Sarah Senker, *Victim Navigator Interim Evaluation*, Justice and Care, September 2020
- Lara Bundock (Snowdrop Project) and Dr Kathryn Hodges (Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery, St. Mary's University) led the Skills for Care, *Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking*, 2020.
- Anta Brachou and Dr Carole Murphy, *Working with Albanian victims of trafficking in the UK: Report on culture specific services*, Forthcoming in Spring 2021

A number of these reports were commissioned by the following non-governmental organisations that were open to objective practice-based research.

Non-Governmental Organisations evaluated by BCRSEA affiliates	Focus of activity of the NGOs
<b>Re-Place (Housing for Women) Project</b>	Re-Place is a Housing for Women special project. It is a service that provides second-stage housing and support to adult women who have been trafficked into the UK for sexual exploitation or domestic servitude. It is the only second-stage housing and support service in the London area and one of a handful of providers across the UK who takes referrals for trafficked women following short term acute care in specialist safe houses.
 The logo for Housing for Women features a stylized key with a female symbol (a circle with a vertical line and a horizontal crossbar) integrated into its handle. To the right of the key, the text "Housing for Women" is written in a sans-serif font.	Caritas Bakhita House (CBH) is a safe house in London that provides emergency and longer-term support and accommodation for women who have been victims of human trafficking, slavery and exploitation. CBH is managed by Caritas Westminster
<b>Caritas Bakhita House</b>	The Snowdrop Project is a charity that was established in Sheffield in 2012. It provides person-centred long-term practical and emotional support to victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.
 The Caritas Westminster logo consists of a red heart shape with a white cross inside, followed by the word "Caritas" in a serif font and "Westminster" in a smaller sans-serif font below it.	<b>Snowdrop Project</b>
 The Snowdrop Project logo features a green snowflake-like graphic above the text "Snowdrop PROJECT" in a sans-serif font.	The Hana Centre (a pseudonym) is a third sector open access service for women at risk of involvement, or involved in, prostitution. In practice, most users are involved in prostitution, but this broad remit means that women are not forced to satisfy particular criteria and continuing support can be offered to those who exit or whose degree of involvement varies. The Hana Centre offers daily support on a drop-in basis.
<b>Hana Centre</b>	<b>Victim Navigator Pilot</b>
 The Justice Care logo features a red stylized figure with arms raised, resembling a person or a symbol of justice, next to the text "JUSTICE CARE" in a bold sans-serif font.	Justice and Care designed a pilot project in 2018 involving 'Victim Navigators', after extensive discussions with the National Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit, police forces and leading national stakeholders. The Victim Navigator Pilot entailed embedding specialist independent workers into senior policing teams to provide expert input to modern slavery investigations and to directly support victims of modern slavery from the moment of identification. Victim navigators were initially embedded in Surrey, Kent and Essex police forces and now are also located in the Greater Manchester and the Metropolitan Police forces as well as Border Force Scotland.
<b>STOP THE TRAFFIK</b>	STOP THE TRAFFIK (STT) started as a campaign in 2006 to bring an end to human trafficking worldwide. In 2015 and in partnership with IBM, STT created the Centre for Intelligence-led Prevention. Since then, STT has been focused on creating a world where people are not bought or sold. As part of that process, STT has developed an intelligence-led prevention approach and the organisational evaluation of STT describes this model as 'Analyse, Share and Use'. Since its inception, STT has presented itself as a fast-moving, dynamic organisation that adapts to emerging challenges.
 The Stop the Traffik logo features a black handprint with the text "STOP THE TRAFFIK" written across it in a white sans-serif font.	

# Terminology

Affiliates of BCRSEA undertook evaluations of projects that engaged with adults with vulnerabilities, women affected by prostitution, potential victims of modern slavery and survivors of modern slavery. The evaluations use different terminology to refer to their target groups. Terms used were service users, clients, guests, victims or survivors, or women. Different terms may be used to emphasise the support that is offered to victims of modern slavery, although survivor may be the preferred term as it denotes resilience. The term guest is used in Caritas Bakhita House as it shapes the way staff and volunteers engage with the women who stay in the house. Moreover, it implies being welcomed into a home where you feel safe and respected but will not stay forever.

For the purpose of this report reference is often made to service user or user as a shorthand, recognising that those organisations offering support choose terms that reflect the relationship/group they are working with.

## 1. The role of NGOs and academics/researchers in policy development and implementation, and influencing good practice

Non-governmental organisations that have a remit around human trafficking and modern slavery have years of experience as practitioners working in relation to prevention, the support and protection of victims, and in aiding victims who participate in criminal and civil investigations and prosecutions. NGOs have continuously sought to use their knowledge and expertise to influence policy at a national level in the UK. This is clear from the written and oral evidence provided during the consultation process of the Modern Slavery Bill and more recently the Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act. Moreover, it is illustrated by the number of studies produced by the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group, composed of thirteen leading UK-based anti-trafficking organisations, as well as the inclusion of NGOs in the Modern Slavery Strategic Implementation Groups facilitated by the Modern Slavery Unit in the Home Office.

An increasing number of academics and researchers have focused attention on human trafficking and modern slavery, and the structures and processes that facilitate these phenomena. They too have sought to influence policy by improving understanding of issues like forced labour or assessing government responses<sup>3</sup>.

There are specific and detailed examples drawn from research undertaken by staff affiliated to the BCRSEA and it is evident from this review that policy-oriented academic research alongside the voice of NGOs and the voice of survivors can help shape policy development. They both provide supporting evidence and can improve policy design and the implementation of policy.

## 1.1 Examples of NGOs influencing policy

The evaluation of the work of STOP THE TRAFFIK (STT) identified the central role this NGO and one of its affiliates played in ensuring there was a requirement in modern slavery legislation in the UK, Australia and Canada that company directors (or persons controlling the company business) sign off on an annual statement or report about modern slavery in their supply chains. This 'requirement for directors to sign off on a modern slavery statement, automatically makes the modern slavery statement a corporate document that carries the weight of penalties, scrutiny and compliance requirements provided for under the Companies Act' (Brady and Van Dyke, 2020, p. 33).

'STT worked with Peter Talibart to analyse data and develop a coherent argument that has been used to influence (currently) three legislative processes across three continents: The UK, Australia and Canada. Common to all of them is the requirement of company directors (or persons controlling the company business) to sign off on an annual statement or report about modern slavery in their supply chains. This is crucial for two reasons. Firstly, because it raises awareness of modern slavery in corporate supply chains, which itself is an important result and can contribute towards the reduction of modern slavery feeding into the legitimate economy. Secondly, in most jurisdictions, company directors signing off on corporate statements of one form or another carries legal and compliance implications and associated penalties for getting it wrong. The strengthening of the UK law and the alignment of other jurisdictions with the corporate reporting requirement makes tackling modern slavery at a global level more likely and highlights the influence of STT's analysis and the policy submissions made by one of its partners on three separate jurisdictions.<sup>4</sup>

STT thus influenced Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) 2015 which is intended to prevent modern slavery in the production of goods and services for the supply chains in British firms. In addition, the evidence provided by Peter Taibart helped ensure the strategy to prevent modern slavery through company directors signing off on annual reports was incorporated in Australia's Modern Slavery Act 2018 and was included in Canada's proposed Modern Slavery Bill. The evidence from the evaluation indicates that a small NGO can have national and international impact aimed at the prevention of modern slavery.

At a national level, academic and NGO research has been used to investigate the implementation of Section 54 as a whole or within particular sectors.<sup>5</sup> *All that glitters is not gold: shining a light on supply chain disclosure in the jewellery sector* is the result of an investigation of the reporting requirements arising from Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act on eight major jewellers in the UK. Based on the evidence obtained the authors, one an affiliate of BCRSEA, concluded there was an 'overall failure by the majority of the jewellers cited in this report to publish a Modern Slavery Statement in line with the requirements of the MSA' (p 32). As a result of the report some of the companies updated their statements and checked their legal compliance. In addition, the report has had over 200 downloads from the Ardea International website, and the learning has been incorporated in training with companies around transparency in supply chains (TISC) and in providing an example for students at several universities who are learning about TISC and Sec 54 of the MSA.

3 For example: Gary Craig, Alex Balch, Hannah Lewis and Louise Waite, *The Modern Slavery Agenda: Policy Politics and Practice in the UK*, Bristol: Policy Press, 2019; Alex Balch, *Regulation and Enforcement to tackle forced labour in the UK: A systematic response?*, York: Joseph Roundtree Foundation, 2012; Ravi KS Kohli, Patricia Hynes, Helen Connolly, Angela Thurnham, David Westlake and Kate D'Arcy, *Evaluation of Independent Child Trafficking Advocates trial: Final Report, Research Report 86*, Home Office, December 2015

4 Robin Brady and Ruth Van Dyke, *STOP THE TRAFFIK's Organisational Evaluation: Final Report*, STT, January 2020

5 See for example, CORE Coalition, *Beyond Compliance: Effective Reporting Under the Modern Slavery Act, 2016*, and Walk Free initiative of Minderoo Foundation, in partnership with Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, WikiRate, and Australian National University, *Modern Slavery in the Global Hotel Sector*: New Report, 2020

Extensive research with a wide range of stakeholders, underpins the report, *A Game of Chance? Long Term Support for Survivors of Modern Slavery*. Based on the evidence collected, Carole Murphy identified key limitations of the Modern Slavery Act and Home Office provision for survivors. She highlighted the lack of long-term support for survivors that is required as a result of their complex needs. These needs arise from vulnerabilities that placed them at risk of modern slavery and are then compounded as victims of modern slavery. These findings have been used to provide evidence in support of Lord McColl's Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill.

The *A Game of Chance? Report* made recommendations related to policy (legislation and statutory guidelines), good practice for victim support, and appropriate resources to deal with the complex needs of survivors to aid recovery and reduce the chance of re-traumatisation and re-trafficking. Moreover, Murphy suggested that a 'cost benefit analysis to establish the social return on investment of longer-term support provision' should be undertaken to inform policy and practice. The Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham subsequently took on this task, aided by Carole Murphy, and published its report *The benefits of longer-term support for survivors of modern slavery outweigh the initial costs* in July 2019. This report was also used as evidence to increase support for the Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill. This report indicated that the long term needs of survivors of modern slavery need to be addressed to aid recovery and re-integration, and to ensure they are not re-trafficked. Moreover, it concluded that there are positive benefits and costs that outweigh the initial cost.

Another example of practitioner research influencing practice is the report: *Improving our Response to Modern Slavery & Exploitation: Supporting Chinese women*, an academic worked alongside three London NGOs, who wished to improve practice by sharing knowledge. Since June 2020 this report has been downloaded more than 240 times from the STOP THE TRAFFIK website where it is hosted. It is surmised that this report will change how different agencies, including police, engage with, and support, Chinese women who are victims of modern slavery or at risk of exploitation. In addition, this report may affect practice in China as it has evoked interest by the Migration Delivery Officer who works in the British Embassy in China and is responsible for modern day slavery coordination.

## 2. 'What looks promising' in terms of Support Services

Many NGOs have developed portfolios of work that are based on the short and medium term needs of vulnerable people and survivors of modern slavery, while some address long-term needs. Some NGOs like Hestia, the Medaille Trust, and Palm Cove are part of the government funded support provision for victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism, while others are independent of government financing and regulations regarding service provision.

**Common aims, principles and processes** A review of the five evaluations of the work of Re-Place project (Housing for Women), Caritas Bakhita House, the Snowdrop Project, the Victim Navigator Pilot<sup>6</sup> and the Hana Centre revealed a number of common aims, principles, and processes. The evidence of commonalities and of positive outcomes in terms of improved well-being and independence for survivors of modern slavery and adults with vulnerabilities create a broad framework that can guide good practice.

The five NGOs shared a number of aims. These aims were:

- to ensure physical and mental safety
- to improve well-being
- to build resilience
- to increase adults with vulnerabilities' and survivors' confidence and support them towards empowerment and independent living

Key principles that underpinned how the NGOs and their staff operated included:

- being victim/people-centred
- being trauma informed
- being non-judgemental
- building and establishing relationships of trust
- providing holistic support
- caring for and caring about service users/guests/clients
- supporting people in their choices (agency)
- seeking to empower
- monitoring outcomes

A number of common processes were identified that demonstrated how principles were translated into practice. These included:

- utilising a case work approach
- being flexible and responsive towards multiple and changing needs,
- being solutions focused so staff have the ability to be creative rather than constrained by established practice or provisions
- working in partnership with external stakeholders to ensure holistic provision
- engaging with adults with vulnerabilities and survivors at their own pace
- offering support that tends to be open-ended, not time bound
- provision of opportunities for vulnerable adults and survivors to have agency

These common aims, principles and processes offer a framework for good practice in relation to working with, and supporting, survivors of modern slavery and adults with vulnerabilities on their journey to recovery and independent living.

### 2.1 People/Victim-Centred

In order to live their values of being people/victim-centred and holistic, these NGOs adopted a number of practices that are discussed further below. All the organisations mentioned above allocate dedicated caseworkers<sup>7</sup> who work directly with service users, and support them in relation to their self-identified needs. A wide-ranging needs assessment that gives users' ownership, rather than telling them what they need is a crucial part of the NGOs processes which helps them journey towards empowerment.

*'It enables them to say where they want to go next and what their priorities are.'* (Snowdrop team member)

The way in which caseworkers are encouraged to operate is also fundamental to the people/ victim-centred approach. It is to work at the pace of survivors and adults with vulnerabilities, and to be flexible and solutions focused.

<sup>6</sup> The Victim Navigator Pilot has been developed by the NGO Justice and Care.

<sup>7</sup> In all five NGOs they may be labelled differently, for example, support worker, caseworker or victim navigator but the essence of their role is closely linked to the person-centred approach in service delivery.

A central element of the NGOs' approach was to address the wide range of fundamental human needs. 'The need for belonging, friendship and community; to communicate and be understood; to be psychologically and emotionally well; to have opportunities for creativity and expression; to be physically active; and to feel safe and secure.'<sup>18</sup> A staff member reflects on how CBH seeks to meet these needs:

*'The way I see Bakhita House is that...it's helping the guests to take those first steps sort of after their experiences, so the support is across so many different things...so its practical, literally like their physical wellbeing... you know food, shelter, yoga, reflexology, GP, their medical wellbeing. Mental health, mental and emotional wellbeing so for example arranging counselling and we have therapeutic art inside the house, you know things that allow them to express essentially, so things like art, we have a drama club. We have various activities where they can go out so it's like looking after their emotional and mental wellbeing. So, it's also the legal side, the administrative side of their actual cases so helping them with their income support, with understanding their kind of situation politically when they're asylum seekers or you know their status.'*

The NGOs' approach was also informed by an understanding of the way in which traumatic events before, during and possibly even after the experience of modern slavery have had adverse effects on the users' functioning and well-being, and can affect the way users may behave. Thus, staff interaction has been responsive to each user's individual circumstances and has sought to build trust and ensure that actions and activities do not re-traumatise victims (see section 3.5 on the Trauma Informed Approach).

Users' voices point to the way these NGOs have impacted on them and helped them build resilience, supported them in their journeys to recovery and accompanied them as they build new lives.

*'When I started with Snowdrop, I got more confident. They give me more life and support me with everything. Before I wasn't sure of myself and I can't believe how far I have come. They are very good; they're supportive, caring, lovely. I see them as my family because I have no one. They accept me and are with me all the time. Everything I face we fight it together.'* (Snowdrop client)

The case worker identifies the users' needs' at the start of their engagement with the NGO but also over time because it is understood that users' needs change and because it is recognised that user's priorities might alter in terms of what they want to do or issues that need addressing. In this role they identify the services or forms of engagement that may be beneficial to users either provided by the NGO or by external bodies. The NGO's partnership approach enables users to access a variety of services but where necessary the case worker also acts as an advocate on their behalf. This holistic response is recognised by the users but also by external stakeholders.

## 2.2 Holistic Support and Partnership Working

Re-Place project (Housing for Women), Caritas Bakhita House (CBH), the Snowdrop Project, the Victim Navigator Pilot and the Hana Centre all provide a range of services for adults with vulnerabilities or survivors of modern slavery. Some are provided by paid staff, including counsellors, while others are delivered by volunteers. However, none of the NGOs is sufficiently large or with the specialist expertise to meet all of the users' needs. As a result, they have looked for local stakeholders that can help meet users' needs and in some cases have developed informal and even formal partnership arrangements.

Services are sought from the NHS and mental health services or counsellors to deal with the physical and psychological consequences of their experiences and from solicitors for legal advice around immigration status or matters related to compensation. Local authorities or other housing bodies are approached with regards to 'move on' accommodation, while the Job Centre is important in relation to benefits and access to employment. Links to colleges might be made in order to help users access courses such as English as well as linking to other NGOs that provide help with volunteering or employment skills or offer creative activities that enhance well-being like dance or drama.

These NGOs act as advocates with statutory agencies and other stakeholders who may be unfamiliar with the needs of their users or their responsibilities to them. Moreover, many users will lack knowledge and language skills in how to navigate the various processes involved in seeking housing, applying for benefits, signing up for work or applying for asylum. The Snowdrop Project takes this further by working at strategic and delivery level to improve access to services and to ensure providers are cognisant of how trauma might affect their users. In the evaluation of the Snowdrop Project one staff member referred to the work undertaken with the Job Centre in terms of their clients so that they would recognise that there were good reasons that survivors might not attend an interview and should not be penalised for it.

*'I feel that a year and a half or 18 months in, I feel that doors open for me much more quickly than they did initially when I started. I did this by just putting myself out there, attending meetings, banging on about modern slavery and human trafficking. I am finding casework a lot easier than it was when I first started and that is what's helping open doors for my clients. My clients often miss a job centre appointment which, in absence of trafficking status or Snowdrop project affiliation, could lead to penalties with weeks of not having benefits.'* (Snowdrop team member)

Victim navigators too have reached out to different stakeholders in order to identify services that may benefit the survivors they support. This networking is also about improving access and ensuring providers understand the needs and experiences of survivors.

For some survivors a number of different agencies have become involved in meeting their needs. This can be challenging as agencies and case workers may operate in silos, duplicating provision or leaving gaps. Victim navigators have sought to build relationships with stakeholders so there is awareness and coordination of the varied responses.

*'We're making sure that what she is doing, I'm not doing the same thing or the things that I've done ... like she is aware the tasks that I'm doing so she's not doing the same and vice versa.'* (Stakeholder, Victim Navigator Pilot)

STOP THE TRAFFIK helped facilitate the development of the Emergency Bed Protocol to include victims of modern slavery and the Modern Slavery Multi-Agency Case Conference (MACC) in Westminster. These were the result of partnership working between The Passage, an NGO focused on people who are homeless, and the Westminster Supportive Housing Team, with the STT coordinator acting as a linchpin. At the time of the STT evaluation, 8 potential victims of modern slavery had been housed through the emergency protocol giving them time to decide if they wanted to be referred to the National Referral Mechanism. MACCs were also conducted in relation to these 8 victims who were able to benefit from a holistic understanding of their needs. Westminster appears to have institutionalised these new processes.

Multi-Agency Case Conferences have been developed around child welfare and safeguarding as well as for those who are victims of domestic violence.<sup>9</sup> The MACC presents the best opportunity for professionals to assess relevant information and to plan together how best to safeguard and promote the at risk person's welfare. MACCs allow for a coordinated response, and enables a more holistic response to an at risk person. The development of MACCs for victims of modern slavery exemplifies the transfer of good practice for at risk groups.

While all the NGOs supporting vulnerable adults and survivors of modern slavery engage with external stakeholders, Caritas Bakhita House, and Snowdrop provide many activities on-site because they have a large number of volunteers that contribute to case work and to activities of interest to the service users, which enhance well-being such as yoga, reflexology, drama, dance and art, or are seen as enhancing their future opportunities such as English classes, life skills, and preparation for employment. Moreover, they illustrate the 'One-Stop-Shop' model of delivering as many services as possible under one roof. The Hana Centre and Re-place also reflect this approach. There are key advantages to users in terms of the way staff 'meet with service users'<sup>10</sup>, know them, care about them, advocate for them, and seek to empower them.

Many of these NGOs use a range of skills including networking and advocacy to tackle barriers to access to services for vulnerable adults and survivors they work with. Thus, they have been or are responding to the difficulties in accessing services and thereby ensuring survivors can journey to recovery as noted by Carole Murphy in her report *A Game of Chance*.

### 2.3 Flexible and Solutions Focused

The ability of staff in these NGOs to be flexible and solutions focused means they have responded to the individual needs of users, whether big or small, and often in creative ways. They have an ability to go beyond the remit of government funded support services.

*'I feel like she my friend, you know. I feel like I trust her. And she, if I worry about something I call her or I tell her. She always find solution.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

It may be that these NGOs also share Snowdrop's perspective that 'supporting survivors with their self-identified needs and not telling them what they needed was a fundamental and necessary step in the journey towards independence and empowerment for clients. In addition, staff felt that a key strength of the project was its willingness to be creative and develop new and innovative ways to ensure the needs of clients were being met' (Snowdrop Evaluation, p.20).

*'If someone's struggling or we're looking for an out of the box way to think about solving that problem, and then taking that out of the box solution and thinking about what the potential outcomes of that would be. Taking risks if something doesn't work then that's okay. The innovative thing, for example, we had a client that was accessing counselling, but she was struggling and didn't have any activities to do and she didn't really want to participate in the community activities, she didn't have kids and she speaks English fine. We thought maybe she could do some volunteering for us and so she'll come and do the childcare volunteering. We're like how we can do that in a safe way for her and the other women. She's getting something in a place that she feels safe but she's also giving back, because that was really important to her.'* (Snowdrop staff member)

NGOs' responses reflected survivors' voices and needs but survivors also shaped service provision which benefited groups of survivors. For example, feelings of isolation and loneliness amongst women accessing Re-place led to the development of a befriending service. In the Snowdrop Project, the bare and often grubby accommodation offered to users led to the Renovation Project. Snowdrop clients did not have the financial resources to decorate and refurnish homes. As a result, the Project brings groups of volunteers into the clients' house or flat who help make it into a home with material and furniture donated by the community.

*'I came here first for English and then Snowdrop helped with everything. Now I am very happy because everything is okay with my home. Snowdrop brought everything that I needed for my home, I didn't buy anything. The ladies here painted my home because it is very old and now it is nice.'* (Lena, Snowdrop Client)

Evidence points to the significant and often long-term psychological harm that arises from being a victim of modern slavery. Counselling has been identified as an important tool to help survivors learn to cope with these harms and to help them rebuild their lives but are often very difficult to access. These NGOs illustrate what can be done to improve access and thus improve outcomes. Snowdrop initially sought volunteer counsellors and as funding emerged was able to employ part-time counsellors to meet the needs of its clients. Access to NHS counselling services can be difficult to access due to lengthy waiting lists, hampering clients aiming to rebuild their lives. Access to counselling was improved by dealing with the barriers of limited or no English or the clients having children. Interpreters are supplied so that counselling can take place in a client's own language and childcare is provided as needed. The development of group counselling sessions was aimed at ensuring earlier access to symptom management of common symptoms like insomnia and anxiety. Thus, Snowdrop sought to address some psychological issues while clients waited for individual counselling. Furthermore, following the service users' feedback in the evaluation, which emphasized the need for more counselling, the counselling programme at Snowdrop has become a real focus point, and not merely seen as an additional service to casework. Under the new approach, a new model of trauma work is being developed, which will offer different types of counselling dependent on the stage of recovery that the service user is in and their willingness and ability to engage.

Moreover, Bakhita House used the evaluation and the highlighted need for counselling to come up with alternative and creative solutions to address such need. They expanded their therapeutic care programme by delivering drama therapy and music therapy, in addition to the existing art therapy sessions. The new therapeutic programmes, although not replacing counselling, for most of the service users worked really well, particularly in terms of inclusivity and overcoming the language barriers.

*'...and the good thing about these therapies was that they don't need a language. When we try to find counselling, it is finding the language that is often an issue. Most of the drama, the arts, especially and the music...you don't need a language. You can still partake.'* (Karen Anstiss, Bakhita House)

Victim navigators too have worked to secure statutory or private provision for their clients and within the survivors' own language. A Directory of Multilingual Trauma Therapists was developed by one victim navigator for use by navigators in the different police forces in England. It is intended to offer a quick guide to pre-identified, trauma-informed counsellors and psychologists, many of whom offer counselling in the languages of the navigators' clients.

9 Cases involving victims of domestic violence are referred to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

10 Hodges and Burch (2016) introduced the idea of how professionals 'meet with' – interact with – adults with vulnerabilities is an essential element of relationship building and which has implications for engagement and access to support.

Finally, the importance of befriending has been recognised as a means of helping to break isolation and loneliness that is common to survivors of modern slavery. Befriending is an intrinsic part of the work of Snowdrop, Victim Navigators, Caritas Bakhita House, the Hana Centre and was being developed by Replace. For example, in the Snowdrop Project a full programme of community-based activities is provided which enables clients to interact in a safe space and aims to tackle the feelings of isolation and loneliness. In addition, Snowdrop has a number of volunteers who act as befrienders and have regular contact with clients and can accompany them to everyday activities and appointments. Caritas Bakhita House has a similar system and also organises a number of activities that enable guests to meet. What stands out as good practice in a safe house environment is the evening communal meal. It not only presents guests with responsibilities to cook a meal for other guests and staff and to wash up afterwards, but the shared meal creates the opportunity to build community.

Most of the NGOs restricted their services to those people seen as victims of modern slavery or human trafficking (MSHT), however others had a wider brief and reached out to women who experience exploitation, harm and vulnerability across a continuum and may be at risk of MSHT. One of the challenges within the modern slavery agenda is ensuring that women who do not meet the MSHT criteria but are very vulnerable and have a range of needs are not precluded from support.

## 2.4 Open Ended Support

An important ingredient in some NGOs approach to guests/clients/survivors was to provide open-ended support and allow them to drop in and out of the service as they needed. The NGOs were there to support survivors and adults with vulnerabilities on a journey often affected by a variety of circumstances. This approach is based on respecting service users' agency. Moreover, it recognises that it can take a long time for trust to be built because of users' previous experiences of being deceived. The length of time that users engaged with these NGOs, which can last for several months to several years, provides evidence of the NGOs' commitment to supporting those with complex needs who often require long term support but may also want to drop in and out of their engagement.

*'We don't put a time limit on our support and that ensures that the people we support will be supported until they can stand on their own two feet and are able to live independently. Whereas, I know there are a lot of other services that are time limited. We try to make sure we look to real independence and empowerment as much as possible.'* (Snowdrop staff)

The situation in Caritas Bakhita House and Re-place is slightly different, as the intention is to help women 'move on' when their circumstances allow them to access alternative living arrangements. As both offer the resources of safe housing and support which are in high demand but limited supply, there is not the same open-endedness of provision.

## 2.5 Trauma informed approach

The Snowdrop Project, Victim Navigators, the Hana Centre, Re-place and CBH all approach their work with adults with vulnerabilities and survivors of modern slavery with an understanding that most are likely to have experienced some form of trauma<sup>11</sup> and that this will impact their road to recovery and how they behave. Traumatic events may have occurred before, during or even after the modern slavery experience has ended because survivors may fear police as well as their traffickers.

<sup>11</sup> Trauma is defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, as 'Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being' (SAMHSA's *Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach*, July 2014, p. 7)

*'My former employer told me before that when the Police find out that I am staying there in their house and I'm working there they're gonna get me and put me in prison and let me wait there until I can get to buy my own ticket and then get me deported and I'm really scared of prison, you know when they get me because I'm thinking of that what they might do that to me.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

*'I don't sleep. I dreaming like I'm the future. I think about what he coming to find me. I scared he can kill me. He can do something to my daughter.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Understanding the impact of trauma has affected how these NGOs 'meet with' service users. They seek to offer a place of safety, a relationship that inspires trust, engagement based on respect and ensuring users are treated with dignity, transparency and honesty in terms of information and advocacy, and empowering users through the presentation of options and supporting them to make decisions.

The NGOs all offered a space where users were safe from people who had the potential to harm them physically and mentally, and where they felt safe to engage. Users' voices indicated that they welcomed an environment where they were treated with dignity and respect and where they were not judged. Based on their practice-based research in an organisation that works with women affected by prostitution, Hodges and Burch stated that 'when women explained what they liked or did not like about helping services, their responses mainly related to the way they were met, heard, talked and responded to. The welcome they received when going to a service for the first time was critical, as was needing to be put at ease. Women referred to an ability to 'read people', frequently stemming from previously being let down, and this informed whether they would trust people to help them' (Hodges and Burch, 2019, p. 11). The body language of staff and volunteers and whether they seemed to care were used to decide if it was safe to engage. 'Tina spoke positively of the behaviour of the staff at The Hana Centre, saying that it helped her:

*'...find peace, when the world is letting me down...They are talking to me... smiling at me, asking how I am, how my son is...'* (Tina)

A number of the women commented on knowing when staff at services 'didn't really care'. Here Storm comments on staff at a night shelter:

*'...they volunteer...not cause they care but just to go on their CV, am I stupid? Of course not...The ones who care you can see, because of their behaviour...'* (Storm) (Hodges and Burch, 2019, p. 11).

The expression of authentic care was a common characteristic identified by users in the evaluations of the other NGOs. For example, a survivor who participated in the Re-Place project said:

*'It's great. I like what they're doing because they're not just helping you to find a place but they actually do care. Which is a lot for somebody like me to know that there are some people that actually care. So that is a lot for me. They will save your life literally. They would save your life because you...sometimes it's still hard for me to think was it 6-7 months ago I was sleeping in a church. I was literally homeless. And then look at me, here I am, so it's amazing and if there was nothing like Re-Place then after the safe house what would become of me? Literally. So I think they are literally lifesavers.'*

A survivor interviewed for the victim navigator evaluation said: *'I feel she actually care about what she do.'*

A safe space was also one where there was trust in the organisation and its staff. A woman engaging with the Hana Centre said a safe space included 'people that will listen to you and do what they say they are going to do' (Hodges and Burch, 2019, p. 15).

Building trust is a fundamental part of the trauma informed approach as users' previous experiences have involved being deceived. For example, at Caritas Bakhita House (CBH) 'staff felt that being present, emotionally supportive and caring helped guests feel safe and that this was essential to developing relationships of trust between themselves and the women they supported. It was noted that the women at CBH had been betrayed, often repeatedly, and abandoned by people (sometimes family) both during their experiences of trafficking and modern slavery but also earlier in their lives and during childhood. These experiences led them to be distrustful and sometimes openly hostile, emotionally shut-down and suspicious of others' (Murphy, et al., 2018, pp 17-18). Providing resources that meet needs was also identified as a way these NGOs could demonstrate that they had listened to users and could be trusted as they delivered on their promises.

*'An important demonstration of authentic caring was staff in support services actually doing what they said they were going to do. This was the key factor when deciding to trust. Delivering on promises was clearly very powerful, and women gave examples such as booking a computer course and going with them, writing statements for court and attending, or talking to housing agencies until the damp problem in one woman's flat was resolved.'* (Hodges and Burch, 2019, p. 12)

Comments from clients/guests/survivors interviewed as part of the evaluations of the other NGOs confirmed that how they were met and supported, created a safe space and a place of trust.

*'She's been really open with me. If I did have a problem I could text her and stuff and I know she'll get back to me.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

*'She first person because every time many years I was disappointed. It's hard to trust someone. She first person in UK what, you know, what I need, what I think I can trust and I know she's very nice.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Being transparent was an important aspect of how these NGOs worked with users in relation to their own processes and what they might be able to offer but also by providing explanations for how external processes work. This helped users make decisions and reduced surprises that might be undermining.

*'I got lots of help because, for me, I wouldn't know what to do. I cannot even speak. They have been helping with accommodation and helping me make conversations for gas, water, electricity. They've helped me to open a bank account and with any letters that are still coming so that I can understand them properly they read them for me and then explain them.'* (Amma, Snowdrop Client)

Being empathetic was a signature of the way in which these NGOs operated and shaped how staff behaved. Staff recognised how trauma had affected their users and sought to support them in ways without re-traumatising them, but recognised that they may not be aware of what might act as triggers to traumatic events. As a result, there was an awareness that staff had to be able to respond to the ups and downs linked to trauma. This is exemplified in CBH, a safe house, where the evaluators described trauma informed staff behaviour and what this meant to the guests:

*'Support workers become finely attuned to the patterns, routines and emotional states of their guests and so provide support when needed. Equally, they know when to step back and give guests the space and time needed to process thoughts, cope with trauma and come to terms with what is happening in their lives.'* (Murphy et al, 2018, p 28)

*'They were very caring you know, even if they did something or ask something they was try not to hurt you or you know remind you of bad things and stuff they were very, very caring. I used to cry a lot, I used to just go down like a baby, but they made me feel better and stuff like this.'* (Former guest 04, CBH)

Being attentive through conversation and listening is also a valued attribute of these NGOs, and allows survivors a chance to talk about how they feel when they are ready to speak. For some this eases their pain and marginalisation.

*'It helped me every way because we speak, she always speak many times. I trust her. I scared to talking about say how I feel...but after when we start it's every time is making me feel much better.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Many of the adults with vulnerabilities and survivors required significant emotional support based on their traumatic life experiences as well as situations of modern slavery or exploitation. These NGOs provided stability and concern which helped survivors manage often overwhelming feelings. Evidence obtained during the evaluations pointed to the way these NGOs were present and helpful during difficult and perhaps dark periods. Survivors attributed elements of their recovery and their resilience to the NGO staff.

*'I think that if I didn't have their acceptance and if I didn't have their help and support, I wouldn't be where I am now, even alive. They've been giving me so much help. Even at very difficult moments where I've been like I don't want to live anymore, they've been explaining that actually life is beautiful, and it is worth living.'* (Snowdrop client)

These NGOs also recognised the way in which trauma impacts on memory. There is an acceptance that survivors' and vulnerable adults' stories can be fragmented or contradictory.<sup>12</sup> In addition, they use their understanding on behalf of their clients in the context where other professionals are gathering evidence and might seek clear and coherent information as a sign of a truthful account of their story, instead of accepting the messy and fragmented nature of memory from those who have experienced trauma.

*Improving Our Response to Modern Slavery & Exploitation: supporting Chinese women* makes specific reference to NGOs working with Chinese national women who told their stories only in bits and pieces over time. Engagement through befriending or providing practical help built a relationship of trust which enabled the Chinese women to disclose more fully over time. For others, trust was established by NGOs' responses to bits of information users were willing to provide to test their trustworthiness before disclosing more information about their background and experiences.

For the many Chinese women who end up in detention, this shock might elicit a willingness to provide more information about their experiences but only if there are people/organisations they feel they can trust. Dialogue between the authors of this report and the Migrant Liaison Officer in China discussed who might offer Chinese women a safe space to tell their stories while they are detained. In this situation some might be willing to disclose they are victims of human trafficking.

<sup>12</sup> Cornelius Katona and Louise Howard, *Briefing Paper: The mental health difficulties experienced by victims of human trafficking (modern slavery) and the impact this has on their ability to provide testimony*, Helen Bamber Foundation, February 2017

A final point that emerged is that working with people with vulnerabilities or who are survivors of modern slavery can take an emotional toll on staff and result in secondary or vicarious trauma. One Snowdrop volunteer asked *'who they can ask for help if their own mental health is affected by the role.'* This issue had been acknowledged by senior leaders at Snowdrop who had put procedures in place to support the staff's emotional and psychological wellbeing.

*'Re-Place staff too expressed the view that supporting women who had experienced such significant and distressing trauma could affect their own wellbeing. The challenge noted was that the current supervision arrangements were not robust enough to support staff to cope with the emotional impact of their role. It recommended that Re-place 'provide additional supervision processes for frontline staff to support their psychological, emotional and physical wellbeing.'* (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2016, p. 17)

## 2.6 Empowerment

The Snowdrop Project are very explicit that how they operate is intended to empower the people they work with. This requires changing the normal power imbalance that operates between a service provider and user. 'From the staff perspective, supporting survivors with their self-identified needs and not telling them what they needed was a fundamental and necessary step in the journey towards independence and empowerment for clients.' (Murphy and Goldsmith, p 2019, p.20) According to a member of the Snowdrop staff, its people-centred approach, 'enables them [clients] to say where they want to go next and what their priorities are.'

Monitoring data collected by Snowdrop points to outcomes for their clients that will facilitate their independence and empowerment. The data indicated the majority of clients, during the evaluation period, benefited from accessing English classes, receiving counselling, obtaining secure housing, gaining qualifications by going to college, or entering employment.

Evidence from the evaluations of the other NGOs that support adults with vulnerabilities and survivors indicated that they too seek to enable their users to make decisions and to become more confident and independent. These changes that they help facilitate are seen as an essential part of the recovery process. Victim navigators performed this function of enabler by providing information about options to survivors. This allowed them to make informed decisions in relation to referral to the National Referral Mechanism, providing evidence to the police, and accessing services available to them.

Enabling users to make decisions in a supportive environment is a significant element of how these NGOs operate. Their ethos is a direct contrast to previous environments where they were denied the ability to make decisions.

*'I have my freedom now and that I just going in the park and the, you know, feeling everything that I'm free. I'm able to go out with my own will.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

*'They were not giving me anything, any of my salary so now I'm receiving £65 per week and it's going to have, like, you know – I have money. All the money and I can really buy what I want!'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Allowing users to make decisions at their own pace is another means of empowering them, as support is based on aiding them in their choices as they are making them. At the same time, users may be given a supportive nudge whereby 'they are given the confidence to act, while they are frequently accompanied in the first steps by support staff walking alongside them.' (Hodges and Burch, 2019, p 13)

Part of the practice at CBH is staff's willingness to challenge each other where they do not see guests making progress towards the goal of independent living. The intention is to nudge guests towards activities that help build confidence and independence.

Another facet of empowerment is rebuilding more positive identities. For some the support survivors received from the NGO can be transformative. A former guest at CBH illustrates this transformative potential when she said:

*'When I leave here I have everything, I know how to treat my life, I know how to go somewhere, I know how to connect to people, everything for my life I start this house.'*

Another former guest reiterated the changes in her life and her future that CBH facilitated:

*'I work in volunteering and I'm studying at school and I'm thinking for the future to get the job and it's a good step and I have such a good network around of me and I meet such a different people and which I didn't have that opportunity and so that is good for me to say oh yes I'm moving forward so that is something I get it in here so to move... because to be honest to be in one country alone and without language and you don't know nothing there, you don't know about the place, you don't know about the route, you don't know about nothing and it's hard, but I get the support from them and so now I know things how they go...I don't know perfectly but I have idea...how to go, where I need to go and what I need to do.'*

## 2.7 Safe and Secure Accommodation

Obtaining accommodation is one of the key requirements for victims of modern slavery because it meets their need for safety and security. For some it is an immediate necessity because they have to leave where they have been staying which is linked to their exploitative experience. For all survivors housing can enable a meaningful 'reflect and recovery' journey. Safe and secure accommodation also plays a significant role in helping survivors into independent living and importantly it reduces the risk of re-trafficking.

For victims identified by police or NGOs, there can be the need for immediate housing to safeguard individuals and to give them time to decide if they want to be referred to the National Referral Mechanism or to access an NRM safe house. The emergency bed accommodation provided for homeless men in Westminster who are victims of modern slavery is an example of good practice. It provides housing and support, for a time-limited period, and enables the men to make an informed decision about entering the NRM or seeking ongoing support from The Passage and other providers.

Caritas Bakhita House also provides immediate safe and secure accommodation for women who have been trafficked and are referred by the police, NGOs, and the Catholic Diocese but is more open-ended. The Metropolitan Police Service provided the largest number of referrals, 42% in the three-year period covered by the evaluation, and through their partnership with CBH were able to bring women to the house at any time of day or night.

A significant aspect of the CBH ethos was to provide a home, not just a place of safety and a place to aid recovery.

*'There is a sense of social...cohesion and fun...which is really important because it's a home at the end of the day. It is a home and it's not.... it needs to have that feel...that it's a safe, homely, comfortable place where they want to be and where they feel safe and looked after.'* (Staff interview)

The house had been designed so that guests engage in ordinary activities that would occur 'in a typical loving home. They cook and eat together, clean together, share communal spaces and celebrate together. Staff set boundaries and engage in relationships that, whilst professional, communicate a care and concern that guests interpret to be more like family than that which is typically found in a project or service' (Murphy et al, 2018, p. 26). Former guests as well as staff commented on the family like atmosphere created in BCH which was highly valued.

*'I'd been to the [name of service] is same thing like you know, they give...they give...like supporting, they give food, they give money they give...they give like NHS and everything you know to look after me as well. That's what...that's what I'm thinking as well but the other thing is different is...in the other house we're not...we're not having...dinner together but in here it's beautiful when we having dinner together it was like with the whole family you know, like we have a real family and we're having dinner together and have a chat.'* (Former guest 01 CBH evaluation, p 26)

Another facet of CBH is to help guests move on to safe accommodation when they leave the safe house.

The Re-Place Project (Housing for Women) filled an important housing niche as it offered safe and secure accommodation for women survivors and helped them move on. It provided alternative accommodation to housing provided by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) which was considered unsuitable for women who have been in situations of modern slavery. Re-place had eleven units of accommodation which were filled as the result of a referral process. As well as being housed, users had a caseworker to help address their individual needs. Service users valued the personal and practical support provided by Re-Place staff which also helped them rebuild their lives.

*'Very supportive because it's not just about giving you a house it's about giving me the house and helping me with issues, things I have difficulties with like I said transport, I didn't know nothing about the trains or anything or how to go anywhere, but with staff telling me you have to get this app or download this or do that.'* (Re-Place service user)

Moreover, the use of Outcome Star by Re-Place to measure the 'distance travelled' by its service users over time demonstrated that survivors reported an increase in their feelings of safety while being part of the programme and in their own secure accommodation.

The evaluation of the Re-place Project noted that it was able to help many of its users move on successfully. Nevertheless, in *A Game of Chance?*, published in 2018, Murphy reiterated the problem of inappropriate housing for women survivors who were also asylum seekers which Re-place had tried to tackle two years earlier. People interviewed by Murphy indicated women survivors continued to be housed in mixed accommodation by NASS who also moved them around to new places which mirrored their experience of trafficking. Moreover, they stated the women were vulnerable to sexual exploitation and could be re-traumatised. The recent Closed Doors Report published by Hibiscus corroborates such findings and suggests many women, potential victims of human continue to live in accommodation unsuitable for the purpose of their reflection and recovery period, such as in asylum accommodation<sup>13</sup>.

The Snowdrop Project also recognised that safe and secure accommodation was an essential component of independent living and helped secure permanent housing for 66% of the clients it dealt

with during the evaluation period. The House Renovation Service served another purpose which was to help clients who had secured accommodation to create a home.

The evaluations of the NGOs indicated that securing move-on accommodation was an issue particularly where survivors were waiting decisions about their immigration status or where their status decreed they had no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Survivors who were NRPF seemed to be excluded from accessing accommodation and support from Re-Place, possibly because the aim was to help support women and move them on so Re-Place accommodation and services could be made available to other survivors. Bottlenecks caused by lack of move-on accommodation may decrease the number of women who receive support and assistance with recovery. Importantly access criteria illustrate a gap in provision for women who have similar needs but have been marginalised through the immigration process and hostile environment. Moreover, lack of appropriate move on accommodation has been noted as a risk factor as survivors may return to exploitative situations if there is no alternative place to live.

## 2.8 Training and Capacity Building of Staff and Volunteers

The evaluations of the NGOs pointed to training as an important activity that was undertaken to ensure staff understood the ethos of their organisation and had the knowledge and skills to perform their roles. Training was specifically devised for volunteers at the Snowdrop Project and CBH, and evidence collected from volunteers indicated they valued the training they received.

At Snowdrop all volunteers who were accepted after a rigorous application and selection process received training which varied according to their role and which had to be successfully completed before volunteering commenced.

- 'Volunteer caseworkers are trained over eight weekly sessions. The training goes into depth into trafficking, the legal framework, the role and responsibilities of a caseworker, the survivor journey, working with people who have experienced trauma, empowerment of the client, anti-oppressive practice and boundaries.
- Befrienders' training involves attending four of these sessions.
- Activity volunteers attend a three-hour training session that includes an introduction to trafficking, the survivor journey, empowerment, anti-oppressive practice and boundaries.' (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2019, p. 12)

Caritas Bakhita House operated with a different model as it had more paid staff, and because many of its volunteers were Sisters who 'have long histories of working with marginalised or deprived communities around the globe and some have worked in the field of anti-trafficking and so bring a very good understanding of the challenges faced by the guests at CBH.' (Murphy et al, 2018, p. 8) As a result, CBH did not require volunteers to undergo training before they undertook their roles providing activities, accompanying guests to appointments or on outings, acting as interpreters or offering training opportunities. However, it sought to enhance volunteer's knowledge and skills, through regular reflection meetings which allowed volunteers to meet and support one another and to learn more on the subject of human trafficking and modern slavery and the needs of survivors through talks and training delivered by specialists in the field.

In terms of paid staff, victim navigators largely learnt 'on the job' and through reading documents they felt would be useful or that were provided by Justice and Care. In order to provide more consistency as the victim navigator project expands and more navigators are appointed a training resource has been developed. Victim navigators interviewed for the evaluation felt going forward more resources around cultural awareness and how victims from specific cultures may present,

<sup>13</sup> Hibiscus Initiatives, Closed Doors Report, December 2020

behave or have preferences should be available to them in order to improve their response to the diverse range of victims they encounter which will impact on victim engagement (see also section on Cultural Mediation).

*'Being more culturally aware across the board might support more survivors to remain in the system.'* (Victim Navigator)

It was acknowledged that staff appointed to roles in organisations that support survivors of modern slavery may not have an in-depth understanding of modern slavery, or the law. As a result, the Re-Place evaluation recommended that staff have opportunities for continued professional development in order to ensure the provision of high quality support.

An approach to professional development within the sector can be about establishing professional standards.

## 2.9 Professional Standards

Snowdrop, Caritas Bakhita House, the Victim Navigator Pilot and Re-place have developed their own practice as well as drawing on good practice shared through the forum run by the Human Trafficking Foundation. They have also learnt from listening to their users and staff and from recommendations arising from the evaluations of their provision. These NGOs as well as the many others operating in the field of modern slavery have developed practice in an area where there are no professional standards. Current practice contradicts the findings of a rapid evidence assessment which recommended the professionalization of support services for victims and the standardisation of good practice across services<sup>14</sup>.

In *A Game of Chance?*, Murphy stated that: 'the development of professional standards and accreditation in consultation with experienced practitioners may be of benefit in terms of gaining greater credibility for the very evident expertise within the sector' (2018, p 28). NGOs and police interviewed for the research expressed concerns that support services could be set up by anyone but they may have 'little or incomplete knowledge/understanding of the complexity of trafficking and slavery, or may have a particular agenda to promote' (ibid). Murphy suggested 'developing a basic entry qualification for support staff may go some way to improving the level of expertise within the field' (ibid). Murphy subsequently acted on this recommendation by seeking the funding needed to develop the *Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking* under the auspices of Skills for Care and the accreditation of a Master's level module offered at St Marys University on *Identification, Support and Care of Victims of Modern Day Slavery*, which is also open to professionals working with victims, as a stand-alone Tier 3 course within the *Training Framework*. The first group of professionals have completed this course offered in 2020.

The *Skills for Care Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking* was developed in partnership by drawing on the knowledge of a wide range of experts. It 'aims to establish clear training standards for those involved in identifying, supporting, and caring for victims/survivors of slavery and human trafficking. These training standards set out the knowledge and skills required by those who may meet victims and survivors of slavery and human trafficking. The priority of this framework is to improve the experience of care and support for those who have been exploited through slavery and human trafficking' (Skills for Care, 2020, p 5).

It is also hoped that the *Training Framework* will be used to review and subsequently adapt training provided by organisations working with victims of modern slavery to ensure a consistent approach across the sector.

## 2.10 Monitoring Outcomes

Another key shared principle is the importance of monitoring results. The Re-Place Project, Snowdrop Project and Victim Navigator Pilot all included monitoring systems which were intended to record user information and measure changes in well-being indicators. Different systems of measurement were used. For example, Re-Place used the system of Outcome Stars while Snowdrop and the Victim Navigator Pilot developed their own systems.

For example, victim navigators conducted initial and periodic review assessments of survivors to ascertain changes in their wellbeing across various domains of recovery, including their mental and emotional health. 'At the time of the evaluation only a limited dataset of 21 repeat assessments was available. This data revealed that 71.4% of victims supported had improved scores across their mental and emotional wellbeing 19% had maintained the same score level and 9.6% had experienced a decrease. The quantitative data collected supports the positive changes in wellbeing reported by victims at interview' (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p 14).

Data collected by the Re-Place Project through the Outcome Star system showed that progress had been made across all categories but most progress was 'made in physical and mental wellbeing, money management and meaningful use of time'. However, it also documented that 'after moving on from Re-Place the progress women made did decrease in the category safety and was variable in the accommodation and legal category. This is unsurprising given the high levels of support they benefited from as Re-Place service users, and the insecurity experienced due to immigration status' (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2016, p 13). The evaluators suggested the NGO consider ways to maintain well-being.

Snowdrop caseworkers were asked to gather and record scores on five domains (Independent Living; Social Isolation; Mental Wellbeing; Risk of Re-trafficking/Exploitation; Hope and Self-Confidence) using a monitoring tool with clients at intervals over the period they were supported by the project. Based on a limited set of completed records, the evaluators pointed to 'positive outcomes for the Snowdrop Project given the extreme distress, trauma and precarity faced by their clients on referral' (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2019, p 25), and attributed these outcomes to the involvement of clients in decision-making regarding their care. There was an exception which was lower scores for the mental wellbeing domain. The evaluators suggested this was not surprising given the nature of the trauma survivors experienced, that symptoms can be re-triggered, and a recovery process that requires long term support. Snowdrop may be able to provide this care as it offers open-ended support.

Evidence obtained from external stakeholders also corroborates positive outcomes for survivors who had been supported by these NGOs. One said with reference to victim navigators:

*She's [victim] definitely gaining confidence. When I first spoke to her she would do nothing but cry and she just didn't really give much off but once meeting [the victim navigator] and knowing that there are people that want to help her, she's opened up like a flower. It's amazing to see'.*

Having systems in place to measure change over time emphasises that the NGOs are interested in the impact of support and services provided, not in the services per se. Moreover, by documenting variations in the recovery process, these systems can be used to aid understanding and to reflect on how to improve practice.

14 Elaine Wedlock and Jacki Tapley, WHAT WORKS IN SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME: A RAPID EVIDENCE ASSESSMENT, March 2016. <https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/victcomm2-prod-storage-119w3o4kq2z48/uploads/2019/02/VC-What-works-in-supporting-victims-of-crime-Review-2016.pdf>

The evaluations of Snowdrop and the Victim Navigator Pilot highlighted the need to collect quantitative data on all users' change in order to have more robust evidence of the outcomes achieved.

### 3. What looks promising in terms of criminal investigation and prosecution

A key finding of this review of practice-based research by BCRSEA affiliates is the role that some NGOs play in facilitating survivor engagement with police, and supporting a criminal investigation and prosecution. NGOs that support survivors of modern slavery can help reduce survivors' fear of police and help build a bridge that enables them to disclose information that can be used to identify other victims, aid a criminal investigation, and participate in a prosecution.

'What looks promising' is the inclusion of an organisational objective to help survivors share intelligence with police and for the NGO to work in partnership with the police-building victim trust. In addition, the NGOs partnership approach with police was focused around encouraging victim-centred practices within police forces. Moreover, these NGOs accepted that police were integral to achieving criminal justice for survivors and that their experience of modern slavery meant they had important information and intelligence which would benefit police who have the responsibility of tackling this crime.

Interviews with NGO staff and police officers provides robust evidence about the value of their partnership and the way it enhances survivors' collaboration with police around a case of modern slavery. Survivors' voices shed light on their fears of the police but also what the police or NGO does to make these encounters possible and successful.

#### 3.1 Inclusion of objectives which support partnership working with police and helping survivors engage with police

Caritas Bakhita House and the Victim Navigator Pilot both aimed to encourage survivors to engage with and share intelligence with the police. According to the CBH evaluation, 'supporting women who have been trafficked to report and disclose information and intelligence' to the police was embedded in CBH's policies and practices. As victim navigators are embedded in a number of police forces to support victims of modern slavery and to work with police to support criminal investigations, it is not surprising that that core objectives of the Victim Navigator Pilot included: '(1) Establish greater trust between victims, the police and the wider criminal justice process; and (2) Foster greater engagement from victims in information sharing, police investigations and, if relevant, prosecutions – strengthening efforts to bring exploiters to justice'.

Achieving these objectives meant that these NGOs had to show that British police could be trusted and demonstrated this through how they interacted with police officers. In CBH, a number of specialist Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) officer's regularly visited the house, and thus their presence had become normalised. Moreover, staff ask the guests if they would be willing to meet with the police and thus normalise the possibility of an encounter. At a support meeting they might say 'you remember those people who brought you here? How would you feel about them coming back and just having a chat with you? And they might want to ask you some questions and [we] do it very gently like that.' (Murphy et al, 2018, p 13)

In settings where the victim navigator and a police officer meet with a victim, the navigator might explain how they could help them and then refer to the help the police could provide. A police officer interviewed for the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot said:

*'It worked nicely having someone from the police and then also somebody who is there for their welfare. So she was explaining this is what we can do to support you. This is what is out there to*

*help and this is what the police can do to help you. Oh, and here is a police officer let's have a talk with them. So it was really nice and she was saying how worthwhile it is to support us and it worked quite nicely but not pushing at the same time.'*

In both cases the NGO staff were conferring legitimacy on the police and challenging distrust in the police that might reflect victims' experience in their country of origin or the efforts of traffickers to present them in a negative light.

Partnership working was fundamental to achieving the objectives of survivor engagement with police and their willingness to share intelligence and to support a criminal investigation. It relied on trust and both partners working in the interest of the survivor. It was a partnership based on reciprocity. As one MPS officer interviewed for the CBH evaluation said:

*'We have an agreement with the house: we are a partnership, they are our partners, we are their partners. We refer people to them and vice versa. People who come to the house who haven't yet spoken to the police; if they decide they want to, then we will be contacted, and we will come and speak to them.'*

The MPS referred victims of modern slavery to CBH for support; in the first three years of its operation 42% of all referrals came from them. Subsequently CBH staff asked its guests if they would be willing to talk to the police. 'Project data shows that 50 out of the 86 (58%) women supported by CBH were interviewed or gave intelligence to the police during their stay. CBH staff understand that because of their experiences guests are in a unique position to disclose and report information that might prevent further crimes and uncover other victims.' (Murphy et al, 2018, p. 12). Within the Victim Navigator Pilot, victim navigators were reliant on police referring victims particularly where they were reacting to a case. Once they engaged with victims the navigators encouraged contact with the police as and when it was considered appropriate. 'Data from the CMS revealed that 82.3% of victims supported by a victim navigator were willing to engage on some level with the police, while 17.7% were not. The level of engagement victims were willing to offer varied from being willing just to take phone calls from police (11.8%), through providing intelligence or information to police (8.2%), providing a formal witness statement (8.2%) and providing an ABE interview (25.9%) up to supporting a prosecution (25.9%). This compares very favourably with the national picture in which just 33% victims were reported to be engaging with police investigations (MSPTU report 2020)' (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 16).

Snowdrop did not have a specific objective like CBH and the Victim Navigator Pilot to work in partnership with police and support victim engagement. However, its people-centred approach meant that where survivors were involved in a criminal investigation or prosecution the Snowdrop caseworker would respond to the needs related to the criminal justice process. Five clients were involved with criminal investigations during the evaluation period. Moreover, three clients 'were supported by Snowdrop to make criminal compensation claims and a total of £47,000 was awarded to these survivors' (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2019, p. 23). These successful claims indicate these victims of modern slavery had also cooperated with a criminal investigation of their case.

There is clear evidence that a strong partnership between an NGO that supports victims of modern slavery and police forces can achieve positive outcomes in terms of victim support and victim engagement with police and criminal investigations. It also has had an impact on prosecutions and convictions. 'Data provided by the House shows that since June 2015 there has been six prosecutions of traffickers as a result of evidence given by Bakhita House guests. This has resulted in a total of 47 years in prison for the six convicted traffickers' (Murphy et al., 2018, p 25.) It is this partnership that is seen as significant for aiding recovery and achieving criminal justice.

*'... by bringing them here. As I said we know that they're going to be taken care of and if we look after the victim and if we keep the victim happy and sort of move her life on for her, then we have the best chance of reaching a prosecution by far.'* (Police interview for CBH evaluation)

A case study included in the evaluation of the Snowdrop Project also evidences the role that NGO and police collaboration can play in supporting survivors during a criminal investigation and prosecution which had a successful outcome. The Snowdrop caseworker 'was able to work with the police and Victim Support to ensure that special measures were put in place, and that Jonas (a pseudonym) was able to give testimony via video link in a different place to the trial. His caseworker and volunteers from Snowdrop accompanied him while he viewed the 8.5 hours of video evidence, accompanied him to court for the pre-trial visit, and was able to support him on each of the five days he had to give evidence. Snowdrop was able to help him find things he could do that would help him not have panic attacks while he was testifying, such as holding ice packs, and was able to de brief with him and had a counsellor available for a specific one-off session after the trial concluded. Jonas' testimony resulted in his trafficker receiving a sentence of 13 years, and the family got a total of 43 years' imprisonment for the offenses against Jonas and others.' (Murphy and Goldsmith, 2019, p. 44)

Another element of this partnership was that the police could rely on CBH, Snowdrop and the victim navigators to support survivors after a police interview or supporting a prosecution as they might be left shaken and distressed by the experience. The support available within a safe house environment was viewed as a particularly commendable practice based on the experiences of some specialist MPS officers.

*'At least here they have got someone on hand twenty-four-seven you know to pick up the pieces really which...which...you know it can be harrowing.'* (Police interview conducted for CBH evaluation, p. 14)

From the survivor's perspective having the caseworker/navigator available to provide emotional support filled a key gap as this was not a police role.

*'I know that the Police are doing their part. But I've been left alone with depression, with crying and all that. That's not the Police's role and that is where [VN] has helped me.'* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Positive outcomes were discerned in these evaluations in relation to NGO and police collaboration around victim engagement. The police recognised survivors were in safe and supportive hands while NGOs acknowledged police were able to obtain vital intelligence that could help them identify other victims and to investigate and prosecute a crime of modern slavery and seek criminal justice. Moreover, in some cases financial compensation for victims was achieved.

### 3.2 Practices that facilitate survivors' engagement with police

In the course of the evaluations evidence was collected about practices that facilitated victim engagement with police. This ranged from the clothing police wore to how they met with survivors. Both CBH and victim navigators understood the importance of survivors seeing police as normal people, and not wearing the trappings of office that in their minds might confer fear or distrust. Thus those police who engaged directly with survivors wore plain clothes. As stated previously, the regular presence of police officers in Caritas Bakhita house helped normalise them. This is how a CBH staff person described the relationship with the police:

*'There's about sort of four and five of the police officers from the MET trafficking and kidnap unit who come here regularly so their faces are very familiar in this house... as I said those ones who come here, the girls will not know who they are necessarily if they haven't spoken to them but they'll pass them and they'll be... oh that's just a normal person there...they're wearing jeans and they're wearing a jumper and they're just normal people and... then if they do end up talking to them actually they're so gentle and they're so caring...they're very, very nice the detectives... we have other officers coming here and we try and make sure that they don't come in uniform where possible because that can be a bit daunting...the ones who come here regularly they're really wonderful.'*

Especially important, and what appears to be an agreed principle was that survivors should engage with police at their own pace; when they felt ready. A former guest at CBH confirmed that staff encouraged engagement but did not push it. She said:

*'Yeah they supported me, you know they supported and they didn't push me to do it, they never pushed me to do it, you know they said that if you feel...unsure to talk or you feel bad to talk don't do it you know...they just are supporting me like you know, but in a very, very good way but they never push me to do something. Everything I done interviews or stuff I've done by... you know because I wanted to do that but not because they pushed me to do that.'* (CBH Former Guest)

Police too sought to give survivors the time and space they needed to disclose information to them.

*'They let me talk. It's just that, I feel like when somebody's talking to me I need to just answer straight away and they give that, you know, reminding me sometimes that I can talk when I'm ready.'* (Interview with survivor for Victim Navigator evaluation)

*'if they don't want to at the start then that's absolutely fine...there's no pressure...no pressure from us, no pressure from the staff here and it allows that...for them to settle in and familiarity, I'm here quite a lot so are the rest of my team...we bob in and out, they see us...they see us chatting to...to the support staff, they see us chatting to other girls, they know we're human, they... you know they see the kind of human side of us, enjoying the tea and cake or whatever and so they...they look at us and think hang on... these...these people are actually OK.'* (Police officer interviewed for CBH evaluation)

The NGO staff also helped survivors understand the criminal justice process, and provided the practical and emotional support that helped enable survivors to engage with police and with the court. For example, at CBH support workers and staff 'talk to guests about what giving evidence involves, answer any questions they might have about the criminal investigation of the offence committed against them, introduce guests to detectives if they are not already known to them, and give emotional support to guests throughout the criminal justice process' (Murphy et al, 2018, p. 6). The case study from the Snowdrop evaluation indicates that it too offers both practical and emotional support during the criminal justice process and interviews conducted with survivors and navigators for the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot also evidenced it.

Another core principle that operates across these NGOs is that survivors have a choice about if, and when, they engage with the police. Meeting with police has been embedded in the needs assessment of CBH. Survivors are asked, 'Has she been interviewed by the police for a potential criminal investigation? If not, would she like to meet with the police?' The assessment policy places value on survivors participating in a criminal investigation but gives them agency; they

have a choice to engage with police early on in their recovery, or later or not at all. For victim navigators, acting as a bridge between survivors and the police is a central aspect of their role, but engagement is not a condition to receive support. Once again respect for survivors and acknowledgement of their agency are underlying principles in how the NGO operates.

NGOs sought to ensure that engagement with police was undertaken in a setting where survivors felt comfortable. CBH was designed to include a specially equipped interview room so that women could speak to police in a place where they felt safe.

NGO staff act as a point of contact between the survivor and the police which may begin at the point of a police operation for the victim navigators and/or occurs as they receive support by victim navigators, CBH or Snowdrop staff. Survivors interviewed for the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot indicated that the navigators continued contact was the key factor that helped them engage with the police and that it kept them in the loop about what was happening in terms of the criminal investigation.

Another pertinent factor was the support provided by the NGO. When survivors felt truly supported they felt able to engage with police and support a criminal investigation. This is illustrated by one survivor who reported to their victim navigator, “Thank you for your support I am ready to tell everything now”.

### 3.3 Role of NGOs as an independent bridge between survivors of modern slavery and the police

Three of the evaluations of NGOs<sup>15</sup> undertaken by BCRSEA affiliates provide evidence of the role they play in facilitating survivor engagement with the police. In addition, the three London NGOs<sup>16</sup> that provided evidence for the report, *Improving Our Response to Modern Slavery & Exploitation: supporting Chinese women*, all worked with the police, and hoped that the good practice they shared might inform police responses more widely.

The NGOs that played this role were characterised by having trusted relationships with police officers, and by the assurance that engagement would be victim-centred or in the case of Rahab and Tamar would be about the safety and welfare of the women encountered. Victim-centred engagement meant it was undertaken when survivors felt ready to meet with police officers, that interviews were conducted in a safe and comfortable setting, and that survivors had access to support.

The different stakeholders interviewed for these evaluations all identified that NGOs independence from the police, and their knowledge of criminal justice processes enabled them to act as a bridge to the police. They act as advocates for survivors, but at the same time, suggest the police can be trusted and information can be shared with them. The importance of the victim navigator being independent was remarked on by stakeholders including the police during the victim navigator evaluation.

*‘Our victims are told not to trust the police, not to trust anyone in authority, so we come in and we’re breaking down the doors and [the VN] coming in as a neutral person is a really good thing, and someone they can trust. She’s not there for the benefit of us, she’s there for the benefit of the victim.’* Police officer interviewed for the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot)

<sup>15</sup> Caritas Bakhita House, Victim Navigator Pilot and the Snowdrop Project.

<sup>16</sup> Caritas Bakhita House, Rahab and Tamar.

### 3.4 Survivors’ perspectives on engagement with police

As discussed, survivors have engaged with police and been involved in criminal investigations and prosecutions and this engagement was facilitated by support from the NGOs.

Less evidence was available about how they perceived these encounters. The evaluation of CBH noted that ‘guests were reluctant to elaborate on their experiences of co-operating with the police at the House. This is understandable because for many the decision to give information and intelligence would have been an extremely hard and fraught one. The data suggests, however, that, whilst the process was clearly a complicated and difficult one, most guests were made to feel comfortable by officers and that women were well supported afterwards.’ (Murphy et al, 2018, p. 14) One of the guests interviewed said:

*‘Yes, I did speak to police and I did tell them what happened before you know I work in different houses like that before to earn money to send back for my daughter and but now I’m here and safe in this house, so I don’t need to work like before. [Interviewer] And what was that like? It was okay, I felt comfortable.’*

The data collected for the interim evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot stated that most victims reported quite limited contact with police, but all reported they had been treated with kindness and respect. They described how they had had female officers present to afford consideration to people’s preferences, that they had been permitted to talk when they were ready and given adequate breaks during the interview process.

*‘Detective is very nice. He’s very kind. Police is – everything very nice.’* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

*‘Five or six times we have engaged with them and I have been very happy with how we have been treated.’* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

It was evident that NGOs providing a bridge to the police could be highly valued as it helped survivors express their feelings and seek justice.

*‘I want to help the Police the best way. I say if I need I will go in, I will coming to the court. I will come in to the court because I hate these people with all my soul and all my heart. I hate these people. I hate.’* (Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

### 3.5 Innovative role: victim navigators enhancing victim-centred policing practice and victim engagement with police

The NGO ‘Justice and Care designed a pilot project in 2018 involving ‘Victim Navigators’. It entailed embedding specialist independent workers into senior policing teams to provide expert input to modern slavery investigations and to directly support victims of modern slavery from the moment of identification. The Victim Navigator programme was therefore devised to fill a specific and important gap in existing service provision by forming a trusted bridge between the police and victims of modern slavery; and by flexibly and independently brokering support from external specialist services according to individual victims’ needs. The Victim Navigator role was to be embedded within law enforcement, with full access to the details of modern slavery cases, but with independence from the police to enable trust to be built with the victim. This was a unique feature of the role as most support services sit outside the police’ (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p 5).

The Victim Navigator Pilot was initially established in two police forces – Surrey and Kent – and subsequently expanded to Essex Police, Greater Manchester Police, Border Force Scotland, and most recently the Metropolitan Police Service. A central management system (CMS) for data collection was established at the start of the pilot and has been further developed over time in order to enhance the quality of evidence about actions taken and outcomes achieved.

What is unique about the Victim Navigator programme is the three intertwining pillars. Victim navigators provide support to victims of modern slavery, offer strategic advice to police on victim-centred criminal investigations, and help victims engage with police.

A number of benefits were identified from data collected from the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot. Police officers interviewed in all four force areas during the period of the evaluation agreed that victim navigators fulfilled one of the core objectives of the programme which was to free up police time and resource so they can focus on criminal investigations and wider organised crime groups, by managing day-to-day police contact with victims. 'Victim Navigators took on responsibilities related to victim support, ensuring victims' needs were met, and had regular contact with victims in relation to their recovery and to keep them engaged with or updated about the criminal investigation. This meant that police officers were able to focus on the criminal investigation and make best use of their expertise and skill set (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 17). The following quote from a police officer exemplifies the benefit to the victim and to the police arising from the victim navigator role:

*'We are dealing with really vulnerable victims here ... I have dealt with vulnerable victims and that distracts you so much, and rightly so, but having [VN's] assistance affords us more time on the investigation side and [the VN] gives them an absolutely sterling service. It is amazing. And she does a better job than we could do or are able to do. She has time so having a dedicated VN frees us up to do suspect [related] things and other enquiries. It really does.'*

Moreover, officers indicated navigators were able to provide more time and more holistic provision.

Another unique aspect of the victim navigator is their ability to offer strategic advice to police officers. 'This might entail the victim navigator encouraging the officer to build the evidence base in order to identify someone as a victim of modern slavery or helping the police plan an operation that put the victim's needs at the centre and ensured the National Referral Mechanism process was followed so there was more efficient access to support'. (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 9) According to one officer:

*'We would not be able to operate properly without her input. She gives us that extra insight, and grounded in the views of the victim... she reminds us that victims of trafficking might behave in certain ways and she is able to give us evidence from studies that have been done, and ideas from what other agencies have done... she has many contacts that help us dealing with these victims.'*

The victim navigator acting as a bridge between the survivor and the police is a significant aspect of their role. By building trust survivors are enabled to tell their stories to police and aid criminal investigations. The benefit of this role was illustrated by one police officer who said:

*'And some of the stories we have had, they've been horrendous. When they're relaxed and the trust is there, some of the stories that these people have come out with are shocking really. And its only with [the VN's] help that we have managed to get that out of them. And that is captured now in our best evidence and that sets the scene for the CPS and further down the line when we go to court.'*

Another significant aspect of the victim navigator role is their ability to act as a critical friend to police forces. A key finding of the evaluation was that victim navigators were successful 'in part, because they have the confidence and tenacity to challenge decisions (e.g. from police) and keep the victim at the focus of investigations. They have cast a critical eye over existing, historic or new cases. There were examples noted where victim navigators had successfully managed to have cases re-examined under the lens of modern slavery, or support the discovery of further victims in open cases. Moreover, there is evidence that senior officers re-affirmed that investigatory strategies need to be improved or that the force needs to learn from poor practice based on Victim Navigators' concerns.' (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 22)

The evaluation obtained evidence that the work of victim navigators has had an impact on policing practice, criminal investigations, victim support and victim engagement with police. Data from CMS shows that strategic advice was provided to 280 modern slavery investigations and 83 victims were cared for through a full support plan in the four police forces from the inception of the project in September 2018 through to 31st July 2020.

In the UK the Victim Navigator Pilot reflects a unique partnership between an NGO – Justice and Care – and police forces, with a victim navigator independent from but embedded within the force. The evaluation found that 'vital to this successful partnership arrangement, is 'force readiness', the police's willingness to utilise the resource of the victim navigator and permit them access to information and intelligence. The best outcomes were seen in forces where victim navigators were seen and used as credible resources who can add value to investigations.' (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 21)

## 4. What looks promising in terms of Cultural Mediation

Cultural mediation is seen as an increasingly important strand of work being carried out by affiliates of the Centre and also discussed in the voluntary sector in terms of its benefits and implementation challenges.

The report *Improving our Response to Modern Slavery & Exploitation: Supporting Chinese women* points out the importance of understanding the social and economic factors that have influenced Chinese women to seek job opportunities in the UK and which have made them vulnerable to exploitation and modern slavery. It highlights the complex job history that Chinese women experience and thus helps challenge a stereotype that Chinese women are solely victims of sexual exploitation. This knowledge can help improve police understanding of the Chinese victims they encounter and encourage them to seek a fuller picture of their experiences. It also suggests that they need to ask more open-ended questions to elicit responses that will help them evidence incidences of sexual exploitation and other forms of modern slavery.

Language was identified as a key issue for those seeking to offer support to Chinese women or to help them engage with police. The report addresses the issue of interpretation and the clarity of concepts that are commonly used but actually might not have an equivalent in Chinese.

The report also suggests how those responsible for service delivery could improve their response through suggestions based on the expertise developed over a period of years by these NGOs.

The report was based on five case studies of Chinese women who were supported by three NGOs based in the London boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea, supplemented by staff expertise acquired developing practice to work more effectively with Chinese women.

## 4.1 The importance of culturally specific services

Service providers should be alert to hidden vulnerabilities, as a result of cultural values and norms, and address such vulnerabilities accordingly in the support and integration plans.

In the last two years, BCRSEA has been involved in a project focusing on Albanian victims of human trafficking and providing tailored support to this ethnic group (Forthcoming Report). All the organisations that were part of this project, which had a focus on culture mediation, have taken a proactive and anticipatory approach, in which cultural awareness and competency were integral to the design of service provision.

As a result of the evidence obtained from this project, BCRSEA believes that a shift in mindset is required by organisations to fully comprehend the cultural dimension of their work and to incorporate strategies to unpick any cultural barriers that are presented. The organisations, who closely worked with an Albanian-speaking practitioner have started to address the issue and commonly referred vulnerable clients to the Albanian-speaking practitioner who led this project and supported the women holistically, who needed extra support to overcome cultural and language barriers. This practice meant that organisations actively considered the needs of the different groups of service users and offered a choice of access to culturally specific services. Moreover, they were proactive in efforts to engage beneficiaries meaningfully, by offering the additional layer of culture-focused support.

The forthcoming report (out for publication in Spring 2021), emphasizes the importance of services taking a proactive approach to identifying vulnerability to ensure that service users get the most suitable service as early as possible and engage purposefully with the provider. Such engagement with in-house or external specialists that can enable culturally specific provision means that beneficiaries will be in a better position to shape services and providers can embrace co-production<sup>17</sup> accordingly.

Furthermore, another crucial aspect of this work pointed out at the desirable outcomes for the women supported in terms of increased self-esteem, confidence, mental health, and improved ability to deal with the impacts of their trauma. Tailored cultural provisions that acknowledge and appreciate women's specific cultural needs and their upbringings and offer support in various languages to enable access are better positioned to gain the necessary trust of service users and consequently support them holistically and appropriately.

The evidence points to the incorporation of cultural mediation in services providing support to survivors or by police engaging with survivors as good practice.

## 5. What Looks Promising in Terms of Prevention

Since its inception STOP THE TRAFFIK has worked to prevent human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK and across the world. It has adopted a partnership approach and has worked with communities, businesses and other key stakeholders on prevention strategies. Based on the recent organisational evaluation of STT, there is evidence that what works is data sharing and its use, and engaging with businesses about risk in supply chains.

<sup>17</sup> Co-production is the process whereby service providers work together with service users to shape services, creating new opportunities for users to engage meaningfully and to contribute to wider social change.

## 5.1 The 'Collect, Analyse, Share and Use' Model

Central to STOP THE TRAFFIK's preventative work is the 'collect, analyse, and share' model that is based on developing collaborative partnerships at local, national and international levels. By collecting open source data and data held by a variety of organisations, STT is able to identify where human trafficking is taking place, to whom, by whom and for what purpose. It seeks to share this information for awareness-raising and preventative purposes. Subsequent to the organisational evaluation conducted in 2019, STT has added 'use' to its model in order to help organisations/partnerships make effective use of the data.

STT has sought 'to improve intelligence related to the risk of human trafficking and modern slavery locally, nationally and globally as well as imparting these risks to various audiences. STT has delivered social media campaigns with local partners in diverse settings. These campaigns have targeted specific locations, for example: Zambia; California, USA; Nigeria-Libya-Italy; Kenya and Uganda; Lithuania; and in the UK – Leicester, Cambridgeshire, Fenlands, Greater Manchester, Croydon and Lincolnshire. These have been collaborative with STT reaching out to various partners in the different locations. In each case, STT's campaigns aim to improve awareness of human trafficking risks and offer target communities opportunities to obtain advice from local partners. Local partners have confirmed that they benefitted from increased interactions with target communities and groups, such as increased calls to help lines, increased attendance at drop-in centres, etc.' (Brady and Van Dyke, 2020, p. 20)

STT works in partnership with Facebook to deliver targeted campaigns to inform communities about human trafficking and places where they can receive support. A recent campaign, directed at Lithuanians, was intended to enhance awareness of workers' rights and working conditions as well as sources of support, prior to them deciding to migrate to the UK for work. Monitoring and evaluation evidence indicates that these campaigns have an extensive reach. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that Facebook was able to reach many rural communities in Kenya and Uganda and raise awareness. This led to an increase in contact with NGOs, like Trace Kenya, that support victims of trafficking and work to build resilience in communities.

*'As a result of the campaign more people and organisations contacted TRACE for advice or to obtain more information about human trafficking. The figure was put at 100 calls. Interestingly the Facebook campaign also reached Kenyans in the Middle East, who contacted TRACE for help/advice as they thought they might be victims of trafficking. The campaign also raised TRACE's profile, it led to more discussion on the ground, and provided more opportunities for TRACE to engage with communities and to do more awareness raising.'* (Brady and Van Dyke, 2020, p 21)

A key element of STT's approach to campaigns is to identify and build local partnerships. These partners help to design and deliver and campaign. This partnership ensures the campaign is appropriate to the audience, and targeted communities are able to access local support.

The STT's 'Collect, Analyse, Share and Use' model has been employed by the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Group (MSE Group) that covers the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster Council and the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The STT Coordinator who works within this Tri-Borough has been promoting data collection amongst the partners of the MSE Group. The analysis of this data was shared with a specific Task and Finish Group who reviewed the findings and decided to adopt a campaign aimed at Filipino Domestic Workers as they represented the most distinct group that was vulnerable to exploitation and modern slavery. STOP THE TRAFFIK worked with specialist organisations Kalayaan, Kanlungan, Filipino Domestic Workers Association and the Voice of Domestic Workers to develop an intelligence report and design a creative social media campaign. The

intention was to reach out to Filipino domestic workers and explain their rights and where they could access support. In addition, the campaign sought to raise awareness of the signs of domestic servitude amongst the wider Filipino community and encourage the community to signpost exploited workers to named specialist organisations. The campaign reached 66,928 of the targeted audience. It resulted in some domestic workers contacting the specialist agencies for support and advice, and another large group put the phone numbers of agencies in their phones so could make contact in the future if they wanted help. Some users reported they had shared the video with friends and family in the Gulf countries so they would know their rights if they were brought to the UK. The issue of domestic work was discussed within families as a result of the campaign and there was an increased awareness of signs of domestic servitude and how to respond.

STOP THE TRAFFIK has aligned their collect, analyse, share and use models with prevention campaigns. It has also sought to push this approach global by working with IBM to develop the Traffik Analysis Hub (TA Hub) which is now an NGO in its own right. The TA Hub brings together information from across multiple sectors, including NGOs, law enforcement partners and financial services, and enables an intelligence-led approach to pro-actively tackle human trafficking. Currently the sectors that have begun contributing to and benefitting from the TA Hub are financial services institutions, NGOs and voluntary sector organizations and law enforcement and government agencies. While the TA Hub will have to be self-sustaining there is no cost to NGOs, law enforcement and academics. This means these partners can access the processed and analysed structured and unstructured data along with interpretative narratives and that they can use this evidence to decide how to act tackle human trafficking.

## 5.2 Prevention through work with private sector

STT has also used the relationship development approach in its work with businesses. It has sought to raise awareness of the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking through training and a risk assessment related to the sector in order to help businesses respond more effectively. 'A key corporate partner over the past few years has been the Whitbread group. Whitbread knew that it needed to respond to the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and that included raising awareness of the human trafficking risk amongst its many hotel and restaurant and construction sites. Whitbread's partnership with STT has resulted in a bespoke training programme that has been delivered at multiple levels within the company, including an e-Learning suite for all operational staff. STT also report that they have seen a significant improvement in Whitbread's perception of the risk of human trafficking in between the two supply chain audits it has conducted for Whitbread.' (Brady and Van Dyke, 2020, p 22)

A different approach to getting businesses on board to tackle modern slavery in supply chains was adopted in Greater Manchester where the STT Coordinator helped establish a Business Forum. 'The Forum, with a growing membership, includes commercial and quasi-commercial businesses, public sector organisations like the NHS, and the airport. It is an informal network and was organised to be sustainable. It provides an environment where local businesses can explore the risk of modern slavery, share experiences and ideas, and exchange good practice. STT/Challenger<sup>18</sup> shares up-to-date data on the picture of modern slavery, emerging trends and the impacts it might have on businesses. According to a key informant the Forum has been of value to the local business community because, many businesses were caught unawares when the Modern Slavery Act was introduced, especially in relation to Section 54 on supply chains. Moreover, the public sector had not given a thought about supply chains beyond Tier 1, the first level of suppliers.' (Brady and Van Dyke, p. 23)

<sup>18</sup> Challenger is the Greater Manchester Police's response to organised crime groups.

In addition, the STT Coordinator trained the procurement team at the University of Manchester, raised awareness of the breadth of modern slavery and human trafficking and how to spot signs, and enabled staff to feel confident about raising issues with its contractors. The University of Manchester is now trying to work collaboratively with its suppliers to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking. Another outcome is the development of its own activities with its contractors, including Balfour Beattie and catering suppliers. As a result, there is evidence that STT has been impactful in relation to prevention both within the local business community but also more widely because of the reach of some of these businesses.

## 6. What looks promising in terms of developing awareness and capacity amongst frontline professionals

The evaluations of the Snowdrop Project, the Victim Navigator Pilot and STOP THE TRAFFIK included evidence of training offered to a variety of stakeholders. The training was intended to build capacity amongst front-line professionals in order to improve the identification of victims of modern slavery, to ensure victims were safeguarded, to enhance support through referral pathways, and to build partnerships.

Snowdrop trained over 800 UK professionals<sup>19</sup> on topics related to modern slavery and the long-term support needs of survivors over the evaluation period. It also spoke at events attended by at least 3200 professionals, practitioners, employers and members of the general public. In addition, it worked at developing positive working relationships with professionals in key service areas in Sheffield as well as holding difficult conversations around challenges to accessing local services. Snowdrop hopes that these forms of engagement improve survivors' access to services, and that agencies have a better understanding of survivors' long-term needs.

Victim navigators also provided training as part of their role. During the evaluation period 723 police officers were trained<sup>20</sup> and 825 other stakeholders.<sup>21</sup> 'There is some evidence from interviews with police that training improved police officers' knowledge of modern slavery and therefore better equipped them to identify victims, and respond more effectively to modern slavery cases. Moreover, post-training feedback corroborated this outcome. For example, 100% of officers in the Roads Policing Unit who were trained by the Surrey victim navigator felt they were better able to identify victims and 97% felt they were more aware of the support needs of victims. Some also suggested how the training might change their behaviour. They said: "Think wider and investigate suspect cases earlier when opportunity arises." "Will make me think about jobs as a potential MSHT issue." (Van Dyke and Senker, 2020, p. 19)

From the victim navigator's perspective, police awareness of how to identify victims of modern slavery was the essential first step to their engagement with them. One navigator explained the importance of training.

<sup>19</sup> These professionals included: social workers, housing officers, midwifery students, local authority employees, police officers and business people

<sup>20</sup> 'Police trained included Road Policing Units, Firearms teams, Public Protection Support Units, Tactical advisors, Neighbourhood Policing Teams responding officers, Victim and Witness Care Unit officers, Discovery Teams, Investigative teams, Prevent and Protect officers, Command Teams, Violence and Vulnerability teams, Covert intel and special ops teams and Police and Crime Commissioners. A further 40 border force officers also received training from the VNs.' (VN Pilot Interim Evaluation)

<sup>21</sup> 'Other stakeholders trained include safeguarding leads and frontline staff at various hospitals, youth offending teams, local authorities, charities including Migrant Help and the Red Cross, faith groups and the registration service.' (VN Pilot Interim Evaluation)

*'Essentially, the VN's role depends on police correctly identifying victims who we can then support, so training is a fundamental part of that, as a number of police will have never received formal training on this complex topic.'*

Thousands of front-line professionals have received training from STT Coordinators as part of their Community Programme.<sup>22</sup> Pre and post training evaluations indicated that training increased professionals knowledge and improved their confidence in responding to modern slavery. In Greater Manchester the significant increase in the number of referrals of potential victims of modern slavery to the police from NGOs and from local authorities were attributed to the actions of the STT Coordinator. The Coordinator provided training to front-line professionals and established an NGO Forum where participants exchanged information and shared good practice. Referring potential victims to the specialist Modern Slavery Unit in the Greater Manchester Police was one topic covered in the training/information exchange.

## 7. What looks promising in terms of fostering systemic change

There is evidence that NGOs are seeking systemic change in how public bodies respond to modern slavery. The Human Trafficking Foundation's London Project exemplifies this approach through the publication of resources to help local authorities identify victims, understand their powers and responsibilities, and develop a referral pathway for adult victims. In addition, the promotion of single points of contact in local authorities, the police and the NHS are aimed at embedding structures to facilitate responses to modern slavery.

The evaluation of STOP THE TRAFFIK identified the role it played in systemic change through the inclusion of Section 54 on Transparency in Supply Chains in the UK's Modern Slavery Act and in Australia's Modern Slavery Act. The evaluation also pointed to systemic change in organisational practice as an outcome of the work of the STT Coordinator in London. She facilitated the development of bespoke Modern Slavery Adult Referral Pathways which have been signed off by the London Boroughs of Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea. In addition, she helped to ensure front-line professionals received training to understand modern slavery and their role and responsibilities with respect to the pathway.

In Greater Manchester the STT Coordinator worked with NGOs tracking victims' journeys and looked at where the system was not working well. Lack of emergency accommodation was identified as a problem and subsequently the Police and Crime Commissioner in Greater Manchester funded such accommodation as well as food, clothing and toiletries for victims of modern slavery.

The evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot has evidenced systemic change in a number of police forces, with police officers and victim navigators collaborating on supporting victims of modern slavery and developing victim-centred operational planning and criminal investigations. Moreover, victim navigators have helped push modern slavery up the police agenda and in one police force has been instrumental in increasing the resources attached to the crime of modern slavery. Guidance produced by victim navigators is intended to raise awareness amongst police officers and to alter behaviour in relation to identifying victims of modern slavery.

<sup>22</sup> The range of professionals covered was extensive, and included, amongst others: police officers, Border Force, adult and child social workers and safeguarding teams, Local Authority Trading Standards staff, NHS staff, Manchester University Students (doctors, midwives, nurses), and HMRC Tax Evasion Officers.

The *Initial Response Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking/Clandestine Entry guide* has been placed in all police force cars in Essex and Kent, while the *Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: Identifying a Potential Victim guide* has been placed on a modern slavery app on Surrey police officers' phones.

## 8. What looks promising in terms of Survivor Voice, Service User Engagement and Evaluation

Re-Place, Caritas Bakhita House, Snowdrop, STOP THE TRAFFIK and the Victim Navigator Pilot all commissioned an evaluation of their work by affiliates of the BCRSEA. The intention was to assess whether they were achieving their objectives, and to identify what was working well and what they could do better in the future. These independent evaluations shifted these organisations from a reliance on internal reflection and learning to more robust evidence to shape how they moved forward.

All evaluations collected evidence from the range of stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, service users/survivors, and external partners.

The four NGOs that directly supported survivors of modern slavery collected data about survivors' characteristics, use of services and survivor outcomes. However, the evaluations highlighted some weaknesses in data collection, with Snowdrop and the Victim Navigator Pilot indicating that greater attention was being paid to develop more robust systems of data collection.

What is significant about the data collection is the emphasis on obtaining information that documents survivor outcomes in terms of feelings of safety and measures of improved well-being, as well as move on accommodation. Monitoring and evaluation tools that were introduced aimed to ensure the focus was not on the delivery of particular services but in terms of meeting survivors' needs and enhancing their well-being and agency. Enabling survivors to indicate what were important changes arising from the support they received enables a more complete picture of what is meaningful to them to emerge. For example, survivors interviewed for the evaluation of the Victim Navigator Pilot made reference to feeling safe, feeling free to make decisions about how they spent their time or money, being able to run, being able to talk, being more alive, and engaging in 'normal' activities.

*She invited me out...Went to coffee, had a coffee together, she offer quite a lot of things that I could come out and do, like cooking and even bringing my daughters and meet other people. That really was so close to my heart. That was very precious.'*  
(Victim interviewed for evaluation of Victim Navigator Pilot)

Listening to survivors is a method of data collection that can be used to identify the impact of support on their lives and what they deem as important outcomes. In the evaluations reviewed, survivors' voices provided affirmation of the way the NGOs' working practices benefitted them. The casework approach adopted by the NGOs is based around listening to and supporting survivors on their road to recovery through dialogue about their situation and what their needs are at different periods of time. This people/victim-centred approach ensures that their voices frame NGO responses to their individual needs. There were other means employed to hear survivors' voices or about users' engagement which were aimed at learning from them and using this knowledge to reflect on and possibly change practice.

There were other means employed to hear survivors' voices or about users' engagement which were aimed at learning from them and using this knowledge to reflect on and possibly change practice. The Snowdrop Project routinely ask clients of counselling services to provide feedback, and there is a complaints procedure through which complaints are dealt with in a timely manner and this has led to a change in policy. A 'Have Your Say' discussion group was set up to allow users to voice any issues or ideas over pizza.

Since the evaluation and the piloting of the discussion groups with service users, Snowdrop is putting into place novel mechanisms to give clients more ownership of the process and support them to be 'co-producers.'<sup>23</sup> Snowdrop aims to make the whole procedure less tokenistic and more rewarding for the users, particularly in terms of gaining transferable skills. In order to achieve meaningful service-user engagement and co-production, Snowdrop will implement a skills exchange programme, whereby service users are supported to gain new sets of skills that would enable them to have their voices heard in any platform, not just at the support organisation. Such a programme intends to equip service users with tools to make co-production an enjoyable and empowering process.

*'...then it becomes much more of a natural progression rather than just me going - Is there anybody that fancies doing this [discussion/consultation group] and them not having the tools to be able to do that?'* (Lara Bundock, Snowdrop)

## 9. Moving Forward: Recommendations

A number of recommendations emerge from the robust findings presented in this report which is the result of an analysis of independent and objective practice-based research.

- The Skills for Care *Training Framework* also seeks to improve the knowledge and skills of professionals who may encounter victims but are unlikely to interact beyond identifying them (Tier 1) and those who are 'First Responders' who have a duty to provide care, support and advice to victims of modern slavery and may have a responsibility to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism (Tier 2). The transformation of these core skills and knowledge into courses that are available to professionals is a recommended action. The Salvation Army has expressed interest in the development of courses that meet Tier 2 standards with the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse. BCRSEA is currently exploring accreditation and funding for the development of such a course in order to improve professional practice.
  - Evidence included in this report demonstrated the critical role that NGOs can play in acting as a bridge between survivors of modern slavery and the police. Moving forward it is recommended that more NGOs that support survivors of modern slavery consider developing a trusted relationship with the police so they can play this bridging role. They can help allay survivors' fears, help them understand the criminal justice process, help them engage with a criminal investigation and help alleviate distress that might arise in seeking criminal justice.
- The common aims, principles, and processes that emerged from evaluations of NGOs providing support services to survivors of modern slavery and vulnerable adults can be used to create a broad framework that can guide good practice. Moreover, it can be used to create training materials drawing on examples from the report.
  - Seeking independent and objective evaluations of activities and the outcomes achieved provides robust evidence of what is working, for whom, and what areas of practice need to be improved. Practice-based research provides the sector with an opportunity for learning and improving practice, as well as providing evidence that may be relevant to policy design and policy implementation.
  - NGOs providing services to survivors of modern slavery and to people with vulnerabilities should develop robust systems of data collection so they can monitor both activities and outcomes for those they work with.
  - Listening to survivors and service users should be embedded in practice going forward as it ensures support meets the individuals' needs and allows for agency. Moreover, it provides opportunities to understand what is meaningful from survivors'/users' perspectives and to identify gaps in provision.
  - The development of professional standards for organisations supporting survivors of modern slavery presents the opportunity to improve the knowledge and skills of those working with survivors. The current short course/Masters level module offered at St Marys University on *Identification, Support and Care of Victims of Modern Day Slavery* is available to professionals working with survivors of modern slavery and meets Tier 3 of the Skills for Care *Training Framework: Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking*.

<sup>23</sup> Co-production in this instance does not relate only to involvement in service evaluation, but will also include co-production around communications, the organisational development and also on national policy.



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