

Improving Outcomes Workshop Resource

Survivor Engagement



Purpose

This workshop, created in partnership with Office for Victims of Crime's (OVC) Survivor Engagement Training and Technical Assistance (SETTA) Program is designed to identify key challenges, successes, and best practices involving survivor engagement as the field moves from survivor-informed to survivor-led. This workshop is focused on engaging survivors in systems-level anti-trafficking efforts.

Structure

- The facilitator will divide participants into small breakout groups (three to six individuals each) and assign each group a scenario, providing the following prompts for discussion:

- Why do you think this scenario may have initially happened?
- What norms or implicit biases, if any, exist? How should they be addressed?
- Thinking about best practices for survivor engagement, what steps would you take to address the issue in the moment?
- How could this situation have been avoided altogether? What can be done to mitigate immediate impact or future occurrences?

- Depending on overall group size, small groups should spend 10 to 20 minutes discussing these questions. Small groups should be prepared to report out to the larger group.
- The facilitator can float between small groups to pose additional questions or topics for consideration specific to each scenario.
- The facilitator should then have each group report out, using the Discussion Questions for Group Debrief (page 3) to delve deeper into these scenarios and best practices for survivor engagement.

Scenario 1

You hear from a partner with whom you've been working a while that a new consultant with lived experience is dissatisfied with how their consultancy is going. They believe they are being asked to speak on content that is outside of their experience/expertise (e.g., they experienced labor trafficking, but are being asked to speak about sex trafficking). You reach out to the survivor consultant, who shares that they were hesitant to bring up their challenges because they do not want it to impact their working relationships. The consultant is a former client of the agency.

Consider...

- How does your response account for power dynamics?
- What could the organization have been better communicated in the consulting agreement?
- Can you broaden representation of survivor voices with diverse experiences? How so?

Scenario 2

As part of the development of a new protocol, you ask survivor consultants to review and provide feedback. You incorporate their feedback and circulate the revised protocol for leadership approval. You see that most of the suggestions remove or edit to the survivors' contributions feel more "feasible" or to ensure that other key partners would be comfortable with the protocols. When you share this feedback with survivor consultants, they express frustration that their lived experience isn't being valued.

Consider...

- How and when are survivor consultants included in the protocol development process?
- What expectations were set with survivors and reviewers, if any?
- What are key considerations when having conversations with decision-makers about centering survivor voices? What about with survivors themselves?

Scenario 3

During a training, a survivor leader is presenting; an audience member makes a comment suggesting it's hard to tell who is telling the truth because youth sometimes lie to get attention.

Consider...

- How might you respond in the moment to such a scenario?
- How can you invite people to check their implicit biases?
- What might debriefing with the training team look like?

Scenario 4

Someone asks a survivor a very personal question about their lived experience during a collaborative meeting. You don't hear the question, but the survivor shares during the debrief that it made them really uncomfortable.

Consider...

- What are some ground rules you could set for future meetings?
- What might a follow-up plan could look like, both during the meeting and separately with the survivor?
- How can you invite people to check their implicit biases?

Scenario 5

You hire a survivor consultant to create a training. The training they develop includes information that does not align with standards set by research or the funder (e.g., discusses prevention, uses images that sensationalize trafficking, has explicit details about survivor stories that could be triggering) and shares some comments that don't align with your organization's equity values (e.g., names one racial group as perpetrators of trafficking) or best practices for training on human trafficking.

Consider...

- What expectations were set with survivors and reviewers, if any?
- What prep work could have been done to align content with expectations or standards?
- What professional development and skill-building opportunities exist for survivors?

Discussion Questions for Group Debrief

- What are some key considerations you heard discussed throughout these scenarios?
- What strategies have you found helpful to implement best practices?
- What might an internal policy to address power dynamics and imbalances include?
- In developing hiring practices for consultants and staff with lived experience, what considerations (if any) should be made?

