



# Speaking Truth to Power

**A small-scale study into victim and survivor support services and youth engagement practices.**

---



Marie Collins  
Foundation



BUREAU  
of Market Research

UNISA   
university  
of south africa



# Contents

Page 3 ..... Introduction

Page 4 ..... Background to 'Speaking Truth to Power'

Page 6 ..... Research Scoping Phase

Page 8 ..... Research Findings

Page 11 ..... Challenges Identified

Page 12 ..... Action Plan

Page 16 ..... Limitations

Page 18 ..... Appendix A





Marie Collins  
Foundation

Marie Collins Foundation (MCF), founded in 2011, is a UK-based charity that is leading the way both nationally and internationally, in responding when a child is sexually abused online. We are dedicated to supporting victims of technology-assisted child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE) on their recovery journey to go on to live safe and fulfilling lives. We provide a voice for the victim and survivor community and support professionals who work with young people through training, mentoring, and promoting the sharing of effective practice. We advocate for victims and survivors by lobbying and sharing our expertise with government and policy makers to improve child protection responses for victims and their families. We have a dedicated team of experienced professionals and an extensive network of trusted partners and affiliates around the world who share, and are committed to achieving, our vision.

MCF are grateful for both the engagement and commitment of the participants across the 5 countries who contributed to this study. We recognise that the nature of the methodology adopted meant they had to not only take time out of their busy schedules to engage with us, but also to undertake periods of self-reflection in relation to the service their organisation provides. We appreciate that such self-reflection requires a level of honesty that may or may not be uncomfortable or even frustrating at times, particularly if the solutions to any identified challenges, at least at first, appear to be out of reach. We have established and nurtured many trusting relationships with both new and familiar organisations whilst undertaking this study, and we look forward to being able to strengthen these partnerships as we collectively work towards delivering our strategic objectives.





## Background to 'Speaking Truth to Power'

At MCF, we have seen first-hand the impact of CSAE on victims and survivors. The challenges of technology-assisted CSAE know no international boundaries and increasingly require a globally coordinated response, informed by the collective voices of victims and survivors around the world.



Technology offers many exciting opportunities for childhood development however, all too often it is used by others to facilitate the sexual abuse of young people. For a variety of complex reasons, for those who are the victims of CSAE, it is often many months or even years later before they feel they can speak out about what has happened to them. It can take many more years of support, intervention, and therapy by a multitude of different services working with them and their family, to support them on their journey towards recovery.

This means that the **'voice of the child'** can often be missing from the policy agenda when shaping and developing these support and intervention services.

**MCF is determined to influence a global change, and the 'Speaking Truth to Power' project will provide the basis on which a progressive movement is built. Where children's voices are heard in order to influence how victims and survivors of CSAE, especially when it is technology-assisted, are supported on their recovery journey.**

Youth engagement has been defined as **'empowering young people as valuable partners in addressing and making decisions about issues that affect them personally and/or they believe to be important'<sup>1</sup>.**

It is important to involve young people through youth-engagement practices to understand and shape responses to CSAE<sup>2</sup>. Specifically, youth engagement and empowerment within the context of child sexual abuse and exploitation is important because children are among those most able to define their problems and contribute to the development of appropriate solutions<sup>3</sup>. Instead of seeing children as passive and weak or as victims that only receive care, children should be recognised as experts and active agents with many strengths<sup>4</sup>. This may be achieved by empowering them and encouraging them to raise their voices and by making informed choices and decisions for themselves<sup>5</sup>. Effective empowerment of victims and survivors of CSAE is also about raising children's awareness of CSAE and of available support services. Furthermore, empowerment may be achieved by making these services accessible to children, through practitioners' support and contributions, encouraging them to learn life skills, promoting their meaningful participation in matters affecting their lives, and through developing their own agency<sup>6</sup>.

Our

Vision

The overall vision is to place victim and survivor support and recovery at the forefront so that children and young people across the world feel empowered to access support services that can aid their recovery. Furthermore, it is envisioned to increase child participation and let the voices of children be heard by establishing a global network and movement of children and young people survivor groups that collectively become recognised as a credible international voice for the young. Therefore, by focusing on the experiences of survivors and young people in this project, the voices of children and young people will be amplified to **'speak truth to power'**.

<sup>1</sup>Walking the Talk (2020) What is youth engagement? Available at: What is youth engagement? | Walking the talk (yetoolkit.ca)

<sup>2</sup>Simantiri, N.L. (2018). Empowerment of child victims and children at risk of sexual exploitation. Accessed online at: [http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment\\_Literature%20Review.pdf](http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment_Literature%20Review.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Simantiri, N.L. (2018). Empowerment of child victims and children at risk of sexual exploitation. Accessed online at: [http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment\\_Literature%20Review.pdf](http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment_Literature%20Review.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>Simantiri, N.L. (2018). Empowerment of child victims and children at risk of sexual exploitation. Accessed online at: [http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment\\_Literature%20Review.pdf](http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment_Literature%20Review.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Simantiri, N.L. (2018). Empowerment of child victims and children at risk of sexual exploitation. Accessed online at: [http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment\\_Literature%20Review.pdf](http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment_Literature%20Review.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Simantiri, N.L. (2018). Empowerment of child victims and children at risk of sexual exploitation. Accessed online at: [http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment\\_Literature%20Review.pdf](http://www.downtozerplatform.com/dtz/files/Empowerment_Literature%20Review.pdf)



# Research Scoping Phase

MCF commissioned the Youth Research Unit of the Bureau of Market Research Ltd (Pty) (BMR) at the University of South Africa to conduct a baseline assessment into the available child sexual abuse and exploitation survivor services and youth engagement practices across five priority countries – Canada, Namibia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Vietnam. This research study included a literature review to firstly establish what the available literature suggests effective practice looks like in designing and delivering support services to victims and survivors of CSAE online and offline. Secondly, we sought to understand what defines effective practice from a broader youth engagement perspective.



## Starting Point



This starting point was a literature review of English language publications to identify the components of effective practice when delivering focussed services to child victims of CSAE and more broadly, youth empowerment programmes and life-skills initiatives. The involvement of the latter was important for understanding the best practice identified when seeking to capture the voice of the child.

## Second Part



The second part of the study involved direct engagement with services working 'on the ground' within selected target countries to understand the practical experiences and challenges that these organisations face in delivering their services and provided a greater understanding of the broad range of support and services that were available.

By combining the findings of the literature review with the real experiences of a select (albeit small) group of organisations, we were able to develop an informed picture of the strengths and challenges that victims and survivors experience from the range of services that exist to support them. Following a thematic analysis methodology, we identified a series of common themes, which, when looked at alongside findings from other similar studies, provided an informed evidence base for the development of future capacity and capability building activity to improve services for victims and survivors and elevate the voice of the child.

## The five target countries (Canada, Namibia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Vietnam) were identified due to:

- i. MCF having an established network of practitioner-level partnerships within these countries which would facilitate delivery at pace.
- ii. All five countries being members of the WePROTECT Global Alliance and have as such demonstrated a commitment (evidentially and anecdotally) towards implementing policies to develop their national frameworks and infrastructure to respond to online child sexual abuse and exploitation in their countries.

iii. MCF becoming aware of several other victim and survivor focused research projects being undertaken or planned by partner organisations in other countries. By selecting these countries, we anticipated being in a position where the findings of this research study could be combined with the other research projects to provide a broader global perspective on this subject.

In total, 50 organisations were invited to take part in the study as a snapshot across the 5 countries. 21 organisations confirmed their willingness to participate. These organisations represented a cross-section of available services in terms of scale, reach and resources, offering a range of national, regional, and local operations. A list of participating organisations is provided in Appendix A.



## Data collection involved:

### Online survey

This was differentiated for the service type (i.e. victim and survivor support service or youth engagement service) and asked a mix of both open and closed questions to gain an understanding about the range of functions that the service delivers, the structure and experience, of the staff, details about the service users including how the service is accessed, the service user experience and if and how they work with other agencies in delivering an holistic service.

### One-to-one semi-structured interviews

The purpose of which was to allow participants to expand on the information provided in the online survey.

### Focus group discussion

This involved a cross-section of 10 participant organisations across the five countries, the purpose of which was to validate the research findings.

The geographical distribution of participating organisations contributing to each element of the data collection is summarised in the table below.

Country	Victim and Survivor Support Services		Youth Engagement Service	
	Online Survey	Follow-Up Interview	Online Survey	Follow-Up Interview
Canada	5	4	1	1
Namibia	1	1	4	3
South Africa	5	4	-	-
Ukraine	2	2	1	1
Vietnam	2	2	-	-

# Research Findings

The available literature supported our view that victim and survivor support services can be further developed by direct, inclusive, and ethical consultation with young people<sup>7</sup>. This can be done by involving victims and survivors of CSAE in service re-design, based on their ability to help others to recognise and to understand the scale, complexity, and impact of sexual abuse, as they are often very willing to discuss their experiences and be at the centre of improving services<sup>8</sup>. The direct involvement of children in service delivery is thus a clear area of priority for CSAE victim and survivor support services.



## Victim and Survivor Support Services



**From the literature review and the thematic analysis of the data collection, we identified...**

**11** common themes of effective practice in delivering support services to victims and survivors of CSAE

**10** common themes of effective practice in youth engagement

Victims and survivors of CSAE are a diverse group whose sexually abusive experiences can include a

wide range of contact and non-contact harms. Victims and survivors of online CSAE in particular may face re-traumatisation from the permanence of their images online and the redistribution of the images<sup>9</sup>. This type of victim experience has implications for support services due to the response towards victims and survivors needing to be tailored towards this particular type of abuse<sup>10</sup>. A review of literature suggests that access to appropriate support services can help reduce the negative consequences experienced by victims and survivors of CSAE. The process of recovering from abuse allows children and adolescents to give new meanings to a traumatic experience and to integrate it with other aspects of their identity, leaving them feeling empowered<sup>11</sup>. Coordinating these support services is often challenging as there is no single model of support that will meet the needs of all victims and survivors of CSAE<sup>12</sup>. Victims and survivors tend to find it harder to access health and support services for a variety of reasons, including stigma<sup>13</sup>. With appropriately tailored support services, victims and survivors can build on their strengths to recover from traumatic events<sup>14</sup>, lower their sense of isolation, and be provided with practical support services such as a safe place to stay away from the abuse<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>7</sup>UNICEF. (2020). Action to end Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. Accessed online at: <https://www.unicef.org/media/89206/file/CSAE-Brief-v3.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>Harris, L. and Hodges, K. (2018). Response to Complexity: Survivors of Domestic Abuse with 'Complex Needs'. Journal of Gender-Based Violence, Vol. 3(2).

<sup>9</sup>Quayle, E. (2016) Recovery Needs of Victims, available upon request.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. (2016)

<sup>11</sup>Capella, C., Lama, X., Rodriguez, L., Aguila, D., Beiza, G., Dussert, D. & Gutierrez, C. (2016). Winning a Race: Narratives of Healing and Psychotherapy in Children and Adolescents Who have been sexually abused. Journal of Child Sexual Abuse. 25(1):73-92. doi: 10.1080/10538712.2015.1088915. Epub 2016 Jan 20

<sup>12</sup>Home Office. (2019). Commissioning Framework: For all commissioners of support services for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse in England [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/814989/6.5206\\_HO\\_Commissioning-Framework\\_A4\\_Web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/814989/6.5206_HO_Commissioning-Framework_A4_Web.pdf)

<sup>13</sup>Namy, S. et al. (2021) Healing and Resilience after Trauma (HaRT) Yoga: programming with survivors of human trafficking in Uganda. Journal of Social Work Practice.

<sup>14</sup>Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (2021). Intervention Programs [online] Available at: <https://boostforkids.org/for-families/intervention-programs/>

<sup>15</sup>Denti, D. and Iammarino, S. (2021) Coming Out of the Woods: Do local support services influence the propensity to report sexual violence? LSE Department of Geography and Environment: Papers in Economic Geography and Spatial Economics, Paper No. 20.



## Effective practice in delivery of services leading to positive outcomes for victims and survivors of CSAE:

**1** A strong ethos of multi-agency collaboration, where partnership working and information sharing between different stakeholders with a responsibility for supporting victims and survivors is encouraged in order to reduce potential re-traumatisation.

**2** Where possible, services provide a multi-faceted response including a variety of different programmes as part of a holistic package such as therapeutic support and group therapies. For example, South Africa has implemented one-stop services, known as Thuthuzela Care Centres, which employ an integrated approach, emphasising respect, comfort, and support to recover, as well as ensuring justice can be accessed.

**3** The service is focused on meeting the specific needs of every service user. Bespoke care plans are a standard practice. Services are adapted for each service user.

**4** Services recognise the intervention needs of the wider family and support networks surrounding the victim or survivor and provide either direct support or signpost to additional services that meet their needs.

**5** Services provide tailored support to particular groups and/or have an awareness of the specific requirements of particular demographics of victim or survivor, such as male victims or survivors for example.

**6** Services provide specialist training and development opportunities for staff to remain up to date with contemporary issues in relation to knowledge and skills to be able to respond effectively to victims and survivors of CSAE.

**7** Services ensure that all staff who engage directly with victims and survivors are knowledgeable about the specific characteristics and impact of CSAE.

**8** Services provide the opportunity for victims and survivors to contribute to the ongoing development and implementation of services.

**9** Services are aware of any accessibility barriers and aim to remove or limit these barriers to ensure victims and survivors can continue to access the service for as long as they need. For example, establishment of online consultations during the COVID-19 pandemic when social distancing restrictions were in place. Online-based interventions have proven to be a useful medium to engage children and young people in Ukraine and Vietnam, by providing prevention, reporting and immediate crisis intervention tools for children in need of support.

**10** Services do not enforce time or duration limits for the sessions or services they deliver, so that victims and survivors can access them for as long as they need.

**11** Services encourage and provide the opportunity for victims and survivors to have a voice about their experiences.

## Youth Engagement Services



Youth engagement allows young people to meaningfully participate and get involved in organisational or community settings and work<sup>16</sup>. Youth engagement practices can take several forms, including promoting youth participation, educating young people on important social issues, and providing young people with important life skills<sup>17</sup>, amongst others.

Youth engagement practices have been linked to a range of positive outcomes including identity

exploration, character development, risk prevention, gains in human and social capital, and improved relationships with adults<sup>18</sup>. The significance of youth engagement projects was noted by Epstein (2017), who found that such programmes allow young people to identify and analyse social problems, communicate with others to confront these problems, and apply these skills to other social issues throughout their lives, equipping them with valuable critical analysis skills for the future<sup>19</sup>.

### Effective practice in delivery of services leading to positive outcomes in Youth Engagement:

1

Services employ a 'youth-centred' approach, that is, focused on the specific needs and interests of those they seek to engage.

2

Services provide extra-curricular programmes in relation to personal, social, emotional and health related topics, which build on the knowledge that young people access through more formal educational settings, such as sex and relationships education.

3

Services are delivered with the intention of providing opportunities for young people to develop self-confidence and self-esteem, leading to empowerment.

4

Services provide specialist training and development opportunities for staff to remain up to date with contemporary issues in relation to knowledge and skills to be able to respond effectively to new and emerging issues that young people face.

5

Services encourage young people to have a voice and to participate in sharing their thoughts and opinions, such as through young people's forums which allow young people to share their experiences of issues that affect them.

6

Services ensure they are accessible and available to all young people regardless of background.

7

Services are based on the views and experiences of young people themselves, rather than stereotypes of the youth.

8

Services provide a pastoral role that caters for young people's welfare as well as their personal development.

9

Services provide a proactive and reactive service for young people facing particular issues or are aware of appropriate support networks for accessing support where it is needed.

10

Services work in close collaboration with other organisations delivering similar or linked services to provide a well-rounded support framework that wraps around the child.

<sup>16</sup>Kraussa, S.E., Zeldinb, S., Abdullahc, H., Ortegad, A., Alie, Z., Ismailf, I.A., Ariffina, A. (2020). Malaysian youth associations as places for empowerment and engagement. *Children and Youth Services Review* 112. 104939.

<sup>17</sup>Theron, V., Harageib, B. and Uutonj, S. (2020). Project BeFree: Concept Note.

<sup>18</sup>Kraussa, S.E., Zeldinb, S., Abdullahc, H., Ortegad, A., Alie, Z., Ismailf, I.A., Ariffina, A. (2020). Malaysian youth associations as places for empowerment and engagement. *Children and Youth Services Review* 112. 104939.

<sup>19</sup>Epstein. (2017) Supporting Global Awareness: A Proposal for Youth Civic Engagement.



## Challenges

### Identified



We found that service providers experience challenges that notably inhibit the effectiveness of victim and survivor support services such as:

- Lack of collaboration, especially between government and non-governmental sectors
- Limited focus on victims and survivors with special needs such as disabilities
- Insufficient knowledge, and specialised skills particularly with regard to online CSAE
- Limited resources and the lack of awareness amongst community members (parents and caregivers).

Furthermore, the research findings confirmed that although victim and survivor support services can be improved by direct participation of victims and survivors, it remains challenging to find a suitable approach to victim and survivor participation without re-traumatising the individual. These challenges impact the delivery of effective support services to victims and survivors of CSAE and need to be addressed to improve the response to them.



# Action Plan

- 1** MCF will build the capacity and capability of victim and survivor support services to respond to technology-assisted CSAE, through the roll out of Click: Path to Protection via a Train-the-Trainer programme.

Participants told us that many professionals working in child protection have limited knowledge or training in supporting victims and survivors of CSAE.

This was reported across all sample countries and suggests that professionals need more dedicated and specialised training opportunities for dealing specifically with online CSAE and what to do to support a young person when they report a CSAE case.

Increased awareness was also highlighted as a need for the wider community in the sample countries, as many communities are still unfamiliar with CSAE and how to support a young person that experiences it.

MCF's flagship training and development product for professionals working to support victims and survivors in their recovery, is the 'Click: Path to Protection', which has reached over 8000 professionals across the United Kingdom. It guides professionals through the journey of a victim or survivor, from the initial discovery or disclosure of abuse, through the investigation and child protection response to highlight the ways in which the multitude of professionals who interact with the victim throughout the journey, can adapt their practice to ensure that they do not, intentionally or otherwise, do any further harm to the child.



Click:  
Path to  
Protection

MCF have very recently worked to adapt the Click: Path to Protection framework and training products, to meet the needs of professionals operating outside the UK. This includes a bespoke Train-the-Trainer programme, which enables international partners to collaborate with MCF in disseminating the key messages of the programme amongst working practitioners within their country and region.

**In completing this study, the opportunity to work with international partners to upskill child protection professionals in the Click: Path to Protection (International) module has been highlighted as a priority.**





## 2

**MCF will support victim and survivor services in lobbying donors to award grants with longer timescales in order to have more time to create sustainable change.**

The responsibility of providing CSAE victim and survivor support services mainly resides with non-governmental organisations, private organisations, and faith-based institutions. In most instances, these organisations and institutions, have limited access to both financial and human resources which significantly impact on the availability and quality of services provided. Consequently, victims and survivors do not always get

access to complete services that they need to recover and live fulfilling lives.

Effective service delivery was not wholly dependent on the level of funding and resource available to an organisation. Organisations with comparatively limited financial resource found ways to provide a meaningful service. This is encouraging for those organisations who wish to improve their service offer by implementing all or some of the above themes.

**Positive change can be achieved in limited time and with limited budget. Further research is needed to explore the identified themes in further detail to understand whether some are more easily achieved and can potentially have a more immediate impact on victim and survivor recovery, than others.**

## 3

**MCF will work with victims and survivor services and youth engagement services to develop programmes that are informed by the target audience and do not lead to the creation of additional harm.**

There were numerous examples of organisations providing both a proactive and reactive support service, which bridge the distinction between youth engagement service and support services for victims and survivors of CSAE. For example, the Project #Be Free initiative in Namibia provides a safe space where young people and their parents can access professional services and seek guidance on a range of matters, including gender-based violence and sexual health. Similarly, evidence was provided by participants from Canada that multi-functional care centres that provide a range of services have a higher degree of success than treatment centres. The rationale provided for this was that multi-functional care centres are able to provide support across numerous areas of a young person's life, rather than just a therapeutic recovery response.

It was generally acknowledged by all participants that the involvement of young people in the design and delivery of services added value and acted to strengthen

the continued development of such programmes. Participants also valued how youth engagement services can contribute to a young person's personal development and provide an opportunity for young people to voice their opinions about important issues that can enhance greater understanding and improve the development of youth policy. Effective practices were identified in Namibia where young people actively participated in the implementation of programmes, as youth ambassadors and volunteers supporting qualified staff members. Such practice was found by participants to empower young people with skills and confidence to provide them with the ability to take advantage of life opportunities that they encounter. Effective practice was also identified in Ukraine where students participated in national forums and discussed the prevention of abuse, including technology-assisted CSAE and formulating recommendations that can be considered and implemented by governments across different countries.

**Most participants agreed that more could and more should be done to implement youth participation in the design of the services related to CSAE that they deliver. Lack of resources to expand services to facilitate this participation and provide the essential mentoring and support to young people were identified as key barriers.**

# Action Plan

## 4

**MCF will support the development of CSAE awareness raising packages for use in wider youth engagement projects**

The effective practices we have identified through completing this study, and the new partnerships we have established with services operating across the five countries, has set the foundation for future collaborative working to develop the global collective voice of victims and survivors going forward. There continues to be a stigma surrounding CSAE, which can be a silencing factor, making it harder for victims and survivors to get the help and support they need.

There are evidently many synergies that exist between those organisations that support victims and survivors of CSAE, and those broader youth engagement organisations that focus on empowerment, life skills and awareness raising of CSAE issues. There is also a clear benefit to closer collaborative working between these two areas to create better holistic services for victims and survivors. Through our future work, we intend to better align the messaging from services that support

victims and survivors of abuse and services working with youth engagement to ensure all young people are being educated about sexual abuse and exploitation, thus empowering them with the knowledge which may well enable them to speak out.

**This study has provided an opportunity to further our understanding by developing an evidence-base for what effective services delivering for victims and survivors of CSAE looks like in reality. We can be confident that the themes of effective practice identified, will inform the continued development of effective prevention and response frameworks for children who experience CSAE.**

## 5

**MCF will develop a blueprint or 'model response' in supporting victims and survivors to recover and make this model available for others to use via our Global Protection Network (GPN) platform.**

We will utilise our expertise and learning from this research. For instance, through collaboration with those who struck us as exemplifiers in their respective countries, we will develop a blueprint or 'model response' in supporting victims and survivors to recover and make this model available for others to use via our **Global Protection Network (GPN) platform**.

We will recommend such a blueprint to members of the WeProtect Global Alliance for inclusion within the Model National Response and encourage them to expand the research to include other countries.





## 6 MCF will develop campaigns that challenge the stigmatising and victim-blaming culture that can silence children.

During the remaining months to Sept 2022 and beyond, the MCF team, including its victim and survivor advocate, will be formulating plans with our new partners to explore the feasibility of establishing multi-country survivor, children, and young person engagement forums.

**The purpose of this will be to formulate, guide them and help implement plans and activity to promote the importance of victim survival and recovery through in country activity.**



We will also establish a progressive network of adult survivors, survivor groups or advocates willing to speak with experience and credibility on behalf of young people and victims to amplify their voice and speak truth to power.

## Join us

The completion of this study marks a significant milestone. However, it does not mark the end of our work, indeed, it serves to refocus our efforts and determination. We will use the findings and knowledge gained through conducting this research, to promote the sharing of practice excellence and influence opportunities to develop existing services through mutual capacity and capability building. The relationships we have established with other like-minded organisations will set the direction and momentum for developing a co-ordinated voice, which can influence change.



**Global  
Protection  
Online Network**

In so actioning our objectives, we will make available such material and advice and expertise to all via our online Global Protection Network, which you can sign up to through:

[www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk/gpn](http://www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk/gpn)

## Limitations

As previously mentioned, we recognise that this study utilised a small sample of participants. It would be fair to point out that it is incredibly difficult to draw any inferences on a country-wide scale in terms of the national provision for victim and survivor or youth engagement services with a sample of this size. However, it was not our intention to assess and understand all of the services that are available in a particular country, rather to understand an exemplar of the lived experiences of a selection of partners in order to provide an evidence base for future operations and collaborations.



## Gaps in global research



Through this study, MCF has identified gaps in global research during the literature review phase. In particular, no research readily exists that describes which particular intervention, or combination of interventions within the themes is better or more effective than another. However, the literature review only considered English language-based research and resources so is not a true reflection of global research in this area, and there may well be additional evidence bases out there that we did not account for. However, what we did find gave us a very solid base from which to formulate our themes and understanding of effective practice within victim and survivor support services and youth engagement practices.

Our study did not include a representative sample of participants and involved limited youth engagement representation from South Africa and Vietnam. However, we are not using our findings to draw conclusions of national capacity and capability within the countries concerned. Instead, the organisations who participated in this study have given us a starting point from which to attain our vision. Moreover, it is simply not credible to claim the research findings could be extrapolated to represent a credible global assertion of what is needed or lacking in survivor focussed practice. We anticipated such assertions however, this work was never intended for pure academic purposes, but rather to challenge whether theory and practical application of effective practice were in synergy.



## Limitations of remote working



The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges for us as researchers in delivering this project and caused us to diversify our usual approach. For example, each phase of the research report and engagement with participants was conducted entirely remotely. In normal circumstances, face-to-face interaction facilitates easier rapport building when it comes to identification of, and engagement with participants in the study. This in turn provides for greater levels of information and the unveiling of certain 'ground truths' which simply are lost in virtual environments and questionnaires. Had global travel restrictions not been in place, there would have been greater opportunity to dig deeper into the operational application of practice within organisations subject of engagement. Additionally, face-to-face involvement in country would likely have increased the number of participant organisations and would have enabled the research team to directly see and experience the operating environments of participating organisations.



## Appendix A

Canada: Zebra Centre Canada, Children First Canada, Associated Counselling Canada, Forensic Practice Canada, Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Centres, Pace Community Support Sexual Assault Trauma Centre

Namibia: Women's Action for Development, #Project BeFree, SODA Namibia, LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia, Sister Namibia

South Africa: Child Witness Institute, Hope Foundation, Child Welfare South Africa, Teddy Bear Foundation, Jelly Beanz

Vietnam: Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, Pacific Links Foundation

Ukraine: #Stop Sexting, Kyiv Community Centre for Children and Youth, Child Rescue Services







## Copyright notice

2022 Marie Collins Foundation. All rights reserved.

Subject to the provisions of this notice, this executive summary, and its companion Speaking Truth to Power full study report, all its contents, information or material is the copyright of the Marie Collins Foundation exclusively.

You may share and make adaptations to the work, including but not limited to: by copy, distribution and transmit the work, only when the conditions have been met:

By attribution - You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the Foundation or licensor, (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work without the expressed written consent of the Foundation).

Share Alike – If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one.

This work is not intended for commercial purposes.



Marie Collins  
Foundation

Charity Nos: 1144355 / SC048777 Company No: 7657115

Date of publication April 2022

Designed by Creative Makeover