

# Comprehensive Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking: Findings from Clients in Three Communities

## *Final Report*

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This study was part of a larger study conducted by Caliber, an ICF International Company and was supported through subcontract #S813. The full project was supported by Grant No. 2002-MU-MU-K004 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Caliber, an ICF International Company, was the lead research organization for the project. The findings presented in this report are part of a larger report incorporating the full findings of the study.

The authors would like to thank the staff, interpreters, and, most importantly, the clients of the Comprehensive Services Site grantees who were willing to spend the time to schedule and participate in these interviews. The authors would also like to thank Kevonne Small for her thoughtful review and contribution to the report.

Opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice, Caliber (an ICF International Company), or the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders.



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## CHAPTER 1: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

### INTRODUCTION

Humans are trafficked across international borders for the purposes of labor exploitation (e.g., domestic servitude, sweatshops) or sexual exploitation (e.g., forced prostitution) and the victims are subjected to coercion, fraud, abuse, or some other form of deception on the part of the traffickers. The Department of State (2004, 2006) estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 people—adults and children—are trafficked across international borders around the world annually.<sup>1</sup> About 90 percent of these victims are females and over half of all those trafficked each year are believed to be trafficked for sexual exploitation. Among those trafficked, about 14,500 to 17,500 are trafficked into the United States each year. Recent data show that victims are often trafficked by perpetrators of the same nationality (Free the Slaves and Human Rights Center 2004).

On October 28, 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) became law in the United States (Public Law 106-386). TVPA marked a turning point in the nation's approach to identifying trafficking cases, assisting victims, and prosecuting traffickers, and created an international collaborative effort to address this issue. The Act allows victims who participate in the investigation and prosecution of their traffickers to apply for T nonimmigrant status (T-Visa) and permanent residency, as well as receive other benefits and services through new grant programs. It also defined new crimes related to trafficking and enhanced penalties for existing criminal statutes. Finally, TVPA provides funding assistance to foreign countries to bolster their efforts to combat trafficking. TVPA was reauthorized in 2003 and in 2005, including additional elements to bolster provisions in the first Act (Department of Justice 2004).

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) within the U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for developing and administering the “Services for Trafficking Victims Discretionary Grant Program—Comprehensive Services Sites.” The program provides direct services, such as shelter, medical care, crisis counseling, legal assistance, and advocacy to assist victims between the time they are encountered by law enforcement until they are “certified” to receive other benefits from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Certification is a “status” of eligibility given by ORR to adult victims of severe forms of trafficking so that they can receive public social service benefits. Victims apply for certification and, in order to receive it, they must cooperate with the investigation to prosecute the trafficker. Once certified by ORR, victims can legally receive social service benefits, often through grant programs provided by ORR, OVC, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and others. Victims who are not certified or who are awaiting certification are not entitled to certain public benefits; thus, these victims are described to be in a “precertification” phase.

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<sup>1</sup> The reported numbers represent the Department of State's latest *estimates* of trafficking both into the U.S. and internationally. Precise estimates are very difficult to obtain due to the hidden nature of this crime, requiring rigorous estimation methodology (Steinfatt 2003; Steinfatt, Baker, and Beesey 2002; U.S. Department of State 2004, 2006).

The OVC funding was created to fill the gap in services during the precertification phase. At the time the grants were awarded, OVC grantees were required to coordinate their services with ORR grantees to ensure a continuum of care throughout both precertification and certification phases. The OVC funding has supported the development of *comprehensive service networks*, in which multiple agencies are involved in a service network to provide wide-ranging care to victims. By helping build collaborative networks across the country, OVC hopes to increase the field's capacity to meet the multiple, specialized needs of trafficking victims from the time they are identified to the time they receive certification.

In 2002, Caliber Associates, along with their subcontractor, the Urban Institute, began an evaluation of the OVC "Services for Trafficking Victims Discretionary Grant Program—Comprehensive Services Sites." The research design for this National Institute of Justice (NIJ)–funded evaluation was divided into three phases that included qualitative and quantitative data collection activities: (1) Phase I was an evaluability assessment with the eight OVC-funded trafficking grantees to select the three sites to be included in the evaluation; (2) Phase II was the planning, implementation, and outcome evaluation in the three selected sites; and (3) Phase III included interviews with human trafficking victims who had been served by the OVC-funded collaboratives. This report presents the results from Phase III.

To learn more about the victim services being provided with OVC funding, Urban Institute researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with survivors and with case managers and other key service providers in the three NIJ evaluation sites. The in-depth interviews document victims' experiences using OVC-funded services, and their perceptions of the OVC-funded collaborative networks between service providers. They also provide a unique opportunity to listen directly to the voices of the victims for whom these services are designed, and to consider their input in future replications and refinements.

## **INTERVIEW METHODS**

The Urban Institute research team conducted a series of in-person, one-on-one interviews (with interpreters as needed) with 34 clients of the OVC grantees implementing comprehensive services for human trafficking survivors in Sites A, B, and C, three cities in the United States. These interviews were held approximately every six months over the course of about two years, from late 2003 to fall 2005. Case managers (and other service providers in the network at each site) identified clients who were appropriate for interviews and assisted the research staff in making logistical arrangements. Interviews were held at service providers' offices, or in public locations such as libraries, or in clients' homes, at times convenient to the participants' schedules. The interviews lasted about an hour and a half, and participants were given a gift of appreciation in the form of \$50 in cash, along with reimbursement for any transportation costs they may have incurred. While participants were told they would be given a gift of appreciation during interview recruitment, the exact nature of the gift was not disclosed to ensure that their participation was strictly voluntary and not unduly influenced by the monetary incentive. Prior to beginning the interview questions, an informed consent script was read by the interviewer (see Appendix A). This script emphasized the voluntary, confidential, and anonymous nature of interview participation. The interpreter, the client's case manager, or the interviewer signed the consent form and the payment receipt as a witness to the victim's marking, to avoid making an

unnecessary record of the victim's name. Research staff and interpreters also signed confidentiality pledges (see Appendices B and C).

Although a possible limitation of this interview approach is that an interpreter may alter the line of questioning, the use of interpreters in these situations is accepted practice, and most of these interviews could not have been done otherwise.<sup>2</sup> To minimize the effects of using interpreters, the Urban Institute research team forwarded interview questions to site staff and interpreters prior to conducting an interview. Urban Institute researchers, when allowed, tape recorded victim interviews. Researchers also took handwritten notes that were later automated. Victim case study notes and tapes were saved in password-protected project files and kept in locked filing cabinets at the Urban Institute as per confidentiality requirements.

Research and service provider staff shared a concern that discussing the trafficking experience with the client would be unnecessarily invasive and painful, since the research objective focused on the service experience, not the trafficking experience. In addition, some service provider staff were concerned that discussions of legal or immigration issues could potentially impact legal or immigration cases if ever subpoenaed. These concerns were particularly central for some of the service provider staff in Site C. The research staff agreed to reformat the open-ended interview protocol used in Sites A and B into a more structured, closed-ended format for use in Site C, as this approach would be less likely to give rise to discussions of sensitive topics not explicitly addressed. Thus, two forms of the interview protocol were used: one for the Sites A and B, and one for the Site C (see Appendices D and E).

Nonetheless, both versions of the interview protocols covered the same topics:

- Service needs as a result of the trafficking experience;
- Ways clients entered the service network, and which service provider was contacted first;
- The nature, length, and helpfulness of the service relationship with each provider;
- Met needs, unmet needs, and the reasons for unmet needs;
- Clients' sense of safety and control when dealing with social service and other community-based service providers;
- Service providers that the client chose not to seek services from, and why;
- Perceived collaboration among service providers;
- Differences in the service experience before and after certification;
- Recommendations to improve services; and
- Advice to other survivors of trafficking.

All research forms and procedures were reviewed and approved by the Urban Institute's Institutional Review Board prior to use. Minor changes to interview protocols (e.g., question wording, additional probes) were made as a result of early interviewing experiences, and these also were reviewed and approved.

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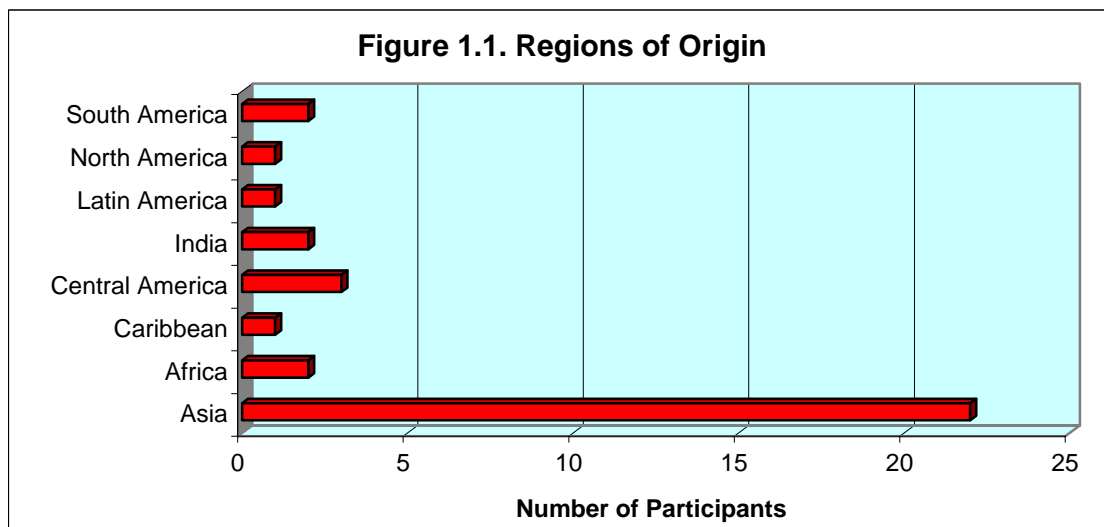
<sup>2</sup> While some of the interpreters worked for the OVC grantees, great care was taken to ensure that the interpreter was *not* involved in that particular client's case. All interpreters signed statements of confidentiality in front of the client before the interview began.

In addition to the client interviews, the Urban Institute team met with each site’s case managers over the period of the study (see Appendix F for the case manager interview protocol). These interviews provided a wealth of information that is useful in understanding the topics addressed in the client interviews, and is incorporated as appropriate in discussions of the findings that follow. Findings from case manager interviews are indicated as such; all other findings reported are from client interviews. Where possible, we also included in our results excerpts from client interviews to illustrate particular findings. These excerpts may represent either an exact quote from the few clients we interviewed in English, a quote from interpreters, or a paraphrase of a particular point provided by an interviewee or interpreter. In any case, the excerpts all accurately reflect the spirit of the information provided by the client of the comprehensive services sites.

## INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

A total of 34 trafficking survivors who were or had been clients of agencies in the comprehensive services sites were interviewed. We interviewed 13 clients in Site A, 14 in Site B, and seven in Site C (because of low caseloads in Site C during most of the study time period). These included 32 women and two men. Their ages ranged from 19 to mid-50s, with most being in their 20s and 30s. A little under half (16) had children (although they did not always live with them here in the United States), and the rest did not have children.

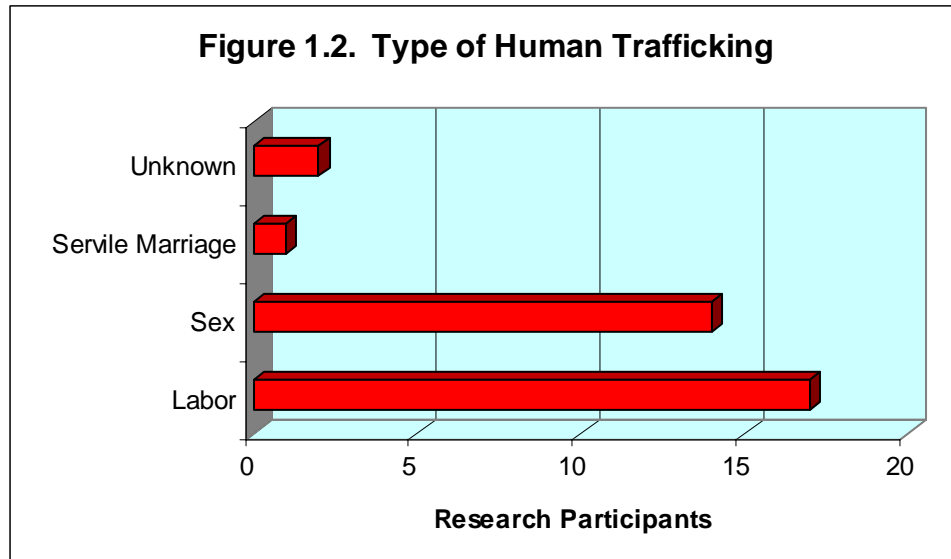
All clients we interviewed were trafficked internationally—that is, none were American victims of domestic trafficking. The most common country of origin was Korea at ten participants, over twice as many as the next most common country of origin (four Vietnamese). The most common region of origin was Asia and the East Indies, with 24 clients from this region (including China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines—see figure 1.1.). Seven clients were from Latin America, including Mexico and several Central and South American countries. Two were from African nations, and one was from a Caribbean island.



The type of trafficking experienced by our research participants was nearly evenly split between the two major types of trafficking (see figure 1.2.): 17 had been subjected to labor trafficking



(including domestic servitude), 14 to sex trafficking, one to a servile marriage, and for two, the type of trafficking was not known to the interviewer. Fifteen clients had received their certification as trafficking victims prior to the interview, and 19 had not yet been certified. All but four of our interview participants had received precertification services from the comprehensive services site as part of the OVC grant.



## **STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The remainder of the report documents our findings from the interviews with clients and case managers of the comprehensive services sites. Chapter 2 describes the needs trafficking survivors have, as identified by the clients themselves. Chapter 3 describes the services survivors received, survivors' experiences with these services (both satisfaction and dissatisfaction), needs that went unmet, and challenges and barriers to providing effective services to this population. Finally, chapter 4 provides advice to the field and to other trafficking victims from survivors, in their own words. Notably, some findings described here are indicative of the challenges that services providers face in general in relation to working in a context with limited resources and service availability. Thus, findings reflect the specific needs and issues of trafficking survivors, which also sometimes are similar to the needs and issues of other types of victims and low-income populations generally.

## CHAPTER 2: NEEDS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

### TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS' SERVICE NEEDS

Like victims of other types of crime, such as domestic violence or sexual assault, survivors of human trafficking have multiple and wide-ranging service needs as a result of the victimization experience. However, trafficking victims also have some unique needs arising from the particular experience of being transported into a foreign country—legally or illegally, willingly or unwillingly—and held against their will in a situation where they were forced to work for little or no pay, and were not free to leave. Since most international trafficking victims do not speak English or understand American culture or legal systems, the sense of being isolated and trapped is very real.

Our discussions with trafficking survivors revealed that many service needs are common to virtually all survivors; but service needs also vary with method of liberation from the trafficking situation, and over time. While our survivor interviews did not explicitly ask how the victim escaped from the trafficking situation, this information was volunteered by 18 of those we interviewed, or by their case managers (who provided background information prior to the interview). Half of these had left the trafficking situation as a result of a law enforcement raid, and half had left with the assistance of a friend, by reaching out to police or service providers, or on their own.

#### Method of Liberation

Some victims escape trafficking through a law enforcement raid. A raid can be a very traumatic experience, both because of the sudden and dramatic nature of such an action, and because of the immediate consequences. Law enforcement raids may be sparked by evidence that prostitution or other illegal activities are happening at a certain location; until further information is obtained, law enforcement may treat everyone at that location as criminal suspects and hold them in detention facilities.<sup>3</sup>

When trafficking victims are held in detention facilities after a raid, their lack of knowledge about the American justice system, combined with negative perceptions about law enforcement based on experiences in their home countries, and on what the trafficker or others may have told them about American agencies to keep them isolated, can produce overwhelming fear and anxiety. Will they be prosecuted as criminals? Will they be deported? Whom can they trust? Is anyone on their side? Does anyone understand their true role in the illegal activity? What will happen to them in the next 24 or 48 hours? While as a rule service providers want case referrals as quickly as possible, some noted that they would prefer not to contact victims while they are still in detention because the victim may confuse them with law enforcement personnel, which can hinder the development of trust and the realization that service providers are there to help

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<sup>3</sup> Trafficking victims who are detained typically come from a raid on large group trafficking situations such as massage parlors, brothels, or sweatshops. Individuals in domestic servitude or servile marriages are generally not detained (with a large number of other victims) for any significant period of time.

victims. Also, many traffickers initially present themselves as “helpers” to victims, so victims may certainly be concerned that other “helpers” will turn out to be exploiters instead.

Several case managers felt that the certification requirement that victims cooperate with law enforcement and prosecution can be emotionally traumatic, because they often have to relive their experiences during case preparation (for example, during stress interviews, in which they are interrogated as if they were hostile witnesses) and testifying. They may also be in great fear for their safety or their family’s safety, since traffickers are often compatriots who have a great deal of power, money, and influence in their home country or village, or in the city’s ethnic community in this country.

- *[In reference to family in home country] I have really really big concerns about that and before I agreed to speak with the government that is the most thing I worry about cause my trafficker knows my family. So, I get worried about if I speak to the government that he going to retaliate against my family.*
- *The traffickers, who are now back in [home country], pressure my sister to tell them where I am. I’d be afraid to go back there, because of them.*

One case manager cited an example in which the trafficker found out where the victim was staying and had his associates pose as city police officers and attempt to abduct the victim.

Aside from the emotional pain and fear, the requirement that victims must cooperate is disempowering and counterproductive to the service providers’ goals of fostering empowerment and independence in trafficking survivors, to help them rebuild autonomous lives. All of these issues present significant challenges to victims and service providers.

Other victims leave the trafficking situation without a law enforcement raid. Some move out of the place they are being held with the assistance of a friend, service providers, or local law enforcement agencies they have learned about and contacted while still in the trafficking situation. Some wish to bring criminal charges against the trafficker (such as one who tried to convince local law enforcement to make an arrest, without success), while others would prefer to stay out of the criminal justice system.

- *I wanted to find out a way how I could actually, in a way, punish my traffickers because once I started realizing what they had been doing, I felt that I couldn’t be able to get out of this experience unless I see some punishment done to them.*

Whether there is a case in the criminal justice system or not, victims need help navigating their way through the immigration system. Many have entered this country illegally and need legal status to continue their residence here. Others entered legally but their continued legal presence is dependent on the trafficker—for example, when the trafficker seizes the victim’s passport or visa as a means of keeping the victim in bondage. The American immigration system can appear

as confusing and adversarial as the American justice system, and it is difficult for unacculturated, uninformed victims to understand what is going on and who they can trust. Assistance with immigration issues is a major focus of service providers' work with victims, and a major interest and goal of victims themselves.

### Changing Needs over Time

Immediately after escape from the trafficking situation, many survivors have acute, short-term survival needs. They may have left the situation in which they were being held in bondage with little or no advance notice, having no choice but to leave whatever belongings they had behind. They need a safe place to stay (either immediately or post-detention); food, clothing, and other personal necessities; medical or dental care for acute problems; safety from the traffickers and others in the community who are sympathetic to the trafficker; and, as noted above, information and advocacy with criminal and immigration cases.

- *Honestly, in a situation like that, you need everything.*
- *[Agency] gave me everything including soap, clothes, shoes, a bag and bought me schoolbooks, and things like a watch.*
- *Everything. They [the agency] took me to the doctor because I was really sick to my stomach. For my teeth, removed teeth. Eye doctor. Counselor. My clothes, my food, a bed for me to sleep in.*
- *First, of course, I need to have someone to talk to. I need to have someone to trust. In my situation I did not know who to trust. Whatever I say—what is deep, what I feel—I keep to myself because I don't want it to turn around and hurt me later. Not sure what kind of influence the person has.*

Many of the victims we interviewed had left the trafficking situation with acute medical or dental care needs, due to neglected health conditions that may or may not have resulted from the trafficking experience. Sex trafficking victims needed gynecological care and often treatment. Some victims preferred non-western forms of treatment that were more culturally appropriate for them, such as acupuncture.

As basic survival needs are being met, the focus shifts toward recovering from the trafficking experience and beginning to rebuild an autonomous life (see table 2.1). Medical or dental care needs may be ongoing and may take some time to address. Mental health counseling needs tend to become prominent once the immediate crisis period is over, although western "talk therapy" is not always culturally appropriate or even understandable to some victims.

- *I need support—emotional support—someone to listen to me. Someone who can listen to me without any judgment because sometime when I talk to the wrong person, I got the impression that person would look down on me and my situation.*

**Table 2.1. Changing Needs Over Time**

<b>Short-term needs</b>	<b>Intermediate needs</b>	<b>Long-term needs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Safety plan</li><li>▪ Secure shelter</li><li>▪ Food</li><li>▪ Clothing</li><li>▪ Personal necessities</li><li>▪ Acute medical and dental assistance</li><li>▪ Information</li><li>▪ Advocacy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ongoing medical and dental assistance</li><li>▪ Mental health services</li><li>▪ Transitional housing</li><li>▪ Education</li><li>▪ Job training</li><li>▪ Work permits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Services for life skills and competencies (e.g., using public transportation, managing finances)</li><li>▪ Life stabilization</li><li>▪ Employment assistance</li><li>▪ Resolution of immigration status</li><li>▪ Independent, permanent housing</li><li>▪ Competency in English</li><li>▪ Assistance with bringing family members to U.S.</li><li>▪ Continued safety planning</li></ul>

Transitional or permanent housing becomes a priority, as is obtaining education or job training and work permits so victims can seek employment legally. The victims' illegal or exploitative employment while in trafficking may have been used to help support family members in the home country, and many survivors are anxious to continue contributing to their families as much as possible.

• *My reason for living is to work hard and send money home to my family.*

In the longer term, all victims we interviewed wanted to build skills and resources to normalize their lives here; none expressed a desire to return to their home countries. The victims originally came here to work and lead a "normal" life. Almost universally, clients wanted assistance with steps to realize this goal, and finding employment was a central issue. Since clients were unable to pursue employment legally until they were certified, they needed immigration issues to be resolved so they could obtain permanent resident status or citizenship. Along with long-term, legal employment, they also wanted independent, permanent housing; competency in English; and for some, assistance in helping family members, such as children, immigrate and join them in the United States (others sent money to family members in the home country). Services may also be needed to enhance basic life skills, such as using public transportation, managing finances (such as banking and budgeting), and so on.

Some victims may still have safety concerns about their former traffickers; for example, some reported that they stayed away from the ethnic community in their city because of the trafficker's influence there.

- *The trafficker is very popular and had influence in the [ethnic group] community. Even though the trafficker is still in jail, the trafficker's friends when met [me] on street they say bad things to [me]—so unsafe in the community.*

While some survivors remain dependent on service providers even years after their trafficking experience ended, others wanted to stop being treated as victims and put the experience behind them. The need to participate in drawn-out or repeated criminal cases (e.g., appeals) was counterproductive to their desire to do this.

There were a few service needs that we explicitly asked about but were rarely if ever reported. These included drug and alcohol treatment and spiritual counseling. It is possible clients just did not report their drug and alcohol problems, or we did not interview the victims with those needs, or the trafficking experience is not conducive to drug or alcohol dependency (in the way that, say, street prostitution is, especially if the substance abuse led to the prostitution as a way of raising funds to buy drugs).

Interestingly, the service needs reported by trafficking survivors were often similar across the three comprehensive services sites. Survivors reported similar needs regardless of the types of trafficking they experienced, whether they were victims of labor or sex trafficking, or domestic servitude, and regardless of their varying ages, how the client came into the service network, and their countries of origin.

## CHAPTER 3: SURVIVOR EXPERIENCES WITH SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

### ACCESSING THE SERVICE SYSTEM

Clients learn about and access services in a variety of ways (see table 3.1). Those who leave the trafficking situation through a raid or detention (by the FBI, ICE, etc.) usually learn about services while they are detained. Others learn about services from friends or acquaintances in the community, other legal or social service providers, and in some instances through service providers' outreach efforts such as a brochure given to them by a doctor or an advertisement at a bus stop. Clients who do not go through detention are generally at a much different point in the escape and recovery process, and there is often much less trauma and confusion surrounding their entry into the service system.

**Table 3.1. Accessing the Service System: How clients learn about services**

<b>Method of coming to the system:</b>	
<b>Raid or Detention</b>	<b>Other</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Learn about services while detained</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Friends or acquaintances in the community</li><li>▪ Legal or social service providers</li><li>▪ Service providers' outreach efforts (e.g., brochure at doctor's office or bus stop)</li><li>▪ Client does personal research and identifies a provider</li></ul>

Learning about supports and services while in detention is a complicated process. This is usually a very traumatic and confusing time for victims, and service providers themselves report how difficult it is to communicate with victims (because of language, culture, and the trauma of the raid), gain their understanding and trust, and work with them productively. Victims may not be able to distinguish between legal and social service providers and those detaining them, and this confusion is only exacerbated by the fact that they are not in detention voluntarily, with some of them having just been "snatched out of their lives" with no advance warning, and had their few possessions taken away. As one client noted:

- *All the money that I earned, they took it and my personal items, they took that... left with nothing... took me to shelter, still had nothing; gave me clothes, not fitting in size and quality; even the food doesn't fit to my taste; in general, without money, quite difficult.*

Many victims do not go through the detention experience. In some cases victims themselves actively research and identify a social service or legal agency that can help them, either before or after escaping the trafficking situation. The agency may even be in another city or state. One client reported calling "someone in Washington, D.C." when first getting services. Another client

said she knew to call a local agency because she saw an advertisement at a bus stop, and several other clients connected to services with the help of caring people they met while still in or after fleeing the trafficking situation.

The isolation and intimidation frequently imposed by traffickers can be a difficult barrier to overcome.

- *It was hard for me to learn about services while I was still there, because he kept me apart from other people, and he threatened to have me deported if I tried to leave.*

For others, their own fear and shame worked to trap them in trafficking.

- *Trafficking victims fear deportation most of all, so they're very reluctant to come forward. My own brother still refuses to come to [case manager], even though I told him about them and said he should come.*
- *I was ashamed to get help, because I thought I would be blamed as a bad person who deserved such bad treatment.*

## **THE SERVICE EXPERIENCE AND CLIENT OUTCOMES**

At the time of our interviews, the survivors had left the trafficking situation anywhere from a number of months to quite a few years previously. Some had ongoing legal, certification, or immigration cases, while others' cases had already been resolved. Some were still actively involved in the comprehensive services site—perhaps even living in a shelter—while others were in a less active, long-term follow-up status. Therefore, the outcomes or current functioning of the clients we interviewed do not represent a consistent timeframe or benchmark in regard to post-trafficking adjustment, but rather a variety of situations and experiences.

We conceptualize outcomes in terms of services received, safety, physical and mental health, and day-to-day functioning and ability to lead self-sufficient lives. On the whole, clients' outcomes are generally more positive when their service needs were met (whether through the assistance of the comprehensive services site or whether clients pursued needed services on their own). The client's experience of the service relationships itself sends messages and contains subtext that can impact on client outcomes. Certification improved outcomes for some clients but was not a universal panacea. Some outcomes were influenced by factors beyond the social service providers' or the clients' control.

### *Services Received and Client Satisfaction*

Most of the trafficking survivors we interviewed had very positive feedback on their experiences with the comprehensive services site, and their positive experiences enhanced their outcomes. Most clients reported getting their most basic needs met for food, clothing, and shelter. Clients



generally reported that initial contact with service providers was helpful and that key services were available and accessible, with at least one person able to help them in their native language. Some victims had nothing but positive things to say about the services they had received, noting that all their needs had been met (and more, certainly beyond their expectations), and they had been met with respect and sensitivity to their culture and emotional trauma. Some clients felt respected and honored by the service providers, which boosted their self-worth enormously. One even remarked that staff had treated her better than her family members had. Yet another had learned about new things like yoga and foods from other countries on weekly international potluck night, etc. These clients were very thankful for the agencies that were helping them, and for the U.S. government and the United States generally. They described the United States as a place of great generosity, freedom, and strength.

- *Everything that I have now is because they [the agency] have given to me. I've done everything on my own but a lot of the decision that I've done has been helped through them.*
- *Really really more helpful than I ever imagined. I have hope in life again before I didn't have hope. Really really tremendously helping me a lot.*
- *Because when I came here I didn't [trust the agency]. And I would think, Why did you help me so much? What did you want in return with the help that [the agency was] giving me? I would ask [the agency] "why you guys help me," and they would answer me they want to help people who were mistreated like I am. And they would tell me that they want me to feel good about myself, feel secure in my own self so that I could become somebody else in life. There were times I couldn't sleep at night and [the agency staff] would come over and they wouldn't leave until I would go asleep. At times I was afraid. Up to now [the agency staff] help me a lot. Thanks to [the agency] and thanks to God.*
- *I feel very fortunate—I feel like I not alone in this world—these three organizations are well connected. Three organizations are part of my family—I feel safe and secure and feel confident and as a person one more time after case is done and is somebody again. Three organizations made America a second home for me.*
- *Helped me greatly and in a way which I feel comfortable staying in America.*

- *I feel like I'm getting great support by the staff because I don't know anything, I don't know how things are going on, I feel supported and I am grateful for anything they do for me.*
- *And up to this point I had no hope, I didn't know why I was living. From this point on, they [the agency] give me some hope, I develop some hopes for living.*
- *I want you to know... I do not think I would have survived without these services. Someday I pledge when I make it, I want to be of help to other survivors... that is my dream.*
- *I don't think there's anything to teach this organization...I know America is trying, this organization is trying ...Bless them (America) that so concerned about other people, even people who are not from here.*
- *Compared to the [native country] system, the U.S. is much better... And I am truly thankful. All I can feel is thankfulness for the services I got.*

Working with service providers also helped survivors understand the American legal system and clear up any misconceptions purposely planted by traffickers to discourage victims from seeking help.

- *Because I never imagined in my life that somebody going to help me with all these legal things. Because I don't understand anything and they keep explaining to me I have these choice and I have these rights. And I don't know how to explain it but...I feel like "whoa" I can't believe it. I starting to know a little bit about the legal thing. So, I feel I am not that scared anymore, usually they [the trafficker] always tell me that the police is really, really bad—that they going to get you. Used to be scared of police and government people but now I find out that it's not true at all.*

### Safety Outcomes

Most of the clients we spoke with felt they were safe from their traffickers. However, some paid a price for the precautions they felt were necessary to keep them safe. While some survivors felt free to move about as they pleased, others were very careful about where they went and when. Some avoided certain areas where they might be seen by the traffickers or their associates, a few even staying inside their homes or the shelter most of the time to stay safe. For one survivor, this made it difficult to obtain necessary legal documents:

- *One of the places that I didn't want help from is the [country] consulate. The [country] consulate is most unsafe place for me because trafficker had well connection with consulate—for my case, the consulate is the most dangerous place for me but I still need to go there for my valid passport—my legal document—don't trust those people and don't feel safe.*

Some respondents were isolated from many of their compatriots, feeling uncomfortable entering their ethnic community in their city here in the United States. The discomfort around this had a variety of explanations: concerns about personal safety, fear of traffickers, embarrassment about the trafficking situation, or, since the trafficking originated in their home country, a need to separate themselves from their compatriots for whatever reason. As one client noted, visiting others in her ethnic community in this country meant perhaps encountering former “acquaintances” that she knew during her forced sex trafficking situation. Despite the reason for wanting to be distant from their community, this tended to limit their access to culturally appropriate food, medical and other services, newspapers and other written materials in their native language, and companions from the same culture and language.

Since safety is such a major concern for survivors, social service providers often make this a major focus of their work. Many survivors reported being comfortable with service providers and feeling safe when working with providers.

- *I feels safe with [agency] because [agency] has very confidential—the way they work with me—every time [agency] work with me they never take me to [ethnic group] community, they separate me from [ethnic group] community. Feel very confident and safe every time [agency] took me somewhere and walking on the street with [agency].*
- *They [agency staff members] were strict, were very cautious about my safety. I feel I am safe with them, such as the places I did not feel safe—they avoided them. They went out of their way so I did not have to face such places.*

### Health Outcomes

One area in which we heard few satisfactory reports was in relation to medical and dental care. Quite a few of the clients we interviewed, even those who had been liberated years previously and had a long service history with the comprehensive services site, were still attempting to get medical and dental needs resolved. These services were inaccessible to many clients because of high costs and extremely long waiting lists for clients with limited ability to pay. Even those who had received some care may not have gotten all the care they needed. Ongoing health problems impacted negatively on outcomes in that they had sustained anxiety and discomfort, their medical conditions may have exacerbated, and their ability to work or take care of themselves or their family may have been limited by health conditions. Both client and case manager interviews confirm the limited availability of medical and dental care.

### Mental Health Outcomes

Some clients also reported long-term mental health needs that they had not received treatment for or were just beginning to get treatment. Some did not prioritize mental health care until their early focus on survival needs subsided and their emotional and stress reactions began coming to the surface. Some felt that counseling would be beneficial but had higher priorities, such as working long hours to be able to support themselves and their family back home, which precluded seeing a counselor regularly. In other cases, clients did not receive any services at all. One client specifically asked for emotional support and this person reported having yet to receive any services to address this need.

Among still other clients who needed and received mental health services, some received services and felt they had been helpful. They reported many positive outcomes, including a stronger sense of self and a feeling that they had grown stronger from having survived the trafficking experience and coped with its aftermath.

- *At the beginning I thought since I got away from trafficking violators, I thought I could survive, I could do anything by myself. But others, like legal aid, saw I had problems, introduced me to counseling. I am still receiving [counseling] services and it's helped me a lot.*
- *The counseling helps me great because I don't have anyone else to talk about my problems. Once I leave this room I wouldn't be talking about my situation with anyone. And so, the counseling really gives me an outlet to talk about the things and about myself, and the person listens to me and advises me sometimes ...and so the counseling is a great thing for me.*
- *The counseling was really helpful. I learned to be more mature and secure, to face my problems, and to trust and protect myself. I never would have left my son behind in [home country] if I'd had these strengths before I came here.*
- *The counseling really helped me to work through my fear and anxiety. I got what I needed out of it.*

Other clients did not find the mental health services helpful or had some concerns with the services. One client received mental health services from a fellow national but expressed concerns about this because of the shame she felt about her trafficking experience. Another client expressed feeling more depressed after talking about her trafficking experience repeatedly and so decided to end her therapy.

- *With counseling, ended up saying I wanted to stop and so just stopped; at beginning, really helpful, then the more I took counseling, the more I depressed... had to say the story over and over again.*

Interestingly, for some, western-style talk therapy did not make sense within their cultural background and outlook. Questions about mental health needs (even when supplemented with other phrases such as “emotional support,” or “help with stress,” or “talking to someone”) simply did not seem to resonate with some survivors. This may be due to an absence of mental health services in many countries, and the importance of cultural context in defining such services and supports. Some clients identified a need for services other than therapy to address their emotional needs, such as acupuncture.

### Autonomous Lifestyles

Our interview participants represented a broad spectrum of progress toward the long-term outcomes of independent, self-sufficient lifestyles. Some clients were self-sufficient, with jobs and their own permanent housing. Even so, many clients had ongoing financial problems because of medical or dental bills or other debt, the need to send money to family members in their home country, and the low wages earned from the types of jobs they had the training and skill to obtain. Others were still awaiting legal authorization to work and were living in shelters or other transitional housing. Many of the clients had very limited English skills and independent living skills (e.g., ability to arrange their own transportation, financial management skills). Some outcomes were hindered by service inaccessibility, such as ESL classes that were too hard to get to because of location or timing. Sometimes clients had tried service options but found them inappropriate to their needs, such as ESL classes that were too advanced, or job training classes that actually focused more on job search skills rather than on specific training for a particular type of job.

## **CLIENT DISSATISFACTION AND UNMET NEEDS**

Although many clients were satisfied with services, satisfaction was not universal. The consistency and quality of the services and care they received was often mixed. In general, the number and quality of services were more likely to vary in the community with a multiagency collaborative than in the more unified single central agency communities (the former having the benefit of bringing more agencies and personnel into the world of trafficking services and truly diversifying and building a system of providers experienced with trafficking-related needs and services). For many victims of human trafficking, identified and unidentified needs went unmet. Needs went unmet for several reasons, some indicative of the services and others indicative of the survivors themselves.

### Unmet Needs Because Clients Did Not Ask for Help

Some clients felt they were a burden on overstressed staff, which chilled their likelihood of asking for services that may have improved their outcomes, and did not make them feel very worthwhile. For some clients, their experiences varied with the individual case manager they were working with, reporting very warm relations and good progress with some individuals but not others. As one client noted:

- *[Case manager] denied my problems or made light of them. She was rude and made unhelpful suggestions. She was very slow in getting anything done, she didn't show up for appointments, and she lost my paperwork. She didn't care about me. She wouldn't come to my home, she told me to take the bus for two hours to get to her office.*

A number of clients noted that after hoping for and not getting needed services—counseling, medical care, job training, English classes—they simply “gave up” on the service providers and decided to try to secure these services on their own (or with the help of friends).

- *At [agency] there were more days when I wasn't able to get [bus] tokens than when I got... uncomfortable. Don't feel comfortable asking again, makes me feel like I'm begging. Concluded [I] better leave this place as fast as I can.*
- *I don't have any problems with services and I am pretty much satisfied with what they could offer me. Um ... but sometimes I do see that squeaky wheel gets the grease. The ones who conference more get more services or rights to go anywhere else. Ones that know how to deal with it have to deal on my own, which is no problem with me. Sometimes it kind of looks kind of, I don't know how to say it. I do more on my own.*

Still other clients were reticent to ask for help because of their perceptions that they should not ask for help.

- *I actually needed everything—for example, I needed pots and pans to cook, so I didn't ask them because I was embarrassed to ask. I needed everything. I eventually got it myself buying one thing at a time. It's just it was hard to ask anybody because I thought people around here in the city were too busy with their own life and they don't seem like they want to be bothered with other people's problems. So, I didn't ask.*

### Unmet Medical Needs

Many (but not all) clients reported receiving very basic medical check-ups but still had unmet medical needs, including gynecological exams, dental care, vision care, acupuncture, and in-depth diagnostics involving blood and/or urine tests. Dental care, when it was received, was very basic (cleanings and check ups) rather than more extensive work like crowns and cavity filling. Some clients had their medical and dental needs met but had to wait many weeks or months to get an appointment, or had to wait in long lines or for many hours after their appointment time. Although these challenges are not unique to trafficking victims, they are indicative of the scarce resources of services for low-income populations.

Sometimes there was a mismatch between what clients wanted or expected and what was provided to them. One client noted that she had been very ill and expected to be taken to the

doctor or a hospital, but was simply given pain medications instead (in detention and in a shelter). She was eventually taken to a hospital, diagnosed with an ulcer, and given appropriate treatment.

- *At shelter, said I was in pain... expect them to say ‘oh where, why, do you need to go to hospital immediately?’ ... they gave me a pill, that’s it!*

### Unmet Needs around Culturally-appropriate Food

Needing and wanting familiar food native to their home countries was a theme raised by some clients. In some cases, it was clear that efforts to meet their dietary needs had simply gone wrong; so for example, Korean victims were given Chinese rice, perhaps under the assumption that both of these Asian countries share the same kind of rice. One client noted for example that the case manager of a friend had given this friend a small amount of money to buy any food she liked, but that nothing similar had been offered to her.

### Unmet Needs Due to a Mismatch Between Service Planning and Survivor Needs

Finally, some service providers noted the mismatch between service planning and needs assessment protocols and victims’ actual needs while in detention. For example, one interview protocol has service providers asking victims about their “housing goals” while a traumatized person in detention just wants to know what is going to happen to them in the next 24 hours or next week.

## **COORDINATION AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS**

A major thrust of the OVC comprehensive services sites’ approach is including multiple agencies in the service network to address the myriad needs of survivors. The sites embodied different models of collaboration: one site had a multiagency collaborative, another had a central service provider that linked to satellite providers as needed, and another started with four major partner agencies but ended with two central providers. The collaborative model could determine how new cases were assigned to case managers and referred to partner agencies.

For clients in communities with a multiagency collaborative (as opposed to a community with a central service provider that links to satellite providers as needed), the case manager is usually someone attached to the first agency to identify and work with the client. This can be an attorney if the first agency to work with the client is a legal service agency, but many attorneys and social service providers reported that it is better to have a social service provider as the client’s main case manager: “attorneys should *not* be in the position of securing mental health services for a client.” Having a single case manager is also less confusing and preferable for the client.

Another interesting observation is that in some instances community-based agencies receive calls requesting help for a domestic violence victim, but they later realize that in fact the individual is a victim of human trafficking. At least one site reported that they decide which agency in the collaborative to call first based on the client’s language or shelter needs.

We asked clients about their perceptions of these collaborative service networks. Client reports about the extent to which people or agencies helping them seemed to be working together were mixed (with a few reporting they didn't know), but the majority reported that they *did* seem to be working together. Often they were able to give examples, such as a new service provider knowing about their needs, or providers coordinating well around scheduling appointments and relaying messages. Almost all clients thought such coordination was helpful or would be helpful (if they didn't think it was happening in their case).

- *I am not sure how much they [the agencies helping me] are working together but I do feel like they are connected to each other, they talk to each other, they know each other.*
- *My impression is that they [the agencies helping me] collectively have one understanding toward me. I believe they are cooperative. I cannot differentiate them. I am satisfied that they are cooperating.*
- *Yes, they work together closely. [Legal service provider] gives [case manager] information on the status of my legal papers, and [case manager] tells me. This helps because then I don't have to spend so much time on services.*
- *One told me about the other. They share information and pass information and messages through each other to me. This helps make the services better because everyone knows what's going on.*
- *Yes, people from one agency will tell me to talk to another if they can't help me with what I need. They get information from each other when I ask a question of someone who can't answer it. This is helpful.*

It speaks well to coordination to note that clients served by a multiagency collaborative are often unaware of which agency individual service providers are affiliated with, or how others helping them are connected to the first person who helps them. Such seamlessness is often an explicit goal in a well-functioning collaborative.

Still others did not seem to think agencies were working together to assist them. A few clients felt that their providers did not work together and did not seem to know what the other partners were doing with their case. Unfilled service gaps and conflicting messages from providers did not further clients' progress toward desired goals.

- *They don't seem to be working together or communicate about my case. The people at one agency don't seem to know what the people at the other agencies are doing with me.*



## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO RECEIVING EFFECTIVE SERVICES

The service providers in the OVC-funded comprehensive services sites faced many challenges and barriers to providing effective and appropriate services to clients. Both case managers and clients raised a number of these concerns during our interviews.

### Using Non-Trafficking-Specific Services

Finding shelter or other temporary housing appropriate for trafficking survivors is not an easy task. Only one of the three comprehensive services sites in this study had a shelter devoted specifically to trafficking victims but not all the clients they served lived in that shelter. In the other communities and for those clients who were not housed in the trafficking-specific shelter, housing was often secured through the emergency shelter (homeless) or domestic violence service system, but neither solution is perfect based on what we learned in these sites. Homeless shelters may not offer the type of programming and advocacy these victims need, and their approach of encouraging residents to go into the community during the day may be counterproductive to victims' safety needs—especially if the shelter is located in the ethnic community where the trafficker lives and where the victim may have been held. Domestic violence shelters seem like they could be a closer fit, since they are oriented toward a victim clientele, but our research participants' still commented on the mismatch between their needs and this type of shelter environment.

In some cases, the mismatch stemmed from the general inhospitality of shelter environments for women from other countries (problems with language, culture, food, etc.), and in other cases the mismatch stemmed from not being able to identify with the problems or needs of trafficking victims, as distinct from domestic violence victims. For example, few trafficking victims need working life skills (e.g., how to set professional goals, communicate, and dress for work) because many have been working since they were very young. In noting what a big issue housing is for trafficking victims, one case manager commented on the 30-day maximum stay in most domestic violence shelters, and further commented that trafficking victims may be reluctant to step out or escape their trafficking situation after reading about this time limit in a brochure, for example.

- *At shelter nobody knew me but my body felt safe compared to where I was before, but psychologically I was still concerned.*
- *I want to be very frank and honest about staff at shelter because I do not think they are very supportive of my needs—for example, if I ask for something her [the staff person's] expression changes negatively and that makes me uncomfortable so I have a tendency not to ask for anything.*
- *They didn't care... just providing a place for people to stay out of trouble; didn't focus on giving service to the people who need.*

In addition, some victims reported that they could not identify with the domestic violence victims they lived with and did not feel that they could share their own concerns and feelings

about their trafficking experiences with these fellow residents. Yet others commented on the problems associated with communal living: overly restrictive security measures, such as curfews;<sup>4</sup> the many rules and chores; the need for exercising great self-control; and the lack of privacy or a place to store their few possessions securely (one client had even been robbed repeatedly at the shelter and her belongings were never recovered). Another client reported feeling compelled (not her word) into participating in various classes and shelter-based activities.

- *I feel safe but they are overemphasizing on the safety. It's almost like that is all they focus on because I am thinking about leaving and becoming independent and when I mention it to them they talking about it is dangerous outside and I am not ready.*
- *Material-wise, I am getting benefits; but benefits entail conditions like I have to go to school... dragging me, not that comfortable in a way because of these conditions.*
- *At this shelter there are combination of people, mothers with young children, this shelter tends more to families with children, and even if I have issues at the meeting, it ends up focusing on children's issues and not me. They have young children running around late at night and it is difficult for me. I feel I am a victim like the children but they seem to focus on the children and families.*
- *The staffs are supportive but emotionally and mentally I don't think anyone understands me and what I've gone through after all that happened.*

The problem discussed here related to shelters was encountered with other social service agencies, too. When agencies outside the collaborative or those not specially trained in trafficking became a key service provider for the trafficking victim, appropriate services were not always provided. Many problems arose including clients being given confusing or misleading information, leaving fundamental service needs unmet (e.g., gynecological exams for victims of sex trafficking), and ongoing lack of trust among service providers and between providers and clients.

Another challenge associated with relying on domestic violence system resources to help trafficking victims is that the domestic violence system is not equipped to handle the patterns of case flow one finds with trafficking victims. Domestic violence victims typically enter local service systems (needing protection, shelter, and support) one victim (with her children) at a time. Often they have been isolated by their batterers, and joining a group shelter with other victims allows the opportunity to work on domestic violence issues with others whose experiences have been similar. With trafficking victims, however, the service system needs to be able to absorb large numbers of victims at a time (in the case of raids on large brothels or sweatshops), and in some cases groups of victims may prefer to remain together through the

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that many clients understood the reasons for shelter security measures and some even appreciated the added sense of safety and protection they felt as a result.

post-trafficking period. Since domestic violence shelters typically have few beds available and shelters may be scattered geographically across communities or regions, victims from a large raid may have to be dispersed across different shelters, isolating them from natural support networks they may have with fellow victims.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Quality of Interpretation Services*

The quality of foreign language interpretation services is critical to effective service delivery for victims of human trafficking. High quality interpretation requires fluency in both of the languages of interest, as well as skills and training in how to interpret conversations effectively and professionally. For example, one client noted that a male interpreter she encountered during detention asked her inappropriate follow-up questions after the interviewer had stepped out of the room and looking at her in a manner that made her very uncomfortable.

It can be difficult for some agencies to know if they have hired an effective interpreter, but some clients can tell whether or not what they are saying in their native tongue is being communicated well. Finding high quality interpretation for Spanish-speaking victims is not as challenging as it is for some other languages, since Spanish is more commonly spoken in the United States and by service provider staff. One case manager commented on a trafficking victim (not part of this study) who had been detained in an airport and who spoke a dialect that was so rare that no one was able to identify what language she spoke, not to speak of identifying an interpreter who could help. Not surprisingly, we also encountered a fair amount of variation in the quality of interpretation as we interviewed clients for this study.

### *Working on Legal Issues*

Dealing with the numerous legal issues trafficking victims face can be very challenging. Trafficking victims often fear deportation and may or may not want to cooperate with law enforcement to make a case against the trafficker. One case manager noted that well-meaning social workers, paralegals, and others who are not experienced in working with human trafficking victims may call the Department of Justice hotline and inadvertently expose undocumented clients to ICE and risk of removal. As one client noted:

- *Main thing was to stay here... worst thing was to be deported back to [home country], so staying here, we can deal with anything.*

Yet other challenges (again identified by a few case managers, not clients themselves) is that small, inexperienced social service agencies may become awed by the FBI or Department of Justice and over-identify with the goals of these large federal agencies, rather than those of their clients, and cautioned providers in communities just beginning to work with trafficking victims against this risk. A few clients noted that they felt like criminals after coming out of the trafficking situation based on how they had been treated by law enforcement while in detention

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<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, the group nature of some trafficking cases (when a medium to large group is “freed” together) also means that there is the potential for a lot of misinformation and rumors among victims, especially if they are getting different messages or answers from investigative authorities and social service providers.

and untrained social service providers who repeatedly questioned them and treated them with suspicion.

- *In INS [detention], I wasn't guilty person, but the ambiance and everybody treated me as I was guilty... bunches of people, I think INS officers. Different people saying different things to different people.*

Additionally, some law enforcement practices may be antithetical to victim recovery. As one case manager explained, “Just as we start to work on victim empowerment and self-sufficiency, law enforcement enters the picture, says ‘jump,’ and we are supposed to say ‘how high’?” In these instances, there are strong parallels with domestic violence cases—while battered women do not face deportation if they fail to cooperate, they may not get much help with subsequent assaults and may face the removal of their children if they fail to cooperate (Aron and Olson 1997).

Other examples of inappropriate treatment can come from untrained law enforcement officers or officers who are not sensitive to the dynamics of trafficking. For example, some case managers reported law enforcement officers had called women by their “working” names (in the case of sex trafficking victims) or treated younger or prettier victims more favorably than others. These experiences may make victims less inclined to work with law enforcement and investigators on prosecuting the traffickers.

In other cases, victims may be very interested in working with law enforcement and helping them prosecute their trafficker, but the process is slow or a decision is made (for any of a variety of reasons) not to pursue the case and the victim is left without recourse.

- *I reported it to the police but they didn't believe me, they wouldn't arrest them.*
- *My status is just waiting for me to get an interview with the government—even to talk to local police it hasn't happened yet. Right now [agency] staff is trying to get an interview with local police and until that happens both of us don't know what to do with my case or legal status.*

### Certification

About half the survivors we interviewed were certified as trafficking victims, and some of these reported that they noticed greater access to services, such as social security, food stamps, and cash assistance, after certification. As one noted:

- *Before certification, really challenging; just breathing; staying at shelter doing nothing; no basis for ID; didn't have ID; didn't have anything with me.*

Some understood that after receiving certification, they could apply for jobs and certain types of benefits but as one case worker commented and others confirmed: “certification gives them access to what’s out there, but what’s out there is not that much.” They also noted some very practical barriers to securing various benefits. Once certified, victims of human trafficking are eligible for a social security number but some had encountered staff at the local Social Security Administration office that were unfamiliar with a letter of certification and refused to issue social security numbers.

Others found waiting for certification to be a very lengthy process. For victims, very long, drawn-out cases were very exasperating, delaying psychological closure as well as the legal status needed to access jobs and benefits available to legal immigrants and certified trafficking victims. Several clients reported extreme frustration at having to wait months for their certification letter and described this unproductive time as “such a waste.”

- *[Legal service provider] has been helpful but the length of time to get a T-visa is very frustrating.*
- *The process of getting certified and getting a green card is very slow and frustrating.*
- *The process of getting work papers takes a really long time.*
- *They [the agency] explained about the procedures of getting legal help through them, such as in order to get help from federal government we need to go through law enforcement, but other than that it is just staggering [the process is staggering]. So, I am in a dilemma since it's been almost two years without getting any legal papers.*

While waiting for this, clients often were interested in developing their English language and work skills, and even volunteering. Some service providers attempted to find constructive activities for clients to participate in, although this happened with varying success.

Some were still awaiting legal access to employment and independent housing even months or years after their liberation from trafficking. Some were engaged in lengthy and difficult processes to help their family members immigrate here, and the delays or legal obstacles were very frustrating. It was clear from interviews with case managers that some clients we interviewed were never going to be certified because of government stipulations around this process. Although that information was shared with us, it was not clear that the individual clients were aware that their case was not likely to be certified and what that would mean for long-term residence in the United States.

### Identifying and Meeting Needs

Our conversations with survivors and case managers illuminated important points about meeting the needs of trafficking survivors. Cultural competence and qualified interpretation services are central in services designed to meet all types of needs. Those who work with victims should be

sensitive to some victims' concerns that their family members do not learn about their trafficking experience, particularly if it involved the stigma and shame of forced prostitution. It is also important for service providers and everyone who works with victims to approach their work in a nonjudgmental way and remember that trafficking victims are allowed to be human and make mistakes like everyone else—before, during, and even after the trafficking experience.

- *Since the counselor I have is also a [ethnic group] coming from [home country], I sometimes find it really difficult to talk to her. She sometimes likes to talk about herself and kind of judge me over what happened.*

Finally, it can be difficult to identify what needs the victim wishes to receive assistance with and what needs he or she expects to resolve independently, since personal and cultural factors can influence how victims conceptualize needs and whether they believe they have the right to ask for help or should work through certain problems on their own.

- *The reason I didn't ask, even though I want to ask, is because I know I am not the only case and they have other people they have to help. I am not the type to ask for help all the time.*

### Working with Limited Resources

Case managers commented on how limited the services and benefits for trafficking victims really are. While helpful, the actual level of support is not nearly enough to help trafficking victims stabilize. Many of them have serious financial and economic burdens (including possibly credit card debt, families back home they need to support, and so on) and the support they receive is very small. As one case manager explained, “We give them \$300 a month for eight months and then expect them to be very grateful, and [we] ask, ‘What are you doing to better your life?’”

Just as client benefits are limited, the service systems supporting them are often under-resourced. Some clients thought that they were not receiving needed services because the shelters themselves were understaffed and under funded and so they felt uncomfortable asking for help. One group of victims (all of whom had stayed at a shelter outside the formal collaborative) repeatedly commented on how they were told they would get help but then never did. In addition to having to go without the needed service, they felt very hurt and disillusioned by these broken promises, and attributed the situation to being foreign or a trafficking victim. Similarly, some victims did not feel they *could* ask for help because they perceived the agency staff to be overwhelmed. There was a perception of a finite amount of assistance and some felt they would not qualify as the priority person to receive help.

- *Haven't told them about needing new eye glasses . . . don't know why, maybe I think that is enough for me, I don't make any more trouble.*

- *Whenever I try to reach the attorney person here [at the agency], it takes a long time to get a response back because he is really busy and he is really busy with conferences and everything. I do aware that its just being busy is the reason that I didn't get the response, but also I think things need to be done quicker than now, because its been already four months.*
- *The services, they definitely need more stuff—like case managers. I think each case manager has many clients and I already seen every case manager is working so hard to get things done so it has to come to the balance where she has to decide which one has to go first and I come out to the last all the time because I am able to do some things on my own. Sometimes I really do think I wish there were more people to actually handle or hear the problems. More staff attorneys, too. More legal staff who know about the issues and who is able to provide advice on time. I see other people getting help quickly but not me so it is really sad for me to see that. It's frustrating.*

### *The Size of the Service Area*

When the comprehensive services site covers a very large geographical area, it is important that service providers be able to visit victims in their homes, because the victims' ability to travel is often very limited. Clients in one of the communities for this study reported that all the service providers, except one case manager, were very good about coming to visit them. This was possible because this community had a relatively small number of trafficking victims during most of the period of study, but as caseloads starting rising over time, staff were less able to drive up to two hours to see clients in the outlying parts of their service area. In the other two communities, service providers typically covered the costs of clients' transportation from one place to another. In some cases, clients lived in towns that were over an hour away, but clients were able to travel into the main city to meet with their lawyers or conduct other business.

### *Working with Different Types of Trafficking Victims*

Several sub-groups of human trafficking victims present unique challenges to service delivery. Domestic workers as a group are often overlooked, according to case managers. One case manager commented that the Department of Justice claims these situations are a case of 'he says-she says,' and the Department of Labor directs providers to focus on cases involving multiple victims, which typically excludes domestic servitude cases. Some victims indicated that they could tell which trafficking cases agencies are focusing on more directly, either based on the severity of the case or the type of trafficking.

- *And the law doesn't define as severe as it should be about like a situation like mine and I am hoping that there some way to get a change to that in the future because it is still violating human rights. My case is especially very different, and I come out to be the last person to be taken care of, because the other, like sex trafficking, they know how to deal with it right away. My case is really different. My status is just waiting for me to get an interview with the government—even to talk to local police it hasn't happened yet.*

Younger clients can also be difficult to serve, according to case managers. One caseworker spoke of a victim who was underage, very traumatized, and had lost her sister (their parents were back in her home country). The caseworker went on to comment on how hard it was to build trust with her, how she had many emotional needs, primarily because she was so young, and made many demands typical of an adolescent (wanting make-up and designer clothes) and had “tantrums” if she didn't get them.

#### Client Confidentiality

Yet more challenges for service providers revolve around data and record keeping. Well-trained social service providers are very careful about what they ask of clients and what they record in their files. If they suspect trafficking, they call an attorney right away. Unlike other conversations they may have, clients' discussions with lawyers are protected by attorney-client privilege and so courts cannot subpoena their records as evidence in legal proceedings. In the case of more tangential service providers, such as healthcare professionals, if there is no need for them to know that a given person is a trafficking victim, then case managers may not share that information with them.

Confidentiality is an important service feature when working with victims of human trafficking. Although some interview participants expressed less concern with this issue than others, service providers and others who assist victims should make this a central issue in their service approach.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Many research participants had favorable comments about their experiences with at least some services provided by the OVC comprehensive services sites. Many clients were able to connect with a service provider, many had some needs met, and many increased their understanding of the American legal system. However, participants also expressed areas of concern about their safety, health, mental health, and ability to move to positions of independence. These lessons learned from victims themselves can be used constructively to inform modifications to training, policies, and practices for those working in the human trafficking field and involved in comprehensive networks.



## CHAPTER 4: ADVICE FROM SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

We asked the survivors we spoke with what advice they would offer to service providers and to other trafficking victims after considering the services they received and their experiences with them. They shared a number of thoughts that reflect their priorities and their experiences as survivors and as service program clients. The concluding portion of this report that follows presents these reflections from survivors, in their own words.

### ADVICE FOR AGENCIES ASSISTING TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

Several clients offered advice to service providers for overcoming the obstacles to reaching victims trapped in trafficking situations:

- *They should put pocket-sized cards in places where people go, like the Dollar Store. No point in putting them in places people can't afford to go to.*
- *Maybe to give out flyers in the laundry mat, close by to the restaurants, in downtown where there is a lot of people there, close to the fields where the people are working in the fields.*
- *I wish that this kind of information should be printed out in each language because most victims don't speak or read English, so if written in their language and sent out it would reach them faster. Even if someone could send it out on the streets so someone can see it and read about that there is help and they are encouraged to reach out.*
- *[One way to get the word out would be through] their own language newspapers—not in English. Most of us do not read English. We would be reading our own newspapers.*
- *If they can advertise [agency] with phone numbers and descriptions of their help... and advertise at churches, because most survivors and victims go to churches looking for help. Usually people who need help go to church. I have done that; because in the church people have a tendency to reach out to help.*
- *From my opinion about if it possible to for the improvement—if [agency] could be more visible to the community. For example, when I come in but nobody would know the agency is here—so secret—would be nice if [agency] could be in public, so people can walk in to get help or file a complaint.*

Some clients made suggestions for how victim services could be improved:

- *There are many services already but if I can think of one thing...I wish [agencies] could provide some kind of vocational school so we can learn something to get a job, so we can eventually become independent. I like everything in this country except without any special talent or vocation it's almost impossible to get any job.*
- *Realize difficult to provide 100% services but should keep their promises, make it their mission; keep something that you said ...[keep your word].*
- *Being able to have somebody understand us culturally, familiarity with our customs/culture, would have been very helpful. Because culturally, language, unfamiliarity with the process, especially in a case like ours as a woman are already living with many risks, and freedom has been taken away.*
- *All I heard during those months was “wait and wait and wait”... none of us came here to be rich and do nothing. Differences between how you say “wait” lovingly, [with] warmth, hopefulness, versus dismissive, not caring.*
- *They should be careful to hire dedicated, caring people to work there, especially people who are themselves survivors.*
- *I think it would be better if they knew each other better—did more research because it didn't seem like they really knew the trafficking situation. For example, when went to apply for medical, they didn't understand my situation, so the cycle repeated itself [didn't understand client's situation].*

Finally, some clients offered their thoughts about how justice, immigration, medical, and school services could be more attuned to the needs of victims:

- *Everything from my opinion is good, but...everything excellent, the only thing that we could have is medical benefit from government because during time confined with trafficker we never receive proper medical attention.*
- *One thing I would like to add which is very important—everything takes so slow, could expedite the papers so I can get things done.*
- *Need to educate the police and trafficking and victim services so they can know what it's about and how to treat victims. Also educate school staff so they can recognize and help students who are victims.*

## ADVICE FOR OTHER TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

The survivors we spoke with also had words of advice and encouragement for other victims of trafficking. Several addressed how to avoid or escape the trafficking situation and the trafficker's control:

- *Before leaving [your home country] if it would be possible, anything you want to do. Ask all questions, before you come here; try to make sure you know why they're bringing you... get name, phone number... make a contract between two families... a signed agreement; we want to hear her voice every week, give her money, teach her to use a pay phone; this arrangement would put fear in the heart of traffickers. Plan for the future too... go to school. Let everything be signed: hours per day, days per week.*
- *If you're ok there, just stay in your own country.*
- *I would like to tell the victims that it is going to be very difficult—the culture, the law, the system - but don't ever lose own beliefs but follow and trust instinct no matter what trafficker says to you. They may be saying they are going to help but trust instinct and go get help other places. And another thing I would like to tell [victims]—that if [victims] want to get out of [the trafficker's] control. Cut the ties completely with this trafficker. If you have one relation with one person who knows the trafficker, it won't work.*
- *If there's a fire station, you can sneak in, say "please, I need your help," then see what they say. Try to find someone connected to government, neighbors, elderly people...*
- *Don't be ashamed or think you're being hurt because you're a bad person—call the police and get out of the situation before they hurt you any more.*
- *I would tell them to stand up - there is a way to survive out of this. There is help. You do not have to go back to [country]—there is a way to stay in America. And also report on those criminals, traffickers.*

Some survivors acknowledged the emotional pain and fear of the trafficking experience and offered these words of encouragement and support:

- *I would tell them that everything happens in life and it's continue moving on. Try to erase all those fingerprints that make you have a hard time and*

*continue on and try to fight for what you want.*

- *In future, we can live a very good life because of our bad experiences in the past. Hope not to give up but let's live life to the fullest.*
- *If talk to a similar person, without ID, without anything, just yourself on your own: try to do something, anything on your own. Be strong; hold your strong self in you.*
- *Don't give up on life; always have hope. Always helping hands around; anytime, anywhere.*
- *They tend to feel ashamed and bad about themselves because of what happened to them. They should know that it's the trafficker who did wrong, not them. They should believe in themselves and keep going to pull themselves through. Focus on the future.*
- *I would tell them how I felt when I was in their shoes, the experiences I've had with services to help, and how strong I feel now. I would try to give them the strength to face their problems and deal with them. I'd let them know that the laws here really work to protect women and children, and they shouldn't be scared of reaching out for help.*
- *Nobody can help unless that person will help herself. I think that comes first. Even with all the services that [agency] can provide, if person is not ready to help herself, then it's not going to work. And it's really hard to find the limit where these people can really help the person or not. All the survivors have all this potential to learn how to live here in the United States, how to survive and get through the difficult period—together—but I think they need to help themselves. That's what I am trying, talking to myself to—feeling negative is not doing much to me and it's just giving worse feelings about like what's going to happen in the future and I have no future and it's really frustrating—but once I know I want to help myself I was able to think clearly that I want to get out of the situation.*
- *I want to tell to not give up and find your skills, talents and learn and train yourself. You're not alone. There's help and look for it, and don't give up until you get it. It's a difficult place to adjust your life in a foreign country but there are places to get help and you don't have to do it alone.*

Finally, some survivors addressed the reluctance that victims may have to get involved with service providers or the U.S. government, and would encourage victims to place their trust in these systems:

- *I would tell them, don't be scared, trust the people who are here to give you*

*services because they will help you.*

- *There are people out there to help you, you should try to reach out to them and not mistrust them because they're Americans or because they're white.*
- *I would say go to agencies that assist because there you won't be alone, not to be afraid because there is help out there.*
- *I would tell them to be patient and hold things in and trust them [the government]. When I was in [agency], I didn't feel like I could trust either the social service or the government. Feel like I was some alien dropped from the sky and I would look up at the sky but in the end it did happen and so it was a matter of being able to trust that it will happen.*
- *The people here do help and provide good services, you need to move forward and use their help to get out of it.*

## **CONCLUSION**

Research participants were very willing to share their experiences and perspectives on the OVC comprehensive services sites for this evaluation. They highlighted not only their positive experiences, but also identified ways that treatment and services for trafficking clients may be improved. Some of their key thoughts have been presented here. Through these in-depth case studies, the direct voice of the trafficking victim can be heard. Listening carefully, practitioners in the field can learn from these lessons and better accomplish their goals to provide quality treatment and services.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Informed Consent

Appendix B: Confidentiality Pledge for Researchers

Appendix C: Confidentiality Pledge for Interpreters

Appendix D: Interview Protocol—Sites A and B

Appendix E: Interview Protocol—Site C

Appendix F: Case Mangers Group Interview Protocol

## **APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FOR FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Our community is part of a national study to learn about how agencies help survivors of trafficking. The goal is to find out what services agencies provide, how agencies work together to help people, and if services meet the needs of the clients. It is not about the legal case that you may be involved in. The study is for the National Institute of Justice.

### **BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY**

We want to know from you and others like you, about your experiences before certification (before receiving your paper) with agencies such as (insert name of agency here). Being in the study is very important because you can give us information that may help improve services for trafficking survivors throughout the country. Without this information, no one can be sure if the services help people and how they can be changed for the better.

### **POSSIBLE RISKS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY**

Being in the study involves a face-to-face interview with a researcher. At no time will you be asked about the trafficking experience itself or your legal case. However, talking about the ways you need help and the services you have received may remind you of negative feelings or may trouble you in other ways. If this happens, I (your case manager) or a mental health counselor will be available for you talk to.

### **WHO IS CONDUCTING THE STUDY?**

Caliber Associates, Inc. and its partner the Urban Institute are doing the study and are nongovernmental research organizations in the Washington, D.C., area. If you are interested in being in the study, a researcher from the Urban Institute will work with me to arrange a time to meet with you. The researcher is trained and will keep all your answers completely confidential. Federal law protects the confidentiality of information you share in this study.

### **WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED ABOUT?**

Should you agree, I will give the researcher background about your case from the records I keep before the interview. Then you will be asked about the time before receiving your papers and:

- The services in your community;
- How you became involved in services in the community;
- What types of services you wanted or needed;
- Your opinions about the services — whether they were helpful and satisfactory;
- How the services helped you; and
- Other services in the community you may know of, but have not used.

The researchers will not be asking you about your legal case at any point during the interview.



Research ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROCEDURE**

I will set up a time with you for the interview. The interview will be held at (insert name of agency here) in a private room. The interview will be audio taped and the researcher will take some hand written notes. If you do not want the interview audiotaped, a second researcher will be present to take notes. You may also have someone present to support you if you would like that (like a friend or case manager). The interview should take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete. You will receive a gift of appreciation for your time at the end of the interview. The evaluation staff can also help you with transportation to and from the interview if you need it. *For Site C site only: We can also help with childcare arrangements if you need them.*

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Being a part of this study is completely voluntary and will not affect the services you receive from agencies, your legal status, your T-visa status, or your eligibility for any type of assistance. What you say also will not affect the agency that is helping you or the money it receives to provide services. You may refuse to answer any question during the interview and can end the interview at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The information you provide will be kept completely confidential. Your confidentiality is guaranteed except if you say you intend to commit a crime or harm yourself. Nothing you say will be attributed to you by name. Your name will not appear on the interview form or be recorded on tape and it will not be identified in any part of the study. Also, the audiotape will be destroyed after information from it can be summarized, if a tape is made.

**QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me and I will find out the answer from the researcher.

**CONSENT**

If you are interested in doing an interview, please mark an X in the box below. The mark also shows that you are willing to have me (your case manager) share information from your records with the researcher.

I, the undersigned, indicate by my signature that the study participant has placed a mark in the above box.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Case Manager (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

*Please give completed form to UI researcher prior to interview.*

## APPENDIX B: STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE

### Assurance of Confidentiality

The Urban Institute and the Caliber Associates, Inc. assure all respondents and participating organizations that the information they release to this study will be held in the strictest confidence by the contracting organizations and that no information obtained in the course of this study will be disclosed in such a way that individuals or organizations are identifiable. Access to the data in this study is by consent of the respondents who have been guaranteed confidentiality except when the intent to commit a crime or harm themselves is revealed to the researcher. Their right to privacy is protected under law.

I have carefully read and understand this assurance that pertains to the confidential nature of all information and records to be handled in this study. I have read a copy of the “Confidential Data at the Urban Institute — Guidelines for Data Security.” I understand that I must comply with all data security requirements adapted from those Guidelines for this project as approved by the Urban Institute Institutional Review Board. As an employee of The Urban Institute, I understand that I am prohibited by law from disclosing any such confidential information which has been obtained under the terms of this contract to anyone other than authorized contractor staff and agree to follow confidentiality procedures outlined to me during training. I understand that any willful and knowing disclosure of information released to this study may constitute a violation of law, may subject the violator to a fine, and may subject the violator to disciplinary action by The Urban Institute, up to and including termination of employment.

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Witness signature)

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(Date)

**APPENDIX C: CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT  
FOR CONSULTANTS AND INTERPRETERS**

Pursuant to Title 28 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 22, independent consultants have an obligation to those we interview to protect their identities and the information they provide to the Evaluation of Services for Trafficking Victims Discretionary Grant Program: Comprehensive Services Sites (the Evaluation). The identity of persons interviewed and the related data are to remain confidential. Removal of names or disclosure of identities and related information is strictly forbidden. Contents of interviews are not to be discussed with anyone except project staff, and only as it is necessary to complete the assigned work. Additionally, sensitive interview information should not be discussed anywhere it could be overheard by persons who are not authorized to know this information.

As an independent consultant of the Evaluation, I, \_\_\_\_\_, will protect the confidentiality of all information identifiable to a private person that is collected in the conduct of my work for the Evaluation.

I shall not discuss any identifiable information that I may learn of during the course of my involvement as an independent consultant with anyone other than project staff members who have a need to know this information.

I will follow the procedures established by the Evaluation to prevent unauthorized access to information identifiable to a private person.

I certify that I have been informed that, the Evaluation, which is being funded by the National Institute of Justice, is governed by the Department of Justice Regulations in 28 CFR Part 22 & Part 46, which governs the use and revelation of research and statistical information identifiable to a private person, and that I, as an independent consultant for the Evaluation, am governed by these regulations.

I certify that I have been given copies of the regulations at 28 CFR Part 22 and Part 46 and that I understand the obligations imposed by them.

I understand that my signing this agreement is a condition of my employment as part of the Evaluation project.

**By signing this statement, I acknowledge that I understand the rules surrounding the protection of confidential information and, if I am found to be in violation of these provisions, I can be fined up to \$10,000 in addition to any other penalty imposed by law.**

Full Legal Name (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX D: FACE-TO-FACE CLIENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL—SITES A AND B

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for being willing to do an interview with us. I am from the Urban Institute, a non-governmental research organization in Washington DC. Your community is part of a national study being done by us, along with Caliber Associates, for the National Institute of Justice. The goal of the study is to learn about services for survivors of trafficking and how agencies help.

Being in the study is very important because you can give us information that may help improve services for trafficking survivors throughout the country. Without this information, no one can be sure if the services help people and how they can be changed for the better. Your input can help people develop and provide effective programs to meet the needs of trafficking survivors.

I am interested in talking with you about the services you received before certification, or when you received your paper. **(IF R. IS CERTIFIED, remind her/him the month s/he was certified to provide a time frame of reference OR IF R. IS NOT CERTIFIED SAY...The services you are receiving now, before you receive your paper.)** At no time will you be asked about the trafficking experience itself or your legal case. However, talking about the ways you need help and the services you get may remind you of negative feelings or may trouble you in other ways. If this happens, please let me know and your case manager or counselor will be available for you to talk to.

I want you to know that what you say to me today will be kept completely confidential and is protected by federal law. The interpreter and I have both signed a statement, guaranteeing that anything you say will be kept private. Your name will not be on the interview form or be recorded on the audiotape and the tape will be destroyed after information from it can be summarized. Also, we ask you to please not mention the names of other trafficking survivors that you know. **To a friend or other support person the victim may have brought:** We also ask you to respect your friend's privacy and not repeat anything you hear during this interview, unless he/she asks you to.

We will combine your information with that of other survivors for our reports. We are not here to share information or give our opinions. Instead, we want to hear about your experiences. There are no right or wrong answers to our questions. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.

Being a part of this study is completely voluntary and will not affect the services you receive from agencies, your legal status, any criminal case against the trafficker, your T-visa status, or your eligibility for any type of assistance. What you say also will not affect the agency that is helping you or the money it receives to provide services. You may refuse to answer any question during the interview and can end the interview at any time. I want to make sure you're here because you want to be and not because you feel pressured to be here, is that right? The interview should take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete. You will receive a gift of appreciation for your time at the end of the interview.

Do you have any questions for me about anything I just said? (**ANSWER R.'S QUESTIONS**). Let's get started.

DATE/TIME:

INTERVIEWER:

---

LOCATION/AGENCY:

### **INITIAL SERVICE NEEDS**

1. When you first got out of the trafficking situation, what did you need help with?

*List first needs mentioned here:*

2. What else did you need help with? Anything you can think of is fine...

*List any additional needs identified here:*

3. What about the following? Did you need help with any of these? *Ask only about those not mentioned earlier.*
- Shelter/housing?
  - Food/money?
  - Healthcare from a doctor or hospital, including dental care?
  - Language?
  - Certification and Visa papers?
  - School or job?
  - Childcare?
  - Spiritual matters?
  - Emotional support/stress? (or help with things like feeling lonely, sad, scared, worried, fearful, hopeless, self-conscious, troubling dreams/memories, or difficulty sleeping, etc.?)
  - Transportation/accompaniment?
  - Information and referral?
  - Life skills?
  - Self-help group with other survivors?
  - Help related to use of drugs or alcohol?
  - Protection from the traffickers?
  - Concerns about your family/friends in this country or back in your home country?

**HELP FOR INITIAL SERVICE NEEDS**

***So your main needs for help were: REPEAT THREE TOP NEEDS BASED ON THE PRECEDING QUESTIONS.***

4. Can you tell me more about how you managed these needs? *(See next page for table summarizing responses)*

*Probes:*

*Did you get services or help for these needs?*

*Who helped you first? Do you know the name of the person or agency that first helped you?*

*Who else/what other agencies helped you? Please include family, friends, religious contacts, and other people from our country who may be here or still in your country.*

*Who initiated? How did R know about source of help, and/or how did source of help know about R?*

*How did you determine what services you needed and what services the agency could provide?*

*Do you prefer to decide for yourself when you want services and what services you want, or would you rather have the service agency make these arrangements?*

*Where did you receive the help (city, place, etc.)? Under what circumstances?*

*What services did you receive?*

*How helpful were the services you received?*

*How long did you get help from this person/agency?*

*Were they able to help you in your own language?*

*Did you understand what types of help they could give you... your choices?*

*Did anyone explain the American system to you?*

*Were you able to make your own decisions?*

*Did you feel safe with this person/agency? Were you supported and in control?*

*Were the services they offered accessible? Places and times were okay?*

*Any problems with the help/services offered? Suggested improvements?*

*IMPORTANT: If more than one person/agency, find out who helped with what, in what order (multiple agencies at the same time or over time), and how/why they were referred or found each agency. Perhaps draw this out in a graphic.*

*Summarize responses on the table on the following page. Important narrative (or graphic) here:*

<b><i>Need—Fill in column headings with top 3 needs identified</i></b>			
<i>Was help received?</i>			
<i>Source of help?</i>			
<i>Who initiated?</i>			
<i>How determined needs?</i>			
<i>Prefer to decide on services yourself?</i>			
<i>Where receive help?</i>			
<i>What services did you receive?</i>			
<i>Services helpful?</i>			
<i>For how long?</i>			
<i>Communicate in own language?</i>			
<i>Understood your choices?</i>			
<i>Understood American system?</i>			
<i>Able to make own decisions?</i>			
<i>Felt safe/supported and in control?</i>			
<i>Services accessible?</i>			
<i>Anything unsatisfactory?</i>			



**OTHER NEEDS (BESIDES TOP 3 INITIAL NEEDS) AND SERVICES RECEIVED**

5. For the other things that you needed help with—besides the top 3 needs we've just discussed—I'd like to find out whether you got the help you needed. If you did get help, I'd like to hear about those services.

For EACH additional need listed below: identify the need, whether she/he got help, agency/person who provided the help, what help was provided, and how helpful the services were.

- Need #4:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Need #5:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Need #6:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Need #7:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Need #8:

**GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES RECEIVED**

6. Thinking about the services you received, would you seek these services again if you needed to? Why or why not?

**UNMET NEEDS**

7. **Instruction to interviewer: Using information provided so far, go over unmet needs (for which services were needed but not provided) and list below. Complete the list by asking:**

Was there anything **else** you needed that no one was able to help with, or you didn't ask for help with?

- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet need: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What about some of the other needs we mentioned earlier, things like ... (*review those not covered*)

- Shelter/housing?
- Food/money?
- Healthcare from a doctor or hospital, including dental care?
- Language?
- Certification and Visa papers?
- School or job?
- Childcare?
- Spiritual matters?
- Emotional support/stress? (or help with things like feeling lonely, sad, scared, worried, fearful, hopeless, self-conscious, troubling dreams/memories, or difficulty sleeping, etc.?)
- Transportation/accompaniment?
- Information and referral?
- Life skills?
- Self-help group with other survivors?
- Help related to use of drugs or alcohol?
- Protection from the traffickers?
- Concerns about your family/friends in this country or back in your home country?

8.1 What are your ideas about what would be helpful to deal with these things or to make them better?

9. For the needs you had but did not ask for help with, can you talk about why you did not ask for help?

***PROBES:***

- Scared
- Did not think the services would help
- Did not think they would help you with your types of problems
- Did not think these are the types of things agencies help people with
- Thought you ought to take care of these needs yourself
- Did not want to admit something happened to you
- Heard bad things about the services
- Worried about negative impact on legal status/deportation
- Worried about negative impact on others ... other victims, family back home, etc.
- Worried that you wouldn't fit in at the agency
- Discouraged from seeking services by someone in the community (another community member — within that ethnicity), friends, family, the trafficker

10. Was there a service agency that you knew about but chose not to go to? If so, why did you not seek help from that agency?

*PROBES:*

- Scared
- Did not think the services would help
- Did not think they would help you with your types of problems
- Did not want to admit something happened to you
- Thought you ought to take care of these needs yourself
- Heard bad things about the services
- Worried about negative impact on legal status/deportation
- Worried about negative impact on others ... other victims, family back home, etc.
- Worried that you wouldn't fit in at the agency
- Discouraged from seeking services by someone in the community (another community member — within that ethnicity), friends, family, the trafficker
- Tried to get help but put on a waiting list
- Tried to get help but turned away for another reason

**SERVICE DELIVERY COLLABORATION AMONG AGENCIES (for those receiving services from more than one agency)**

11. Did the people from different agencies appear to be working together to help you? *Who* seemed to be working together in a way that helped you? **(IF R. ANSWERS INDIVIDUAL NAMES, TRY TO IDENTIFY THE AGENCY THE PERSON IS AFFILIATED WITH).**

***PROBES:***

- shelter
- housing
- victim services
- nonprofit legal organization
- local law enforcement
- FBI
- prosecutor
- mental health agency
- health center/facility
- interpreter/translation services
- other

12. In what ways were the people/agencies working together?

***PROBES: What did they do? How did they work together?***

13. Were the services more helpful as a result?

## **CERTIFICATION**

14. **IF R. IS CERTIFIED:** Was there a difference in the services you received before you were certified (got your paper) compared to after you were certified (got your paper)? **IF NEEDED, REMIND R. OF THE DATE S/HE WAS CERTIFIED...** If so, how were the services different? Were services better or worse? What kinds of services were available after you were certified that were not available before you were certified and/or vice versa?

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

15. Are there ways that you would suggest that agencies could get the word out better, so people like you can know what services are available?

16. In what ways can agencies improve services for trafficking survivors?

### **CONCLUDING QUESTIONS**

17. If you had a chance to give advice to other trafficking survivors, what advice would you give them?

18. Are there people here who are from your home country and who are a source of support for you? A source of problems or concerns for you?



19. We want you to help us evaluate the services in your community and we value the input you have provided so far. Is there anything we have missed that would help communities improve services? Is there anything that you want to share with us that we did not ask about?

Those are all the questions I have for you. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this study and would like to remind you that all of your answers are confidential. Thank you very much for your time today. Your contributions to the project are very valuable. As a token of our appreciation for your time, we are paying each person who talks with us \$50 in cash.

(PROVIDE R. WITH THE INCENTIVE MONEY.)

Research ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E: FACE-TO-FACE CLIENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL—SITE C

*DATE:* \_\_\_\_\_

*TIME:* \_\_\_\_\_

*LOCATION/AGENCY:* \_\_\_\_\_

*INTERVIEWER:* \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for being willing to do an interview with me. I am from the Urban Institute, a nongovernmental research organization in Washington, DC. Your community is part of a national study being done by us, along with Caliber Associates, for the National Institute of Justice. The goal of the study is to learn about services for survivors of trafficking and how agencies help.

Being in the study is very important because you can give us information that may help improve services for trafficking survivors throughout the country. Without this information, no one can be sure if the services help people and how they can be changed for the better. Your input can help people develop and provide effective programs to meet the needs of trafficking survivors.

I am interested in talking with you about the services you received before certification, when you received your paper. **(If R. IS CERTIFIED, remind her/him the month s/he was certified to provide a time frame of reference OR If R. IS NOT CERTIFIED SAY...The services you are receiving now, before you receive your paper.)** At no time will you be asked about the trafficking experience itself or your legal case. However, talking about the ways you need help and the services you get may remind you of negative feelings or may trouble you in other ways. If this happens, please let me know and your case manager or counselor will be available for you to talk to.

I want you to know that what you say to me today will be kept completely confidential and is protected by federal law. The interpreter and I have both signed a statement, guaranteeing that anything you say will be kept private. Your name will not be on the interview form or be recorded in notes from this interview. Also, we ask you to please not mention the names of other trafficking survivors that you know. *To a friend or other support person the victim may have brought:* We also ask you to respect your friend's privacy and not repeat anything you hear during this interview, unless he/she asks you to.

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We will combine your information with that of other survivors for our reports. We are not here to share information or give our opinions. Instead, we want to hear about your experiences. There are no right or wrong answers to our questions. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.

Being a part of this study is completely voluntary and will not affect the services you receive from agencies, your legal status, any court case, your T-visa status, or your eligibility for any type of assistance. What you say also will not affect the agency that is helping you or the money it receives to provide services. You may refuse to answer any question during the interview and can end the interview at any time. I want to make sure you're here because you want to be and not because you feel pressured to be here, is that right? The interview should take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete. You will receive a gift of appreciation for your time at the end of the interview.

Do you have any questions for me about anything I just said? (**ANSWER R.'S QUESTIONS**). Let's get started.

#### **ENTRY INTO THE SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM**

1. Trafficking survivors may have different types of needs because of the trafficking experience, and they may or may not get help with those needs. I'll read a list of needs, and I'd like you to tell me whether you needed help in each of these areas as a result of the trafficking experience. For those needs you **did or do** need help with, I'd like you to tell me whether you got the help you needed. Also, I'd like to know what you needed help with first.  
*Note: Interviewer will check rows in second to fourth columns to indicate respondent's answers.*

<u>Service Needs</u>	<u>Needed Help?</u>	<u>Got Help?</u>	<b>First Need?</b>
A. Housing/shelter			
B. Medical/healthcare/dental care			
C. Transportation/accompaniment			
D. Food/money			
E. Protection from the traffickers			
F. Information and referral for services			
G. Emotional support/coping with stress/feelings of sadness/feelings of fear			
H. Help with spiritual matters			
I. Employment/job training			
J. Education/school			
K Life skills			
L. Interpretation/translation			
M. Child care			

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N Self-help groups with other survivors			
O. Drug or alcohol treatment			
P. Concerns about your family/friends in this country or back in your home country			

2. How did you first get help?

- Can you name or describe the person or agency you first got help from?
- Who initiated the help—did you contact a person or agency, or did someone contact you?
  - i. You initiated contact \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. Agency staff initiated contact \_\_\_\_\_
- Where did you first get the help?
  - i. At the agency \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. At a different agency \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. In the community \_\_\_\_\_
  - iv. Other (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
- How did you know to contact that person or agency for help—how did you learn about the person or agency originally?
  - i. Word of mouth from friends or family \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. Saw a poster or flyer about the agency in the community or at another service provider \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. Read about the agency in the newspaper \_\_\_\_\_
  - iv. Referred from another agency \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCES WITH SERVICES**

3. After the first contact, did you continue to receive services from this same person/agency?

- i. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_
- If yes,
  - How did you determine what services you needed and what services this agency could provide?
  - Do you prefer to decide for yourself when you want services and what services you want, or would you rather have the service agency make these arrangements?
  - What services were provided?
  - Were the services helpful? If yes, how so?

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City: \_\_\_\_\_

- When/for how long did you/have you received services from this agency?
- How did you communicate with the service provider — was someone on staff able to speak to you in your own language or was an interpreter available to assist you? How often?
- Did staff members provide you with enough information to make important decisions?
- Did you feel supported by the staff members? What types of things did they do to support you?
- Were the services difficult to access — problems with times, locations, language?
- Where any of the services unsatisfactory? Why, please explain.
- Would you seek these services again if you needed to? Why or why not?

**4. FOR OTHER SERVICES THAT WERE PROVIDED AS PER QUESTION #1, ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR EACH AGENCY PROVIDING SERVICES.**

**(NOTE THE TYPE OF AGENCY/NAME OF AGENCY)**

- How did you determine what services you needed and what services this agency could provide?
- Do you prefer to decide for yourself when you want services and what services you want, or would you rather have the service agency make these arrangements?
- What services were provided?
- Were the services helpful? If yes, how so?
- When/for how long did you/have you received services from this agency?
- How did you communicate with the service provider — was someone on staff able to speak to you in your own language or was an interpreter available to assist you? How often?
- Did staff members provide you with enough information to make important decisions?
- Did you feel supported by the staff members? What types of things did they do to support you?
- Were the services difficult to access — problems with times, locations, language?
- Where any of the services unsatisfactory? Why, please explain.
- Would you seek these services again if you needed to? Why or why not?

5. Did you have needs that you didn't seek services for, or was there a service agency for trafficking survivors that you chose not to go to? If so, why did you not seek help, or decide not to go to that agency?

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- Scared \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not think the services would help \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not think these are the types of things agencies help people with \_\_\_\_\_
- Did not want to admit something happened to you \_\_\_\_\_
- Thought you ought to take care of these needs yourself \_\_\_\_\_
- Heard bad things about the services \_\_\_\_\_
- Worried about possible negative impact on yourself or others \_\_\_\_\_
- Worried that you wouldn't fit in at the agency \_\_\_\_\_
- Discouraged from seeking services by someone in the community (another community member — within that ethnicity), friends, family \_\_\_\_\_
- Tried to get help but put on a waiting list \_\_\_\_\_
- Tried to get help but turned away for another reason \_\_\_\_\_

### **SERVICE DELIVERY COLLABORATION AMONG AGENCIES**

6. Did the people from different agencies appear to be working together to help you? Who seemed to be working together in a way that helped you? (**IF R. ANSWERS INDIVIDUAL NAMES, TRY TO IDENTIFY THE AGENCY THE PERSON IS AFFILIATED WITH**).

#### ***PROBES:***

- shelter
- housing
- victim services
- nonprofit legal organization
- mental health agency
- health center/facility
- interpreter/translation services
- other

11. In what ways were the people/agencies working together?

#### ***PROBES:***

- What did they do that showed they were working together?
- In what ways did they work together?
- Were the services more helpful as a result?

**12. IF R. IS CERTIFIED:** Was there a difference in the services you received before you were certified compared to after you were certified? **IF YOU NEED TO, REMIND R. OF THE**

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City: \_\_\_\_\_

**MONTH (AND YEAR) S/HE WAS CERTIFIED...** If so, how were the services different? Were services better or worse? What kinds of services were available after you were certified that were not available before you were certified and/or vice versa?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

13. Are there ways that you would suggest that agencies could get the word out better so people in a trafficking situation can know what services are available?
14. What are ways that agencies could improve services for trafficking survivors?

## CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

15. If you had a chance to give advice to other trafficking survivors what advice would you give?
16. Are there people here who are from your home country and who are a source of support for you? A source of problems or concerns for you?
17. We really appreciate your insights and we value the input you have provided so far. Is there anything we have missed that would help communities improve services? Is there anything that you wanted to share with us that we did not ask about?

Those are all the questions I have for you. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this study and would like to remind you that all of your answers are confidential. Thank you very much for your time today. Your contributions to the project are very valuable. As a token of our appreciation for your time, we are paying each person who talks with us \$50 in cash. **(PROVIDE R. WITH THE PAYMENT.)**

## APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR CASE MANAGERS

**Date:**

**Name of Interviewer:**

**City/Location/Agency:**

**Case Managers(s)/Agency(ies):**

### **Introduction/Purpose**

Thank you for meeting with me today. My name is XXX and I work with a nonprofit nongovernment research organization called **The Urban Institute** in Washington, DC. My organization and Caliber Associates have been funded by the **National Institute of Justice** to evaluate programs such as yours that are helping victims of trafficking. As you probably know, we are just learning about how to serve and support victims of trafficking and many communities across the country have no established or organized programs to provide this kind of help. So we are very interested in understanding **what you think are the key issues in helping victims of trafficking**. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers here, and everything you say will be **strictly confidential**. Nothing you say will be attributed to you by name, although it is possible that others within the trafficking victim service community may try to guess who said what. You may choose not to answer any questions you would prefer not to answer. You are in a key position to understand what is working and what is not working so well when it comes to helping victims of trafficking. We’re interested in learning about what the greatest challenges are as you try to help your clients, how you have overcome some of them, and what guidance you would give your counterparts in other communities who are just starting to develop similar supports and services.

As you know, we will also be meeting with several victims themselves, so we can hear directly from them what their social service experiences have been and what can be done to better support their recovery. At the end of this discussion, I’d like to ask you for any suggestions you might have for us in preparing for our meetings with victims.

1. I’d like to begin the discussion by asking about your background in social services and case management, and the types of clients/organizations you have worked with in the past (and for how long).
2. What types of victims and agencies do you work with now? How long have you worked at these agencies? What share of your agency’s clients are victims of trafficking? What



share of *your* clients are victims of trafficking? How long have you worked with trafficking victims? How many trafficking victims have you worked with?

3. How do the needs of trafficking victims compare to the needs of other victims you work (have worked) with? Other clients you work (have worked) with? Which needs are the same and which are different? Please explain...
4. Are you able to meet all the needs of trafficking victims or identify other people/agencies who can help meet these needs? What needs are among the most pressing, most common, the most unusual/unexpected, the most challenging? Are there any needs that are going completely unmet? Why? What is the impact of this?
5. Other than clients' specific needs, are there other aspects of what you do that are different for trafficking victims compared to other victims/clients? What are some of these differences? How do you handle them? Probes: caseload size, approach, ...
6. In retrospect, how prepared were you when you first starting helping victims of trafficking? What types of information, training, or other resources did you need? Were you able to get them? How and from whom?
7. Did you make any mistakes/missteps when you first started helping victims of trafficking? What were they? How did you know they were mistakes/missteps? How did you resolve them?
8. If victims are involved in receiving services from (or needing to interface with) multiple agencies in the community, how are interagency communications, coordination, or collaboration handled? Is there one primary case manager who oversees all of the services? How do trafficking victims "navigate" the system? As far as you now, is there anything that can or should be done to improve the system *from the victim's point of view*?
9. From the perspective of the "frontline" what are the greatest needs for improving services for trafficking victims? Please be as specific as possible. Probes: greater awareness/understanding generally; better policies/protocols for serving victims; better interagency coordination; more funding for direct services (which ones?).
10. What guidance would you give your counterparts in another community who are just getting started in serving victims of trafficking?

Thanks so much for sharing your insights and perspectives with me today. They are an important part of this study.

## **Preparing to Interview Individual Trafficking Victims: Meeting the Case Manager**

Thank you for arranging the upcoming interview with your client.

*Confirm:*

- *Date, time, and place of meeting;*
- *Special arrangements for transportation and child care (if any); and*
- *Client's preferences regarding tape recording.*

As you know, all information will be kept strictly confidential. If your client consented to my having access to case file information, I'd like to get that now.

*Get information on:*

- *Demographic characteristics (age, race/ethnicity, marital status, children, etc);*
- *Types (labor or sex) trafficking and dates of trafficking (year);*
- *Types and dates of system intervention, if applicable, (such as FBI or INS raid and year escaped from trafficking);*
- *Date and source of referral to this agency (month and year became client to this agency);*
- *Services provided by this and other partner agencies;*
- *Certification status (if yes, month and year the client was certified); and*
- *Other relevant information.*

What else should I know before meeting this person? Are there any special cultural, victimization, individual factors I should be aware of? What are appropriate ways to interact with this person — things like handshaking, making eye contact, personal space, or offering simple refreshments?