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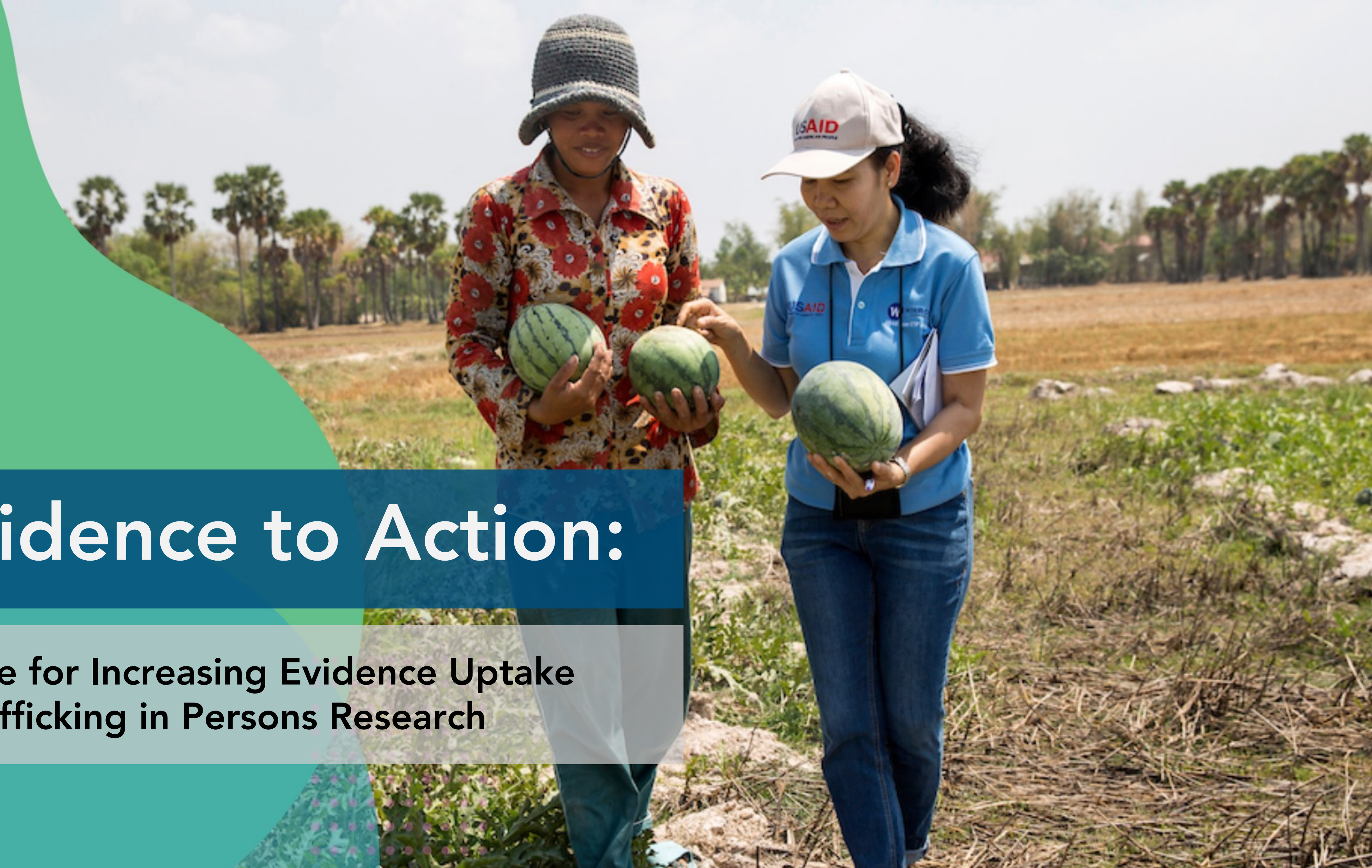

From Evidence to Action:

Practical Guidance for Increasing Evidence Uptake and Impact in Trafficking in Persons Research

Winrock International is a recognized leader in U.S. and international development, providing solutions to some of the world's most complex social, agricultural, and environmental challenges. Inspired by its namesake Winthrop Rockefeller, Winrock's mission is to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity and sustain natural resources.

Introduction

This resource offers specific actions that funders, researchers, and project implementers can take to increase evidence uptake and impact in human trafficking research. The content is based on the discussions that took place among 140 participants in two multi-sector working groups during the November 2020 Evidence to Action Summit. Some of these actions are the responsibility of one party, while others are the shared responsibility of multiple parties. The actions are organized into three stages: before research, during research, and after research. Funders, researchers, and project implementers should read this entire resource before undertaking a research project and should commit, in advance, to which actions they will take.

This was created as a complementary resource to "From Evidence to Action: Challenges to Evidence Uptake and Impact" which was written for researchers. It can be found here.

How to use this resource

You can come back to this tool at any stage during the research process to ensure you are laying the groundwork for maximum impact. This document provides recommended actions by the stage in the research process (as you can see from the Navigation Page): before, during, after, and at all times.

On the Navigation Page you can click on the title that is relevant to your position for each stage of the research process. If you are a funder, researcher, or project implementer, there are certain roles and responsibilities for you to consider. We do understand that these roles are interchangeable at times and there may be relevance for you in more than one place. For that reason, we have added a navigation pane on the right-hand side of the screen. This way you can easy jump to the most relevant information for you.

Throughout, you will also find tools and checklists to help you think through your actions and engagement.

We hope you find this resource useful. If you have feedback on this resource, please reach out to CTIPMEL@winrock.org.

Navigation Page

1 Before Research

2 During Research

3 After Research

4 Standing Rules of Engagement

Shared Actions

Seek to fill knowledge gaps. When undertaking new research, consider answering questions or addressing issues that have not been researched before and that project implementers are interested in. Funders and researchers should ask project implementers for ideas or ask for their feedback on ideas the funders and researchers would like to pursue. A few examples of knowledge gaps (as identified by practitioners during the Evidence to Action Summit) include data on the forms of trafficking prevalent in specific countries (for example, cross-border trafficking, sex trafficking, labor trafficking, domestic servitude, etc.); the collective impact of the work of CSOs and NGOs in the field; the risk of TIP through social media; and the perspectives of survivors on what interventions are effective. Knowledge gaps will vary by locality and will change over time, so project implementers should be consulted before any new research project begins (see **Questions for Project Implementers**).

Actor: Funders and Researchers

Questions for Project Implementers

Before a research project starts, you should always ask project implementers and policy makers the questions below. These questions help implementers name their own motives and needs, as they relate to the research. They also help inform the researchers' literature review and understanding of why they are being asked to do this research.

1. What information are you missing that would improve the ability to do your job?
2. What don't you know that would really help you to be more efficient or effective?
3. What tools do you need to better do your job and why don't you have them?
4. What would be the consequences or disadvantage of not completing this research project?
5. Why is this research project important to you right now?
6. What do you hope to get from this research?
7. Does anything about this research worry you?
8. Are there any kinds of possible findings or results that would cause you to think this research project was a failure?

These questions not only help the researcher to better define the research topic and question, but also overcome some common misunderstandings or expectations about what research can do and cannot do. Often project implementers are looking for clear, straightforward answers and may perceive a result that does not confirm their experiential knowledge as a failure of the research. The last three questions might lead to a conversation where researchers need to help project implementers gain a better understanding of the need for research and what research can and cannot do.

1 Shared Actions

Co-design relevant research. Funders should collaborate with expert researchers and with the potential beneficiaries of research when writing research funding calls or deciding which research to fund. Funders should also thoroughly explore whether any previous research has been done on this topic and what kinds of research are most helpful to project implementers. Once research funding is secured, researchers and project implementers should co-design relevant research by co-writing research questions and co-selecting methods. If possible, consider involving participants or other potential beneficiaries at this stage. Decide together what an appropriate scope is for the research and what its envisioned impact is. This will take time, but it is one of the only ways to guarantee that project implementers' voices are heard at the key stage of research design (see Testing Hypotheses for project implementers and Why Research? for project implementers).

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Testing Hypotheses

Project implementers often have a hypothesis that they want to test through research. Researchers should understand what that hypothesis is and should propose the research methods that are best suited to testing it. Project implementers need to respect the fact that research should not be used merely to validate knowledge that has been gained from experience in the field, but to test whether that knowledge can be proven.

Why Research?

Why do project implementers need research?

Project implementers need research to:

- Learn from the experiences of others and discover opportunities, challenges, possible adaptations or innovations, etc.
- Develop an improved understanding and awareness, such as what factors related to their work are specific or more generally relevant, and what aspects influence the variability of their work.
- Provide acceptable evidence to donors in the future, to support the project implementer's choice of strategy or to explain why other strategies were not selected. This evidence may exist prior to research but it is often dismissed as "anecdotal" and is not considered credible because of perceived weaknesses in methodology and/or because an academic institution was not involved.
- Reach beyond their own remit. This is particularly true for small organizations, who may not have the time, resources, or skills to conduct relevant research.

1 Shared Actions

Write realistic, thorough research proposals that include uptake strategies from the start. Whether it is funders, researchers, or project implementers who are writing a research proposal, the proposal should be realistic. Whenever possible, work together to write a research proposal. Read through this document to understand some of the activities you will need to plan for in order to increase evidence uptake and impact. How much time and money will these activities take? Who else needs to be involved for the research project and its various activities to be successful? Will participants be compensated for their time? How much time and money will be devoted to supporting evidence uptake and impact after the research project is over?

Actor: Funders, Researchers, and Project Implementors

Budget for the translation of briefs, reports, or other outputs. If the researchers and intended audience are fluent in different first languages, ensure that there is provision for translating research outputs. Outputs can include standard briefs or reports, but they can also include creative options such as podcast episodes, infographics, videos, and more. Think about how you will disseminate this research so that you can budget for translation if necessary.

Actor: Funders and Researchers

Be clear about what new knowledge you are creating with your research. Examine whether it is entirely new or whether it builds on existing work. Involve project implementers so you can better understand what local or historical work might be relevant. Will your research be useful? If not, it should not be undertaken. Further, be realistic with one another and with project implementers about the scope of research that is possible and the research outputs (such as reports) that are possible in light of any financial and time constraints (see More Than Do No Harm for all).

Actor: Funders and Researchers

More Than Do No Harm

It is important to think about what you are contributing, but it is also important to ensure that you do no harm when undertaking new research. Furthermore, your research process itself should be ethical and constructive, and should result in actionable outcomes that will improve the work of project implementers and the lives of victims or survivors. Whenever possible, include survivors before, during, and after a research project. Meaningful survivor inclusion is safe, empowering, accountable, transparent, liberating, and joyful. For ideas about how to apply these principles to your research project, see "The Charter for Engaging Survivors."

1 Shared Actions

Make an action plan. What will the project involve? Everyone who is working on the research project should have a clear understanding of how it is designed, what the goals are, and how the success of the research will be measured. Additionally, be clear with one another about what research is going to be produced. How is data being collected? Which parts of the action plan will each of you be responsible for? Which specific individuals will be responsible for implementing recommendations? How long will ethics or other approval processes require? Do project implementers want to be trained on the research methods during the research project (either to directly participate or to be able to feed into the research process and findings)? Who are the participants likely to be? When do they need to be contacted, and by whom? The action plan should be very specific. For example, prepare a calendar with expected deadlines and meetings for every part of the research project, list the tasks that might be required to obtain permission for research in-country, etc. Read through this document to understand what other activities (such as consultations) you might need to plan for. Outline this agreement in a document, such as a memorandum of understanding or terms of reference (TOR), and finalize it when everyone is satisfied with it. This might include NGOs, CSOs, UN agencies, or others who need to be involved in different parts of the action plan. The action plan should be included in your funding proposal for the research project.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Budget for every aspect of the action plan. The research budget must cover everything listed in the action plan. This includes any costs for materials, participant compensation, travel, etc. It also includes staff time. For example, if researchers are looking for partners, they need to pay for staff time to help with that coordination. CSOs who are funding research should remember that communication is time consuming and think about how they want to manage their staff time. If the action plan requires staff to attend many meetings, are they being paid for this time by the CSO or by the research budget? Will participants speak the same language as the researchers, or will interpreters be necessary? The responsibility for budgeting for all of these things will mostly fall to funders and researchers. But project implementers might also have some responsibility for managing the budget. Project implementers will likely also have responsibility for helping to determine how much money is needed for some parts of the action plan.

Actor: Funders, Researchers, and Project Implementors

1 Shared Actions

Protect the time for the action plan. How much time will each item in the plan take to complete? Protect time for collaboration and communication with one another—remember that time is a resource, and you can budget it just as you budget money. Schedule regular meetings together for the whole life of the project. Schedule time to complete each action item and to follow up on new action items that result from meetings.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Write clear, proactive applications to ethics committees or relevant authorities. Be as clear and specific as possible about what you are researching, why you are researching it, who will participate in the research, and how you will proactively address specific, local ethical concerns or vulnerabilities. This should be done in collaboration with one another. Help one another understand the various approvals needed and what the processes are. Submit applications as early as possible to avoid a delayed start to the research and never begin research before receiving approval. Promptly answer any of a committee or authority's follow-up questions (see Core Principles and Ethical Implications).

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Core Principles and Ethical Implications

Core principles for ethical research include:

- Maximizing benefit
- Minimizing harm
- Respecting autonomy
- Fairness and accountability
- Integrity and transparency

Additional implications of a research project must be considered, including the impact on:

- All those involved in the research
- Those who may be affected by it
- The welfare of any animals, wildlife, or sea life involved
- Cultural sensitivities
- Protected species and sites

1 Shared Actions

Coordinate with others. Before you begin a new research project, ask if anyone else is currently doing something similar or relevant to the work you plan to do. Ask CSOs, NGOs, and other researchers if they know of any work you should be aware of. It is common to find that others are doing very similar research at the same time, and in the same area. If you discover this, make contact with the individuals or organizations doing the work to better understand their research. What are their research questions and who are they interviewing? With whom they are implementing projects and who is benefiting from those projects? Others may be interviewing or working with the same people you are. Share information, be aware of who else is in the area, and make them aware of your research, as well. See if you can share resources or build upon each other's work.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Identify relevant stakeholders. Who stands to benefit from this new research? Who might be affected by your research? Engage new stakeholders as they come to light. The literature review, which should have been completed by the researchers, may give you ideas about who has been interested in similar projects in the past. Reach out to individuals or organizations to let them know about your project. Ask them if they would be interested in receiving your final report. If they are potential participants in your research, ask if they would be willing to take part. Save their contact information so that you can reach out to them again in later stages of your research.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

1 Funders

Share calls for proposals in local languages and accept proposals in local languages. Language can exclude local researchers and project implementers from proposals. Proposals should be written in or translated into local languages. Proposals written in those languages should also be accepted. If you do not have staff who are able to produce these proposals, you will need to budget for translation services. (See Inclusive Calls for Proposals for tips on proposal development)

Engage local project implementers and local researchers. Fund local individuals or organizations to conduct research. Local project implementers should at least be engaged in consultations and in collaboration—some examples of which are described throughout this document. Local researchers and project implementers often have a better understanding of the local context than international research institutions do, and they may be able to work more quickly. Where possible, encourage local project implementers or researchers to work in partnership with one another during a research project. (See Fair Compensation & Setting up Research for Impact for tips to ensure researchers and implementers are laying the groundwork for success)

1 Researchers

Understand the local context.* If your research team is from a different country or a different region within the country, it is important to bring others with local experience onto your team. You should also meet with local academics, project implementers, and other key individuals to gain an understanding of the local context and "sense check" your own operating assumptions and objectives. Budget for at least two weeks in the field dedicated to learning, listening, observing, holding meetings, and asking questions before beginning research. Work with project implementers to understand local laws, power dynamics, social norms, discrimination, any mistrust towards counter-trafficking organizations, how migration and trafficking in persons are understood, any possible stigmatization of victims, etc. Be sure to allocate adequate resources to support local involvement at every stage of the research project (see **Be the Learner** for researchers*).

**This recommendation is also pertinent to project implementers who are working in an area or focusing on a topic that they are unfamiliar with*

Conduct a literature review. Search thoroughly for research that addresses the topic or question you are going to be researching. Consider beginning with a simple Google search or Google Scholar search. If you are partnered with a university or a research organization, they may have additional search tools you can use. Ask CSO partners what research they consider important or relevant. Keep in mind that research can be produced by many types of organizations, including universities, NGOs, governments, and more. Also keep in mind that not everyone understands how the quality of research may vary.

Be the Learner

It is important to remember that working in an area or researching an area does not necessarily mean you are an expert—even if you have done this kind of work for a long time. It is necessary to be humble and realize that you may have "blind spots" about the groups your research is meant to benefit. (For example, "blind spots" can exist around caste, wealth, skin color, ethnicity, religion, or language.) Bring others on board who may have lived experience or local expertise that can enhance your understanding of the context.

When you include local experts or locals with lived experience on your team, decide whether you are consulting them or co-producing research with them. **Consulting** means that you are seeking the views of local partners and using what they tell you to inform your decision process throughout the research project. Co-producing research with them means that you are all "are equal partners at all stages" of the research project.

Either way, local partners must be meaningfully included in your research. This means going beyond a one-time meeting. And, regardless of whether you choose consultation or co-production, local partners should be compensated fairly for their time and contributions.

1 Before Research
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Funders
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3 After Research
4 Standing Rules of Engagement

1 Project Implementers

Be upfront. Be upfront within your organization and with researchers regarding what research is feasible and what research is useful to you. If researchers need you to act as gatekeepers for participants, be clear and realistic about how much time you will devote to this activity and whether you think the research will benefit the participants. Be upfront about your capacity to implement research recommendations and the financial or time constraints that might affect your ability to do so. It is better to set low and realistic expectations for others than to agree to a level of commitment you are not able to keep.

Shared Actions

Communicate regularly. Everybody involved in a project should know what parts of the project plan have been actioned and what parts lie ahead. Regular meetings, emails, or the sharing of "live documents" through services like Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive are useful in keeping the lines of communication open. Additionally, any individual or organization that experiences a setback or unexpected obstacle should inform the others right away. COVID-19 is an example of an obstacle that affected many research projects in different ways. There may also be setbacks that affect only one person or one organization, such as a serious illness or an unexpected change in organizational leadership. Regular communication gives everybody the opportunity to keep their expectations realistic and to agree to revising the project plan or deadlines, if necessary.

Actor: Funders, Researchers, and Project Implementors

Help participants understand that they should be honest and upfront. It is common in some areas for individuals to give answers they think that researchers or project implementers want to hear. But this does not support quality research or useful recommendations. Researchers and project implementers should help participants understand that the most useful answers are honest and upfront (depending on the appropriateness of the setting, it might be better for implementers to not be present during data collection). This may require cultural awareness and sensitivity, so researchers and project implementers need to work together to communicate this to participants (see Mitigating Response Bias for additional resources).

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Mitigating Response Bias

One of the reasons it is important that participants feel safe and comfortable sharing genuine responses is so that your research project will be informed by high-quality data that reflects reality—instead of reflecting what your participants think you want to hear or what they might think the "right answer" is. In fact, participants answering questions openly and honestly is an important part of reducing bias in your research. There are a number of additional ways that you can reduce this and other kinds of bias in your research project.

This short resource describes five different types of bias and offers suggestions for minimizing them (continued below).

2 Shared Actions

Identify additional relevant stakeholders. As you analyze your data and begin to interpret what it means, think again about who stands to benefit from your research and who might be affected by your research. Reach out to additional stakeholders to let them know about your work. Tell them why you think it might be relevant to them. Ask them if they would be interested in receiving your final report. Save their contact information so that you can reach out to them again later.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

Interpret findings and co-create recommendations together. After initial research analysis, researchers should share an update with project implementers and ask for their feedback. If possible, include participants and other stakeholders, as well. This may be done multiple times, i.e., after a second round of analysis. This will ensure that researchers have properly accounted for the local context and that the completed research project will be relevant. It will increase the likelihood that the completed project will be well received and that it will have impact. Researchers should share the key themes from the findings and share preliminary recommendations. A short, confidential overview of the analysis results could be circulated in advance, giving project implementers and other stakeholders the opportunity to read it and formulate feedback or questions for the researchers. Are the preliminary results in alignment with the project plan? Do the findings make sense? Are the findings presented in a helpful and logical way? Are any important themes missing? Is any of the terminology unclear? What recommendations should be made in light of the findings? These could be discussed in a consultation workshop or round-table discussion. Project implementers should respond when invited by researchers to do so—this will result in more inclusive, higher quality research that is better positioned to benefit you and the people you work with.

Actor: Researchers and Project Implementers

2 Researchers

Work efficiently. It is essential that the work you do is of high quality. However, research has a reputation for taking too much time. Make efficient use of your time so that you can produce useful research and recommendations in a timely manner. If you take more time than is necessary, project implementers will likely lose interest in the research, or local circumstances might change and make your research irrelevant.

Train project implementers to carry out further research. If appropriate, and if it is in your action plan, train the project implementers on where to find research tools, how to read academic literature, and how to use your methods to gather data in their own future research. It is often easier to teach about research while the research is being conducted, so that project implementers can see research "in action" rather than learning about it only in a lecture-style setting (see **Participatory Action Research** & **Tools for Increased Participation** for ideas to engage participants at all stages in the research).

Predict barriers to evidence uptake. Talk to project implementers about what might prevent them from following the recommendations that will result from this research. What has prevented them from following previous research recommendations? Is there anything the researchers can do to help make the upcoming recommendations more feasible?

Participatory Action Research

Action research, sometimes called "participatory action research," is a method that can include project implementers and other research beneficiaries in a very meaningful way. In action research, researchers work together with participants (for example, project implementers and survivors) to collect data. In the process, participants learn how to do action research—a skill they can use for their own future research projects. Click here for an introduction to action research

Tools for Increased Participation

There are many areas/ways in which practitioners can be included in the research process, including the analysis phase. Here are some helpful tools from the Innovation Network, the Institute of Development Studies, and Better Evaluation.

2 Researchers

Write useful recommendations. Read the "Preparing for Impact" report, the brief from the Evidence to Action Summit, to understand what makes a good recommendation (e.g., cost-effective, relevant, and feasible). How long might each recommendation take from a project implementer's perspective? Are your recommendations clear and specific enough that a project implementer would know exactly what to do after reading them? Show project implementers a draft of the recommendations and ask if they are useful and doable. Make edits to the draft, as necessary, until project implementers feel they are clear and feasible (see **Gain First-hand CTIP Experience** for some thoughts on "one the ground" experience).

Ask project implementers how they want to receive the research findings. Near the end of your research project, ask whether project implementers prefer full reports, executive summaries, policy briefs, or other ways of presenting the findings. Publish the findings in a way that is going to be useful to project implementers. Do some project implementers prefer printed reports? Can the findings be found easily online? If the findings are presented in a PDF, is it clickable?

Gain First-hand CTIP Experience

An example of a useful recommendation is printed below. The example comes from the recommendations in the "Preparing for Impact" report.

Researchers and stakeholders should develop both subject matter expertise and a personal interest in anti-slavery work. This is particularly important to credibility from the perspective of NGO practitioners. Consider volunteering, asking to visit NGO offices, engaging professionally with survivor support networks, and reading grey literature with a charitable eye."

This is a useful recommendation because the author is specific about what readers should do to follow the recommendation, offering several specific examples. Another reason it is useful is because some of those examples require a one-time commitment (visiting NGO offices) or an ongoing commitment (volunteering), and some require moderate time commitments (engaging with survivor support networks). This shows that the researcher understands that lack of time might be a barrier to evidence uptake and she has shown how readers with very little time can still follow the recommendation. Finally, this is a good example of a useful recommendation because the author showed it (and others from the same report) to several trusted stakeholders before the report was published. Those stakeholders gave feedback on the recommendation and the author edited it accordingly until they felt it was clear and feasible.

3 After Research

Shared Actions

Post the research online, preferably alongside other resources. Unless the research is "embargoed" or confidential, it should be posted online in a place that is easy to find, and not behind a paywall. If other research or resources are already posted in one place, such as a database, the research should be added there. Funders, researchers, and project implementers can all take initiative in posting the research. It is okay for the research to be posted in more than one place (for example, on a research institution's website and on a project implementer's website) because it will reach different audiences in each place. Consider directly emailing individuals or organizations in your professional networks to share the research. Ask them to share it further with others who may be interested. The research should also be shared, multiple times, on Twitter or other social media platforms. Your social media posts should include a link to the findings and a short overview or highlights from the research. If the findings are presented in infographics, podcasts, or other creative formats, share these widely on social media, as well (see Make a Difference for ways to maximize uptake).

Actor: Funders, Researchers, and Project Implementors

Continue training project implementers to carry out further research. This should have begun during the research project. However, additional training may be required. Or, project implementers who did not wish to receive training during the project may desire to do so afterwards. This may require extra funding, which should be made available. Costs can be reduced by offering this training online.

Actor: Funders and Researchers

Make a Difference

Researchers at the Summit said that they were frustrated by the fact that their research sometimes did not make a difference in the areas where they conducted research—nothing had changed even years after the work was done. What can be done about this?

Researchers can:

- Follow all of the guidance in this resource
- Follow up with project implementers after you have disseminated your research, to understand why they did or did not follow your recommendations
- The next time you conduct research, take this feedback onboard

Funders and project implementers can:

- Take responsibility for working on disseminating and implementing recommendations
- Provide feedback to researchers
- If researchers make any changes to their recommendations based on your feedback, take responsibility for trying to implement the new recommendations

3 Researchers

Get creative. Think about innovative ways of sharing your findings. Consider social media posts, hosting a podcast, or speaking as guest on someone else's podcast. Can you create a short video about your findings? Can you communicate your findings in infographics or a "Top 10" list? Can you host a video call where you give a short presentation about the findings and host a Q&A session? Remember to speak or write in a language that your audience can understand. Use a translator or interpreter if necessary—this will help you communicate your message more clearly and will support evidence uptake (See **Creative Ideas** for varying ways to ensure your messages are heard).

Follow up with project implementers. After project implementers have had some time to read the research and act on the recommendations, follow up with them. Which recommendations have they followed? Which recommendations have they not followed, and why? Is there anything you can do to remove obstacles for the project implementers so that they can follow more recommendations? Did the project implementers understand the language in which the research was disseminated? If not, can you provide it in their preferred language?

Share the findings with participants. Participants should always be given the final report or other research outputs. Remember that participants can be individuals or organizations. If you have permission to use participants' contact details for this, send the findings to them directly. If you do not have permission, or if you never had the participants' contact details, ask project implementers or gatekeepers to share the research with participants on your behalf. (If participants do not give you their permission and contact details during the research, it is good practice to tell them where they can find the research after the work is completed, or to give them your professional email address or professional social media details.) Remember to prepare the report or other outputs in a language or languages that participants can understand.

Creative Ideas

Short videos can be effective ways of sharing your findings. In this video, the results of a research project and some recommendations are explained in under five minutes. Infographics can also be impactful, succinct ways of sharing your findings. The Global Slavery Index has a "Highlights" infographic that contains high-level findings and serves as an introduction to the different sections of the much larger 2018 Global Slavery Index report. Finally, illustrations can be useful and creative ways of sharing many ideas in one place and showing how they all relate. For example, the Sandwell Anti-Slavery Partnership created this useful illustration to communicate the main points and key findings from a 2021 conference called, "Sexual exploitation still happens here."

3 Project Implementers

Read the entire report produced by researchers. Researchers should produce succinct summaries of their findings or present them in creative ways. However, it is likely that they will also produce a more traditional, full report. At least one person at your organization should read the full report and be ready to engage with other team members over it. It is not sufficient to only read recommendations and summaries of research – especially if you have been engaged as a partner in the research project or are a primary beneficiary of the research. Just as researchers are expected to conduct a literature review and thoroughly understand the local context before undertaking research, project implementers need to read and understand the complete research report before taking action to implement recommendations.

Implement recommendations. It is crucial that project implementers follow the recommendations made in research reports. If you were a project partner, you might have already been given this responsibility in the original action plan. Regardless of whether the responsibility was specifically assigned to you, project implementers must understand that it is their responsibility to implement recommendations. Even when funders and researchers have the resources to offer some support, it is not their responsibility to implement recommendations. If project implementers do not do this, then research runs the risk of being largely useless and nobody will benefit from the work that was put into it or the knowledge that was gained from it.

4 Standing Rules of Engagement (What to do at all times)

The following are recommendations that funders, researchers, and project implementers should follow at all times. Even when there is no active research project, these ways of behaving and interacting with one another help to create collaboration, understanding, and respect. This is essential for ensuring evidence uptake and impact from future research.

Participate in multi-stakeholder forums.
Funders, researchers, and project implementers: Join existing multi-stakeholder forums, partnerships, or platforms in order to understand which project implementers are active in the field, make contacts with them, and be able to share findings within those forums on a regular basis moving forward (see **Get Involved** for ideas on bridging silos).

Funders: There are not many existing multi-stakeholder forums. The anti-trafficking field would benefit from regionally based forums that meet regularly and include partners from a variety of sectors. Consider funding such a forum. Once a forum has been created, consider funding a forum secretary or chair (part-time or full-time) and a venue for any in-person meetings or events.

Collaborate and communicate—and respond to collaborative initiative and communications.
Funders, researchers, and project implementers: Create opportunities to include one another in meaningful collaboration or communication (CSO staff, for example, can invite funders and researchers to any events hosted by your organization, and researchers should attend whenever possible). Always respond if and when others engage you in collaborative efforts or communications. If there is no ongoing research project at the time, approach these as listening opportunities to learn what challenges and research gaps exist for researchers and other stakeholders. Be prepared to share your own view so that others can understand your perspective.

Get Involved

In order to truly understand the local TIP context, consider gaining first-hand experience of local counter-trafficking work. Funders, researchers, and other stakeholders should develop both subject matter expertise and a personal interest in TIP work. This is particularly important to credibility from the perspective of NGO practitioners. Consider volunteering, asking to visit NGO offices, engaging professionally with survivor support networks, and reading any literature (whether it is academic or not) produced by project implementers.

Standing rules of engagement (What to do at all times)

4 Standing Rules of Engagement (What to do at all times)

Proactively offer your expertise.

Project implementers: Proactively offer your expertise and the benefit of your experience to researchers, even when they have not initiated this conversation. If you are aware of researchers working in your area, reach out to offer your support. It may be frustrating that the research was begun without you or that you are not being consulted; however, it is important to show researchers that you have an interest in their work, have local expertise, and may have relevant experience that could support the work they are doing. Even if the researchers do not involve you in research that is underway, building relationships is important for working together in the future.

Keep an open mind.

Researchers: Be prepared to rethink how the research project will be run. Many of the actions listed in this document require collaboration and coordination with others. Listen when others suggest new ways of doing research or when they ask for creative solutions to longstanding problems. Become comfortable with treating project implementers as your equals and allowing them to work alongside you or to guide you in their own areas of expertise.

Inclusive Calls for Proposals

What should a call for proposals require from applicants?

- A budget and justification of expenses
- An action plan
- Proof that at least one local project implementer will be a partner in the project and what their role will be
- Proof that the research has a plan for survivor voice or input

How to be more inclusive:

- Instead of solely depending on written proposals, consider accepting proposals in the form of presentations or meetings
- Accept submissions written in local languages
- Accept proposals for assessments of previous research or studies
- Print your contact information on the call for proposals so that applicants can ask you questions while they are preparing their proposals

How can you ensure that calls for proposals are relevant and receive quality responses?

- Organize a consultation with local organizations and other relevant stakeholders before publishing the call. Depending on the topic, this may include representatives from the government, private sector, migrant groups, research institutions and universities, etc.
- After the call is published, organize an event (hosting it online is okay). Give a short presentation about the call for proposals and leave plenty of time to address questions from those in attendance. This will help ensure strong, relevant proposals. Events like this are often called "workshops." These events help to develop interest around the research and facilitate support in implementing the recommendations that will result from the research (continued in the next box)

Inclusive Calls…Continued

What to look for in a proposal:

- Knowledge of the local context
- Time spent in the field
- Knowledge of the local language or languages
- Researchers' previous experience conducting studies with vulnerable populations or previous work with project implementers who have this experience

During the selection phase:

- Allow adequate time for applicants to write a proposal between the date it is first published and the deadline.
- Give yourself adequate time to prepare and select a successful proposal or proposals
- Include a meeting with shortlisted applicants (online is also an option); be sure to use an interpreter if the applicants are fluent in a different language than you
- Evaluate the attitudes and approaches of different applicants; you will ultimately want to select a team that is more prone to collaboration and listening

During the negotiation and final agreement with successful applicants:

- Be very clear on expectations, timelines, communication, and the reporting process
- Set an agreed plan to receive updates and provide feedback; this should be in the funding agreement and applicants should be required to include updates and feedback in the action plan they create with any project partners
- Have a clear agreement on how the final result should look and what your plan is to disseminate the results at end of the study

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Setting up Research for Impact

To ensure that all parties involved have a positive and successful experience of working together, answer these questions with researchers and project implementers before the research project begins:

1. What would you like this partnership to do? Why are these individuals or organizations partnering for this project?

2. Have you considered inviting the following organizations to be partners on this project? Local universities or academics, local project implementers, relevant local government groups, faith representatives, national NGOs with local representation, business partners, and survivors.

3. Are there existing partnerships or networks in the area that should be included? These might be focused on TIP work, or on related issues such as migration.

4. Do you have terms of reference for the partnership (including expectations for member responsibilities, meeting frequency, and an expected duration of the partnership)?

5. Are information-sharing agreements in place between members? For example, have the researchers agreed to share emerging findings with partners at specific points during the research project?

6. Do partners need to be compensated for their role in this research project? Are partners open to non-monetary compensation, such as exchanging staff resources, student placements, the use of venues, or skills offers from NGOs and businesses? Are compensation agreements in the terms of reference?

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Fair Compensation

As often happens with CTIP research, the lead researcher is a foreigner or an academic with limited to no field experience. And data collectors might be local students or staff from local CSOs. Traditionally, the lead researcher dictates how work is to be done (often the lead researcher will design the study, quickly train data collectors, then disappear, later preparing the report and presenting the findings). But often, there is a large difference in salary or per diem for the lead researcher and the individuals collecting the data.

This should be avoided! The aim should be to work together, from designing the research to presenting the results, and to learn to from each other. The research should always include a component on introducing new methodologies to in-country researchers. Resources and salaries should be allocated based on experience, skill, and the level of effort (or time commitment) required. All parties should feel ownership, be rightfully compensated, and be involved from day one, through to the dissemination of the research.

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Mitigating Response ...Continued

Participants often need to be told that researchers want them to be honest and to share their genuine thoughts or experiences. But you can help participants feel safe and comfortable doing this by following ethical guidelines. General research ethics will provide a good foundation for your research project. Your organization, or one of your research partners, might have a code of ethics like this one. If so, you should familiarize yourself with it and be sure you follow it carefully. You can even share a "participant information sheet", like this one, with participants so that they understand their rights and your responsibilities.

If participants are survivors of abuse or trauma, including human trafficking, there are additional, free resources you should become familiar with. Some examples are below. All of these resources are useful for research that includes survivor participants, but they also offer new ways of thinking about how to include survivors throughout the research process.

- The "Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research & Service Development" is a short document that explains what "good engagement" with survivors looks like and how you can ensure that your research project does not cause harm to survivors. The charter includes guiding principles to follow and seven specific commitments you can make when engaging with survivors.

Mitigating Response...Continued

- The "Survivor Research Involvement Ladder" shows four levels of survivor involvement in various stages of a research project. It can help you evaluate to what extent you are meaningfully including survivors as participants and as key stakeholders in your research in other ways.
- The "Nothing About Us Without Us" guide is designed first and foremost for policymakers. But it is also useful to anyone who runs research projects with survivors. For instance, it asks questions like, "Have you provided survivors with a clear explanation about why you are seeking their input, what is expected of them, and what they can expect from you?" It then provides examples of how you can achieve ethical and effective survivor engagement.

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