

ACTION PLAN

FOR SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP IN
THE NEXT DECADE

2023 - 2033



A SHARED VISION AND PLAN FOR CO-CREATING
A GLOBAL, SURVIVOR-LED, ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT



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FOR SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP IN THE NEXT DECADE
2023 - 2033

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We also want to recognize the contributions of the 170 survivor leaders who built the shared vision of survivor leadership, and the 72 survivor leaders who reviewed and provided feedback on an earlier version of this document.

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Anxhela Bruci, Bhim Kumar Newar, Eseosa Eguamwense, Rebekah Layton, and Zuhura Hussein. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated facilitators, whose passion, commitment, and ability to create safe, collaborative spaces have been instrumental in making this process meaningful and successful. We also appreciate their contributions drafting and reviewing this document.

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We also want to thank all the interpreters who helped us to communicate across languages and strategize while navigating connectivity challenges.

Survivor Alliance:

Daniela Fonkatz and Chanel Dionne were inaugural members of our Movement Building team as Director and Coordinator, respectively. They led the design and implementation of the strategy, process, and methodology for the Visioning Workshops, the Action Plan Working Groups, the member feedback sessions, and the overall development of this Action Plan document. We want to send our heartfelt thanks to Daniela and Chanel for pouring their hearts into this process and into the people involved from around the world. We also want to acknowledge Minh Dang, our Founder and Executive Director for her vision in bringing survivor leaders together to create this plan, and for providing strategic feedback throughout the process.

Survivor Alliance would like to thank Porticus and Walk Free for their generous support in creating this Action Plan.

ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION

National action plans to combat human trafficking, forced labor, and/or modern slavery¹ are often released by national governments to indicate their priorities and commitment to anti-trafficking efforts². Although the “inclusion of victims” is recommended by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in their guidance manual³, this widespread inclusion remains to be seen and felt by people with lived experience.

The Action Plan for Survivor Leadership in the Next Decade 2023-2033 (hereafter, “Action Plan”) you are about to read is survivor-led and survivor-informed. This plan defines a survivor as someone who has exited a situation of human trafficking and may or may not be receiving social services through a registered governmental or non-governmental organization (NGO). Survivors are people who were once victimized, but now are members of our community, and whose expertise is born from their lived experience. Following this definition, survivor leaders are those with lived experience expertise who have taken the courageous step to share their expertise for the purpose of social change.

The creation of the Action Plan was supported by [Survivor Alliance](#)⁴, an international NGO whose mission is to unite and empower survivors of human trafficking and slavery to be leaders of the anti-trafficking movement. Survivor Alliance was established to fill a gap in the professional sector that served people with lived experience of human trafficking. At the time of the organisation’s public launch in 2018, there was no concerted international effort to bring survivors together for capacity building and movement building. The accepted approach was to focus on the identification of victims, and short-term crisis support. Despite decades of survivor leaders asking for long-term solutions such as employment opportunities and leadership development, these solutions remain in the minority of anti-trafficking interventions.

Twenty-three years after the ratification of the Palermo Protocol⁵ - and many hours of advocacy from survivor leaders later - there is now a cultural and mindset shift in the professional anti-trafficking sector towards valuing survivors’ lived experience.

This action plan contributes to this ongoing shift and hopes to inspire changes to policy and practice. Survivor Alliance does not claim ownership over this plan; it was co-created by over 200 survivor leaders and we hope that it will be improved upon by at least 200 more.

In the following pages, you will learn about the methodology employed to create this plan, and the variety of avenues we offered to survivor leaders to contribute to the Action Plan. We will also share anonymized data on the demographics of the survivor leaders who engaged in the process.

¹Survivor Alliance utilizes the United Nations definitions of slavery and human trafficking for determining its membership. In written reports, we utilize a variety of terms to match existing publications and policies. For the sake of brevity, we will only use the term human trafficking for the remainder of this document.

²For example [US National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking](#), [Australian National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery](#), and [Malta’s National Action Plan on Human Trafficking \(2020-2023\)](#).

³Fundamentals, Toolkit on Developing National Action Plans on Forced Labour, Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2020.

⁴You can learn more about Survivor Alliance and our Movement Building Program at our website

<https://www.survivoralliance.org/movement-building>.

⁵United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children, 2000.

Next, you will read the vision statement that was a precursor to creating this action plan. The vision statement was both a dreaming exercise and an effort to set our eyes on a target. It answers the question: Toward what goal will this action plan lead us?

Engaging survivor leaders in articulating their vision for survivor leadership over the next decade ensures that the collective efforts of this social movement are informed directly by survivors. Too often, survivors are only included after targets and objectives are decided. Our imaginations and hopes are often presumed to be the same as the decision-makers; yet, the whole purpose of lived experience expertise is that it brings unique and different contributions.

The vision statement is followed by the Action Plan itself. The Action Plan is grouped into four themes: Survivor-led Global Movement, Decision-making, Direct Services, and Production of Knowledge. We will describe each theme and explain how it fits into survivors' larger vision. Then, the themes will be broken down into goals and the concrete action steps that are needed to achieve those goals.

We will also present three additional sections. These emerged during the project's visioning and action planning and are relevant to the successful implementation of this Action Plan. First, we share what survivor leaders need for capacity building. Next, we describe the barriers that hinder survivor leader engagement. Lastly, we make a call to action to our allies.

This Action Plan sets out a vision for what survivor leadership looks like in real terms, and how we will get there. Releasing this plan is a step towards survivors charting our own destiny, and we are inviting all who want to support us to follow our lead.



Minh Dang
Executive Director
Survivor Alliance



HOW THIS ACTION PLAN WAS CO-CREATED

The development of this Action Plan began in 2021 when Survivor Alliance hosted the World Congress (“the Congress”), the first fully survivor-led and facilitated global conference on anti-trafficking. The Congress was attended by close to 200 survivor leaders representing 10 different countries and 60 trusted allies. Our vision for the Congress was to increase the visibility of survivor leadership in anti-trafficking convenings, which are often missing the input and voices of survivors due to expensive travel and registration costs. The congress was a free and collaborative space that allowed survivors and our allies to come together to start developing a 10-year plan to advance survivor leadership within the anti-trafficking and anti-slavery movement⁶.

In July and August of 2022, Survivor Alliance’s Movement Building team hosted 12 survivor-only Visioning Workshops. With 170 attendees representing 20 different countries, participants connected through their collective experiences and expertise to create a shared vision of a global movement where survivors take the front seat as change and decision-makers. In these spaces, no dream was too big and no idea was too small to share. These collaborative and forward-thinking workshops captured the brave, thought-provoking, and abundantly creative power of survivors, highlighting a known yet unpopular truth: Survivors are so much more than our trauma stories.

We are capable of leading our movement.

Following the Visioning Workshops, Survivor Alliance selected 60 survivor leaders from across 20 countries to take part in a six-month-long multilingual and multicultural strategic planning process to develop an action plan. Leaders were divided into six working groups according to the different thematic topic areas. Then, they met to collectively identify goals and demands for each of the selected themes.

After the working groups, Survivor Alliance facilitated five survivor-only feedback sessions to ensure that the voices of those who weren’t able to join the working groups due to their limited capacity were included. Eighty-two survivors from across 12 countries met to review the Action Plan and provide their input and recommendations. An additional 55 survivors representing 10 countries submitted their written feedback.

“

"We discussed a lot, and very important points emerged. We were able to get together survivors from different countries to express their views and how survivor-led organizations will be formed in the future. I feel very privileged to be able to participate and voice my opinion"

- Working Group Member

”

⁶To learn more about the World Congress, you can read our [full report here](#).

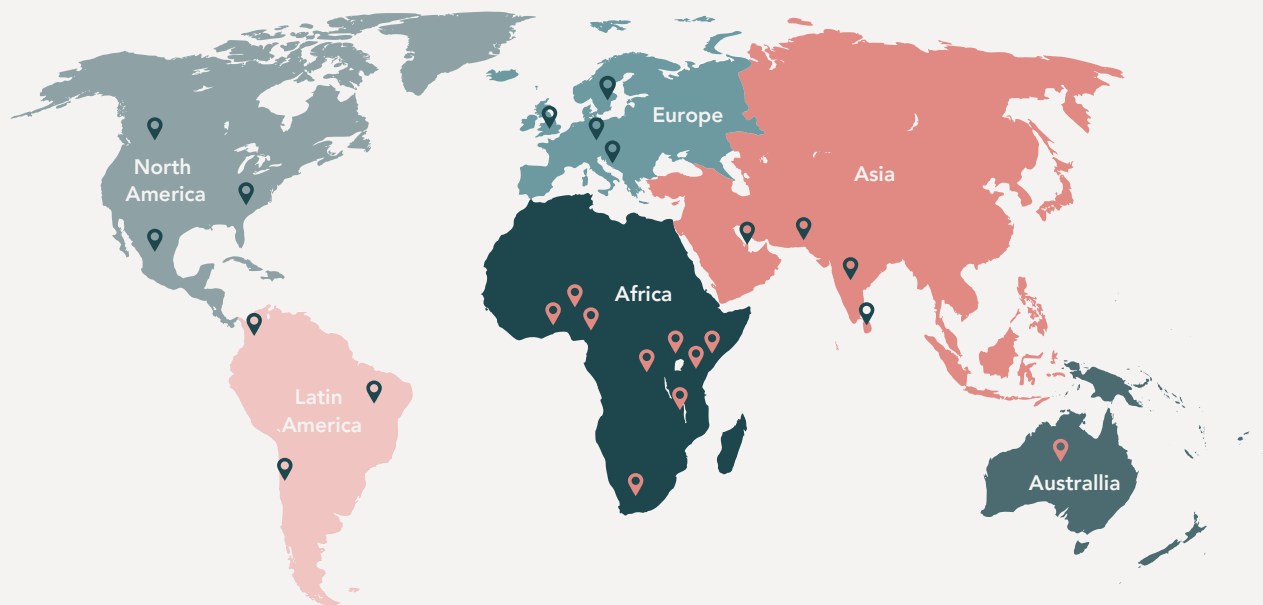
We concluded that a majority of the decisions, policies, service models, advocacy efforts, and even pay structures have been created by allies and leaders who don't share our lived experiences. This Action Plan is our call to change this practice.

Survivors should be the leaders of the anti-trafficking and anti-slavery movement.

This Action Plan envisions how we will make this a reality within the next decade.

Action Plan Participants' Location by Country

World map image with dots representing the countries represented by survivors involved in creating the Action Plan. One dot represents one country. The dots are dispersed across the map, indicating a global presence.



Africa: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda;
Asia: India, Nepal, Qatar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka; **Australia:** Australia; **Latin America:** Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Mexico;
North America: Canada, USA; **Europe:** Albania, Germany, Sweden, UK

Limitations

As with everything we do, there are key limitations to this Action Plan. We want to acknowledge that despite the breadth of input from survivors, there are still important communities and voices that are missing or underrepresented in this report. We hope that those communities will accept our invitation to expand, edit, and evolve this plan.

We also recognize that inherent in building a collective voice can be the sidelining of minority perspectives and opinions. Diversity of perspectives is essential to a thriving community. We welcome in good faith, collaborative conversations with dissenting or alternative perspectives.

OUR SHARED VISION

The following text was built from contributions shared by a participant during one of the Visioning Workshops. It was enriched by complementing ideas and dreams from the other eleven workshops.

In ten years, survivors will no longer need to be advocates for change. WHY? Because WE will be the change.

We WILL be therapists. The therapist who will personally understand the challenges that survivors of human trafficking face. The therapist who will do effective work in mental health and trauma-informed care.

We WILL be doctors. The doctors who can identify trafficking and care for survivors in a more informed way.

We WILL be law enforcement officers. The officers who will vet and train all other law enforcement on how to recover and protect survivors. We will be the officers who hold other officers accountable for their wrongdoings - past and present.

We WILL be executive directors of anti-trafficking organizations. We WILL be human resource directors and CEOs with effective hiring processes. We WILL be directors who understand the benefits of employing survivors and understand the type of support that is needed for survivors to thrive and grow.

We WILL be in the legislature. We will write the bills on immigration and compensation. We will write and enforce the laws that prosecute exploiters.

We WILL be an ALL-inclusive unified community, where a diversity of experiences and perspectives are celebrated and welcomed. We as survivors will be the ones that have ascended into the ranks of government order to make the change.

We WILL be the representatives of our communities, cities, states, and countries to help eradicate human trafficking globally. We WILL all have a seat at the table because WE created the table. This is the table where it will be common to hear, "I see you. I hear you. I believe you."

We WILL be the researchers and authors. The experts that provide case studies, books, and educational materials that include our lived experiences, coupled with refined statistics, for a more accurate depiction of human trafficking.

We will be the movement healers and builders, addressing harm done to survivors by the sector and providing alternative methods for healing. We will recognize the intersections of oppressions, the traumas that survivors carry in addition to the traumas of human trafficking. We will hold brave spaces for us to heal in community - to be in spaces of comfort and to feel taken care of.

We will honor our individual and collective lived experiences, cultivating leadership from our lived experiences. We will decolonize the social structures, the knowledge production, and the thought patterns that uphold oppression. And we will bring our joy and light, restoring passion to our movement.

In the next ten years, we won't have to ASK for the change because WE WILL BE THE CHANGE.

You can read or watch this powerful poetic statement in [English](#), [Bengali](#), [Hindi](#), [Swahili](#), [Spanish](#), and [Portuguese](#) in these videos.

THE ACTION PLAN



Our Action Plan is discussed through four key themes:

1. Survivors Leading the Global Anti-trafficking Movement.
2. Survivors in Decision-making Positions.
3. Survivors Providing Direct Services.
4. Survivors Leading the Production of Knowledge.

Each of these themes encompass specific goals that we believe are necessary to achieving our vision of survivor leadership. In the following sections, you will read a short description about each theme, and then learn in-depth about each goal associated with that theme. Each goal is then followed by specific actions required to achieve the goal. In total, we have outlined fourteen goals and 145 actions in this Action Plan.

SURVIVORS LEADING THE GLOBAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

- GOAL 1:** We will foster a survivor-led anti-trafficking movement
- GOAL 2:** We will build a diverse, inclusive, and intersectional movement
- GOAL 3:** We will elevate collective healing as a movement practice
- GOAL 4:** We will create and strengthen survivor-led organizations.
- GOAL 5:** We will strengthen collaboration with allies

SURVIVORS IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

- GOAL 1:** We will be in decision making roles in the anti-trafficking sector
- GOAL 2:** We will be in decision making roles in public institutions
- GOAL 3:** We will lead and influence policy and legislation

SURVIVORS PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICES

- GOAL 1:** We will hold diverse roles throughout organizations providing direct services
- GOAL 2:** We will improve the conditions for survivors employed in direct services
- GOAL 3:** We will inform best practices for direct services

SURVIVORS LEADING THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

- GOAL 1:** We will lead the academic production of knowledge
- GOAL 2:** We will lead anti-trafficking education for diverse audiences
- GOAL 3:** We will influence the media and cultural narrative around human trafficking and slavery

SURVIVORS LEADING THE GLOBAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

Those who currently have the largest influence in fighting human trafficking are not the ones who have experienced it. Anti-trafficking work is shaped by governments and large, well-funded anti-trafficking organizations and foundations. While we recognize the important efforts of frontline NGOs and their staff, their work is often driven by funding priorities and their ability to convince the public to donate to their work.

We want to change the way things are currently done and shift the structure of the work from a charity-focused sector to a grassroots social movement - one that follows the principles of movement building. One that is by, of, and for the people.

As survivors, we want to make sure that we are the most important part of this movement. In the box are the key goals for our community that we think are needed to make us front and center in fighting for change:



Goal 1: We will build community and mobilize our collective power to influence change.

Goal 2: We will build a diverse, inclusive, and Intersectional movement.

Goal 3: We will elevate collective healing as a core practice in our movement and organizations.

Goal 4: We will facilitate the creation, promotion, and improvement of survivor-led organizations.

Goal 5: We will seek to strengthen collaborations between survivor-led organizations and other organizations in the anti-trafficking sector.

Goal 1: We will build community and mobilize our collective power to influence change.

As survivors, we will work together to build and lead a global movement against human trafficking. Our movement will be inclusive for all survivors of trafficking, no matter their background or identity. We will build a community where every survivor can feel safe enough and brave enough to share their experiences and expertise, and have a sense of belonging. We will take action together to bring joy and restore passion to our movement.

With a shared vision and agenda for change, we will organize and harness our collective power and leadership. By implementing the actions outlined in this Plan, we will contribute to creating a world where survivors' voices are amplified and exploitation is eradicated.

Because of our firsthand experiences, survivors possess a depth of understanding and insight into the intricate realities of human trafficking. It is imperative that we honor and acknowledge our unique perspectives, our agency, and our expertise when addressing this multifaceted issue. Survivors have a deep understanding of the spectrum of exploitation and its intersecting issues, such as intimate partner violence, LGBTQIA+ concerns and vulnerabilities, poverty, racism, sexism, homelessness, healthcare access, ecology and climate change, reproductive rights, migrant rights, trauma, disability and accessibility, and much more.

Actions:

- 1** Organize activities that bring survivor leaders from around the world together to strategize and develop effective approaches for building and advancing our **shared vision to drive change**. These activities will provide opportunities for us to share our experiences, insights, and best practices, fostering a sense of unity and empowerment.
- 2** Establish **Community Organizing training** for survivor leaders to develop the skills and strategies for movement building and direct actions. These opportunities will allow us to build our capacities and create sound strategies for change.
- 3** Create a **global database of survivor leaders**, enabling connection and the sharing of skills and resources for fighting trafficking, promoting survivor leadership, and facilitating collective healing. This database will serve as a platform for collaboration, support, and networking among survivor-led initiatives worldwide.
- 4** Establish organized safe spaces with guidelines designed to encourage courageous and challenging conversations among survivor leaders, as well as between survivor-led organizations and other anti-trafficking entities. These spaces will promote understanding and strengthen collaboration in order to address critical issues within the movement.
- 5** Explore and **establish connections with other global social movements**, such as the feminist movement and labor unions, to learn from their experiences and exchange strategies. By fostering cross-movement collaboration and solidarity, we can leverage our collective strength and advocate for comprehensive change.

- 6** Engage with donors to advocate for **increased funding specifically directed towards movement building strategies** led by survivor leaders. Meetings with donors will aim to highlight the importance of survivor-led initiatives and emphasize the need for sustained financial support to advance our cause.
- 7** Create a comprehensive **resource that lists funding sources available for survivor-led projects and organizations**. This resource will facilitate access to financial support and strengthen the sustainability of survivor-led initiatives, empowering them to continue their critical work.
- 8** Establish capacities and mechanisms for **collective accountability** within non-profit organizations operating in the anti-trafficking sector. This will ensure transparency, ethical practices, and responsible governance, which will foster trust and enhance the overall effectiveness of the movement.
- 9** Conduct **research and collect data to monitor the allocation of funding** for anti-trafficking efforts. This information will be used to advocate for increased funding for survivor-led organizations, leveraging evidence that demonstrates the impact and value of these initiatives in combating trafficking and supporting survivors.
- 10** Prioritize the utilization of **art and creative expression as powerful tools** for building a global movement. By incorporating creative mediums, we can amplify survivor voices, engage broader audiences, and evoke meaningful emotional responses that drive societal awareness and action.
- 11** Establish a **designated day worldwide to honor survivors of human trafficking**, creating a platform for their stories, experiences and resilience. This will contribute to the recognition, celebration and understanding of survivor leaders.
- 12** Pursue **strategic partnerships with organizations in the sector**, social movement NGOs, public institutions, and the private sector for the implementation of this Action Plan. This will contribute to creating a collective commitment to achieving its vision and goals.
- 13** Organize **survivor-led conferences on human trafficking** to bring together organizations and institutions working in the field and encourage open dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collective efforts to combat trafficking. This collaborative approach will address various forms of modern slavery, promoting comprehensive solutions at both regional and continental levels.
- 14** Organize regular global meetings for survivor leaders to **document and monitor the implementation of this Action Plan**, ensuring that our ongoing actions stay responsive and relevant as issues change and new challenges arise.

Goal 2: We will build a diverse, inclusive, and intersectional movement.

We aspire to cultivate a community where every individual feels welcome, connected, and valued. We recognize that our differences make us stronger and we celebrate the richness and uniqueness of each person's experiences and perspectives. By harnessing the power of unity within our diverse group, we will effectively challenge and dismantle the oppressive structures embedded within our society.

We are determined to do the necessary internal work to understand and acknowledge how different identities and forms of oppression intersect. This commitment particularly extends to marginalized communities like women, Black Indigenous People of Color, LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual), neurodiverse survivors, people with disabilities, elderly survivors, individuals from the Global South, and young leaders. This intentional focus ensures that our movement reflects our values and actively contributes to the creation of a more just society. We seek to dismantle systems of oppression such as patriarchy, white supremacy, capitalism, colonialism, and ableism that perpetuate inequality and marginalization.

We will commit to language and disability justice, allowing survivor leaders to communicate and be informed in the language of their preferences and creating spaces that are accessible and intentionally designed to welcome all of us.

To enhance and strengthen diversity, inclusivity, and intersectionality within the social justice movement, we will actively foster collaborations and solidarity among various movements dedicated to addressing systemic oppression. By joining forces and working together, we can effectively tackle the interconnected web of discriminatory systems and significantly amplify our collective impact.

We will keep promoting spaces that encourage heart-to-heart connections among leaders of the anti-trafficking movement. In order to build transformative change, we must recognize and elevate all of our stories in all their brave, bold, and beautiful diversity.

Actions:

- 1** Create and disseminate **information that reflects the diverse identities** and experiences of survivors. This will ensure that the narratives and resources produced encompasses the full spectrum of survivor experiences, amplifying the voices of marginalized individuals within the movement.
- 2** Organize global initiatives that support survivor leaders to reflect on and **learn about the diversity of survivors' experiences**. This includes encouraging leaders to examine their own biases and beliefs, and the behaviors that result from them. Doing so will foster personal growth and a more inclusive approach.
- 3** Develop survivor-led awareness campaigns and **organize collective activities that foster the recognition of intersectionality among marginalized identities**. Specifically, focus on women, Black Indigenous People of Color, LGBTQIA+, neurodiverse survivors, and people with disabilities, and the various forms of oppression they face. This will promote a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of their experiences.

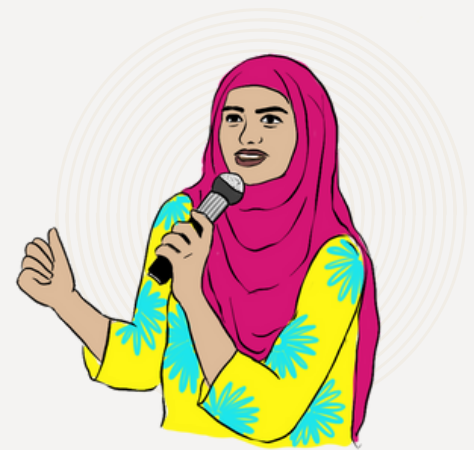
- 4 Facilitate opportunities for **survivor leaders to come together and learn** about various parts of the world, while relating these experiences to their own work and ideas. This inclusive effort will prioritize groups that are often overlooked or excluded.
- 5 Create spaces for **critical reflection on the impact of colonization** on the experiences of survivors of human trafficking. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of the historical and systemic factors influencing survivors' journeys and inform strategies for dismantling the legacies of colonization.
- 6 Establish a mechanism for **collective response and advocacy against the discrimination of marginalized communities** within the anti-trafficking sector. This platform will enable survivor leaders to address instances of discrimination and take a unified stand against systemic oppression.
- 7 Develop user-friendly and **accessible versions of global policies and advocacy tools**. This will empower survivors with the knowledge and tools to strengthen their capacities and campaigns. These resources will also ensure that survivors can actively participate and navigate policy landscapes effectively.
- 8 Facilitate connections between **survivors living in areas with limited opportunities and local groups**, enabling them to support grassroots outreach efforts. This approach empowers survivors to contribute to their communities and organizations, even in resource-constrained settings.
- 9 Establish leadership transition programs that provide **safe and inclusive spaces where emerging survivors** can become future survivor leaders. These programs will offer mentorship, support, and skills development, ensuring a sustainable pipeline of empowered survivor leaders.
- 10 **Partner with and elevate the voices of younger generations** within the movement, creating platforms for them to express their perspectives, insights, and ideas. This will foster intergenerational collaboration and ensure the movement remains dynamic, inclusive, and relevant to the evolving challenges faced by survivors.
- 11 **Partner with organizations that specialize in intersectional advocacy**, such as those focused on racial justice, gender equity, and LGBTQIA+ rights. This collaboration can bring additional expertise, perspectives, and resources to awareness campaigns and collective activities.

Our Collective Commitment to Building a Diverse and Inclusive Movement

By embracing these commitments, we can foster an intersectional and inclusive movement that uplifts and empowers all survivors.

We recognise that creating lasting change requires collective effort, and a willingness to challenge ourselves and the structures that perpetuate inequality and oppression.

We understand that these inequalities are connected to systems of oppression that reinforce inequalities and cause harm to many communities and identities. While we build our movement, we are ready to do the work to ensure ALL of us feel that we belong.



Collectively, we commit to:

- Recognizing and honoring the intersecting identities and experiences within our community. This includes acknowledging our diverse backgrounds, cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, and other identities. By embracing intersectionality, we ensure that our movement addresses the unique challenges faced by individuals with multiple marginalized identities.
- Reflecting on how the different parts of who we are (our race, gender, and background) can affect us in different ways, and adopting strategies that promote a movement where all survivors are included.
- Learning about the cultural and historical backgrounds, the systemic oppressions, and the transformative experiences of other survivors - looking through a wide lens of diverse perspectives and contexts.
- Defending every survivor's human rights, especially those of communities and identities that are often discriminated against. We will come up together in solidarity to support and protect each other.
- Causing NO harm to other survivors, and holding ourselves accountable when we unintentionally do. We will name the harm we witness within the anti-trafficking sector and movement, and speak up: "See Something, Say Something." We commit to open communication about uncomfortable topics and harness conflict as an opportunity to grow.

- Being more intentional about improving care practices towards ourselves and our collective. In this way, we will create safer spaces where those around us can speak up without fear of judgment or retaliation.
- Showing up for each other with authenticity and treating others the way we want to be treated: with kindness, love, and respect. We commit to being aware of our own biases when we enter our collective spaces, to communicate positively to build good relationships, and to be open to earn trust.
- Cultivating empathy, compassion, and support for one another. This includes recognizing that each survivor's healing journey and process may differ, and honoring their individual choices and autonomy. We will create a culture of care where survivors can seek and provide resources, emotional support, and guidance to one another.
- Creating accessible platforms and opportunities for survivors to come together, connect, and share their experiences, knowledge, and ideas in a common and inclusive ground where our diversity is welcomed.
- Sharing our power and resources with other survivors, amplifying opportunities for those who have less access. This includes sharing opportunities and spaces with fellow survivors who are younger, providing peer to peer support and capacity building.
- Creating multilingual spaces, focusing on fostering equality among languages and resisting the dominance of any one language, so that we can all speak and be heard.
- Leading by example and being a reflection of the social change we want to see.



"My favorite thing about the Working Groups was learning about the different realities of the other participants and seeing how supportive everyone was to each other. I also liked being able to share and learn."

- Working Group Member



Goal 3: We will elevate collective healing as a core practice in our movement and organizations.

We recognize that survivors require deep healing and rebuilding after enduring exploitation - without the pressure to just survive. We will build a supportive and nurturing movement where healing together will be valued and prioritized in all aspects of our work. As a core value woven into the fabric of everything we do, our collective healing will mirror our individual, spiritual, and cultural desires for healing. We will hold brave spaces of comfort, spaces where we can feel taken care of and where we can take care of others in turn.

Our goal is to build a movement that lives beyond us, creating structures and practices that understand, listen, and respect our trauma - a space to rest and experience joy.

We will be the healers and architects of this movement. We will seek innovative approaches to healing from an intersectional and holistic perspective. We understand that survivors carry diverse traumas beyond trafficking that can compound exponentially. Our movement will acknowledge and attend to all our forms of trauma. We will create structures and practices that honor and respect the unique healing journey of each individual.

Professionals with lived experience of trafficking can face stigma, exploitation, and discrimination in the anti-trafficking sector. This can significantly impact their professional life, leading to isolation, low self-esteem, medical issues, disabilities, and mental health challenges. To address these challenges, survivor-led organizations will promote trauma-informed policies and practices, recreating work cultures that intentionally promote wellness, and self and collective care. With survivor expertise, we will actively shape policies and programs, fostering respectful collaborations. We will create an environment that genuinely understands, supports, and empowers survivors on their arduous path to healing and recovery.

By prioritizing collective healing as a movement practice, we will build a resilient community that nurtures the well-being of survivors. Our focus on holistic recovery, rest, and joy will ensure that our movement not only endures but also provides the necessary support for survivors to thrive.

Actions:

- 1** Promote collaborative efforts to collectively **redefine and envision what “collective healing”** means and looks like for survivors of human trafficking and slavery. This will involve engaging survivors in discussions and co-creating a shared understanding of collective healing within our movement.
- 2** Create **accessible and intersectional content that reflects the importance of collective healing** and provides practical guidance on incorporating it into our work. This content will be designed to reach a wide audience and empower individuals with the knowledge and tools to embrace collective healing practices.
- 3** Explore and implement **restorative and transformative justice practices** in order to move towards repairing the harm that we may cause when we do not fully recognize fellow survivors’ unique experiences of trauma. By acknowledging and rectifying harm, we will foster an environment of accountability, learning, and healing within our movement.

- 4** Organize **survivor-led groups and circles to talk about the issues that are affecting us**, building brave spaces to support and be present for each other. These spaces will enable survivor leaders to engage in open and honest conversations about trauma while fostering healing and resilience.
- 5** Promote spaces and practices that use **culture, art, and creative expressions as a healing practice**. These will encourage powerful opportunities for survivor leaders to express, share and connect with each other.
- 6** Establish spaces and networks for survivor leaders to **foster friendships and receive mentoring and ongoing support from our peers**. These connections will facilitate mutual growth, healing, and empowerment within the survivor community. It will also create opportunities to learn from organizations that are already effectively implementing effective support networks.
- 7** **Organize self-care and collective care activities** in our organizations and networks that allow survivor leaders to prioritize their well-being and build connections with others. These activities will create opportunities for rest and rejuvenation within a supportive community.
- 8** Develop guidelines for **trauma-informed human resource policies for our organizations and the broader movement**. These guidelines will allow organizations to make intentional efforts to improve how they work and relate to each other.
- 9** Incorporate continuous **trauma-informed therapy, coaching, and emotional and psychological support** into organizations' self-care policies. This will lessen the impact of traumas associated with lived experience and contribute to a smooth transition from reintegration to survivor leadership.
- 10** Develop and advocate for guidelines to **integrate collective healing policies into the values and practices of our organizations and the broader movement**. These guidelines will ensure that healing is a foundational principle that is actively pursued in all aspects of our work.
- 11** Compile a **comprehensive list (database) of affordable therapists, coaches, mentors, and other professionals** specializing in trauma-informed care and healing. This resource will support survivor leaders and their organizations in accessing professional support and guidance.
- 12** Promote **holistic healing support programs for the children of survivors** that addresses the impact of trafficking on them. These initiatives will prioritize their well-being, offering resources, counseling, and support for their recovery and resilience.

Goal 4: We will facilitate the creation, sustainability, and improvement of survivor-led organizations.

We will create and strengthen survivor-led organizations to build our collective power, address systemic issues related to human trafficking, and better support the needs and opportunities for survivor leaders.

A survivor-led organization can mean different things and can look different in many ways. For some organizations, it might mean employing only staff with lived experience; for others, it might mean that the majority of their governing and decision-making positions, as well as staff and members, are survivor leaders.

While many variants of “survivor-led organization” exist and are possible, what they all have in common is that survivor experiences, expertise, and needs are at the center. They are the ones that lead the work, the agenda and the strategies of their groups and organizations. They are the heart of the organization and are the ones driving the struggle for change. In these organizations, people with lived experience apply their unique perspective and knowledge to develop programs and services, and address systemic issues related to human trafficking.

In this Action Plan, we recognise and celebrate the diversity of structures of survivor-led organizations and their chosen approaches and definitions for what it means to be survivor-led.

We will work to successfully seek funding that is accessible and adapted to the needs of grassroots survivor-led organizations at every stage of their development, allowing them to grow and flourish. We will build trust and support in our organizations, creating unity and love in order to strengthen us and make us feel safe.

We will harness our individual and collective capacities and power to build our plans and put them into action efficiently and strategically. We will bring together local, national, and global initiatives to increase opportunities to promote a sense of belonging and solidarity within survivor communities.

Actions:

- 1** Advocate for **increased and accessible funding** to effectively support the incubation and expansion of survivor-led organizations at all stages of development. This will include unrestricted funding that allows survivor-led organizations to address their own needs and the evolving needs of survivors they serve.
- 2** **Meet with donors to explore sustained, long-term funding** for survivor-led organizations to support their structural planning, organizational management, and strategies.
- 3** Create a **network for under-funded, small, and local organizations** to connect them to the help and support that they need.
- 4** Create an **open directory listing survivor-led projects and organizations worldwide.**

- 5** Develop **networks for professional development and peer mentorship for those working with survivor-led organizations**. This will strengthen their capacities and skills in managing organizations for transformative change.
- 6** Create **regular regional and global opportunities for survivor-led organizations to coordinate and collaborate**. This will allow survivor-led organizations to discuss their progress and address challenges in order to have a stronger impact and contribute to prevent human trafficking around the globe.
- 7** Create mechanisms to ensure **transparency and accountability** for survivor-led organizations.
- 8** Develop **strategic communications plans** to increase the visibility and work of survivor-led organizations and promote the **initiatives of smaller and emerging organizations through digital media platforms** and other means.

Goal 5: We will seek to strengthen collaborations between survivor-led organizations and other organizations in the anti-trafficking sector.

Survivor-led organizations bring unique expertise and perspectives to the anti-trafficking movement. By partnering with other anti-trafficking organizations, we can access additional resources, expertise, and support to help us achieve our goals. In turn, other organizations can benefit from our insights and expertise, ensuring that their work is survivor-centered and trauma-informed.

By facilitating the exchange of knowledge, we will create a more unified and coordinated response to human trafficking so that we can achieve the social transformation we all seek.

Although non-survivors may not fully grasp the extent of our experiences, we recognize and appreciate their dedication to supporting and working with us as colleagues. We will nurture a collaborative atmosphere where survivors and allies will work together towards a world without exploitation.

We will make spaces for survivor leaders and allies to have important and difficult conversations, and together we will change the way power is held in the sector. We will address the power imbalances that come with partnerships with other anti-trafficking organizations and ensure that survivors have an equal voice and are treated with respect and dignity.

Actions:

- 1** Enhance **communication and collaboration with private and public anti-trafficking organizations and institutions**, recognizing and actively addressing the power dynamics inherent in these relationships.
- 2** **Build strategic relationships with local and national governments** to encourage the meaningful engagement of survivor-led organizations in national strategies and policies to prevent human trafficking.
- 3** Advocate for **corporations that fund or volunteer their professional services** to designate part of their corporate social responsibility initiatives towards survivor-led anti-trafficking organizations.
- 4** Develop **partnership agreements that clearly outline the terms, responsibilities, and expectations of collaboration** with other anti-trafficking organizations, preventing duplications and ensuring effective coordination.
- 5** Create **comprehensive guidelines and training for building fair and equitable working environments** for organizations in the sector. This will help to eliminate workplace cultures where survivors experience differential treatment compared to their peers who have not experienced trauma.
- 6** Establish a platform or network where survivors can **share information about organizations that do not adhere to ethical standards** by exchanging insights and experiences, possibly anonymously.
- 7** Implement a standard **approach for exposing and denouncing organizations that engage in unethical practices** to exert a pressure for change and promote the adoption of more ethical policies and practices.

SURVIVORS IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

Leadership and decision-making roles within the anti-trafficking and anti-slavery sector need to be realistic and have accessible career options for survivor leaders. For many of us, our lived experiences are at the center of why we are so deeply committed to this work. However, our opportunities are minimized when we are asked to sit at decision-making tables, only to share our trauma stories. Survivors carry so much more wisdom, knowledge, and skills than is often acknowledged.

In this newly realized survivor-led global movement survivor leaders will be CEOs, directors, politicians, and respected thought leaders. People who look like us, understand us, and value us.

In this section, we will highlight three main goals and their actions, that when put into practice, will bring the change we desire to see.



Goal 1: We will be in decision-making positions in anti-trafficking and anti-slavery organizations.

Goal 2: We will be in decision-making positions in public institutions responsible for the prevention of human trafficking, the prosecution of perpetrators, and the protection of survivors.

Goal 3: We will be trained and mobilized to effectively lead and influence policy and legislation at all levels of government.

Goal 1: We will be in decision-making positions in anti-trafficking and anti-slavery organizations.

Historically, we have been marginalized and underrepresented in leadership roles within anti-trafficking and anti-slavery organizations. We are ready to shift this reality. Our voices will be heard, our stories will be told, and our leadership will be recognized and celebrated. It is time for a new chapter where inclusion and diversity are at the forefront of our collective fight for justice and freedom.

By embracing our knowledge and experiences, we will challenge existing norms and create more effective anti-trafficking strategies. We will keep claiming our rightful place at the forefront of the movement while driving meaningful and lasting change.

Our aspiration is to hold diverse leadership roles within anti-trafficking organizations at local, national, and international levels. We aim to be directors, human resource personnels, program leaders, and decision-makers who will shape the direction and impact of these organizations. To achieve this, we will collaborate with allies who share our commitment to inclusivity, working together to lead and implement strategies within the sector.

To be the best leaders we can be, we will support each other and continuously improve our skills.

Actions:

- 1** Organize activities to amplify our voices and **raise awareness about the importance of having more survivors in leadership positions within anti-trafficking organizations.** These activities will provide a platform to discuss the current context, as well as the challenges, opportunities, and demands for greater representation.
- 2** Facilitate and participate in **leadership and strategic skills development opportunities.** These initiatives will focus on enhancing our abilities to organize and plan programs, manage budgets, supervise staff and advocate effectively for our beliefs and visions.
- 3** Create strategies to **influence philanthropic and anti-trafficking organizations to prioritize hiring professionals with lived experiences** in leadership positions. Through targeted advocacy efforts, we will highlight the value and unique perspectives that survivors bring to these roles.
- 4** Advocate for philanthropic organizations and government entities to allocate funds and **establish programs such as fellowships, training initiatives, and shadowing opportunities.** These resources will enable survivor leaders and organizations to gain the necessary experience to assume decision-making roles.

- 5** Develop **trauma-informed human resource policies** that prioritize the well-being of survivors in leadership positions. These policies should highlight survivor leaders' skills and create spaces for them to exchange knowledge, experiences, and best practices while learning from each other.
- 6** With their consent, **amplify the visibility of survivors in leadership roles**, challenging negative stereotypes and showcasing their capabilities and achievements. We will reshape the perception of survivors and highlight their contributions to the anti-trafficking movement.
- 7** Organize **opportunities for survivor leaders to find peer support and mentorship**. This will create a network of support and accountability and help survivor leaders address any challenges they may encounter in their leadership positions.
- 8** Develop **policies and strategies that specifically support survivor leaders with marginalized identities** such as those who have disabilities or are BIPOC or LGBTQIA+. By ensuring that they thrive in their leadership positions, we will create a more diverse and representative movement.
- 9** Develop guidelines and training modules to **prepare survivors to transition** from mid-level management to executive roles in anti-trafficking organizations.
- 10** Develop and advocate for **Human Resource policies and procedures that protect and maintain survivors' privacy**. Survivors must have agency over whether they disclose their personal narratives if we are to create a safe environment where they are not exposed to unnecessary risks.

Goal 2: We will be in decision-making positions in public institutions responsible for the prevention, prosecution of perpetrators and protection of human trafficking survivors.

Many of the current strategies on human trafficking have not included survivors' input. By excluding our expertise, intervention models risk being misguided, ineffective, or even retraumatizing. Worse, they become detached from the realities faced by survivors.

One example is the "4P model" for the prevention, prosecution of perpetrators and protection of survivors which was developed by the United States to outline its response to human trafficking.

As survivors, we understand the complexities of these issues, and our perspectives bring insights that cannot be replicated by people without that lived experience. We are committed to putting our knowledge into action providing education and advocating for adequate budgets, policies

and programs. We want to effectively contribute to all the public institutions we engage with, such as law enforcement, healthcare, the judiciary system, first responders, immigration services, and other relevant institutions.

By taking on these decision-making roles, we will actively reshape the future of interventions and bring about improved outcomes for survivors. Our voices will be heard, our insights valued, and our expertise will be used to create a more just and compassionate society. Together, we will transform public institutions and pave the way for a more survivor-centered approach to combating human trafficking.

Actions:

- 1** Advocate for **meaningful opportunities where survivor leaders can engage with and impact the policies and practices of public institutions.** This includes actively participating in policy discussions, sharing our expertise, training staff, identifying and addressing gaps, and advocating for survivor-informed approaches.
- 2** Build strategic alliances by **forging connections and collaborations with individuals in public institutions.** In this way we can leverage our collective power to advocate for change and ensure our voices are heard.
- 3** Organize strategies and campaigns to **demand job placements for survivors, enabling them to build a career path within public institutions.** This involves advocating for inclusive hiring practices, promoting survivor leadership, and raising awareness about the value and expertise survivors bring to these roles.
- 4** Advocate for **scholarships and grants to support educational opportunities for survivors.** By removing the financial barriers for those pursuing positions in public institutions, we can empower survivors to acquire the necessary qualifications and skills to excel.
- 5** Conduct **collective training and support groups to enhance survivors' confidence and capacity.** These groups will provide a safe space for sharing knowledge, developing skills, and addressing any concerns or challenges that arise during the process of applying for and thriving in positions within public institutions.
- 6** Establish mechanisms to **safeguard and uphold the anonymity of survivors who choose to be included in court proceedings** related to the prosecution of traffickers.

Goal 3: We will be trained and mobilized to effectively lead and influence policy and legislation at all levels of government.

We are determined to go beyond simply sharing our personal experiences with policymakers and political leaders. Our goal is to be actively involved in shaping and influencing policy and legislation at all levels of government.

To achieve this, we will focus on building our capacity through training and mobilization. We will equip ourselves with the knowledge and skills to effectively lead and contribute to policy development processes. This includes actively participating in drafting, writing, reviewing, and monitoring legislation proposals.

We want to create survivor-led coalitions that will operate at the local, national, and international levels, serving as platforms for collective action and collaboration. We recognize the importance of working in partnership with our allies and members of governments. Fostering these kinds of constructive relationships will help our inclusion at every stage of policy and legislation development.

By actively engaging in policy and legislation processes, we ensure that our voices are heard and that our contributions are valued and integrated into decision-making processes. We will work tirelessly to bring our perspectives, expertise, and insights to the table. Together, we will advocate for policies that prioritize the rights, protection, and empowerment of survivors of human trafficking.

Our warm and determined approach will create a welcoming space for dialogue and collaboration, shifting us all towards governance and legislative frameworks that are centered on survivors.

Actions:

1

Promote the creation of a **diverse survivor council** that will serve as a unified voice representing the perspectives and interests of survivors worldwide. This council will advocate for survivors to hold positions of power at all levels of politics and government.

2

Create **survivor-led groups and coalitions dedicated to drafting, writing, and proposing laws** that address human trafficking and modern slavery. These groups will actively engage with lawmakers at all levels and leverage their lived experiences to influence policy and legislation.

3

Monitor the implementation of policies related to human trafficking and modern slavery and produce recommendations for their effective execution. By closely tracking progress and identifying gaps, we will ensure that policies become impactful actions that protect and support survivors.

- 4** Establish forums for survivor leaders from different countries to come together and **share their knowledge on how to influence policies and work with policymakers.** Through cross-cultural learning and exchange, survivors will be empowered to effectively advocate for policy changes on a global scale.
- 5** Develop and **execute online and in-person advocacy campaigns** to mobilize public support and get policymakers to prioritize survivor-centered anti-trafficking policies.
- 6** Build relationships **with allies and members of governments** to advocate for survivor-informed policies and ensure our perspectives are included in decision-making processes.
- 7** **Create accessible documentation of anti-trafficking policies and legislation** in formats that are easily understood by diverse audiences. By providing clear and user-friendly resources, we will enhance transparency and promote informed participation in policy discussions.
- 8** Advocate for **more survivor representation in government positions**, prioritizing survivors from marginalized communities and identities.
- 9** Facilitate **in-person and online forums** (like town halls and assemblies) where survivors, who may opt to remain anonymous, can discuss and advance specific anti-trafficking policies with relevant stakeholders.
- 10** Advocate for survivors to **hold leadership roles in inter-institutional coordination mechanisms.** These mechanisms advocate for the implementation of development objectives, humanitarian protocols, treaties, conventions, and protocols on eradicating modern slavery and supporting survivors.
- 11** **Advocate for greater legal protections for children** that prevents and responds to incidents of trafficking.
- 12** Use **petitions as a tool to mobilize a collective voice** that can influence decision-makers to recognize and prioritize the inclusion of survivors in leadership positions.
- 13** Promote the creation of safe spaces for survivors from marginalized communities, such as those who are LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, formerly incarcerated, and undocumented. Here, survivors can connect to discuss challenges, plan collective actions, and advocate for more inclusive policies.

SURVIVORS PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICES

A vast majority of anti-trafficking organizations focus on providing care, support, and direct services like case management, safety, shelter, medical/healthcare services, counselling, financial support, re-integration, and housing assistance. Despite this well-meaning intention, there has been a lack of survivors in leadership roles; their opportunities are often limited to peer mentorship and crisis management. We want survivors to lead in organizational management and hold decision-making positions. There is power in ensuring survivors are providing and influencing direct services.

While we acknowledge that offering this kind of care can be fulfilling for survivor leaders, it can also be demanding. When we deliver and shape direct services, it is important that we create environments that prevent burnout. Our approach should focus both on the well-being of survivors and comprehensive care and support that's accessible to all staff members.

With survivors taking the lead on a global scale, direct services will include the development of holistic trauma-informed care for both survivors and staff members. In this section, we have included our three most important goals and the action steps we are committed to taking in order to ensure that we cultivate a new way of providing direct services.

Goal 1: We will hold diverse roles throughout organizations providing direct services.

Goal 2: We will improve the conditions for survivor professionals who are employed in direct services.

Goal 3: We will improve the overall condition and quality of work within direct service organizations.



Goal 1: We will hold diverse roles throughout organizations providing direct services.

We are ready to take the lead and shift direct care intervention models. This will include holding more diverse positions within direct service organizations, beyond crisis intervention, and peer and mentor support roles.

We will utilize our expertise to develop trust and ensure the needs of service recipients are met in caring and compassionate ways. We will also create a more survivor-inclusive approach that prevents re-exploitation and promotes autonomy and self-determination.

We will be seen as whole human beings with knowledge and expertise beyond our lived experiences. We will hold many roles on the diverse continuums of care that will contribute to the development of a more collaborative, trauma-informed approach to direct care.

Actions:

- 1** Develop and participate in **accessible and diverse professional development programs** to strengthen the skills and confidence we need to work in direct service organizations.
- 2** Develop **online and in-person discussions** that allow professionals with and without lived experience to learn from each other and contribute to shifting the way survivors are perceived.
- 3** Develop **research and communication campaigns** that show how professionals with lived experience can improve the way direct services are designed and implemented. This will highlight survivor leaders' expertise on how to develop trust, ensure needs are met, and prevent re-exploitation of those survivors who are receiving services.
- 4** Advocate for **organizations and institutions providing direct services to develop trauma-informed hiring practices and policies**. Also push for the acknowledgement that lived experience is as equally valuable an expertise as academic education.
- 5** Create an **online directory for peer support groups and survivor professionals who provide direct services** that will allow us to connect, gain knowledge, and offer feedback. This directory of trauma-informed coaches, mentors, healers, licensed therapists, psychiatrists, and doctors will include non-religious and decolonial healing approaches.
- 6** Find opportunities to **support survivors who are pursuing professional credentials** such as medical school, nursing school, law school, and licensed counselor and social worker degrees and certifications.

- 7** Establish **partnerships with educational institutions and training programs to develop specialized direct services courses or certifications** that integrate lived experience and academic knowledge.

- 8** Develop a **“find your lane” toolkit** that explores survivors’ passions and needs, identifies what role they would like to hold, and outlines collective advocacy strategies to help them achieve those professional goals.

Goal 2: We will improve the conditions for professionals with lived experience employed in direct services.

To ensure we are able to thrive in direct services workplaces, organizations need policies and practices that honor confidentiality and contribute to the overall well-being of survivors. We want to create more trauma-informed, collaborative, and trustworthy working environments. To do that, organizations must respect survivors as working professionals and hold themselves accountable to their own values.

Organizations should provide survivors with in-depth trauma training on how to navigate workplace burnout, how to identify their triggers when supporting other survivors, nervous system regulation techniques, and educational tools for allies employing survivors in direct service roles. Organizations should also provide opportunities for professional development. We will keep advocating for healthy workplace cultures that embrace autonomy and offer brave spaces for survivors to seek support when hardships arise.

We will advocate for competitive wages and benefit packages that match the demands and expectations of the job description, and that are equals of other professionals in the sector. We will also advocate for access to funding that supports employees when financial hardships arise, as a lack of affordable housing can sometimes lead to re-exploitation.

Actions:

- 1** Organize **mentoring programs facilitated by survivor leaders** that focus on financial literacy, project management, and accompaniment for other survivors employed in direct services.
- 2** Work with direct services organizations to **facilitate trauma-informed training for staff**. These trainings should focus on creating professional environments that feel welcoming to survivors in all of our diversity.

- 3** Develop policies that **prioritize and cover the cost for individualized health and well-being programs for direct services staff**. This could include on-site mental health professionals, staff benefit packages, and on-site wellness care as well as policies to support their needs and growth such as adequate paid leave, workplace peer support, access to quality physical and mental health care, and adequate paid time off.
- 4** Develop a team-based approach for managing time-off and addressing emergency situations among direct service workers, with the primary objective of **safeguarding their income and job security**.
- 5** Advocate for **competitive wages that are congruent to the demands and expectations of the job** and equal to the wages of other direct services professionals.
- 6** Develop a **prevention and intervention toolkit** to help front line workers debrief following any vicarious trauma or re-traumatization that may occur in the workplace. The toolkit will highlight the ways re-exploitation can occur in the workplace and provide concrete ways to avoid it.
- 7** **Identify and address acts of discrimination** against direct services professionals with lived experience.
- 8** Develop a **workplace harassment and stigmatization policy** to protect survivors and implement monitoring practices that can be adapted to different geographic locations.
- 9** Organize accessible **peer support groups and accountability groups among survivor leaders** working in direct services. These groups should offer non-biased optimism and support and a space for exchanging ideas around intervention strategies. By participating in these groups, professionals with lived experience will gain knowledge and feedback on the services they wish to provide.
- 10** Develop **supervision processes and tools** that outlines clear expectations, identifies progress, encourages accountability, and identifies opportunities for growth for all employees in direct services organisations.
- 11** Develop a campaign to **abolish criminal records for survivors of human trafficking** or cancel any criminal records when people are identified as survivors.
- 12** Advocate for **access to safe, affordable housing** for professionals with lived experience who are working in direct services.

Goal 3: We will improve the overall condition and quality of work within direct service organizations.

We come from many different backgrounds and navigate many different complexities that aren't represented in current direct service models of care. Many of these approaches stem from a westernized worldview and do not take the needs of the survivor receiving the services into account.

In order to improve this situation, we need the quality of direct services to be aligned with the background and cultural context of the survivor receiving them. Direct service workers and therapists need access to more alternative healing methods and trauma-informed approaches that are survivor-led and survivor-centered.

Survivors should be at the forefront of developing direct service models of care to ensure that these models are diversified. We need to create accessible spaces where BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and survivors with neurodivergence and disabilities can self identify and lead the development of their own treatment plans.

Actions:

- 1** Develop campaigns to **ensure sufficient and accessible funding is available to under-resourced direct service** organizations so that they can provide quality programming.
- 2** **Develop trainings and other fee-for-service programs to help raise funds** for direct service organizations.
- 3** Develop **recommendations for how direct services can be provided to survivors** from many different backgrounds and cultures in ways that help them feel heard and supported, while respecting their confidentiality.
- 4** Advocate for the **creation of unbiased services to improve support for survivors from marginalized communities**, including those with disabilities, or who are BIPOC or LGBTQIA+. These services should recognize the autonomy of survivors and allow them to self-identify if and when they feel safe enough to do so.
- 5** Develop **more trauma-informed services and awareness initiatives for male survivors** and increase engagement in prevention and response mechanisms.

SURVIVORS LEADING THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Research on human trafficking and slavery is primarily led by academics and professionals without lived experience. However, survivors bring perspectives that can inform how to conduct anti-trafficking research as well as elevate the importance of survivors' voices in research.

We promote the importance of survivors leading the production of knowledge in all its forms, including scholarly research, the creation of educational resources and materials, storytelling, and testimonials. However, instead of focusing solely on formal academic scholarship, we also believe that survivors' knowledge can be represented in many other formats and hold the same importance as academic research.

The following goals, and their related actions, are crucial to achieving our vision of survivors leading the production of knowledge on human trafficking and slavery:



GOAL 1: We will lead the academic production of knowledge about human trafficking.

GOAL 2: We will lead the development and implementation of anti-trafficking education for children, communities, and institutions.

GOAL 3: We will strategically influence the media and cultural narratives around human trafficking.

Goal 1: We will lead the academic production of knowledge about human trafficking.

Survivors have the knowledge, language, and skills not only to be part of the academic research on human trafficking, but to lead entire research processes - from inception to dissemination. Survivors will lead the boards that ensure ethical research practices, and we will develop best practices guidelines for conducting research on human trafficking and slavery.

We will no longer accept our lived experience being taken for granted and not accredited. We will have access to compensation, accreditation, and royalties for all survivor-led and created information. We will promote the use of ethical and action-oriented research which go beyond traditional approaches to conducting human trafficking and slavery research.

Our voices and experiences will be amplified through the creation of a virtual platform that gathers all the knowledge that we have created. We will promote spaces of learning where we educate fellow survivors and empower each other to publish books, journals, and lead research.

We will lead the production of knowledge on human trafficking and slavery because we know, and because we can.

Actions:

- 1** Advocate that **experts with lived experience lead the research on human trafficking and slavery** at all stages, across all research entities, and at the local, national, and international levels.
- 2** Amplify the dissemination of research led by survivors, including the **creation of a virtual platform for survivors to engage in research and training with each other**. The platform will also allow survivors to access research, articles, toolkits, training curriculum, opportunities, and tools on the production of knowledge.
- 3** Develop **best practices for research**, including developing standardized terminology and shared language that is equitable, inclusive, and empowering. We expect this tool will influence curriculums and methodologies in academia.
- 4** Advocate for universities and other knowledge production entities to offer human trafficking courses that have an **intersectional, anti-oppression, and decolonial** approach.
- 5** Build capacities and strategies to **demand compensation, accreditation, and royalties** for research and papers produced by survivors.
- 6** Create a **multicultural survivor-led group of content experts** from around the world who can review human trafficking-related content and methodologies for research.

- 7** Create and promote **survivor-led consulting companies** that hire and train survivors without academic qualifications. These companies can conduct research and advocate for the fair payment and treatment of survivors who are involved in knowledge production.
- 8** Create a **survivor-led, peer reviewed journal to publish human trafficking research**. This journal will be reviewed by an advisory board that includes survivors with PhDs and other expertise in academic research.
- 9** **Promote Participatory Action Research (PAR), trauma-informed, and survivor-compliant methodologies** to ensure that research is grounded and solutions-focused. This will also make sure that longitudinal research is focused on survivors' narratives after their exit from shelter, and on their continued healing and growth.
- 10** Advocate, lead, and **disseminate evidence-based human trafficking research** from a trauma-informed and intersectional perspective.
- 11** Promote the development of **knowledge through materials, methods, and approaches produced outside of academia**. Survivors can build the skills and confidence to share their knowledge and experiences in diverse ways such as through books, articles, blogs, podcasts, performance art, music, film and television, photography, painting, and other artistic, and creative expressions.

Goal 2: We will lead the development and implementation of anti-trafficking education for children, communities and institutions.

For many years, anti-trafficking education was designed and delivered in the name of survivors, without survivors being involved in the process. The insights and knowledge that survivors add to the production of educational materials is critical to understanding the complexity of human trafficking and slavery. Without our input, the crucial knowledge that derives from lived experience will continue to be left out from knowledge production.

Survivors have the knowledge of lived experience. We can lead trainings and raise awareness in both the local and international spheres, and we will lead the provision of anti-trafficking education. We will stand for each other and make awareness more accessible for a diversity of survivors across the world. We will create and promote platforms and spaces for us to come together to build and share knowledge.

And we will keep demanding: Nothing about us, without us

Actions:

- 1** Develop **child and youth-friendly curricula** on human trafficking, exploitation, and sex education that emphasizes consent. Advocate that these lessons be compulsory in schools and universities.
- 2** Engage survivors, parents, schools, and the community to **co-develop knowledge and awareness on the risks of human trafficking**. By encouraging open and supportive environments in schools, children can feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics.
- 3** **Review existing training curriculums and design new ones** for law enforcement and any government agencies responsible for the prevention, prosecution of perpetrators, and protection of survivors. These mandated courses should cover underrepresented topics like implicit and explicit bias, and be led by survivors.
- 4** Create and promote **accessible training and resources for underserved audiences**, such as children, families, and schools, to prevent human trafficking. This will support survivors and their children by working on de-stigmatization and healing processes.
- 5** Design and facilitate **training to raise awareness on the challenges that LGBTQIA+** survivors face when accessing services. These trainings should be tailored to the community, as well as public and educational institutions.
- 6** Develop a series of **survivor-led training curricula that promote research on the intersection between structural racism, poverty, and human trafficking**.
- 7** Create **platforms and network spaces for survivors who are leading trainings** to exchange resources and materials for their courses, as well as work opportunities.
- 8** Develop awareness information tailored for various religions and religious institutions, such as churches, mosques, temples, and synagogues, to change harmful practices, norms, and cultural beliefs.

Goal 2: We will strategically influence the media and cultural narratives around human trafficking.

Media narratives around human trafficking and slavery have portrayed survivors as helpless victims who are stuck in time and not able to cope or evolve and thrive in positions of influence. The time has come for us to take the microphone and tell our own story. We will stand up and say, "This is about me and what I have been through." We will stand against any organizations, companies, and media that tokenize survivors and use our stories for funding.

We will lead media education to ensure that all information and resources on human trafficking are survivor-centered. We will pave a new path around how our truth is told; an empowered path that restores control to survivors.

Actions:

- 1** Provide **media education** to ensure that information and resources on human trafficking are trauma-informed and survivor-centered.
- 2** Offer training to support **survivor leaders on how to set boundaries during speaking engagements** and share their stories in an empowering way. By having ownership over storytelling through different channels (documentaries, biography books, podcasts, artwork, anonymous blogs, etc.) we can tell our truth without being influenced by political agendas or media sensationalization.
- 3** Create **survivor-led and directed content** that provides analysis on human trafficking and reflects what human trafficking and recovery looks like in different contexts and countries.
- 4** Create an **online multi-language platform** where survivors can share their stories through writing or uploading video files.
- 5** Create spaces that provide **legal protection and support to survivors who experience abuse** due to media outlets sharing their personal stories without consent.
- 6** Create a **living glossary, written by survivors, of non-revictimizing** terms and expressly disseminate it to media professionals and speakers.
- 7** Review **existing best practice guides for interviews, documentaries, and other media communication** when working with or on survivors' stories and create new ones where there is a lack. Advocate that this curriculum is taught at journalism and film schools.
- 8** Use **branding, digital communication tools, and social media channels to promote successful survivor leaders' stories** and strengthen the anti-trafficking movement with a focus on survivor influence.

BUILDING OUR CAPACITY

Survivors need more access to training and professional development opportunities so that we can build their careers and the movement as a whole. These opportunities should be widely available, especially to those who do not have the economic resources to pay for them. Therefore, survivors also need to have access to sponsorship and funding opportunities to help them further their education in various fields.

To advance our development, we need to strengthen our knowledge and capabilities in the following:

1. Strategic, operational, and organizational development:

- Strategic planning, organizational management, project planning and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation
- Trauma-informed human resource policies and practices
- Project budgeting and finance management and monitoring
- Conversations and negotiations about compensation, how to bill, and how to make financial proposals
- Grant writing and fundraising
- Building a professional network
- Navigating the job application process - writing resumes and cover letters, and preparing for interviews
- Identifying professional lanes within and outside the anti-trafficking sector
- Leadership, teambuilding, governance and decision-making, and organizational conflict management
- Capital and investment consulting

2. Movement building and leadership:

- Political training, leadership, and empowerment
- Advocacy and strategic campaigns to influence policies and legislation
- Understanding the United Nations (UN) system, its relevance to grassroots work, and how to use it to advance survivor leadership and anti-trafficking advocacy work
- Understanding global system reports such as the Trafficking in Persons Report, the Global Slavery Index, and others
- Community organizing for transformative change
- Networking and trauma-informed collaborations

3. Collective healing and trauma-informed approaches:

- Knowledge about health, well-being, and mindfulness
- Understanding trauma-informed approaches and tools
- Knowledge about culturally diverse therapeutic practices for collective healing
- Accessing ongoing mental health counseling and support

4. Strategic communication:

- Developing public speaking, active listening, and other communications skills for advocacy and effective public representation
- Designing online campaigns and public messaging
- Ethical and trauma-informed storytelling
- Engaging with the media
- Basic legal skills, like what a proper contract should contain and what it needs to include to secure intellectual property rights
- Understanding data protection and digital security

5. Collective healing and trauma-informed approaches:

- Tools to manage vicarious trauma
- Higher quality training on trauma-informed care
- Technical training on de-escalation
- Intentional and consistent mentorship from survivors who can provide peer support
- Development of direct service data collection tools and practices
- Training to become technical assistance providers for direct services organizations

6. Specific training for survivors who are interested in working and leading in academic fields or similar contexts:

- Documentation of life experiences in a technical and effective manner
- Intellectual property rights
- Validation of methodologies and research in the anti-trafficking contexts
- Human participant research ethics training
- Peer research training
- Academic presentation skills, including communicating statistics and research results

- Development of research proposals and how to find funding opportunities
- Training on how to use intersectional approaches to develop curricula and trauma-informed methodologies and implementation

BARRIERS TO OUR ENGAGEMENT

Survivors want to lead in their communities and become activists but are often hindered by situational and systemic barriers. Basic resources like housing, employment, and economic stability are not easily and readily available to all survivors, and becoming leaders and advancing our capacities often isn't a priority because we are trapped in cycles of constant survival.

While some survivor leaders have been successful at starting their own organizations, they still face challenges. Below is a list of the barriers collected from survivors themselves which keep survivors from becoming thriving leaders in their communities and in the anti-trafficking sector and movement.

1. Survivor leaders are often unable to access basic resources and services due to structural inequalities. Specific barriers include:

- Housing instability and insecurity
- Limited access to educational opportunities
- Inability to access job and career opportunities that provide living wages, often due to gaps in our employment records
- Limited access to information about local resources that support survivors from marginalized communities
- Fear of deportation and criminalization
- Having to register as a sex offender, often due to the criminalization of survival strategies, results in stigma and limits access to programs and job opportunities
- Social inequity and power structures that perpetuate human rights violations, often fostered by oppressive and authoritarian governments, lead to the risk of further exploitation
- The ongoing impact of colonization on social and political structures and power dynamics
- Social and political structures that are inherently designed to oppress and exploit marginalized groups and minorities, while maintaining power and wealth disparities
- Limited access to necessary equipment like laptops or stable internet connections

2. Survivors experience external discrimination and can struggle to feel welcome and integrated even in their own communities. These barriers include:

- Insufficient services that provide integrated, community-based, and person-centered care that promotes recovery, self-sufficiency, and a higher quality of life

- The impact of trauma on identity and self-concept
- Publicly identifying as a survivor can exacerbate low self esteem
- Struggle to transition from a state of survival to one of thriving
- Limited or no access to affordable healthcare
- Inability to obtain personal bank accounts due to a criminal record obtained during trafficking and exploitation
- Lack of access to quality food options

3. Survivors experience external discrimination and can struggle to feel welcome and integrated even in their own communities. These barriers include:

- Fear and threats of ostracization from family and community
- Feeling isolated
- Lack of support systems such as families, friends and communities
- Shame and stigma around any criminal records received as a result of lived trafficking experience
- Disempowering and negative perceptions of survivors as incapable, powerless, or “broken”

4. Even when survivors seek to work in the anti-trafficking field, they can face the following barriers:

- Lack of diversity within the sector so opportunities seem to be given to the same few people
- Limited opportunities for education or professional development
- Survivors’ criminal records can keep them from being able to pass background checks for both paid and volunteer positions
- Hyper-specialized anti-trafficking spaces mean that survivor leaders are limited to “survivor” positions and direct services work. They are often not able to explore other fields in the sector because they need to have a degree
- Survivor leaders are often stigmatized and othered and thus have to acquire much more knowledge and experience to be competitive in the field compared to their colleagues
- Survivors’ efforts to initiate cultural changes in organizations are undermined and their demands labeled as part of a “trauma response”
- Fear of recognition: Some survivors seeking to work in the anti-trafficking field may fear being associated with the work or being recognised and stared at in public
- Lack of accessibility: Some survivors seeking to work in the anti- trafficking sector lack access to phones or the internet and are not able to get updates on what jobs are available or the time frames for applications.
- Lack of materials: Some survivors lack the materials they need for work like laptops and cellphones.
- Lack of experience with no opportunity for on-the-job training
- Limited job opportunities for persons who don’t speak English

5. And leading our own organizations doesn't shield us. Survivor-led organizations face the following barriers:

- Lack of adequate funding and resources for grassroots organizations and startups
- Disjointed communication and networking patterns that inhibit collaboration between organizations
- Internal conflict between organizations in the anti-trafficking sector
- Gatekeeping from other organizations towards startups by withholding recommendations or requiring bank statements before accessing funding, though staff have been working on a voluntary basis
- Difficulty navigating complex power relations and expressing concerns to funders and partners

6. When seeking to provide and influence direct services, survivors can still face barriers, including:

- Lack of access to locally available resources for clients and inconsistent references or directories
- Under-resourced organizations that lack funding for quality programming
- Survivor leaders in direct service can be re-traumatized by the lack of empathy and knowledge among allies and other sector workers regarding the complexities of lived experiences
- Lack of trauma-informed training for first responders and sector workers
- Lack of support and resources to assist survivor leaders in managing their vicarious trauma
- Stagnation and lack of career growth as services often focus on basic needs and do not have the expertise to help survivors hold a job while dealing with the impact of trauma
- Lack of collaboration between service providers
- Lack of resources and support for complex mental health needs
- Misidentification by first responders and sector workers can mean that not all survivors are able to receive care and support
- Service providers who lack compassion, empathy, and a willingness to actively listen to survivors' needs

7. Survivors who want to engage and lead the production of knowledge can face the following barriers:

- Having to compete with allies and organizations that are not informed by lived experience in order to obtain research funding
- Institutions responsible for the primary production of research remain colonized and racist
- Lack of compensation for survivors' intellectual property
- Research production on human trafficking and slavery being led by academics, with limited opportunities for survivors to contribute through their own lived experiences

- Limited to only being research participants rather than leading methodologies or as direct producers of knowledge
- Misleading representation within the media of survivors and trafficking as a whole



Let's work together to transition the anti-trafficking sector from a White, Anglo-centric sector to one that is more intercultural and accessible. Let's commit to engaging with a more diverse representation of survivor leaders and intentionally create and finance a space where everybody - and especially communities that have been marginalized - can feel present, supported, and welcomed.

OUR CALL TO ALLIES: SHIFTING THE CULTURE AND PRACTICES OF THE SECTOR

This section invites allies to learn from survivors on how to shift the foundational culture and practices, and the current power dynamics, of the anti-trafficking sector to foster a more just and inclusive movement that is led by survivors.

Many of our professional allies are currently inviting survivor leaders to provide their lived-experience expertise. However, designing policy and programs without involving survivor leaders from the start - only seeking our input at a later stage - sets everyone up for failure.

Once time and funding has gone into developing a proposal, there are powerful pragmatic and emotional reasons not to want to completely alter those plans. But what happens when an ally's plan is completely counter to the feedback from survivor leaders?

When survivor leaders who have been invited to contribute their views disagree with any proposals presented, we are often silenced, excluded from future consultations, or replaced by other survivor leaders who share more agreeable views. While this may not be intentional, it causes harm and breeds an ongoing distrust of our allies.

This unequal power dynamic is built into the structure of the sector. So, this Action Plan is a request for accountability from allies to survivors. Below you will find a series of demands and recommendations that will encourage this:

1. Shift from a top-down to a bottom-up approach.

We must normalize the value of survivor leadership by creating a bottom-up approach to survivor engagement. The typical top-down approach prioritizes the perspectives of people in professional positions with the power to make decisions that set the course for a policy or program. This approach prioritizes survivor voices and operates on shared power between survivors and allies. Survivor feedback and invitations to ally accountability are more likely to occur with bottom-up approaches. Shift the culture of the anti-trafficking sector so that survivors are recognized as experts and professionals in diverse areas and as whole human beings (versus solely as service recipients).

To create this bottom-up approach we ask that our allies:

- Recognize that **lived experience is only one part of survivors' identities and stories**. Avoid inviting survivors to solely speak about their trauma narratives. Instead, allow us the space and opportunity to contextualize our experiences in our own way and time.
- **Pay survivors for their contributions and work**, including speaking on panels, reviewing policies and reports, and engaging in research processes.
- **Recognize and hire survivor leaders as experts** to draft, lead, and monitor the implementation of anti-trafficking policy and legislation efforts at local, national, and international levels.

- Create more **accessible and meaningful spaces for survivors to contribute and influence grant making processes** even as they challenge existing practices and promote new approaches will shift power within philanthropy.
- Create spaces within and across survivor-led and anti-trafficking organizations to **have difficult and brave conversations**.
- Improve **communication and collaboration between survivor-led organizations, ally-led organisations, and private and public institutions in the sector** while acknowledging and addressing the power dynamics that often come with these collaborations.
- **Recognize and hire survivor leaders as experts** to draft, lead, and monitor the implementation of anti-trafficking policy and legislation efforts at local, national, and international levels.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for survivor leaders to **engage with and impact public institutions' policies and practices**.
- Identify, train, and support **survivors to serve in political positions**.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for **survivors to lead anti-trafficking organizations and coalitions at all levels**.
- Ensure **transparency and accountability** by sharing information on where public and private funds are coming from and how they are being used.
- Revisit fundraising activities to make sure they match the values of a welcoming movement that celebrates survivors and cares about their well-being.

2. Enhance survivors' access to trauma-informed and sustainable employment.

Many anti-trafficking organizations, policies, and initiatives have failed to prioritize trauma-informed practices in their hiring and organizational culture. Being trauma-informed is now a buzz phrase without the action and on-the-ground practices to show it is being implemented in a genuine way. Organizations are often claiming to be trauma-informed while simultaneously invalidating the voices, wisdom, and knowledge of survivor leaders.

Many anti-trafficking workplaces promote the norms of White culture, which are often ableist, racist, heteronormative, and sexist as the standard for being "professional" without questioning them. These toxic behaviors are then allowed to thrive, creating unhealthy work environments - which is certainly not trauma-informed. As a result, sustainability of employment is often short lived and unrealistic for survivor leaders.

It is crucial to acknowledge and eliminate such oppressive norms and organizational culture and hiring processes. Be intentional about implementing and cultivating the trauma-informed practices that are promoted but not yet fully exercised.

- Implement **trauma-informed human resource policies and practices that** are informed by survivors.
- Prioritize and support survivors being **hired to leadership positions** in anti-trafficking organizations and institutions, and develop job descriptions that **explicitly encourage people with lived experience to apply**.
- Prioritize **hiring survivor leaders for human resources positions**. One benefit of employing survivors is that there will be leaders within the institution who understand the type of support that survivors need to thrive and grow.

- Give survivor leaders the opportunity to work in **diverse positions within the anti-trafficking sector**, beyond mentoring or peer specialist roles. Provide opportunities that allow survivors to self-identify their interests and skills while also learning how to connect their skills that cross into new fields.
- Provide jobs that are inclusive by **offering survivors on-the-job training and professional development**. This means that survivors won't be expected to meet educational and certification requirements before joining the organization.
- Develop **policies that prioritize ethical practices**, including avoiding actions like pressuring survivors to share their stories, exploiting them for fundraising purposes, lacking survivor representation on the board, and paying survivors unequally.
- Provide **fair benefits packages for professionals with lived experience** that support their needs and growth (adequate paid leave and time off, workplace peer support, and access to quality physical and mental healthcare, for example).
- Guarantee that **salaries and consulting contracts for professionals with lived experience are congruent** to the demands and expectations of the job, and are equal to other professionals' wages in the sector.
- **Allocate emergency funding** outside of grant funding which staff can use to provide support to survivors. Having access to those funds for their own financial hardship will give survivors more autonomy and resources.
- Include **safe, affordable housing options** when hiring professionals with lived experience in the anti-trafficking movement.
- Provide ongoing **coaching support** for survivors working in the anti-trafficking sector.
- Implement **peer support systems** for survivor leaders working as staff or consultants in anti-trafficking organizations and direct services institutions.
- Provide **mental health support**, and train therapists and staff working in anti-trafficking organizations and direct services on **trauma-specific approaches**.
- Prioritize **hiring survivor leaders for human resources positions**. One benefit of employing survivors is that there will be leaders within the institution who understand the type of support that survivors need to thrive and grow.
- Guarantee that survivors in anti-trafficking organizations are **protected against harassment and stigmatization** in the workplace. This will encourage more survivors to be interested in the sector.
- Provide **paid internship opportunities and training** that can lead to permanent employment.
- Provide **compensation, accreditation, and royalties** for survivor-created information.
- More **pathways to employment** need to be offered, with an emphasis on paid internships coupled with training.

3. Practice an intersectional approach and create accessible, intercultural spaces for survivors.

We encourage you to join us in the effort to make a movement and a sector where all our identities, backgrounds, languages, and geographical locations are reflected. Let's work together to transition the anti-trafficking sector from a White, Anglo-centric sector to one that is more intercultural and accessible. Let's commit to engaging with a more diverse

representation of survivor leaders and intentionally create and finance a space where everybody - and especially communities that have been marginalized - can feel present, supported, and welcomed.

We urge allies to provide more opportunities that are inclusive of all survivors. This is essential to ensure that survivors and allies are able to effectively connect, contribute, and collaborate.

- Promote **more diverse representation of survivors from different identities and communities** in your programs, conferences, and advisory groups.
- Recognize the intersectionality of marginalized identities and oppression, specifically focusing on **women, black, indigenous, people of color, LGBTQIA+, neurodiverse survivors, and people with disabilities**. Develop international practices to promote diversity and inclusion in your work, taking into account their particular needs.
- Develop and implement **anti-oppression policies and practices** when engaging with survivors from diverse identities.
- Provide funds for survivor leaders to organize:
 - ▶ Cross-cultural exchange programs and opportunities at national, regional, and global levels to allow survivor leaders to connect (virtually and in person). This includes supporting survivor leaders to access devices and internet data.
 - ▶ Meetings and workshops where survivor leaders from different countries share their experiences about how to influence policies and work effectively with policymakers.
 - ▶ Strategies and actions to support leadership opportunities for the younger generations within the movement.
- Promote the **production of knowledge on human trafficking from regions that have limited information available**, such as the Global South, while reflecting the different realities of each region.
- Develop more **accessible materials** for reaching a diverse community of survivors.
- Ensure specific **services for queer and BIPOC survivors** are being developed and applied, including allowing LGBTQIA+ survivors to self-identify only if and when they feel safe enough to do so.

4. Enhance and fund more survivor-led organizations and initiatives.

The anti-trafficking sector has few funding opportunities that focus on investing in the grassroots initiatives and ideas created by survivors. While we recognize that some new initiatives are moving toward this, much of the funding still focuses on addressing survivors' short-term needs, prioritizing large NGOs that already have million-dollar revenue budgets.

These larger organizations are also responsible for distributing funds to other organisations. They therefore have enormous power to select which NGOs and programs are funded. Survivor-led grassroots organizations are often overlooked when opportunities to support anti-trafficking efforts become available because they don't meet minimum budget requirements.

The current financial infrastructure within the anti-trafficking sector has not addressed how to effectively fund survivor-led organizations and initiatives. But below is a list of

recommendations on ways allies can support survivor leaders to enhance and fund their organizations and initiatives.

- Provide more **accessible and effective funding** for survivor-led organizations and initiatives by:
 - ▶ Supporting the incubation and expansion of survivor-led organizations at all stages of organizational development, from the pre-seed to the growth and scaling stage.
 - ▶ Including unrestricted and flexible funding that allows survivor-led organizations to prioritize their needs.
 - ▶ Decreasing bureaucratic requirements (less paperwork, procedures, legal documents) to make funding processes less complex.
 - ▶ Prioritizing funding for anti-trafficking programs that are survivor-led or have survivor leaders in leadership positions.
- **Fund survivor-led community organizing** at the national and international level to unite efforts and to create more opportunities for exchange and connection, including:
 - ▶ Supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities in this Action Plan.
 - ▶ Providing opportunities that allow survivors to visit survivor-led organizations in other countries to learn from their strategies and work.
 - ▶ Supporting the implementation of trauma-informed, brave spaces that welcome the sensitivity and strengths of survivors while building community and connections, both in person and virtually.
 - ▶ Covering retreats focused on self-care and well-being for staff and members of survivor-led organizations. Development funding should also support recreational spaces where survivors can relax and connect with each other.
 - ▶ Ensuring sufficient funding is available to provide quality programming for under-resourced, survivor-led, and direct service organizations.
 - ▶ Deepening interconnection and exchanges with other grassroots movements to learn from their experiences and create collaborations that recognize the autonomy of each movement and challenge existing power dynamics.
- Provide **practical training opportunities for staff** of survivor-led organizations designed to grow and build capacity (see Capacity Building section in the Action Plan).
- **Amplify the visibility and work** of survivor-led organizations.
- Support the **development of “Councils of Survivors” and other grassroots policy groups** that draft, write, and review and write legislation proposals across all levels of government. These groups can effectively apply pressure to seated lawmakers.
- Develop **written, formal agreements** that clearly outlines the terms, responsibilities, and expectations of collaboration between survivor-led organizations and other anti-trafficking organizations.
- Fund or **organize volunteers to provide corporate professional services** to survivor-led human trafficking organizations, and designate part of your corporate social responsibility initiatives to this.
- Support the **development and implementation of trauma-informed protection mechanisms** for survivor leaders defending human rights. Make sure these mechanisms take into account the particularities of the individual and their identities.

5. Integrate healing as a core component of survivor leadership approaches.

To truly empower survivors, it is important to recognise that healing is not just an option; it is a cornerstone. It is not a passive process, but a consistent and ongoing transformative journey that provides survivors with the emotional and psychological tools to lead and inspire others.

When allies support survivor leadership practices grounded in healing, it cultivates a community where thriving, rather than mere surviving, becomes the norm. This leads to true empowerment and meaningful change.

By centering healing in their approaches, allies not only acknowledge survivors' resilience and strength, but also provide them with the support they need for their well-being and success.

- Be intentional about **centering collective healing** as a fundamental aspect of building movements and organizations.
- Support and promote **opportunities for survivor leaders to do deeper healing work** and rebuild after exploitation.
- When financing projects that engage with survivor leaders, **include additional funding for individual or collective healing support**.
- Advocate to **legitimize other forms of healing** so that alternative healing practices to support survivors working in the sector can be recognized and funded.
- **Train practitioners of alternative healing practices** to provide direct services for survivors of human trafficking.

6. Shift towards alternative forms of knowledge production, and value lived experience as the basis of anti-trafficking knowledge.

Although academic research is considered the main source of knowledge, survivors possess valuable firsthand insights that not only enrich research but can also establish the principles for conducting anti-trafficking research. It is especially important that survivors' knowledge holds equal importance to academic knowledge and can be conveyed through various means, not solely restricted to scholarly work.

Survivors are demanding that academia, educational and public institutions, and media shift from traditional methods of producing anti-trafficking knowledge. Survivors demand to have ownership over how our stories and experiences are portrayed. Through ethical storytelling, documentaries, and other creative forms of expression, we will restore our control over how our truth is told.

To make this possible, allies should:

- Collaborate with and strengthen the capacities of survivors to **lead and be actively involved** in the **production of academic knowledge** on human trafficking by:
 - ▶ Setting up a national research unit in countries where this does not already exist that focuses on human trafficking, working in collaboration with universities and public institutions.
 - ▶ Engage with "survivor review boards" to review academic research and, as part of research ethics, provide training on ethical and trauma-informed research practices.

- ▶ Provide scholarships for survivors who are interested in research and the production of knowledge, as well as for survivors interested in pursuing PhDs.
- ▶ Promote the creation of Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodologies ensuring that research is grounded and focused on solutions. This includes the creation of longitudinal research that is focused on survivors' narratives after they transition to reintegration.
- ▶ Provide mentoring and guidance for survivor leaders to navigate the research process.
- ▶ Facilitate access for survivor leaders to engage with institutions of learning in order to educate other survivors and empower them to publish books, journals, and research.
- ▶ Promote the development of research focused on individual and collective healing from an intersectional and trauma-informed perspective.
- Promote the **creation and recognition of knowledge by survivor leaders**, both within and outside of conventional academic and institutional settings, and leverage this research to shape relevant public policies.
- Hire and engage survivor leaders to develop curricula and produce the materials for training around human trafficking, applying an intersectional, feminist, and trauma-informed approach for diverse audiences:
 - ▶ Child and youth-friendly curricula on human trafficking and exploitation, and make it compulsory for schools and universities.
 - ▶ Prevention education curriculums targeting buyers and potential buyers of sex.
 - ▶ Training and awareness from a human rights approach that centers the vision of survivors as agents of change in local and international spheres.
- Create information and awareness that sheds light on the political responsibility attached to human trafficking, shifting away from the narrative that it happens only to vulnerable people.
- Improve the quality of awareness information about human trafficking in public spaces (such as airports, rest stops, etc.) that are accessible to a diversity of audiences, including in rural areas.
- Create and distribute documentaries and original stories that portray survivors' stories in an empowering and ethical manner, moving away from political propaganda and from victim/savior stories.
- Fund and create standardized terminology and language around human trafficking that is equitable, inclusive, and empowering - and advocate for the implementation of this language by different actors.
- Develop a clear process for the distribution of trainings and presentation resources within the community to keep organizations and academic institutions from taking advantage of funding meant for training sessions and awareness and reducing them to one-off events.
- Implement respectful, trauma-informed, and clear consent processes with survivor leaders who share their trauma stories. Ensure that survivors get to review what is shared about them and are fully informed about the length of time and scope of use they will be granted.

AN INVITATION TO ACTION

We encourage you to read this Action Plan as an invitation to action:

To all survivor leaders: We invite and encourage you to take ownership of this plan, to implement the Actions that resonate most with your own work and passions, and consider how you can adapt them to your local context. Continue reaching out to fellow survivors for collaboration and support. Share your achievements and learnings. Remember: you belong, and together, we can achieve our shared vision of co-creating a global, survivor-led anti-trafficking movement.

To our allies: Your support and resources are vital to the success of the Actions outlined in this plan. We hope that this serves as a valuable resource to inform your plans, policies, and practices. Take the time to review this plan with your organizations, to determine which goals and actions fit the organizational scope of your work, and set aside funding to address them. And join Survivor Alliance and other survivor-led organizations for future gatherings.

Please share with us any feedback you have about this Action Plan, as well as any information about the activities and learnings that you are involved in, to: actionplan@survivoralliance.org

We are counting on you to be a part of this important journey!



GLOSSARY

In this Action Plan, we use the terms “survivor”, “human trafficking” and “slavery” to refer to our shared experiences. While we believe that a common language is useful and necessary in order to express ourselves and address various actors, we do not want to exclude the possibility of alternative narratives. When we speak of “survivors of trafficking or slavery” we include people with similar lived experiences who may identify themselves or their experiences in a different way. We acknowledge everybody has the right to interpret their own narrative in a form that makes sense of their experiences. We keep an open mindset to changes in our language in order to create and foster an inclusive environment for our community.

Accountability

The act of transparency, honesty, and acceptance of responsibility for one’s actions.

Autonomy

The capacity to independently make decisions and pursue a course of action for oneself.

Bias

A preference for or a prejudice against a thing, person, or group and expressed either intentionally (explicit bias) or unintentionally without conscious knowledge (implicit bias) through one’s behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs.

Bilateral Organizations

The term bilateral means “two sided” and refers to organizations and agencies that operate directly between two well-defined parties, typically, two countries. Bilateral organizations provide direct or developmental support, often in the form of financial aid. However, one country’s bilateral organization can interact with numerous other countries on a one-to-one basis. Examples of bilateral agencies include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Bottom-up /Top-down Approach

A **bottom-up approach** refers to a system in which survivors are centered as knowledgeable and competent experts who are positioned as decision-makers, collaborators, and leaders who are driving strategies for the anti-trafficking movement due to their lived experience.

A **top-down approach** refers to approaches in which allies and those without the lived experience of trafficking are centered as the decision-makers, collaborators, and leaders without the adequate attention, input, and prioritization of survivors’ contributions.

Brave Spaces

A supportive and affirming environment that is physically, emotionally, and socially safe for sharing, learning, and healing (see also safe spaces). This is a place where people feel encouraged to share their diverse perspectives and lived experiences, be vulnerable, own their intentions and the impact they have on others, and have difficult conversations with respect and kindness.

Burnout

A state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress.

Collective Healing

A cultural, political, social, and physical journey characterized by opportunities for rest, joy, and support that acknowledges harm and begins an active process of holistic recovery as a community.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of corporations integrating social concerns into their business operations with the aim of social accountability, responsibility, and making positive impacts on communities.

Direct Services

Professional support care that focuses on providing personal and individualized assistance to persons in need. These services can range from peer support, crisis management, mental health services, housing assistance, and rehabilitation services.

Feminism

A socio-political movement and ideology that aims to establish the political, economic, personal, and social equality of all genders, with a particular interest in promoting women's rights and interests.

Human Trafficking

According to the UN⁷, trafficking in persons mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.

Intersectionality

A framework for understanding the complex, cumulative ways in which multiple systems of social identity (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, class) intersect to create unique dynamics and effects that can impact power, privilege, and oppression.

LGBTQIA+

The label LGBTQIA+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, or other marginalized sexual and gender identities. It also refers to a community of people whose sexual identities were historically excluded and are now are united by a common cultural experience.

⁷Adapted from the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol - Article 3, Paragraph A, <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Annex II - Definition and mandate.pdf>

Modern Slavery

The ongoing exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain where people cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power which results in physical, psychological, and interpersonal trauma, as well as financial and social instability and inequities, and the dilution of the fundamental principles of democracy⁸.

Movement Building

The act of organizing and motivating people to work towards a collective vision that is important for a community by centering those with lived experience, strengthening connections between and across stakeholders, acting through research, advocacy, campaigning, and community organizing, among others, as well as building the capacity to sustain efforts.

Neurodiverse

A label used to describe the intrinsic diversity in brain functioning and cognition, such as in people with autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Retraumatization

The act of being exposed to new traumatic events, or re-experiencing traumatic events that an individual has survived in the past.

Safe Spaces

A supportive and affirming place that provides a physically, emotionally, and socially safe environment for sharing, learning, and healing. However, even within such spaces there is always a risk of moments when people may not be safe because it is impossible to predict others' thoughts and actions.

Self-care

The active process of taking care of oneself to protect one's emotional, mental, and physical wellness.

Slavery

The UN defines slavery⁹ as the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.

Stigmatization

The label LGBTIA+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, or other marginalized sexual and gender identities. It also refers to a community of people whose sexual identities were historically excluded and are now united by a common cultural experience.

Survivor

A label used to describe individuals who have lived through experiences of human trafficking and/or modern slavery. We use this term to describe someone who has exited the situation of exploitation.

⁸Nicholson, A., Dang, M., & Trodd, Z. (2018). A Full Freedom: Contemporary Survivors' Definitions of Slavery. *Human Rights Law Review*, 18(4), 689–704. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hrlr/ngy032>

⁹Adapted from: Slavery Convention, Article 1, [https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/slavery-convention#:~:text=\(1\)%20Slavery%20is%20the%20status,right%20of%20ownership%20are%20exercised.](https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/slavery-convention#:~:text=(1)%20Slavery%20is%20the%20status,right%20of%20ownership%20are%20exercised.)

Survivor Leader

Someone with lived experience of human trafficking and/or slavery who is using their experience to make positive change.

Trauma-Informed

An approach that realizes the widespread prevalence and impact of trauma, recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma, responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, practices, and procedures, seeks to actively resist the re-traumatization of survivors, and prioritizes restoring the survivors' feelings of safety, choice, and control.

Tokenism

The practice of making only a superficial effort to engage survivors in discussions that affect them directly, without really giving them the space and authority that they deserve.

Victim Blaming

Placing personal responsibility for trafficking on the survivor instead of on the persons and systems responsible for the trafficking experience. For example, blaming a trafficking survivor for being trafficked or blaming them for not leaving sooner.

Vicarious Trauma

A supportive and affirming place that provides a physically, emotionally, and socially safe environment for sharing, learning, and healing. However, even within such spaces there is always a risk of moments when people may not be safe because it is impossible to predict others' thoughts and actions.



Survivor Alliance
survivoralliance.org