Partnerships in Investigating Sex Trafficking
Bridging Gaps to Support Survivors

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Key Definitions and Acronyms

AUSA – Assistant United States Attorney
CEASE – Cities Empowered Against Sexual Exploitation
CEO – Chief Executive Officer
CSEC – Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
ICE – Immigration and Customs Enforcement
HIS – Homeland Security Investigations, part of ICE
FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigations
IMB – Illicit Massage Business
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
NIJ – National Institute of Justice
NYAWC – The New York Asian Women’s Center
ReWA – The Refugee Women’s Alliance
SAVI – Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Program at The Mount Sinai Medical Center
SFCAHT – San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking
T-Visa – T Nonimmigrant Status, granted to eligible victims of human trafficking
TVPA – Trafficking Victims Protection Act, originally passed by US Congress in 2000
WashACT – Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking
WARN – Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network
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Executive Summary

Since passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000, communities across the United States have grappled with how to respond to the crime of sex trafficking. Drawing on international definitions, the TVPA describes sex trafficking as an economic crime in which an individual is induced to perform commercial sex acts through force, fraud, or coercion. Persons under 18 years of age need not be subject to the conditions of force, fraud, or coercion to be considered sex trafficking victims.

Sex trafficking spans all sectors of our communities. Legitimate businesses and institutions are often used to facilitate the criminal activity, and in some jurisdictions are used to help detect and disrupt the crime. People who experience sex trafficking often undergo immense physical, mental, and emotional trauma – both as part of the trafficking situation and leading up to it. A history of trauma and neglect renders an individual more vulnerable to exploitation. A survivor may be reluctant to leave a trafficking situation because she may not see herself as a victim of crime or fears retribution from her trafficker. Additionally, she may see no other alternatives to support herself financially. Even after an individual is identified as a survivor of sex trafficking, she will require a myriad of services in order to reintegrate into society, from those that meet basic needs, such as safety and housing, to more intensive services including healthcare, mental health counseling, and job training. The complex nature of this situation requires robust responses to meet survivors’ diverse needs.

Law enforcement cannot address these cases alone.

These crimes require complex, intensive, and long-term responses. With that in mind, this paper seeks to address the following question:

How can local law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies effectively partner to respond to sex trafficking cases involving foreign born women and mitigate harm to victims?

Approach

Our research first examined some of the barriers faced by law enforcement agencies in partnering with other actors to respond to sex trafficking cases. We focused specifically on serving the foreign born survivor community to glean lessons from particular types of cases and compare approaches across municipalities. We conducted a review of available literature on the topic, including academic journals, government-developed guidebooks, articles, case studies, and books offering in-depth analysis. To learn from the lived experience of actors on the ground, we interviewed 31 practitioners across the jurisdictions of Boston, New York City, San Francisco, and Seattle.
conversations uncovered both the ongoing challenges and promising practices emerging from partnerships in those areas.

Some of the questions we sought to answer include:

- What are the special services required in attending to foreign born trafficking survivors?
- In forming partnerships, what different actors are included, and how are roles, responsibilities, and boundaries distinguished among various organizations?
- How can groups with differing ideologies, missions, and skills work toward a common goal?
- What are possible performance metrics that can be used to evaluate collective success?

Based on our findings, we developed recommendations, informed by interview inputs, for how communities can build on previous partnership efforts to enhance the local response to sex trafficking. This paper aims to provide useful examples as suggestions to jurisdictions that are in the process of examining their own cross-sector partnerships.

Findings: Barriers and Recommendations

Our research identified five main barriers to effective investigations and responses to sex trafficking. Based on our findings, this paper offers the following recommendations for creating impactful partnerships.

A. Conflicting ideologies and missions may result in the exclusion of important groups from task forces or collaboratives, limiting the scope of resources and perspectives available for partnerships. Disagreements around problem definition and divergent theories of change about how to eliminate sex trafficking may hamper group productivity. When members in the task force or partnership cannot agree on the essence of the problems leading to and posed by sex trafficking, approaches to address the issue may vary greatly and work at odds with one another.

RECOMMENDATION: Find common ground between responding organizations and stakeholders. It may be helpful to acknowledge the diversity of ideological viewpoints of those working in this field while maintaining neutrality in a collaborative space. If possible, establish a third-party as the impartial convener of the task force (i.e., not law enforcement or a service provider).

B. Challenges in measuring performance may hamper the ability of a collaborative to respond and adapt to quickly changing criminal networks. Due to incomplete and poor quality data for such a hidden crime, cities are largely unable to determine the scope of sex trafficking within their communities. Without reliable data, communities cannot measure the effectiveness of various investigation techniques and community interventions to prevent and dismantle criminal networks.
C. Tactical difficulties in the identification of victims and the building of trust are a central challenge for responding effectively to sex trafficking cases; victims may not know they are crime victims and may be unwilling or unable to seek assistance. Survivors often come from incredibly vulnerable situations, and may be loath to trust government officials and processes. Building trust to obtain survivor testimony in a sex trafficking investigation and to procure all necessary services is especially difficult when working with foreign born populations.

RECOMMENDATION: Establish performance measurements and processes. This includes creating realistic definitions and timeframes for success and developing process and outcome measures. Identify collective measures of impact to encourage collaboration around a shared purpose.

D. Agencies often have limited resources available to effectively respond to sex trafficking cases, which tend to be long-term, complex, and in need of intensive intervention. Law enforcement agencies are ill equipped and not well positioned to meet the extensive needs of each survivor. Policies and community resources often do not account for the true needs of the victim population.

RECOMMENDATION: Engage new stakeholders in order to better identify and empower survivors. Bring non-traditional actors beyond law enforcement and service providers into the collaborative response. Boundaries should be established between agencies and protocols developed for victim identification so each actor understands their role.

E. Responding agencies may lack cultural sensitivity to serve survivors generally and those who are foreign born specifically. Survivors have often undergone tremendous trauma and may react in unexpected ways that hinder progress if they do not receive proper trauma-informed care. For the foreign born community, immigration status and citizenship issues further complicate the response expected of law enforcement officers.

RECOMMENDATION: Collaborate with cross-sector agencies to overcome resource or capacity limitations. To better understand all resources available, build a comprehensive list of organizations working directly or indirectly with survivors. Define standardized processes and tools for data collection to scale impact.

RECOMMENDATION: Embrace outreach and training efforts to improve cultural understanding and sensitivity among responders. Learn from a diverse team of partners. Foster a professional culture that follows harm reduction, resilience, and empowerment principles at all times.
Next Steps: Partnership Checklist

- Assemble a comprehensive list of service organizations working directly or indirectly on sex trafficking to gain a full view of available services and service gaps.
- Build a coalition that acknowledges the diversity of ideological viewpoints.
- Consider identifying a neutral third-party organization to manage the task force, such as a city government agency or a judge.
- Determine common ground among members to define shared norms of operation.
- Create a shared vision for success that incorporates realistic definitions and timeframes, understanding that individual cases are time- and resource-intensive and long in duration.
- Engage non-traditional agencies to grow capacity and adapt to changing environments.
- Establish clear boundaries between agencies in terms of roles and responsibilities.
- Offer culturally appropriate and trauma-informed training to providers and law enforcement, particularly first responders.
- Develop shared protocols for victim identification across the collaborative.
- Develop collective measures of impact using process and outcome and measurements.
- Establish mechanisms for reporting, data collection, and analysis to inform policy, resource allocation, and to measure collective performance.
- Follow harm reduction, resilience, and empowerment principles at all times.
A Note on Terminology

Each organization has its own preferred term for referring to those who are or have been trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. These include victim, survivor, client, and sex worker, among others. We recognize that none of these terms is perfect, and each comes with its own ideological implications. Over time, a person may shift from victim to survivor, from being trafficked with an identified trafficker to engaging in commercial sexual exchange without an exploiter. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, we have chosen to use the term victim for individuals in trafficking situations and survivor once an individual has begun the process of moving out of a trafficking situation. Though the transition from victim to survivor is rarely linear, as part of a paper that advocates for empowerment and the development of survivor-centric responses, we have opted to use the language of survivors as often as possible. When describing the work of a specific organization, we may adopt their preferred terminology in describing the individuals and communities with which they engage.
Introduction

Recent years have seen a flurry of legal and policy responses to sex trafficking at the international, federal, state, and local levels. In 2000, the US Federal Government passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, which defined a new set of crimes related to human trafficking and enhanced penalties for offenders; 49 states have since enacted their own legislation criminalizing human trafficking.\(^1\)

As part of this legislation, sex trafficking is defined as “a commercial sex act induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.”\(^2\) TVPA includes further protections for non-citizens who have been trafficked: if they participate in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases, they can qualify for refugee benefits through a special visa created for trafficking victims (T-visa) or through a certification of continued presence.\(^3\) This law is based on three primary pillars: to protect victims, prosecute offenders, and prevent future trafficking.

Though much remains to be studied about the crime of sex trafficking, it is clear that a broad spectrum of actors is required to respond appropriately. Local agencies are often the first to identify and respond to trafficking cases and are generally tasked with meeting the long-term, complex needs of survivors. Law enforcement, service providers, and policymakers must learn how to partner effectively with one another in order to meet the multitude of needs of survivors, empowering them to leave a trafficking situation and, when appropriate, cooperating in an investigation and/or prosecution.

The need for partnership is particularly clear in cases involving foreign born survivors who often operate in multiple jurisdictions and require additional services to their domestic counterparts, most notably linguistic, cultural, and immigration services. Even in areas with robust networks of capacity, victims may be charged as criminals, denied much-needed services, or may never be appropriately identified in the first place. In part, this is due to the challenges in obtaining survivor cooperation in providing assistance or pursuing investigations. For many people at risk of being trafficked, attempting to leave a trafficking situation, or recovering from the experience, trauma plays a deep and undeniable role.

There are also challenges inherent in the nature of these partnerships, with organizations operating with diverse ideologies, missions, outlooks, and expertise. Guidelines and technical assistance around partnerships could ensure that a multi-sector approach is “efficient, conducive to collaboration, and responsive to the needs of all partners” and those they serve.\(^4\) This includes identifying and engaging essential partners; developing agreements on roles and responsibilities; establishing information-sharing protocols; and creating formalized channels of communication.\(^5\)
This paper aims to serve as a guide to jurisdictions that seek to create meaningful partnerships between law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies, including other local and federal governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses, and community groups, to respond to sex trafficking. The paper will place a particular focus on the challenges presented by foreign born victims, and the opportunities for agencies to collaborate in this arena. We hope this document provides useful information for local law enforcement agencies, NGO service providers, and municipal government agencies that serve as conveners of local anti-human trafficking task forces. Our intention is to provide useful examples to assist task forces at different stages of formality and development – from recently formed, unstructured NGO and law enforcement partnerships to robust, established multi-sector collaboratives.
Case Study: Illicit Massage Businesses

The US commercial sex industry includes a range of venues and activities, such as street and online sex work, escort services, karaoke bars, brothels, and massage businesses. Sex trafficking occurs across all of these forums. To learn in greater detail about the challenges that come with partnering to conduct sex trafficking investigations, we focused our research around one particular venue where sex trafficking can occur: illicit massage businesses (IMBs). A network of nearly 5,000 IMBs operates across the United States. A 2013 study conducted by the Urban Institute identified 4,790 massage businesses offering sexual services. Compared to other forms of sex work, IMBs are highly organized and typically run by entrepreneurs from China or Korea. According to officials, women from China, Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and other Asian countries are often recruited fraudulently for a job in the US. After paying a recruiter, these women incur a debt, and are coerced into trading sex in IMBs once in the US.

Male clients who frequent these massage businesses pay a house fee and an additional fee dependent on requested sexual activity. The tip generally goes to the woman performing the sex act. IMBs are typically open to all types of customers – men of all races, ethnicities, and ages. Many customers find their way to these businesses via online “erotic massage parlor” review boards. However, some IMBs have started limiting the customer base to thwart undercover law enforcement efforts. The IMB networks are highly organized; women working in massage businesses are rotated on a circuit from city to city, both to present customers with a variety of women to choose from, and to disorient the workers. Individual actors own multiple massage parlors, a key indicator of organized crime.

Although sex trafficking has been found and is suspected in IMBs, law enforcement faces difficulties in identifying victims of sex trafficking in these spaces. Proving whether the women involved are trafficked or voluntarily involved in prostitution is difficult, as many women refuse to identify as victims or to provide information against their traffickers. Other challenges with these cases include:

- Workers may not self-identify as crime victims and will not seek help or services
- In many jurisdictions female workers are still treated as criminals instead of victims
- Language and cultural barriers inhibit communication and trust
- Many distrust the legal system and government officials, especially due to immigration status
- Closing an establishment pushes illicit activity further underground and leaves workers vulnerable, and other establishments may open in its place (“whack-a-mole” phenomenon)
Methodology

Research Design. After conducting a review of available literature, we collected qualitative data through interviews with local law enforcement officers and prosecutors, as well as NGO service providers, defense attorneys, public health officials, and other municipal government officials.

Site Selection Process. We selected a sample of four resource-rich urban areas as study sites. Pre-study interviews with subject matter experts highlighted the cities of Boston, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle as those that experience a high incidence of sex trafficking involving foreign born women, including IMB activity. Although all four cities experience a similar high incidence of sex trafficking investigations, response across jurisdictions differs in some important ways:

- All four cities have hosted task forces that receive federal funds from the US Department of Justice. However, the Boston task forces received funds especially for provision of services for mental-health and crisis-intervention services and training and technical support on trauma and mental health.6
- Seattle and Boston belong to the Cities Empowered Against Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Network, which is committed to reducing the buying of sex to ultimately reduce incidents of sex trafficking.
- New York, San Francisco, and Seattle are sanctuary cities, meaning police and municipal employees cannot inquire about an individual’s immigration status. This limitation becomes important when evaluating available resources for foreign born survivors, as well as challenges to robust data collection efforts in these cities.

Interview Participant Selection. After site selection, we identified the primary law enforcement agencies in each city that were charged with investigating sex trafficking. The knowledge and ability of law enforcement professionals to identify victims, investigate cases, and make appropriate referrals is crucial to the development of an overall response to sex trafficking. We focused on local law enforcement and service providers, rather than federal criminal justice agencies, because local practitioners have unique knowledge about the on-the-ground trafficking situation and how it has evolved over time. Next, we identified NGO service providers through background research and by asking our intended interview subjects which NGOs they partnered with when investigating crimes of sex trafficking and connecting victims with services. Finally, in our interviews, some individuals expressed concern about a knowledge gap between policymakers and people doing work on the ground. For this reason we also interviewed municipal government officials and others who were members of local anti-human trafficking task forces, whenever relevant. A detailed description of interview participants can be found in Appendix A.

Stakeholder Interview Process. The in-depth stakeholder interviews provided us with information on (1) the investigative process; (2) partnerships used to investigate sex trafficking; (3) the structure of investigative teams and partnerships; (4) performance measurement efforts to evaluate efficacy of sex trafficking investigations; and (5) overall lessons learned.
Literature Review

Before conducting in-depth interviews, we sought to better understand several different aspects of counter-trafficking partnerships, namely (1) challenges among and guidance for local law enforcement agencies; (2) task force development and management; and (3) trauma and resilience in situations of victimization.

Challenges among and guidance for local law enforcement agencies

Though many solutions put forward to reduce or eliminate sex trafficking do not require the involvement of criminal justice organizations, it is clear that their involvement in responding to these cases is critically important. However, police often face a number of barriers in effectively identifying and intervening in trafficking situations.

A 2012 study conducted by researchers at Northeastern University and the Urban Institute for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) looked at trafficking case files to identify challenges faced by state and local investigators and prosecutors in order to improve their ability to manage human trafficking cases. While their study only looked at cases that had been brought to the attention of law enforcement, and is therefore not generalizable to all human trafficking incidents, it provides useful analysis and guidance for steps forward.

Among the challenges noted was a lack of awareness and misunderstanding among practitioners of the elements involved in human trafficking; reliance on reactive identification strategies; difficulty in managing trauma-related conditions and complex needs of victims; and attitudes among law enforcement that victims may have, in some way, been responsible for their victimization.

State anti-trafficking laws vary widely both in terms of how the crime of human trafficking is defined and the focus of the policy response. However, beyond this, police and prosecutors have significant discretion in determining the outcome of cases by deciding which offenses to investigate, which offenders to arrest, what types of criminal charges suspects will face, and who will be prosecuted: they are “the gatekeepers to the criminal justice system.” As such, personnel must be trained in the nature and elements of this new crime, and police and prosecutors must develop a shared understanding of evidence needed to secure convictions in order to have successful identification and prosecution of cases. This is particularly difficult given that those police officers need to understand what their goals are and what information is important to them – how to present the case. Often lawyers view this process as adversarial, but we need those channels of trust to make referrals to law enforcement and vice versa. This allows law enforcement to better understand the case, corroborate the case, and understand the needs of the survivor. Julie Dahlstrom, Clinical Instructor at Boston University School of Law Human Trafficking Clinic and Senior Staff Attorney at Casa Myrna Vazquez.
most likely to come into contact with those who are trafficked are patrol officers and first responders – who are often given little or no training on identification and response to trafficking cases – not those in specialized units trained in recognizing trafficking situations.\textsuperscript{11}

The NIJ study brings to light two particular challenges of note for this paper. The first involves the often complicated criminal status of trafficking victims. Many who are trafficked are engaged in criminal activity that complicates their identification as crime victims (service providers consulted as part of this study noted that these illegal acts are often performed as the result of coercion from traffickers, although the extent of traffickers forcing criminal activity unrelated to the commercial exchange of sex is unknown). In addition, foreign born victims may be undocumented immigrants; in such cases, law enforcement may fail to ask questions about potential victimization, and instead classify them as criminal aliens.\textsuperscript{12}

The second challenge comes from more general limitations on local law enforcement to manage the needs of foreign national victims. Sometimes this involves cultural or linguistic barriers, with a lack of access to personnel with foreign language skills or connections to ethnic communities. This may also involve limited understanding of the additional fears of foreign born victims, including threats against their family in their home country or fear of the risk of deportation.\textsuperscript{13}

Both of these challenges point to a need for law enforcement to partner with relevant service providers who are better equipped to assess a victim’s situation to address his or her needs. A collaborative response is most appropriate, as no single service provider can meet all requirements to assist and empower a survivor.

Task force development and management

Many task force models exist within the field of anti-human trafficking, both formally and informally. In terms of officially sanctioned task forces, the US Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance has funded 48 anti-human trafficking task forces since 2004.\textsuperscript{14}

Multi-agency task forces generally include representatives from federal, state, and local law enforcement, prosecutors, labor regulators and/or inspectional services, victim service providers, other non-governmental agencies, and mental health professionals. However, “task force” does not necessarily require a formal structure – a task force can be informal and small in size, such as a single
prosecutor, police detective, and domestic violence service provider working together to support a victim with similar needs to a victim of domestic violence. Regardless of structure and level of formality, research has begun to show the advantages of operating within a task force structure. A 2008 study by researchers at Northeastern University looked at local law enforcement agencies participating in federally funded human trafficking task forces. Those who investigated a case of human trafficking reported investigating many more cases on average than those non-task force agencies (36 on average for task force agencies compared to 15 on average for non-task force agencies). Additionally, cases identified by local law enforcement agencies participating in task forces were more likely to result in formal charges following human trafficking related arrests than non-task force agencies.

When determining appropriate structure and scope for a new task force in a given jurisdiction, several options exist. The “Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force Strategy and Operations E-Guide,” made available by the Office for Victims of Crime within the US Department of Justice, documents the following task force models:

**Single Leader Model.** In this model, a federal or local law enforcement agency, federal or state prosecutor, or victim service provider convenes and leads the task force. The task force may form due to a surge in capacity or expertise, or because specific grant-based funding is made available. Leadership responsibilities commonly rest on an individual law enforcement officer, typically a detective or investigator who is responsible for both conducting investigations and leading the task force. Other task forces are led by state agencies such as statewide criminal justice associations or the state Attorney General’s office, or federal agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). For many task forces, the leader or co-leader is the Assistant US Attorney (AUSA)’s Office.

**Intelligence Task Force Model.** In this more traditional law enforcement-only structure, the task force includes only the investigative and prosecutorial functions. The law enforcement task force leader reaches out to relevant NGO service providers only when cases require specific services for victims, but those service providers are not members of the task force. As expected, intelligence model task forces are effective in coordinating investigations, but not as useful for coordinating victim services. Service providers often establish their own coalition or consortium to coordinate services and discuss service provision, outreach, and training. This model is not as effective in building partnerships and trust between law enforcement and service providers. However, it has advantages of more focused meetings and fewer risks of case or client confidentiality breaches.

**The Core Team Model.** The core team model is a task force structure in which, typically, law enforcement, service providers, and a prosecutor comprise the central or core team that guides other members. In order to remain effective, members of the core team should assess results, stay aligned with the mission, and have the authority to commit the organization and
themselves to a long-term relationship with the task force to ensure sustainability. A reasonable size for a core team is generally five to seven participants. Depending on the mission and purpose of the task force, the core team may include representatives from the following professions:

- Local, regional, or state law enforcement
- Federal law enforcement (FBI, ICE Homeland Security Investigations)
- NGO service providers and/or legal advocates working with victims of trafficking
- Prosecutors (US Attorney’s Office, state and/or district prosecutor’s office)
- State or federal court systems
- Defense attorneys
- Child welfare or child protection agencies
- Juvenile justice and diversion programs
- Social service agency, legal service agency, and/or NGO working with runaway and homeless youth or at-risk youth, domestic violence or sexual assault victims, or immigrants

Trauma and resilience

There is a clear need for comprehensive services aimed at addressing the trauma(s) experienced leading up to and as part of sex trafficking. This serves two purposes. First, victim cooperation is often essential to mount effective investigations and prosecutions. Second, in order to encourage and support the rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors into a stable and safe livelihood, responders must address the underlying trauma present in many survivor experiences.

The US Department of State ranks trafficking cases as “the most labor and time-intensive matters undertaken by the Department of Justice” due to their complexity and the challenge of working with highly traumatized victims. A report from the NIJ found that police were often unprepared for the amount of trauma suffered by victims, making investigations more difficult and lengthier, possibly re-traumatizing victims, especially when adequate services were unavailable. Along with a fear of losing their financial and emotional support network, a fear of retribution by traffickers is almost universal among human trafficking victims, along with uncertainty about whether or not law enforcement will recognize them as victims rather than classifying them as offenders for engaging in illegal activity, such as prostitution.
Foreign born victims present additional challenges due to a common fear of police, both because of perceptions of police from their home country and a fear of punishment due to illegal entry or illegal status in the United States.\textsuperscript{21} Precarious immigration situations make it even more challenging for officials to gain trust following a traumatic experience. Often, police must resort to tactics usually used on suspects, including the use of arrest as a means to detain victims (thus ensuring their safety from a trafficker) and secure cooperation.\textsuperscript{22} While such strategies may only be used when appropriate services are lacking, they may be counterproductive to gaining a victim’s trust.

The NIJ study found that law enforcement alone is limited in its ability to address the multitude of issues facing trafficking victims, including health and mental health services, and access to housing, education, and job training. However, having a long-range plan for victims can impact the likelihood of victim cooperation in an investigation.\textsuperscript{23} The fear of retaliation, distrust of law enforcement, and lack of viable alternatives that so often accompanies the experience of being trafficked necessitates a wide-range of services to address the varied needs of traumatized victims and survivors.

A related challenge for criminal justice agencies and service providers is meeting the economic needs of sex trafficking victims, particularly if victims are financially dependent on their trafficker. Even if victims are identified, many jurisdictions lack sufficient services to respond, particularly if robust networks of service providers are not in place. Those who have been trafficked require opportunities for employment, which create alternatives for survivors to be able to support themselves after leaving their trafficker.\textsuperscript{24} Many agencies lack adequate shelters for victims, resulting in a lack of cooperation with authorities and even a return to the trafficking situation if there is no safe place to stay.\textsuperscript{25} These needs must be addressed before authorities can ensure cooperation in an investigation and gain victim testimony at trial. “Building strong relationships with victim service providers who law enforcement can call on to assist victims during the course of an investigation is often critical in building a successful case.”\textsuperscript{26} Providing services for victims is an essential component to address the crime. The economic dependence of victims on their traffickers necessitates the continued provision of services to ensure cooperation with police and prosecutors.\textsuperscript{27} Any attempt to punish perpetrators without caring for those they harm is unlikely to succeed.

Rita Abadi, Clinician and Operations Manager, The Mount Sinai Medical Center Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention (SAVI) Program

We needed to find a way to engage these kids and young women into social services. Then you figure out [they] have this trauma bonding with their traffickers and this is a very strong form of attachment. \textbf{So what we are trying to do is to be able to replace this attachment}….What we are trying to do is to start from the basic needs in order to create the connection…so they create an attachment to us, to the services that can start to replace [the bond with the trafficker]…so you can create healthy attachments to replace a very twisted kind of attachment that is the trauma bond.
Summary of Findings – City Profiles

Communities across the United States are attempting to address sex trafficking with varying success. Through preliminary research and field interviews, we found that major challenges and promising practices within partnership models for handling sex trafficking cases fall under five broad categories.

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission</strong></td>
<td>How agencies working in counter-human trafficking approach the purpose of the work, including how they define the problem and the framework they apply to search for solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Defining Success</strong></td>
<td>How agencies determine intended outcomes, as well as monitor and evaluate progress of performance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tactics</strong></td>
<td>How agencies conduct operations in the pursuit of investigating sex trafficking, including techniques and on-the-ground know how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity</strong></td>
<td>Resources agencies draw on in order to conduct operations and support survivors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge and skills applied by agencies when working on sex trafficking cases</td>
</tr>
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Going forward, we will use this categorization to discuss specific barriers and recommendations for growth uncovered through our research. Findings by city are described briefly below and can be seen in more detail in the Appendices.

**Boston**

As a large metropolitan city along the East Coast and one of the oldest cities in the country, Boston is a major port of entry for immigration into the United States and a popular travel destination for regional and national tourism. In recent years, Boston has actively worked to overcome its historical reputation as a destination for commercial sex. For instance, the ‘combat zone,’ an area of downtown Boston notorious for strip clubs and prostitution, has been transformed into new high-end shops and restaurants. After the passage of the Massachusetts human trafficking law in 2011, some of the first prosecuted sex trafficking cases in the region specifically targeted owners and operators of illicit massage businesses. Law enforcement and service providers identified victims in Boston IMBs who were transported from China and other East Asian countries via New York City.

The Boston Area Trafficking Task Force was established in 2005 with funds from the US Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance. While federal funds have not supported this task force in several years, the forum allowed partners to build relationships that continue to persist in supporting the work of crime investigation and victim support. The 2011 Massachusetts human trafficking law established new crimes at the state level related to sex trafficking and forced labor. In addition to providing resources to support the local law enforcement and victim services response,
the law mandated establishment of an Attorney General-led Interagency Human Trafficking Policy Task Force, bringing together advocates for victims, prosecutors, academics, and law enforcement officers over an eighteen-month period to form policy recommendations. Today the only active Boston task force is an informal law enforcement task force chaired by the AUSA’s office, which holds an annual meeting that includes service providers.

New York City

As the country’s largest city and home to one of its largest immigrant populations, New York City is a hub for human trafficking. Its close proximity to major international airports and other ports of entry and a concentration of industries that lack close regulation contribute to the prevalence of the crime. At the same time, New York State has among the most comprehensive and long-standing human trafficking laws in the United States – it encompasses an understanding of the wide-variety of coercive, forceful, and fraudulent tactics used by traffickers to control their victims (including the withholding or destroying of immigration documents and use of debt-bondage) and was the first state to pass a Safe Harbor law in 2008.30

Much of the organization of New York’s law enforcement agencies and service providers is managed through its diversion court system, a network of Human Trafficking Intervention Courts, which reach close to 95 percent of those charged with prostitution-related offenses in the state. These courts primarily target individuals charged with prostitution-related offenses in an effort to identify and assist sex trafficking victims. Although problems continue by charging those who are possibly trafficked with criminal offenses, the Intervention Courts treat defendants as victims, convening service providers weekly in order to provide resources for survivors, including shelter, healthcare, immigration assistance, and drug treatment, with an aim towards ending the cycle of exploitation and arrest.31 The Human Trafficking Intervention Court in Queens – started in 2004 and the oldest court of its kind in the nation – sees an especially large number of foreign born defendants. According to court statistics, Asian defendants represented 27 percent of cases in 2010, and 40 percent of cases in 2014.32

San Francisco

In 2009, The FBI listed the San Francisco Bay Area as one of the 13 highest child sex trafficking areas in the nation. California is particularly vulnerable to trafficking in persons because of its proximity to international borders, its seaports and airports, and a significant immigrant population. California, together with New York, Texas, and Oklahoma, has the largest concentration of survivors of human trafficking in the United States.33

In response, San Francisco has adopted a City-led partnership model that coordinates across law enforcement, service providers, and policymakers to increase the community’s awareness of the
issue of human trafficking and to enhance relationships across anti-trafficking partners. Building on the work of the community-based San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT), in 2013 Mayor Ed Lee launched the Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking to review current efforts, identify gaps in services for survivors, and improve the City’s response to human trafficking. The task force is staffed by the Department on the Status of Women and meets every other month. Several committees also meet regularly: Child Sex Trafficking, Forced Labor (formerly Illicit Massage Parlor), Training (formerly Super Bowl), and the Sex Work & Trafficking Policy Impact Committees.

Seattle

Washington State is a hotbed for the recruitment, transportation, and sale of people for labor due in part to the multiple ports, international border with Canada, and vast rural areas. According to a study from The Urban Institute on the underground commercial sex economy, in Seattle the most prevalent commercial sex venues are massage parlors and residential brothels, as opposed to street and online prostitution. “The proliferation of Asian massage parlors and Asian home brothels is unique to Seattle and involves individuals from China, Vietnam, and Korea.” Law enforcement has identified illegal business and sex work occurring in these spaces, but has been unable to determine whether force, fraud, or coercion exist.

The City has opted for an enhanced collaborative model, bringing together state and local leaders, law enforcement officials, and legal and social services organizations with the goal of raising awareness, identifying and assisting victims, and obtaining convictions of offenders. Unlike San Francisco, the Seattle model does not put the city government at the center of human trafficking response coordination. Federal funding supports the activities of the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WashACT), which is co-chaired by Assistant US Attorney Catherine Crisham, the Seattle Police Department’s Vice High-Risk Victims Unit, and Kathleen Morris, Program Manager for the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN).

Seattle represents more of a traditional intelligence task force model as described by the DOJ Task Force E-Guide, where a partnership between law enforcement and service providers developed over time. However, a robust core team model that includes key government actors is not in place.
Barriers to Effective Investigations and Response

This section now turns to challenges, identified through our research, experienced by law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners in investigating sex trafficking cases and assisting survivors. While these are not comprehensive, and individual cases present their own distinct challenges, the barriers identified below are centrally important in responding appropriately to sex trafficking, particularly for foreign born survivors.

A. Mission: Conflicting ideologies/approach

Conflicting ideologies and missions may result in the exclusion of important groups from task forces or collaboratives, limiting the scope of resources and perspectives available for partnerships.

Most initiatives require a coherent and consistent theory of change, with a common understanding of the problem at hand, an agreed upon intervention, and an expected outcome or impact. Those working on anti-sex trafficking initiatives occupy a variety of spaces on the ideological spectrum and may advocate for multiple focuses simultaneously. However, there are two broad theories of change informing many responses to the issue (Figure 1).

The first views demand, or the conditions that enable the purchase of commercial sex in a community and create opportunities for exploitation, as the underlying problem. Under this perspective, criminal justice agencies and partners must work to reduce demand through prosecution of those who buy, facilitate, or traffic commercial sex or by partnering with other organizations to otherwise decrease demand for commercial sex. Only by reducing the willingness of potential purchasers to buy sex – who may be unable to determine whether or not trafficking is occurring – and increasing the risk for those who profit from these crimes can advocates end commercial sexual exploitation.

The second theory of change sees supply, or the factors that lead to vulnerable conditions that subject a person to victimization, as the primary issue at play. Under this worldview, the central concern is reducing vulnerabilities of potential, current, and former trafficking victims so as to limit those at risk of exploitation. Only by reducing exposure to situations that present the possibility of trafficking can responders hope to curb commercial sexual exploitation.
This paper does not seek to evaluate or address the validity of either of the above claims. While groups may not have common conceptions of the problem or the solution (or even a common definition of what sex trafficking is), they all seek to reduce or eliminate instances of harm for victims and survivors. Instead, our research hopes to determine how a collaborative is able to work with organizations with divergent theories of change in order to achieve a shared goal. What common ground needs to be built in order to foster alliances? How can groups establish collective efficacy in the midst of conflict over a complex problem? What measures should be used for evaluating progress on the path towards an ideal outcome? Specifically, we look to guide law enforcement agencies and partners in best practices for serving foreign born survivors, including identifying emerging trends and programs and encouraging the development and collection of evaluative measures to determine success.

In speaking with a service provider working as part of the Human Trafficking Intervention Court in Queens, New York, one of the essential components of success she identified was a common goal among organizations and agencies involved in addressing sex trafficking. This is critical in cases where a multitude of actors are required to appropriately respond. However, there is often a lack of institutional agreement on the very nature of the problem and how institutions should react. Even in Queens, which has more experience handling trafficking cases than most jurisdictions, there has only been a special court to deal with victims and survivors since 2004. In the case of new crimes, such as sex trafficking, there is a significant amount of legal uncertainty around the outcome of a prosecution or the evidence needed in an investigation. In such an environment, irrelevant factors such as race, class, or gender of suspects of victims may strongly influence the outcome of a case. In a situation of uncertainty, clarity around collective aims is vitally needed.
Two divergent ideological viewpoints foster a significant amount of conflict between agencies advocating on behalf of victims (or sometimes against them):

Those who see prostitution as immoral tend to operate under an “oppression” paradigm in which prostitution and sex work is seen as degrading and a prime example of patriarchal aggression and domination…[It] categorically denies prostitution as legitimate work, suggesting that entering into sex work cannot be a rational choice. Conversely, those who support legalization of prostitution see it from an ‘empowerment perspective.’…[which] accepts that these individuals face dangerous situations, abuse, exploitation, and/or coercion, but this view also accepts that selling sex as a commodity can be a rational and legitimate choice for those who choose to engage in it.37

From one perspective, prostitution is inherently immoral and violent; from the other, sex is simply another economic service for sale. Though many (if not most) organizations operate somewhere in between these two ends of the spectrum, there are inherent contradictions within jurisdictions that seek to respond to sexual exploitation. Most notably, girls and boys who are too young to legally consent to sex may be prosecuted in certain states for selling it.38

What is more, while TVPA defines a minor as under 18 for the purposes of criminalizing sex trafficking, different agencies may have alternative ideas around what constitutes a child. Many cases of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation begin with a victim under the age of 18, but may continue for years or decades afterwards. States and nonprofits may have differing abilities or willingness to provide services to adolescents above the age of 18. The law does not clarify what is to be done if trafficking began when a person was a minor but was identified as engaging in sex work (with or without force, fraud, or coercion) above the age of 18.

The lack of a clear consensus on what the problem actually is, the culpability of those involved, and the missions of organizations tasked with responding to victims can be particularly damaging to those seeking to leave a trafficking situation. The controversy and inconsistency around these issues may lead to a lack of early identification or treatment, leaving survivors without adequate services.39 The absence of a shared language regarding sex trafficking can have significant consequences. If identified as a prostitute, an individual could be detained and charged with a crime, whereas the same person identified as a victim of sex trafficking could be provided with a range of health and protective services.40

B. Defining Success: Challenges in measuring performance

Challenges in measuring performance hamper the ability of a collaborative to respond and adapt to quickly changing criminal networks.

Determining measures for collective success becomes a challenge when each agency has slightly different views of the end goal. As we learned in conversations with practitioners, the most
advanced task forces have a shared goal to be more proactive in identification and assistance provided to survivors. In less advanced districts, law enforcement has an agenda to incarcerate offenders, while service providers have a separate agenda to support victims. These two aims may be at odds, such as if criminal justice agencies limit a victim’s access to services pending cooperation in a criminal investigation. Such approaches can be unproductive and even harmful.

In the cities we visited, detectives who have significant experience working on sex trafficking investigations understood the nuances of these cases, and the unique expectations of a collaborative, victim-centered approach. However, first responders or less experienced investigators may not have this same mindset, and may be drawn to more winnable cases, such as those involving minors (i.e., cases that do not require evidence of force, fraud, or coercion) or multiple victims, so that the outcome of an investigation is less dependent on securing a sole victim’s trust. The intensive resources required to support a survivor – both time and services – may deter responders from pursuing more difficult or seemingly unwinnable cases.

Individual officers cannot be blamed for this approach. Law enforcement institutions are generally set up to measure specific activities and outcomes, such as number of arrests, indictments, and prosecutions. However, sex trafficking cases are resource-intensive and may take a very long time, even years. Many of the investments needed for these cases are expensive, such as stable and supportive housing. It often becomes difficult for agencies to request additional resources because they are unable to represent their work using traditional metrics. In more advanced districts, law enforcement agencies understand the unique needs of these cases. However, a cultural shift is needed in cities that are just beginning to handle sex trafficking investigations.

Furthermore, a lack of reliable data in the field prohibits effective baseline measurement. As a hidden crime, it is inherently difficult to grasp the scope and the scale of the problem of human trafficking in a given community. Though many of these figures are subject to debate, in 2011, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that 95 percent of trafficking victims in the United States were female and 54 percent were 17 years of age or younger. About one-third of victims were black, one-fifth white, and one-fifth Hispanic. The majority (77 percent) were US citizens or permanent residents, and less than 15 percent were undocumented or qualified aliens.41 These prevalence and demographic figures are important in determining resource allocation within a given jurisdiction. However, true numbers and figures are unknown due to a lack of awareness, underreporting, and difficulties in identifying victims and perpetrators.42
A report from the Urban Institute funded by the NIJ that looked at the size and structure of the underground sex economy in eight major US cities noted the challenges in getting accurate numbers and the fact that many studies rely on rough estimates and assumptions: “Official data collection on human trafficking arrests or prosecutions is unreliable since a) it represents the tip of the iceberg for a largely hidden crime and b) it is not collected systemically.” Different states have different laws around prostitution and trafficking, with interpretation of law and policy being even more variable between jurisdictions. Even after law enforcement identifies a trafficking incident, serious questions remain regarding the tracking of information for reporting and investigation purposes.

Evaluating the efficacy of prevention efforts proves especially challenging. A 2011 Campbell Collaboration systematic review of prevention and intervention strategies to reduce sex trafficking concluded that “no substantive conclusion about the effectiveness can be made, resulting in neither support nor rejection of present anti-trafficking initiatives.”

Measuring prevention efforts is a universally difficult task. However, progress can be made by breaking the process into measurable parts, and by looking at processes or outputs rather than final outcomes.

C. Tactics: Difficulties in identification and building trust

Identification of victims is the central challenge in responding to sex trafficking cases, as victims may not know they are crime victims and may be unwilling or unable to seek assistance.

A large part of the challenge around effective investigation and management of cases remains in simply identifying when sex trafficking occurs. Part of identification involves distinguishing between trafficking, sexual exploitation, and other forms of sex work, a demarcation that varies according to state law and ideology of intervening parties. Further complicating this situation, sex trafficking cases involve hiding and moving victims. Even when a case does come to the attention of those involved in the criminal justice system, responders may not be trained to recognize or understand it. The very characteristics that make a person vulnerable to trafficking, including undocumented status or inability to speak English, may hinder correct classification as a victim.

Beyond these factors, victims rarely self identify for a variety of reasons, including a fear of punishment due to engaging in illegal activity such as prostitution or illegal entry into the US, intimate connections with an exploiter, threats to victims or their families, or fear of police. Though not exclusive to this group, foreign born victims may face additional barriers to coming forward including the shame and stigma around engaging in commercial sex, uncertainty regarding the safety of family members in their home countries, social isolation, and debt bondage to or financial dependence on their trafficker.
While many trafficking victims come from vulnerable populations with a serious history of previous abuse,\textsuperscript{49} often sex workers become involved in the industry for similar reasons such as economic necessity, family and peer encouragement, childhood trauma, and social acceptance.\textsuperscript{50} Clearly, the risk factors for sex trafficking overlap with the reasons for involvement in sex work. While many service providers do not find it meaningful to distinguish between these two groups, and may even challenge the notion that there is a difference between one group and the other, policy solutions and legal pathways available to each population vary greatly. Particularly for law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, it is important to understand how to distinguish between the two and how to craft policy that accounts for these differences.

Study interviewees recounted numerous stories about encounters with suspected sex trafficking victims who were never connected with resources and support services because they either did not believe they were victims or did not disclose that they had been victimized. Both law enforcement officers and service providers expressed immense frustration around this issue of non-cooperation.

In addition, many of those interviewed commented on the need to break traumatic bonds between a trafficker and his or her victim and to establish trust between law enforcement or service providers and victims in order to encourage disclosure. Such a process may take years.

D. Capacity: Overcoming limited resources

\textit{Agencies often have limited resources available to effectively respond to sex trafficking cases, which tend to be long-term, complex, and in need of intensive intervention.}

After being identified, trafficking victims often require a range of services to address the physical and emotional trauma experienced leading up to and as a result of their trafficking situation. “Law enforcement agencies are rarely equipped to provide the types of services, including medical and psychiatric care, that victims often need before they are ready to cooperate with authorities in an investigation and provide testimony against the trafficker(s) at trial.”\textsuperscript{51} As a result, law enforcement must learn to overcome the historical distrust of service providers in order to meet a victim’s needs and deliver appropriate services.

City Government Agency Representative
Across the four cities that were part of this study, many agencies reported a lack of adequate shelter for victims of trafficking, including long-term housing, as a major problem. The NIJ found that “victims were less likely to cooperate with authorities and may even return to their trafficker if they did not have a safe place to stay during the course of the investigation and during the prosecution.” After a survivor’s basic needs of safety and shelter are met, she may require medical care, legal assistance, immigration support, counseling, job training, food, clothing, and many other services.

Communities in which law enforcement officers and service providers see themselves as part of one team tend to meet these needs most effectively. For instance, in one city, a detective trusts referrals from a service provider’s program because the program has a history of referring strong cases. The detective wants to maintain a positive working relationship in order to continue receiving case referrals. The service provider values collaboration because cooperating with law enforcement enables additional benefits for survivors she works with, such as a T-visa for foreign born survivors.

At the same time, the network of various law enforcement agencies working on human trafficking investigations across jurisdictions can be very confusing to non-law enforcement partners. One service provider expressed bewilderment that she had to communicate with so many different entities – local law enforcement, the FBI, the Attorney General’s Office, the AUSA’s Office, and ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). Although only 9 percent of law enforcement agencies in the United States operate at the federal level, a considerable amount of activity related to the commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors takes place at this level. This structure can be difficult for local service providers to navigate.

In that same vein, service providers in some jurisdictions are asked to engage with several different task forces and collaborative bodies. While they value the importance of building relationships to support survivors, the additional task of attending meetings becomes a drain on non-profit organizations’ already limited resources. “Although there are many hourly wage people in law enforcement as well as victim services and other fields who voluntarily work unreportable and unpaid hours to counter trafficking, it is valuable to have a realistic view of job schedules, constraints, and volunteer capacity.” Streamlining of collaborative bodies and activities would reduce this burden on the organizations involved.

E. Understanding: Lack of cultural sensitivity

Responding agencies may lack cultural sensitivity and linguistic capacity to serve foreign born victims.

Assisting the foreign born survivor population comes with a unique set of challenges. Besides the obvious linguistic and cultural barriers that hinder communication between law enforcement or service providers and survivors, traffickers may rely on culturally specific modes of force, fraud, or
coercion that would be otherwise undetectable to US agencies. For instance, within many Asian cultures, the value of pride or saving face carries much more significance than in Western cultures. Traffickers can exploit this traditional value simply by threatening to tell relatives or friends in the victim’s home country that she is working in the sex industry. This threat may be enough to dissuade the victim from seeking help or trying to leave the trafficking situation.

Similarly, victim needs may not be well understood for populations who have come to the US from a very different physical environment and social context. US law enforcement agencies may be poorly equipped to discern these needs, and a task force may not include enough diversity to comprehensively serve all foreign born survivors. For immigrant populations, citizenship status issues further complicate law enforcement’s response. Due to sanctuary city policies that aim to build trust and confidence among immigrant communities, many police agencies are unable to inquire about citizen status during routine policing activities. This may cause front line patrol officers to hesitate before intervening in potentially challenging situations. Even so, one non-profit serving the refugee population in Seattle advised against turning away victims simply because of linguistic or cultural barriers. Such biases, where people are fearful to intervene in cases that they may not understand, may lead to a lack of law enforcement involvement at all.
Recommendations

Challenges persist in developing effective cross-sector community responses to sex trafficking, but jurisdictions across the country are developing innovative models for responding to these cases. Based on lessons learned in Boston, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle, this section proposes recommendations for anti-sex trafficking partnerships. These are meant to serve as a guide for jurisdictions at various stages of task force formality and evolution that want to enhance their own community’s sex trafficking investigations and support for survivors.

A. Mission: Find common ground

The divergence of opinion in handling sex trafficking cases can lead to challenges in crafting appropriate policy responses. As complex cases that require multiple partners to manage services for victims and survivors, pool resources, and investigate and prosecute crimes, partnerships are essential. There may be multiple means of organizing these relationships: formally or informally, locally or federally funded, headed by governmental agencies or non-profit partners. Whatever the form, it is important for a collaborative to find common ground upon which to engage in its work.

Recommendation: Acknowledge the diversity of ideological viewpoints, while maintaining neutrality.

One means of bringing in diverse ideological groups is through the establishment of a core team model task force. This model provides opportunities to develop collaborative cross-sector relationships, pool resources and knowledge, and build processes to more effectively respond to cases of human trafficking. Moreover, a core team model task force creates a platform for member organizations to promote a consistent and unified message on human trafficking to the community, along with advocating for needed changes in laws or funding related to the response to human trafficking.56

We don’t want to necessarily make [membership in the Collaborative] too formal because we want each of the member groups to feel comfortable with their own requirements. The Collaborative cannot express positions on legislation on behalf of the agencies. Only if we have consensus can we go as the Collaborative and say we support this legislation.

Antonia Lavine, Coordinator, San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking

Rarely do all member organizations in a task force (1) share the same understanding of the problem of sex trafficking, and (2) agree on all aspects of how to bring about change. However, diverse organizations can share enough of a common understanding to work together effectively. Criminal justice and social service providers must move beyond varying conceptualizations of prostitution and sex trafficking and learn to recognize and respond to the trauma associated with commercial sexual exploitation.57 Even if organizations do not align on the broader vision of what it means to
address sex trafficking, they can agree to the same tactical goals. Development of shared organizational norms can facilitate this process. It may not be realistic to expect all individuals and organizations to share worldviews, but creating shared missions and goals can assist in addressing the needs of victims and survivors.

Recommendation: Establish a neutral third-party to chair the task force.

A neutral third-party convener can be a particularly useful means of maintaining impartiality, collecting information, and establishing collective norms and aims. Depending on the way in which partnerships are organized, this could mean leadership from the courts or justices (as in New York); centering a collective in city agencies (as in San Francisco); or co-chairing of a task force by governmental and non-governmental organizations (as in Seattle and Boston).

Each form of partnership carries its own strengths and weaknesses. However, there is great value when conveners do not take ideological stances. In San Francisco, much of the city’s sex trafficking response is developed through the Office of the Mayor. By institutionalizing task force management within an agency that is not law enforcement or a service provider, a degree of impartiality is maintained. Further, when a city agency such as the Mayor’s Office holds convening power, new policy needs can be uncovered.

Before management transitioned to the City, much of partner coordination and policy work was done by the San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT or the Collaborative). Antonia Lavine, Coordinator of the Collaborative, spoke about its formation:

In 2008 we had great collaboration between service providers and law enforcement, mainly for the purpose of criminal justice work. But the government was not involved in this collaboration on a policy level... We knew that we wanted the collaborative to include not only law enforcement and service providers, but also to include the city and to be a venue for the government to take ownership on the issue of human trafficking by adding the missing policy level. We knew that we would include state and federal government and city-level departments.

Now as a city-run task force, this structure has assisted in collecting more robust information and including divergent viewpoints. For example, sex worker advocates – who may feel or actually be excluded from many formal partnerships – are brought into the city task force. There is even a Sex Work & Trafficking Policy Impact Committee to ensure that agencies hear from all those impacted by their work. Including this voice allows responders to better understand the unintended negative consequences that anti-trafficking efforts have on other vulnerable groups.
Alternative task force models: How to organize partnerships

City agencies

City agencies may be charged with organizing anti-trafficking efforts. In San Francisco, activities are coordinated out of the Mayor’s Office, primarily through the Department on the Status of Women. This grew out of recognition of a policy gap in municipal activities, pointing to the need for city involvement. There are a number of benefits to this model:

- Impartiality of convener: City agencies do not take a particular ideological stance so as to allow for broader inclusion of possible partners.
- Central data collection: The Mayor’s Task Force gathers and analyzes data from all partner agencies. Though challenges remain, attempts are being made to develop consistent processes and reduce overlap between organizations.
- Adaptability to local circumstances: As part of its policy work, the Task Force has committees to manage responses to subjects of need. These include Child Sex Trafficking, Forced Labor (formerly Illicit Massage Parlor), Training (formerly Super Bowl), and the Sex Work & Trafficking Policy Impact Committees. This model also allows for inclusion of city agencies to help develop innovative solutions, such as using public health approaches in IMBs.

Courts or justices

Courts or justices may be well suited to serve as conveners for city efforts. Ret. Justice Bobbe J. Bridge, President and CEO of the Center for Children & Youth Justice, noted, “The judge is seen as and their job is to be, in their day job, is to be a neutral, objective arbitrator, knowing how to keep confidences, knowing how to make decisions, how to move people to decisions, how to facilitate conversations in a fair and equitable manner, all of those kinds of skills…it becomes its own safe place.” Judges are thus natural fits for managing partnerships. The Diversion Court Model in New York allows for a somewhat informal network that is coordinated through the criminal justice system. Human Trafficking Intervention Courts bring together criminal justice agencies including law enforcement, prosecutors, and defense attorneys; and service providers. Justices may be able to adapt to the particular circumstances in their jurisdictions, responding to changing environments while simultaneously advocating for policy change when needed.

Co-leadership by law enforcement and service providers

Certain municipalities may opt for task forces to be co-chaired by law enforcement and service providers. This may be more appropriate due to resource constraints or the nature of local activities. In Seattle, the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WashACT) is co-chaired by Assistant US Attorney Catherine Crisham, Lieutenant James Fitzgerald of the Seattle Police Department’s Vice High-Risk Victims Unit, and Kathleen Morris, Program Manager for the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN). While there may be challenges in maintaining neutrality under this model, it allows for sharing of information and resources, identification of service gaps, and coordination of investigations and prosecutions of offenders.
B. Defining Success: Establish performance measurements and processes

Current measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of partnerships rely on incomplete and insufficient data. Because sex trafficking prevalence numbers are unreliable, attempts to measure effectiveness of various investigative tactics and survivor-centered approaches fall short. In this section, we suggest new ways to think about defining and measuring success within partnerships to address sex trafficking.

Recommendation: Create realistic definitions and timeframes for success.

Compared to many other crimes, sex trafficking investigations can be very time intensive. Many interview participants noted that they might be in contact with a potential victim of trafficking over months or years before that individual comes forward and asks for services. As such, criminal justice agencies and service providers alike must adopt a long-term approach. In some cases, making contact with a potential victim may only mean planting seeds. This way, even if an individual is not yet ready for services, when she is ready, she remembers being treated with dignity and respect, and feels comfortable reaching out to an organization. The focus should be on building trust in order to create an environment where the survivor feels empowered to make her own choices about the direction of her recovery.

An emerging movement talks about “victims served” as a measure of performance. Since needed services are often not provided by police, collective performance measurements should be developed. Collective metrics are ideally designed to reward all collaborative members for a job well done in assisting a survivor, whether or not an investigation is pursued. Examples include:

- Number of potential victims identified by collaborative member
- Number of survivors served by the collaborative
- Number of perpetrators identified, arrested, or charged with trafficking crime
- Number of community referrals
- Duration of time that an individual has been out of “the life” and in a stable, safe, and supportive environment

Success looks like breaking out of the cycle of addiction and trafficking – it’s incredibly sad and frustrating to watch this struggle, the cycle is very powerful.

Elizabeth K. Keeley, Assistant District Attorney, Human Trafficking and Exploitation Unit, Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office

Sometimes a successful outcome does not involve the criminal justice system at all. In some cases, a victim will simply want to exit the trafficking situation without pursuing criminal charges against the trafficker. A survivor-centered approach would put this person at the center, and provide her with services regardless of cooperation with law enforcement. As such, applying traditional law enforcement measures such as tracking the number of investigations, arrests, and convictions does not accurately portray the results of anti-trafficking partnerships.
**Recommendation: Develop process and outcome and measurements.**

In asking about performance evaluation, many interviewees described activity output measures as their basis for tracking success. NGO service providers documented the number of trainings held, number of people trained, number of events hosted, and number of materials produced to measure the efficacy of training and awareness activities. Similarly, participants cited the number of survivors served or referred to outside services to judge their capacity to serve. It can be helpful to gather this information to monitor changes in activity over time. Moreover, counting the number of victims supported can feed into multi-agency efforts to understand prevalence rates, such as in San Francisco’s 2015 Human Trafficking Report, which draws on service provision data from 19 different agencies. However, in order to understand the impact of each agency’s work, both process and outcome measures can be developed. Some example measures are listed below.

**Figure 2: Types of Measurements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUT</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>OUTPUT</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The resources you have (people, time, money)</td>
<td>How well the process is working (efficiency, accuracy)</td>
<td>The activities and services you deliver</td>
<td>The change created in your target group as a result</td>
<td>The broad, long-term effect of your initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example Input Measure:
- How many dedicated agents are investigating sex trafficking in a given time period?

Example Process Measure:
- What is the average time you spend investigating a sex trafficking case?

Example Output Measure:
- How many total sex trafficking cases has your agency investigated since 2010?
- How many sex trafficking related arrests have been made since 2010?

Example Outcome Measure:
- Rates of investigation, arrest, prosecution, and conviction versus acquittal.
- Outcomes for foreign born victims, including deportation, Continued Presence, and T-Visas.

Example Impact Measure:
- Sex trafficking prevalence rates in a given region, before and after an intervention.
While impact may be difficult to measure, outcome of activities can be determined in various ways. One means of doing this is to systematically tie investigative activities to the result of individual cases to compare the efficacy of various techniques. Robust tracking of activities can help determine rates of success for investigative actions, and can enhance organizational learning. For instance, agencies can evaluate the outcomes of different cases according to how the case was opened (for example, during another investigation, undercover operations, tips from informants, other law enforcement referrals, community or faith based referrals, other criminal justice system referrals, or regulatory agency referrals). This approach can help law enforcement understand where to focus efforts and who to partner with going forward.

One way to assess outcome would be to ask clients themselves. Creating a feedback loop to learn from victims after they have gone through the system would produce learning for all agencies involved. Questions could include: “What services or actions were especially helpful? What could be improved?” A true survivor-centered approach would treat the survivor as a client. How can the experience and outcomes be best for him or her? As recipients of services, responses for survivors should be tailored to their needs. Some service providers we spoke with conduct exit interviews with clients; this practice could be adopted by other service providers and by victim advocates within law enforcement entities. One service provider described evaluating her organization’s performance through referrals received. They recognize the strength of their reputation in the community because they continue to receive referrals both from other service providers and from former clients.

Additionally, process measures can be developed alongside outcome measures to understand time and resources invested in different cases. Learning about the efficiency of various activities (for example, location surveillance versus online monitoring) can help prioritize investigative and collaborative efforts for future cases. This learning can only come from proper documentation and review of these activities, ideally in a cooperative setting.

C. Tactics: Engage new stakeholders
Identifying victims and appropriately responding to quickly changing criminal networks are central challenges in addressing sex trafficking cases. Bringing together partners in an adaptive system of responders requires an attention to group diversity, boundary setting, and the development of shared protocols. This next section lays out promising practices and recommendations for mindfully engaging new stakeholders.

Recommendation: Engage non-traditional agencies to grow capacity and adapt to changing environments.

Sex trafficking is a crime that intersects with actors in many different fields. Collaborative task forces commonly include professionals from the judicial system, local and federal law enforcement, social service agencies, child welfare or child protection agencies, and juvenile justice systems. However, many other governmental, non-profit, and private sector entities also have a role to play. Labor
inspection agencies, public health officials, faith communities, school districts and educators, medical professionals, transportation, local government licensing departments, regulating bodies (for massage parlors, nail salons, etc.) and code inspectors could all be engaged to help identify incidents of sex trafficking.

Here are some of the new actors that are being brought into a community response to sex trafficking.

- **School districts**: San Francisco passed a resolution to update their child abuse reporting protocols in schools, committed to training all staff at school districts, and developed awareness-raising curriculum for students.

- **Local businesses**: In San Francisco, an ordinance was passed that required local businesses with greatest risk of human trafficking (for example, nail salons, restaurants) to hang posters to

### A Public Health Approach in San Francisco

In one new program about to launch in San Francisco, community health liaisons will establish relationships with workers in massage businesses absent an investigation. The liaisons are ideally peers who are survivors of exploitation and fluent in relevant languages other than English, as many working in such establishments are originally from countries in Asia. Liaisons will go into massage businesses to educate employees about their rights and provide needed services.

As noted by Minouche Kandel, Women’s Policy Director at the Department on the Status of Women for the City of San Francisco, establishments may advertise as massage parlors, but may essentially serve as brothels. “Within that, there is the belief that there is some human trafficking happening there. So not to say that every woman who is working in those facilities is being trafficked, some may just be prostitutes who are not trafficked, but that there’s a certain percentage that are.” The challenge is thus to develop a means by which the City is able to determine when trafficking is happening while minimizing harm to other vulnerable groups who may be employed in these businesses.

The outreach program is meant to support people working in these establishments, and to provide workers with resources and information to seek out additional services in the future. This model puts the worker at the center of decision-making, empowering the individual to determine his or her own path. This community outreach approach is about building relationships to educate others rather than deciding for them when trafficking is happening.

One government representative stressed the importance of identifying indicators for health and safety: “What we want to do is to have social workers go in not looking for human trafficking, but instead asking, ‘What do you need? Have you been to a clinic? Would you know where to go? Do you know your rights as an employee in SF? Do you know where to get healthcare?’ which is a very different conversation from ‘are you being trafficked? Are you being forced?’” The goal is thus not on identifying trafficking outright, but in ensuring the safety of employees and their connection to resources and outreach.

This program is an attempt to adapt to the reality that many victims are uncomfortable, unwilling, or unable to self-identify. Furthermore, it tailors its staff, training, and approach to the foreign born population that work in massage businesses in San Francisco. Once underway, the program will evaluate, learn, and adapt in order to best meet the needs of the population it aims to serve.
educate the public about warning signs of human trafficking and how to report suspicious activities.

- **Cultural groups**: Local cultural associations have access to communities and the ability to reach out to potential victims and potential exploiters. For example, a local Thai association could communicate what labor or sexual exploitation looks like in ways that are appropriate and understandable for the Thai population.

- **All frontline responders**: Groups of frontline responders who are likely to encounter trafficking can be trained to recognize warning signs. In one example shared with us, a jail warden learned to recognize the tattoos that indicated if a female had been “branded” by a pimp. As she conducted intake of women arrested for drug or prostitution charges, she began to screen for different tattoos and initiate targeted conversations with women who she suspected might be victims of sex trafficking.

One group that is often left out of collective responses to sex trafficking are sex workers. A number of stakeholders interviewed spoke of the value of including sex workers in task forces, helping policymakers to avoid unintended consequences or harmful side effects on vulnerable populations that are impacted by anti-trafficking initiatives. Agencies can take such knowledge to be thoughtful and intentional about who they employ as staff. Survivor-led initiatives may be particularly effective in building trust and gaining access to populations that are otherwise difficult to reach.

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**The Exploitation Intervention Project at the Legal Aid Society, New York City**

The often-lengthy process of victim disclosure in sex trafficking cases leads to a counterintuitive problem: many women who are exploited are charged as defendants for a whole host of crimes, particularly those involving prostitution-related offenses. Though New York State has created a diversion-court system to handle these cases, a victim may be left with a litany of charges to manage—and though they may not all be related to prostitution, a trafficker may force, fraud, or coerce a victim into additional criminal behavior.

The Exploitation Intervention Project at the Legal Aid Society in New York City (formerly known as the Trafficking Victims Legal Defense & Advocacy Project) seeks to provide services for clients charged with prostitution and other related offenses in the five boroughs of New York City. The project bridges service gaps by providing comprehensive representation to a marginalized group.

According to a 2013 report on the commercial sexual exploitation of minors from the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, defense attorneys are key partners in identifying victims of sex trafficking among those arrested for prostitution and other offenses. These partners can screen defendants, identify victims, provide service referrals, and prepare robust legal defenses on their client’s behalf. The involvement of public defenders in New York City ensures the provision of much-needed services, regardless of a client’s willingness or ability to articulate having been trafficked.
Recommendation: Establish clear boundaries between agencies in terms of roles and responsibilities.

Both law enforcement and service providers need to be transparent about what they do and what they do not do. Each organization has its limitations, and investigations often require cooperation over a lengthy time period. It is important for all parties involved to determine roles and responsibilities, and to strive for consistency across cases.

Many of those interviewed stressed the importance of setting boundaries from the survivor’s point of view. For people who have experienced trauma and exploitation, it can be difficult to know whom to trust. Over the past decade, efforts to better integrate service providers into law enforcement activities have been lauded. On the surface, bringing along a service provider with linguistic and cultural competency during a takedown of a suspected IMB sounds like a good idea: the service providers can connect with suspected victims after law enforcement interviews, to offer services and support. However, in practice this rarely goes as planned. Instead, the women working in the IMBs cannot distinguish between law enforcement (who they are already hesitant to trust), and service providers (whose sole purpose is to help them). Instead, the women recite coached stories (“I don’t work here” or “I was just dropping by to see my friend”) and refuse services.

Organizations must create recognizable boundaries between one another in order to counter confusion and maintain separation of responsibilities. Carrey Wong, Assistant Director of Client Services at New York Asian Women’s Center, highlighted this tension:

> The dual role of a counselor as an interpreter is very conflicting, and gets into all sorts of confidentiality issues. We often hear from our legal and law enforcement partners that the relationship we have established with the client would help in terms of disclosing, because they trust the interpreter and feel more comfortable. Instead of using counselors to interpret, we should be focused on training more trauma-sensitive interpreters.

It may be very useful for a social worker, health worker, or interpreter to accompany law enforcement on these investigations. However, law enforcement and service providers should maintain their distinct roles and appropriately sequence interventions so as to distinguish between various agencies.

In San Francisco, attorneys act as a buffer between law enforcement agencies and service providers. When law enforcement wants to speak with a survivor regarding a criminal investigation, they must make a request through the attorney’s office. Law enforcement does not have direct access to a client, or even to the non-profit serving that client. Additionally, all meetings with the survivor
related to the criminal investigation take place at the attorney’s office, so the survivor can easily distinguish between meetings regarding service provision and meetings regarding the criminal case. This practice was adopted over time, as agents initially would turn up at the non-profit or shelter, and further alienate or traumatize the survivor during a time of recovery.

Furthermore, governmental institutions may not always be the best channel to assist survivors of sex trafficking. Many people with a history of systems involvement (including the immigration system, child welfare system, and juvenile justice system) may be predisposed to distrust government agencies and may keep their distance from government-related organizations or activity. Non-governmental groups play a critical role in these cases. They provide a safe space for survivors, often serving as informal and comfortable alternatives where survivors are able to obtain needed services.

**Recommendation: Develop shared protocols for victim identification**

Identifying victims of human trafficking is one of the most difficult steps in assisting them. Across task forces, different actors will have different approaches to identifying and assisting survivors. These varied methods may create divides that hinder collective productivity. For this reason, it may be helpful to develop a shared set of protocols on how to handle these cases. None of the sites in our study had a comprehensive city-wide protocol for identifying adult victims of trafficking. However, a number of jurisdictions across the country have started to use such protocols to identify cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Specific guidance should be developed for partners according to their roles and customized to meet the needs of a given community. For instance, in one community in the Midwest, detectives recognized that runaway children were particularly vulnerable to sex trafficking. In response, agencies developed a standardized questionnaire for a children’s center that asked questions to determine whether a runaway youth was familiar with commercial sexual exploitation. Screening all children for potential exposure to trafficking helped detectives identify victims and resulted in a large number of identified human trafficking cases in this site. A similar approach is underway in Washington State where responders recently developed a 12-step intake
questionnaire for agencies working with at-risk youth. Such initiatives may be adapted by other organizations working with communities who are vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.

D. Capacity: Collaborate with cross-sector agencies

Once identified, even absent an active investigation or prosecution, victims need a plethora of services, requiring dense networks of capacity. Those seeking to assist victims require timely information and must quickly find services and programs available to victims. Establishing partnerships across public, private, and nonprofit organizations can greatly improve the ability of criminal justice agencies and service providers to meet the needs of survivors.

Recommendation: Develop a comprehensive list of organizations working directly or indirectly on trafficking.

The first step in addressing human trafficking is learning about all of the partners in a given jurisdiction. Task force leaders can map out organizations that are working on trafficking and related issues such as, domestic violence, immigration, sexual assault, or gender-based violence. A comprehensive list would include information on the resources and specialties of each organization such as foreign language capacity, cultural awareness, and housing availability.

The New York City’s Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice developed a “Human Trafficking Services Resource Directory” as a referral guide for service providers, law enforcement agencies, attorneys, and survivors. In San Francisco, SFCAHT regularly produces a “Directory of Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking: A Guide to Local and Regional Resources for Survivors of Human Trafficking in the San Francisco Bay Area.” The 2015 guide lists 23 government agencies at both the city and federal levels, and nearly 40 different NGO service providers.

In Boston, responders to sex trafficking use the co-location model: law enforcement and service providers share the same workspace within the Family Justice Center (FJC). The FJC is a program of the Boston Public Health Commission; an initiative of the Mayor's Office and Suffolk County District Attorney; and the Family Justice Division of the Boston Police Department, which houses the Human Trafficking Unit. The FJC provides a range of services, free of charge, to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and child abuse - including non-English speakers, immigrants (regardless of status), and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals. The FJC website states, “If you need help, but don't know where to start, the Family Justice Center is here for you.”

All of these efforts help to map out the local landscape of organizations with the capacity and expertise to respond to human trafficking.
Recommendation: Establish mechanisms for reporting, data collection, and analysis to inform policy.

The importance of robust, reliable data to inform policy decisions, allocate resources, and assess intervention effectiveness cannot be overstated. After a collaborative partnership based on shared values has been set up, and a shared definition of success is reached, the group can establish processes for standardized reporting in order to share relevant data points with partner agencies.

Many jurisdictions shared information about data collection efforts underway. In San Francisco, the Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking produced a 2015 Human Trafficking Report. Development of the report began years earlier with conversations about relevant data points and the creation of a common questionnaire for all partner agencies.

The Washington Anti-Trafficking response Network (WARN)

Non-governmental organizations come together as part of the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN) to provide direct services to and increase identification of victims of human trafficking in the state. The coalition serves victims of trafficking regardless of age, country of original, legal status in the United States, or industry in which trafficking occurred.

WARN works with other service providers, law enforcement, and mobilization groups to improve responses to human trafficking in Washington State. In part, this is done through the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WashACT) which is co-chaired by the Assistant US Attorney, the Seattle Police Department’s Vice High Risk Victims Unit, and the Program Manager of WARN. Members meet monthly to share information and resources, to identify and remedy gaps in services, and to coordinate investigations and prosecutions of offenders.

Members include the International Rescue Committee in Seattle, API Chaya, Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA), YouthCare, Lutheran Community Services Northwest in Spokane, and Northwest Justice Farm Worker Unit in Yakima.

Free and confidential services provided by WARN affiliates include:

• Intensive case management
• Safe housing, food, and clothing
• Immigration and legal assistance
• Interpretation services
• Criminal justice system/victim rights advocacy
• Physical and mental health treatment
• Education and job readiness training

For more information, go to: http://www.warn-trafficking.org/
The following steps should be considered in developing data sharing processes:

a) Develop partnerships based on trust. This is essential before any data sharing can occur.

b) Determine specific codes to standardize data across city agencies. Socialize data standards with partner agencies to learn from experiences of different actors and gain broad buy-in.

c) Develop questionnaires and reporting protocols. As much as possible, integrate reporting activities into current processes, to minimize additional burden to agency staff.

d) If feasible, develop mechanisms to eliminate duplication of data across various agencies.

e) Build statistical models to collect and analyze data from law enforcement, service providers, and city agencies.

f) Adapt and improve based on lessons learned from data collection.

E. Understanding: Embrace outreach and training efforts

Many of those working on anti-sex trafficking efforts have been doing so for decades, and may have worked on domestic violence, sexual assault, or child abuse responses before then. Responders most engaged with the issue have an advanced understanding of the nuanced needs of survivors, and the importance of a survivor-centered approach. However, many other individuals within criminal justice and advocacy systems lack knowledge and experience to address the unique needs of sex trafficking survivors. The tactical and philosophical knowledge learned in responding to these cases must be shared.

Recommendation: Train service providers and law enforcement in appropriate identification and response.

Law enforcement and service providers must be appropriately trained to recognize sex trafficking cases, respond to victims, and address their needs. This is particularly important for appropriate identification of victims. Whereas specialized units may be prepared to handle these crimes, patrol officers and first responders—who are most likely to come into contact with sex trafficking victims—may not be equipped with trauma-informed interviewing techniques and foreign language capacity.

I try to be very honest about the flaws in the data. There’s so much bad data out there about human trafficking. And ours, in some way, adds to the pile in that it has its limitations. I think it’s great we did the data collection because now we have a baseline, and we can compare trends year to year, and see where people are accessing services. On the other hand, it’s not a prevalence report. Meaning we don’t know how much human trafficking is happening. All that being said, we are one of the few cities that has tried to quantify what we are seeing, and we can be proud of that.

Minouche Kandel, Women’s Policy Director at the Department on the Status of Women, City of San Francisco
needed to accurately identify cases. Law enforcement may only have one chance to interview a potential victim, so need proper training on how to interview highly traumatized persons.

First responders must also be able to recognize subtle indicators. For instance, a state trooper may stop an out of state car containing a 35-year-old man driving two 16-year-old girls with a duffel bag full of skimpy clothing on the front seat. The trooper should recognize this as unusual and raise a red flag to prompt further investigation.

Criminal justice agencies can partner with other organizations that may be better equipped to identify trafficking situations among particular populations. For example, foreign born survivors may be best served by organizations that understand their cultural and linguistic circumstances. The New York Asian Women’s Center (NYAWC) serves clients in 18 different Asian languages and dialects (though it also serves some non-Asian residents). NYAWC provides case management, counseling, outreach, and educational services with an awareness of the community it serves. Counselors speak the language, live where their clients live, and are involved in the communities they work with. In Seattle, The Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA) has Southeast Asian, Arabic, and Eastern European staff. Though both organizations began in response to domestic violence cases, their linguistic and cultural capacity make them appropriate fits for serving foreign born clients and identifying situations of trafficking.

Recommendation: Follow harm reduction, resilience, and empowerment principles.

Caring for victims and responding to the crime of trafficking requires addressing the trauma that they have undergone, both before and during an exploitative situation. As Sergeant Gregory Graves of the New York City Police Department’s Organized Crime Control Bureau noted, victims of trafficking must be empowered to come out of a problematic situation; service providers and responders cannot do this work for them.

Holistic and empowering care recognizes “that in order to best meet the needs of the victim, services must address the trauma experienced in a manner that empowers and enhances the resiliency of each survivor.” Trauma-centered care recognizes and addresses the various forms of abuse experienced by victims and survivors – including exposure to repeated physical, sexual, and psychological abuse or witnessing violence. Sex trafficking is often one of many traumatic
experiences in someone’s life. Trauma- and survivor-centered approaches to care can best address these issues holistically to increase resilience and a survivor’s ability to cope and move forward. Many of those interviewed noted the importance of resilience and reintegration. One possible means of engaging in such work is to develop protective attributes to help someone adapt to and capitalize on opportunities. Such a strategy does not necessarily remove a victim or survivor from a risky environment, but works to help them cope in challenging contexts. Though a survivor may be emotionally ready to leave a trafficking situation, she must also have viable physical and financial pathways out of the life. This requires educational and job-training opportunities that create meaningful and realistic opportunities for survivors.

Empowerment is an integral part of recovery. Instead of going in with checklists to decide if someone else is being trafficked, agencies should educate people about their options and connect them with other clients who have made these changes. As one interviewee noted, change is a process that can take a long time. Strong relationships must be built between survivors and those who seek to serve them. The path may be long and arduous, but true healing requires patience and commitment from responders.

There have to be meaningful economic opportunities and educational opportunities for people because if we understand prostitution as exploitation and gender-based violence, **if you want people to not be in a situation where they’re getting exploited, they need power.** They need agency and autonomy over their life…They have to have the right not to prostitute. If that right doesn’t exist, then how can we expect them to not end up being exploited?

Valiant Richey, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King County
Conclusion

We are not saviors.
Rita Abadi, Clinician and Operations Manager, The Mount Sinai Medical Center Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention (SAVI) Program

Responding to sex trafficking cases is difficult, intensive, and long-term. No single person, agency, or organization can address this issue alone. Partnerships are essential for appropriately caring for victims, supporting survivors, and diminishing or eliminating harms caused by commercial sexual exploitation.

Yet this is not the work of saviors. Numerous individuals interviewed as part of this paper recounted the damage of approaching sex trafficking as though they were rescuers saving those in distress. These crimes are often egregious, the suffering inflicted upon its victims incredible and unjust, but behind these stories are people in need of security, selfhood, and opportunity.

Organizations that seek to assist in addressing the causes and symptoms of trafficking will not agree on all of the issues that surround this problem, or even on the means of solving it. However, by laying the groundwork for successful partnerships and establishing the foundation for a common goal, collectives can work together to achieve better outcomes in these cases.
Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Breakdown

Across the four cities, we conducted 23 interviews with 31 individuals. The interview breakdown was as follows:

- 12 Law Enforcement
  - 7 local law enforcement officers (1 joint duty part-time federal officer)
  - 1 law enforcement victim advocate
  - 4 county prosecutors
- 14 Service Providers
  - 12 NGO service providers
  - 1 NGO research and advocacy organization (did not provide direct services)
  - 1 NGO convener organization (did not provide direct services)
- 5 Other
  - 2 municipal government agencies
  - 2 defense attorneys
  - 1 academic researcher

Most interviews were conducted in-person and lasted between one and two hours. We used a simple audio recorder to capture interviews after obtaining permission from interviewees. When interviewees did not agree to be voice recorded, interviewers took detailed notes. The interviews were semi-structured to encourage respondents to provide open-ended responses. Sample interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Law Enforcement (police and prosecutors)</th>
<th>Service Provider</th>
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## Appendix B: Sample Interview Guide

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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| **Preamble**      | • Thank you for taking the time to meet with us.  
• Do you still have about 30 to 45 minutes to speak at this time?  
• As we explained in our initial email, we are looking at the ways in which law enforcement agencies can partner with non-law enforcement actors to investigate cases of sex trafficking in the United States.  
  o Specifically, we would like to better understand the means through which these partnerships work to gain the trust of foreign born women involved in these investigations, especially women from Asian communities working in illicit massage parlors, and women who have been found to be working in Latino residential brothels.  
• For these interviews, at your request, your comments will be anonymous and non-attributable, but we will be taking notes and compiling responses.  
• We will be audio recording the conversation, so that we can focus on what you are saying instead of taking notes.  
• If we want to directly quote you, we will send this back and get your permission before publicizing.  
• **Is all of this OK with you?** |
| **Introductory**  | • Tell me what your job is. How does it fit into the overall organization?  
• How long have you been with your organization/agency?  
• Have you previously worked on sex trafficking investigations as part of another agency? |
| **Investigation Process** | • **Can you talk us through the steps of an investigation, from start to finish?**  
  o How are cases initiated? Who is involved?  
  o How is evidence collected, and what is the role of the victim/survivor in this process? Who else is involved?  
  o How is probable cause determined?  
  o What happens to the team and to the victim/survivor after the case is taken up by prosecution?  
• Can you tell us about a case where the team did a good job?  
  o How was that case brought to your attention?  
  o Who was involved in handling the case?  
• Can you tell us about a case that didn’t end up as positively as you think it could have?  
• How many cases fall in the first or second category (good job vs. less positive)?  
• How do you judge or measure if you have been successful?  
• Are there specific tools or services needed dealing with foreign born victims?  
• If you had two more people on your team, what would they do? |
| **Partnerships**  | • **What non-law enforcement organizations do you partner with at each step of the investigation?**  
• In what situations do you partner with other kinds of organizations?  
• Do you ever partner with the following:  
  o NGO’s (service providers or non-service providers) |
- Businesses
- Community or neighborhood organizations
- Clergy and faith communities
- Other?

- Are there people or organizations that you would like to partner with? How would these be helpful?
- Can you share examples of partnering with non-law enforcement agencies?
- Do you think partnering with these groups impacted the effectiveness of the investigation?
  - Are there certain kinds of partnerships that are most impactful?
  - Most difficult to manage?
- How are partnerships used specifically when dealing with foreign born victims?

**Structure**

- **Within your agency, who handles sex trafficking investigations? Is there a dedicated team?**
  - How many people work on sex trafficking investigations?
  - What kinds of skills or training are required for officers working on sex trafficking?
- **Within the agency, how is “sex trafficking” defined, as opposed to commercial sex work/prostitution? How is it determined who will work on these cases?**
  - Is there a difference in responding to these various types of cases?
  - If so, what is that?
- **Is your agency part of a city or regional task force to combat trafficking?**
- What are specific challenges involved in working with foreign born victims?
  - Illicit massage parlors?
  - Latina residential brothels?
- Are these cases normally dealt with as sex trafficking cases? Who responds to/investigates these?

**Performance**

- **How does your team measure performance in sex trafficking investigations? Do you use metrics? Do you track cases?**
  - Are there specific ways that you measure “effectiveness” here?
- In your opinion, how should the effectiveness of sex trafficking investigations be measured?

**Other**

- PREAMBLE: Many other places are thinking about how they can best respond to these types of cases. Part of our intention with this project is to think about how we might be able to guide other jurisdictions in best practices.
- If you were advising others looking to successfully handle sex trafficking investigations, what would you tell them to avoid?
- What would you tell them specifically to do?
  - What about if they were in a rural area?
  - What if they were in a highly congested urban area?
- **What other elements of the overall investigation processes and procedures did we miss in this discussion?**
- **What other suggestions do you have to improve law enforcement’s ability to win the trust of foreign born survivors, to support sex trafficking investigations?**
Appendix C: DOJ Task Force Models

Single Leader Task Force Model:

Intelligence Task Force Model:

Core Team Task Force Model:
Appendix D: Boston Profile

Sex Trafficking in Boston
As a large metropolitan city along the East Coast and one of the oldest cities in the country, Boston is a major port of entry for immigration into the United States and a popular travel destination for regional and national tourism. In recent years, Boston has actively worked to overcome its historical reputation as a destination for commercial sex. For instance, the ‘combat zone,’ an area of downtown Boston notorious for strip clubs and prostitution, has been transformed into new high-end shops and restaurants. After the passage of the Massachusetts human trafficking law in 2011, some of the first prosecuted sex trafficking cases in the region specifically targeted owners and operators of illicit massage businesses. Law enforcement and service providers identified victims in Boston IMBs who were transported from China and other East Asian countries via New York City.

Response: Proactive Identification Model
The Boston Area Trafficking Task Force was established in 2005 with funds from the US Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance. While federal funds have not supported this task force in several years, the forum allowed partners to build relationships that continue to persist in supporting the work of crime investigation and victim support.

The 2011 Massachusetts human trafficking law established new crimes at the state level related to sex trafficking and forced labor. In addition to providing resources to support the local law enforcement and victim services response, the law mandated establishment of an Attorney General-led Interagency Human Trafficking Policy Task Force, bringing together advocates for victims, prosecutors, academics, and law enforcement officers over an eighteen-month period to form policy recommendations. Today the only active Boston task force is an informal law enforcement task force chaired by the AUSA’s office, which holds an annual meeting that includes service providers.

In Boston, responders to sex trafficking use the co-location model: law enforcement and service providers share the same workspace within the Family Justice Center (FJC). The FJC is a program of the Boston Public Health Commission; an initiative of the Mayor's Office and Suffolk County District Attorney; and the Family Justice Division of the Boston Police Department, which houses the Human Trafficking Unit. The FJC provides a range of services, free of charge, to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and child abuse - including non-English speakers, immigrants (regardless of status), and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

Boston benefits from a particularly dense network of capacity. The Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Coalition partners more than 35 public and private agencies with a focus on domestic minor sex trafficking. Some of the over 80 colleges and universities in the Boston area have joined the local response. As part of the Human Trafficking Clinic at Boston University, law students provide legal and immigration services to survivors. The Freedom Clinic at Massachusetts General

Caitlin Ryan & Deena Zeplowitz
Harvard Kennedy School, 2016
Hospital is the first medical clinic in the nation dedicated exclusively to caring for victims of human trafficking. The clinic provides medical care, counseling, and support services free of charge. Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s Passage Way Program and the After Midnight Program at Boston Medical Center also provide services to survivors. Medical personnel at the Boston Medical Center are trained in victim identification and available 24/7 through the emergency room to provide support for survivors of trafficking.

As a Cities Empowered Against Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Network city, the Boston anti-trafficking community also pursues the demand side of sex trafficking, including the buyers and traffickers of commercial sex. Member cities of the CEASE Network develop customized strategies to reduce overall demand for commercial sex over a two-year period. As a result, investigations undertaken by the Boston Police Department target the buyers of sex by conducting undercover stings and by reaching out to venues such as hotels where commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors may be taking place.

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Ongoing Challenges</th>
<th>Promising Practices</th>
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<td>Mission</td>
<td>- Unstable task force structure</td>
<td>- Co-locating for enhanced response</td>
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<td>Defining Success</td>
<td>- Lack of progress monitoring</td>
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<td>Tactics</td>
<td>- Personality-driven collaboration</td>
<td>- Survivor-led initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Engaged legal community</td>
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<td>- Engaged healthcare community</td>
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<td>Capacity</td>
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<td>- Network participation</td>
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<td>- Engaged community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>- Imbalanced focus on adults versus minors</td>
<td>- Dedicated resources</td>
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</table>

**Promising Practices**

- **Co-locating for enhanced response (Mission, Tactics):** The Family Justice Center offers a unique opportunity for cross-agency representatives to collaborate on a day-to-day basis. Co-location helps build trust across law enforcement and non-profit service providers who historically have not trusted one another. Due to this close working relationship, members of the Family Justice Center are able to field referrals at all hours.

- **Survivor-led initiatives (Tactics):** Much of the success of the Family Justice Center can be attributed to the leadership of the EVA Center and My Life My Choice, both survivor-led non-profit organizations. The professionals leading these organizations possess expertise and sensitivity that allows them to build the trust necessary to work with survivors over an extended period of time.

- **Network participation (Capacity):** As a member of the CEASE Network, the city is able to draw on lessons learned from other CEASE cities when formulating its response to sex trafficking. Further, additional resources and opportunities are made available through the Network, such as a January 2016 Hack-a-thon (“Hack Trafficking 4 Good”) hosted by

Caitlin Ryan & Deena Zeplowitz  
Harvard Kennedy School, 2016
Attorney General Maura Healey’s Office, Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh’s Office, and Thomson Reuters’ Data Innovation Lab.

- **Engaged community (Tactics, Capacity):** Home to more than 80 colleges and universities, Boston’s sex trafficking response benefits from the expertise and participation of national and international experts of human trafficking. University-based healthcare and legal clinics further boost the capacity of non-profit service providers to deliver needed services to the survivor population.

- **Dedicated resources (Capacity, Understanding):** Specific offices and positions in the Boston Police Department and the Suffolk County Attorney’s Office were created to focus on human trafficking cases. This level of specialization allows practitioners to become experts in these cases and to lobby for additional resources to support the services required by the survivor population.

**Ongoing Challenges**

- **Imbalanced focus on adults versus minors (Capacity, Understanding):** Resources in the Boston area are primarily funneled to domestic minors who are victims of sex trafficking. While the needs of this group are great, adults and foreign born victims are often left behind.

- **Personality-driven collaboration (Tactics):** Boston’s sex trafficking response benefits from the extreme dedication of only a handful of individuals across law enforcement, victim services, and legal advocacy. The loss of any of these individuals would have a strong negative impact on the entire response, threatening the model’s sustainability.

- **Unstable task force structure (Mission, Defining Success):** At different times, various actors have convened task forces in Boston. The composition of each is slightly different, and was championed by a different dedicated professional. When those committed individuals (such as the Attorney General or the Assistant US Attorney) move on to a new jurisdiction or issue, task force activity declines or ceases altogether. This model is ultimately unsustainable and inhibits organizational learning over time. The lack of consistency also poses a challenge to collaborative actors who hope to formulate long-term, collective goals.
Appendix E: New York City Profile

Sex Trafficking in New York City

As the country’s largest city and home to one of its largest immigrant populations, New York City is a hub for human trafficking. Its close proximity to major international airports and other ports of entry and a concentration of industries that lack close regulation contribute to the prevalence of the crime. At the same time, New York State has among the most comprehensive and long-standing human trafficking laws in the United States – it encompasses an understanding of the wide-variety of coercive, forceful, and fraudulent tactics used by traffickers to control their victims (including the withholding or destroying of immigration documents and use of debt-bondage) and was the first state to pass a Safe Harbor law in 2008.  

Response: Diversion-Court Model

Much of the organization of New York’s law enforcement agencies and service providers is managed through its diversion court system, a network of Human Trafficking Intervention Courts, which reach close to 95 percent of those charged with prostitution-related offenses in the state. There is one court in each borough (Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island), two on Long Island (in Nassau County and Suffolk County), and four in the rest of the state. These courts primarily target individuals charged with prostitution-related offenses in an effort to identify and assist sex trafficking victims. Underlying this focus is an understanding that many of these “defendants” come from poor, unstable homes with a history of abuse. 

Although problems continue by charging those who are possibly trafficked with criminal offenses, the Intervention Courts treat defendants as trafficking victims, convening service providers weekly in order to provide resources for survivors, including shelter, healthcare, immigration assistance, and drug treatment, with an aim towards ending the cycle of exploitation and arrest. Criminal charges may be dismissed or reduced depending on a defendant’s compliance with court-mandated services and programs.

New York City has had a number of task forces historically, including three currently in operation. These have been successful in advocating for changes in the law, but it is unclear how effective they have been in integrating the work of partner agencies throughout the City. It appears that the primary means of communication and connection occurs through the courts, which bring together criminal justice partners, local service providers, and other community stakeholders. The Human Trafficking Intervention Court in Queens – started in 2004 and the oldest court of its kind in the nation – sees an especially large number of foreign-born defendants. According to court statistics, Asian defendants represented 27 percent of cases in 2010, and 40 percent of cases in 2014.
Theme | Ongoing Challenges | Promising Practices
--- | --- | ---
Mission | - Lack of central focus or strategy | - Inclusion of diverse stakeholders
Defining Success | - Lack of progress monitoring | - Meaningful policy change
 |  | - Cultural change
Tactics |  | - Inclusion of relevant stakeholders
 |  | - Engaging alternative partners
Capacity | - Limited resources | - Compilation of resources
Understanding | - Lack of attention to root causes | - Survivor-centered approach

**Promising Practices**

- *Meaningful policy change (Defining Success)* – Much of the activity of New York City’s court model resulted in significant changes at the level of state and city policy, including through continuing expansion and adaptation of the legal framework around trafficking statutes. Advocacy on the part of task forces and other organizations helped lead to passage of New York State’s Safe Harbor law and changing of trafficking offenses from non-violent to violent felony crimes.

- *Survivor-centered approach (Defining Success, Understanding)* – Law enforcement and service providers interviewed articulated a clear understanding of the pathways into trafficking and the need for long-term engagement with victims. They recognize the complex, challenge nature of the crime itself and the status of survivorship, and prioritize a victim- and survivor-centered approach.

- *Inclusion of diverse and relevant stakeholders (Mission, Tactics, Capacity)* – New York’s strategy benefits from a dense, rich, and diverse network of service providers. By serving all those charged with prostitution-related offenses, recognizing that many victims of sex trafficking are identified after months of interaction with service providers or criminal justice authorities, the courts are able to side step an ideological divide between those who disagree on the nature of engaging in sex work.

- *Engaging alternative partners (Tactics)* – Partly due to its organization around the court system, New York City’s collective includes public defenders, notably through the Exploitation Intervention Project at the Legal Aid Society. This move recognizes the reality that, despite a desired shift to move away from arresting and charging victims of trafficking, many victims are actually defendants and require significant legal assistance as such, before and during their involvement in criminal trafficking cases against perpetrators (if such cases are ever brought forward). Many victims of trafficking are hesitant to come forward or unaware of their status as victims and may take years to disclose. Including public defenders ensures certain services regardless of a client’s willingness or ability to articulate having been trafficked.
Ongoing Challenges

- **Lack of central focus or strategy (Mission)** – Though its network of courts allows for wide coverage across the state, the lack of a convening body in some form limits the ability of collaborators to have a central focus or strategy. While advocates work towards policy reform, many partners are focused more on the need to engage in on-the-ground work, with no specific agency charged with aligning or shifting priorities as needed.

- **Lack of progress monitoring (Defining Success)** – The lack of a collaborating agency also limits the ability of partners to monitor overall progress. Though many note challenges in meeting particular needs of survivors and acknowledge the long-term nature of these cases, there is limited collection of overall activity in the city. Though particular agencies collect their own data, there is no mechanism for evaluating efforts across the network.

- **Limited resources (Capacity)** – Though New York has a particularly dense network of service providers, including many that cater specifically to the needs of foreign born women (Restore NYC, New York Asian Women’s Shelter, and Sanctuary for Families among others), almost all service providers noted a strain on limited resources, particularly housing.

- **Lack of attention to root causes (Understanding)** – Judge Toko Serita of the Human Trafficking Intervention Court in Queens, New York said, “This court is not devised to solve the problems of trafficking, but to address one of the unfortunate byproducts, which is the arrest of these defendants on prostitution charges.” Though it importantly deals with the downstream effects of trafficking and prostitution, such a strategy may be limited in its ability to address the root causes of sexual exploitation.
Appendix F: San Francisco Profile

Sex Trafficking in San Francisco
As the most populous state in the US and a geographically diverse border state with major international harbors and airports, California remains a major site of both domestic and international human trafficking. California is particularly vulnerable to trafficking in persons because of its proximity to international borders, its seaports and airports, and a large immigrant population. Furthermore, the FBI lists the San Francisco Bay Area as one of the 13 highest child sex trafficking areas in the US. A 2012 statewide report noted that 72 percent of the human trafficking victims who came in contact with regional task forces and whose country of origin was recorded were are American, but California is also home to a large Asian immigrant population. People of Asian origin make up 14.9 percent of California’s population, the highest of any state in the country.

Response: City-Led Partnership Model
California’s anti-trafficking law went into effect in 2006. In the following years, several regional task forces formed across the state, including the North Bay Human Trafficking Task Force in San Francisco and the East Bay Human Trafficking Task Force in Oakland. In 2009, concerned community members and local political leaders came together to form the San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT or “the Collaborative”). SFCAHT was launched with membership of 21 government agencies and non-governmental organizations, including representatives from city, state, and federal law enforcement; local city government agencies; community-based and government service providers; advocacy and faith-based groups; educators; and legislators. The purpose of the collaborative was to coordinate across law enforcement, service providers, and policymakers to increase the community’s awareness of the issue of human trafficking and to enhance relationships across anti-trafficking partners. SFCAHT coordinator Antonia Lavine noted that, before the creation of the collaborative, there was a sense that law enforcement and civil society groups were working together relatively well, but the community was missing an adequate response to the issue on a policy level. The city needed a mechanism that included strong local government participation in order to influence policy. Today the collaborative is made up of at least 1000 people and 50 organizations, though not all the members are formal members of the collaborative.

Building on the work of the collaborative, in 2013 Mayor Ed Lee launched the Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking to review current efforts, identify gaps in services for survivors, and improve the City’s response to human trafficking. The task force is staffed by the Department on the Status of Women and meets every other month. Several committees also meet regularly: Child Sex Trafficking, Forced Labor (formerly Illicit Massage Parlor), Training (formerly Super Bowl), and the Sex Work & Trafficking Policy Impact Committees.

The formation of the Mayor’s Task Force has led to several positive outcomes. First, getting the right policymakers around the table uncovered new policy needs. For example, the Child Sex Trafficking Committee identified a gap in services: there was no 24-hour peer advocate response.
The city moved to rectify this immediate need. Next, the city-led task force became a centralized point for data collection efforts. After years of relationship building and methodology development, the task force released its first Human Trafficking Report in 2015, which counted 291 known and suspected human trafficking survivors identified by 19 different agencies. Finally, the neutrality of the city-led model allowed for the inclusion of traditionally excluded groups, such as the sex worker community.

The “Directory of Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking: A Guide to Local and Regional Resources for Survivors of Human Trafficking in the San Francisco Bay Area,” developed by SFCAHT, lists 23 government agencies at both the city and federal levels, and nearly 40 different NGO service providers. These NGOs provide a range of services to survivors of sex trafficking, including shelter, legal aid, immigration status assistance, medical and health services, interpretation services, and mental health counseling.

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Ongoing Challenges</th>
<th>Promising Practices</th>
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<tr>
<td>Defining Success</td>
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<td>- Meaningful policy changes</td>
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<td>- Relationship building</td>
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<td>Tactics</td>
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<td>- Inclusion of relevant stakeholders</td>
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<td>Capacity</td>
<td>- Limitations to data collection</td>
<td>- Compilation of resources</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>- Limited resources addressing root causes</td>
<td>- Survivor-centered approach</td>
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</table>

**Promising Practices**

- **Local government participation and ownership (Mission)** – Community-based efforts, supported by the Collaborative, successfully led to the creation of the Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking. Today, day-to-day management of the task force falls under the city’s Department on the Status of Women. City government is the driving force behind collaborative efforts and initiatives to seek policy change.

- **Inclusion of relevant stakeholders (Tactics, Mission)** – The Mayor’s Task Force structure is comprised of multiple committees, including a committee on Sex Work & Trafficking Policy Impact. Task force leaders recognize the importance of including sex worker voices when making decisions concerning the city’s sex worker population. The task force also includes key government agencies such as the Department of Public Health.

- **Meaningful policy changes (Defining Success)** – Cross-sector and agency meetings uncovered some notable gaps in serving the San Francisco victim population; namely, policies around the treatment of minors were unclear and inconsistent. As such, the Mayor’s Task Force helped pave the way for the Human Services Agency to convene a CSEC Steering
Committee to establish and pass a new inter agency protocol regarding sex trafficking of minors. The task force continues to identify gaps in services and emerging policy needs.

- **Survivor-centered approach (Defining Success, Understanding)** – The Special Victims Unit within the San Francisco Police Department has taken over investigation of prostitution-related cases from the Vice Unit. This team is better equipped to address the needs of victims. Service providers described observing a cultural shift within law enforcement agencies, and a transition to a more victim-centered approach.

- **Compilation of resources (Capacity)** – Since 2013, SFCAHT has assembled a detailed directory of services available to survivors. This resource is accessible online, and lists 23 government agencies at both the city and federal levels, and nearly 40 different NGO service providers. These NGOs provide a range of services to survivors of sex trafficking, including shelter, legal aid, immigration status assistance, medical and health services, interpretation services, and mental health counseling.

- **Data collection (Capacity)** – Building upon initial work done by the Collaborative, San Francisco now has a fairly robust data collection mechanism spanning across government and service provider agencies. The Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking issued the city’s first Human Trafficking Report in 2015. This report compiles data from 19 government and community-based agencies, and provides a snapshot of 291 identified human trafficking cases. Due to data collection challenges and limitations the document is not meant to be a prevalence report, but can instead be used as a baseline to analyze trends over time.

- **Public health approach (Tactics)** – A new community liaison health outreach approach places health workers in massage businesses before any foul play is suspected. The health workers build relationships with employees and business owners to provide information about workers’ rights and available health services. This public health approach looks very different from a raid or inspection, putting the potential victim at the center of making decisions about his or her needs and required services.

**Ongoing Challenges**

- **Limitations to data collection (Capacity)** - San Francisco is a sanctuary city, meaning law enforcement and municipal service providers cannot question individuals’ immigration status. As a result, it can be difficult to obtain demographic data that could inform investigative approaches and policy. Further, due to the aggregated and anonymous nature of the data, it was impossible to remove duplications, so individuals may have been counted multiple times by multiple agencies.

- **Addressing root causes (Mission, Understanding)** – Homelessness is a major problem in San Francisco. The root causes of vulnerability that lead to incidents of sex trafficking, such as poverty and lack of stable housing, remain incredibly difficult for the community to tackle. While encouraging efforts to address this link are underway, it is particularly challenging to respond to these two complex and interrelated challenges simultaneously.
Appendix G: Seattle Profile

Sex Trafficking in Seattle
Washington State is a hotbed for the recruitment, transportation, and sale of people for labor due in part to multiple ports, an international border with Canada, and vast rural areas. According to a study from The Urban Institute on the underground commercial sex economy, in Seattle, the most prevalent commercial sex venues are massage parlors and residential brothels, as opposed to street and online prostitution. “The proliferation of Asian massage parlors and Asian home brothels is unique to Seattle and involves individuals from China, Vietnam, and Korea.” Law enforcement has identified illegal business and sex work occurring in these spaces, but has been unable to determine whether force, fraud, or coercion exist.

Response: Enhanced Collaborative Model
At a September 2015 event in Seattle, US Attorney General Loretta Lynch commented:

By bringing together state and local leaders, law enforcement officials and legal and social services organizations, this coalition has made its members more effective in performing a variety of important activities – from raising awareness about trafficking in Washington, to identifying and assisting trafficking victims, to obtaining convictions against those who seek to exploit and abuse human beings for sex, for labor and for servitude of all kinds. With your innovative efforts and unwavering commitment, you are demonstrating the power of working together, across traditional professional lines, to bring a comprehensive approach to a daunting and urgent challenge.

At this event she announced that the Seattle Police Department and the International Rescue Committee in Seattle would each receive $750,000 over the next three years, for a total of $1.5 million, to support law enforcement efforts and services to victims.

Unlike San Francisco, the Seattle model does not put the city government at the center of its human trafficking response coordination. Federal funding supports the activities of the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WashACT), which is co-chaired by Assistant US Attorney Catherine Crisham, the Seattle Police Department’s Vice High-Risk Victims Unit, and Kathleen Morris, Program Manager for the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN). WARN is led by the staff at the International Rescue Committee of Seattle, and includes the Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA), API Chaya, the Northwest Project Farm Workers Unit, YouthCare, and Lutheran Community Services Northwest. Additional partner agencies working on anti-sex trafficking initiatives include the Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS) and Real Escape from the Sex Trade (REST).

Seattle represents more of a traditional intelligence task force model as described by the DOJ Task Force E-Guide, where a partnership between law enforcement and service providers developed over time. However, a robust core team model that includes key government actors is not in place.
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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Ongoing Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>- Ideological divides</td>
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<td>- Possible limitations to building trust due to harsh policing strategies</td>
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<td>Tactics</td>
<td>- Shift away from arresting victims of sex trafficking for prostitution-related offenses</td>
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<td>Capacity</td>
<td>- Limited data collection</td>
<td>- Development of intake protocol for institutionally-involved youth</td>
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<td>Understanding</td>
<td>- Lack of clear outcome metrics</td>
<td>- Diverse collaboration across race and gender dimensions</td>
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**Promising Practices**

- *Culturally appropriate services (Understanding)* – A recent study on collaborations against human trafficking highlights WARN as a multi-partner collective in which males and females, Caucasians and people of color, and people of various national origins work together to provide a range of culturally competent, multilingual, trauma-informed expert services for victims of every form of trafficking. Partners adopt a client-empowerment approach in order to support clients in whatever way they determine so as to assist them in rebuilding their lives after having been trafficked.¹²

- *Meaningful policy changes (Defining Success)* – Seattle advocates have made significant strides on developing improved counter-trafficking policy in the state, most notably on cases involving youth through the creation of a statewide Model Protocol for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children. This approach focuses on collaboration between law enforcement, the courts, victim advocacy organizations, youth service agencies, and other professionals to foster a victim-centered approach. It looks to enhance coordination among these agencies to improve identification, providing services to victims and survivors, hold exploiters accountable, and ultimately, to work toward ending these crimes in the state.¹³

- *Cultural change (Defining Success, Tactics)* – Prosecutors and law enforcement have successfully shifted from arresting and charging victims of sex trafficking to arresting and charging buyers and traffickers.

- *Diverse collaboration across race and gender dimensions (Understanding)* – Service provider members of WARN cater to a variety of communities and are well-trained in and well-recruited from various linguistic, racial, and cultural groups.

- *Development of intake protocol for institutionally-involved youth (Tactics, Capacity)* – CSEC advocates in Seattle developed a 12-step questionnaire as part of intake protocol for youth involved in the foster care system. It remains to be seen if such a strategy could be adapted for other populations, including adults and foreign nationals.
Ongoing Challenges

- **Ideological divides (Mission)** – As a member of the CEASE (Cities Empowered against Sexual Exploitation) Network, Seattle has adopted a strategy to end demand for commercial sex. While this provides clarity on defining the problem and strategies for a solution, certain voices may be left out of the conversation. It is unclear if municipal and state government agencies are able to effectively partner with all NGO service providers due to this stance.

- **Possible limitations to building trust due to harsh policing strategies (Tactics)** – As King County shifts towards a harsher strategy of arresting and prosecuting buyers and traffickers of commercial sex, it is unclear how this will impact the willingness of victims to come forward.

- **Limited data collection (Capacity)** – Though service providers and law enforcement track their activity, there is no central agency that collects this data for all agencies. While efforts are underway to improve in this area, much of the available data remains unreliable or incomplete.

- **Lack of clear outcome metrics (Capacity)** – Much of the data that comes from the city reflects activities and inputs rather than outcome or impact. Long-term measures may be needed here, though it is unclear if there is consensus on what those measures should be.
### Appendix H: City Matrix

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Key Challenges</th>
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<th>San Francisco</th>
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Appendix I: Available Resources

A) The **Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force Strategy and Operations E-Guide** was made available by the Office for Victims of Crime within the US Department of Justice. The E-Guide supports the work of multidisciplinary anti-human trafficking task forces around the country and provides direction and promising practices on anti-human trafficking task force creation. Available here: [https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/](https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/).


C) In 2013 SFCAHT produced its first **Directory of Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking: A Guide to Local and Regional Resources for Survivors of Human Trafficking in the San Francisco Bay Area** (pictured right). The 2015 guide lists 23 government agencies at both the city and federal levels, and nearly 40 different NGO service providers. These NGOs provide a range of services to survivors of sex trafficking, including shelter, legal aid, immigration status assistance, medical and health services, interpretation services, and mental health counseling. The guide can be found here: [http://sfcaht.org/directory-of-services.html](http://sfcaht.org/directory-of-services.html).

E) The 2011 Massachusetts human trafficking law established new crimes at the state level related to sex trafficking and forced labor. In addition to providing resources to support the local law enforcement and victim services response, the law mandated establishment of an Attorney General-led Interagency Human Trafficking Policy Task Force, bringing together advocates for victims, prosecutors, academics, and law enforcement officers over an eighteen-month period to form policy recommendations. The 2013 Massachusetts Interagency Human Trafficking Policy Task Force Findings and Recommendations can be found here: http://www.mass.gov/ago/docs/ihttf/ihttf-findings.pdf.
Endnotes & Bibliography


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5 Ibid., 11.


7 Farrell et al., “Identifying Challenges: Executive Summary.”


9 Ibid., 9.

10 Ibid., 8.

11 Ibid., 88.

12 Ibid., 109.


15 Ibid., 9.


18 Ibid., 108.

19 Ibid., 84.

20 Ibid., 139.

21 Ibid., 104.


23 Farrell et al., “Identifying Challenges,” 137.

24 Ibid., 120.

25 Ibid., 133.


27 Ibid., 4.


31 Ibid.


42 Ibid., 1.
47 Owens, “Funding Services.”
51 Farrell et al., “Identifying Challenges,” 133.
52 Ibid., 120.
57 Countryman-Roswurm and Bolin, “Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking,” 525.
58 Farrell et al., “Understanding and Improving Law Enforcement Responses to Human Trafficking,” 146.
59 Farrell et al., “Identifying Challenges,” 100.
63 Farrell et al., “Identifying Challenges,” 97.
64 Countryman-Roswurm and Bolin, “Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking,” 528.
70 Pierce, “Top 4 States for Human Trafficking.”
72 Ibid.
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79 King County, “Public Health – Seattle & King County, Help Stop Human Trafficking.”
82 Foot, Collaborating against Human Trafficking, 84.


