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Galvanizing Local Anti-Trafficking Partnership Work Using Intelligence: Profiling the Problem and Building Resilience

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Abstract: Prior research has evidenced the importance of collaboration and multi-agency partnership work in responding to human trafficking in both the UK and US. Three previous key studies are synthesized in this paper. We situate multi-agency anti-trafficking collaborative work within conceptualizations of "resilience" and mechanisms by which to achieve it, and draw comparisons between the structure, organization, and activities of anti-trafficking partnerships in the UK and US. We present results, reflections, and discussion regarding the utility of local-problem diagnosis and multi-agency, using collaborative intelligence analysis as a mechanism to galvanize and organize local partnership action, resulting from action research conducted in one police force area. We posit the replication of this "problem profile" exercise as a mechanism for anti-trafficking collaborators to galvanize their aims and day-to-day efforts to make their communities resilient to human trafficking. We close by arguing for resilience as a framing for this mechanism and for local collaborative efforts.

Keywords: anti-trafficking; antislavery; multi-agency partnership; problem profile; resilience; task force

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1. Introduction

This article discusses its subject matter in two country contexts: the UK and the US. The terms "modern slavery" and "human trafficking" function as umbrella terms in those countries, respectively, that encapsulate many diverse forms of exploitation, including human trafficking, forced labor, criminal and sexual exploitation, forced marriage, forms of child slavery (including sexual exploitation), and debt bondage [1]. These diverse forms of exploitation (hereafter simply referred to as "human trafficking") are present in countries all over the globe and are estimated to affect up to 50 million people [2]. People who are trafficked can be forced to work against their will for little or no pay, exploited commercially for sex, held in domestic servitude, and forced into criminality. The methods and means through which victims are exploited vary widely and continually adapt to local demands for labor and services, often rooted in force, fraud, or coercion [3,4].

In addition to serious and organized crime, a wide variety of complex and entrenched factors underlie the challenge of human trafficking, including structural and societal factors such as levels of education, access to economic opportunity, embedded cultural norms, institutionalized business practices, economic development, conflict, human rights observance, and democracy [5]. Multiple cause-and-effect relationships link these factors to individuals' or communities' vulnerability—or resilience—to trafficking. They stretch beyond criminal enforcement and are intrinsically connected to aspects of community, place, and locality. These issues are also generally determined and governed at a local level but are frequently overlooked in the development of anti-trafficking strategies. Addressing the challenge of trafficking—from prevention through to achieving sustainable freedom for individuals and societies—therefore also requires the engagement of a wide range of actors, including local governments, statutory (government-mandated) and voluntary services, businesses, and publics. Social, community and professional networks may also be part of the solution due to their implication in the occurrence of human trafficking. For this reason, some studies

have called for more attention to community-based initiatives and the process of building "resilience" against human trafficking [6–8].

Within this framing, local communities themselves become vital "first responders" to victims of human trafficking and play important roles in providing long-term survivor and recovery services, as well as to the facilitation of prevention initiatives that are sustainable in the long term [9]. Yet, the role of these organizations (local government, non-governmental, community, and faith-based) in helping understand local issues is frequently underestimated, and local efforts can suffer from a lack of focus, accountability, and direction even in situations where a formalized partnership among such organizations exists.

Human trafficking itself is not constrained by administrative or jurisdictional boundaries, and the specific types and ways that exploitation occurs can vary considerably by geographic locality and region, and according to a range of determining factors. Furthermore, previous studies have identified not only significant gaps in the understanding of human trafficking by practitioners, but also in the cohesion of different organizations working against it [10], while research by Gardner has shown significant implementation gaps between national policy and local on-the-ground response [11].

Therefore, it is vital that efforts to address human trafficking are underpinned, in part, by a local and accurate problem diagnosis that provides the intelligence picture, or "problem profile" of trafficking in that area, describing the nature, frequency, and contextual conditions that surround local manifestations of trafficking, according to what information and data are available. Such an approach, for example, can enable partnership structures to draw upon principles of situational crime prevention (a framework for developing crime reduction strategies that rely on the contextual understanding of a given crime issue) to develop offender deterrence strategies, organize local knowledge, inform the requirements of crime commission [12], and to increase opportunities for criminal deterrence by removing opportunities and incentives to offend (p. 335, [13]). As part of a wider approach to building local resilience to human trafficking, we use the problem profile as a mechanism to demonstrate the collaborative benefit of multi-agency working, and the coordination of multi-sectoral skills and expertise as a means of further developing a locality's multi-agency anti-trafficking response (in the UK, antislavery partnerships are roughly counterpart to US human trafficking task forces).

In this paper, we draw from three previous articles. The first, an empirical study by Rinaldi-Semione [14], focuses on establishing conceptions of freedom and resilience from across the anti-trafficking field and provides insights into the structure and functioning of anti-trafficking partnerships in the US and UK. The second, containing conceptual research by Gardner et al. [8], is used to define the idea of 'antislavery resilience' and provides a framework for its use within anti-trafficking partnership settings. Finally, we draw new insights and reflect on Brewster et al.'s work to operationalize aspects of the Gardner et al. resilience cycle within one such anti-trafficking partnership setting [15].

We premise that organizations that are currently engaged in local anti-trafficking responses can work together to develop an understanding of the underpinning issues associated with human trafficking, which can result in a significant improvement of the coordination and specificity of localized anti-trafficking interventions. We open with an overview of the anti-trafficking partnership landscape in the UK and US. We then synthesize two conceptions of resilience against human trafficking—a concept that is core to our paper. Next, we detail what a problem profile is, what its significance can be for local anti-trafficking partnerships and communities' resilience against human trafficking, and how a problem profile was developed and used by one UK anti-trafficking partnership in Nottinghamshire County. We argue for the problem profile as a mechanism to galvanize local partnership work and build community-level resilience. The problem profile itself is rooted not only in foundational concepts but in a process that will be described later in this paper. Finally, we reflect on the preponderance of police leadership in anti-trafficking partnerships in both country contexts, drawing our reflections mainly from the process of completing the problem profile that is described in this paper. We conclude that viewing

local anti-trafficking efforts and activities through a resilience framework—and operationalizing resilience using problem profiles—sets up anti-trafficking partnerships to be effective for the organizations that participate, as well as for survivors and those who are vulnerable to being victimized in their communities.

2. Anti-Trafficking Partnerships

Globally, efforts to address human trafficking continue to have momentum, with partnership work that seeks to build cooperation and collaboration between different organizations—in one form or another—forming a central pillar of the anti-trafficking landscape. Before advancing the discussion of how anti-trafficking collaborations can build resilience using a problem profile, it is important to understand some of the key characteristics of collaborations in the UK and US, which are the subject of this paper and the studies that have informed it.

These partnerships exist at many different levels. They range from international networks advocating for systemic change, to local organizations in specific localities that collaborate on operational incidents within specific towns and cities. These networks are driven and led by a range of actors, including international organizations, law enforcement, local government, and faith- and community-based organizations, and for a range of different reasons. At the international level, the UN's Alliance 8.7 brings together a range of UN bodies, international NGOs, and the International Labor Organization to drive global action against slavery in service of the UN Sustainable Development Goals [16]. Other initiatives from faith groups, such as the Catholic Church's Santa Marta Group and Church of England's Clewer Initiative, have also increased in number and visibility at the national and regional levels [17,18]. Additionally, non-profit organizations, such as The Salvation Army, often engage in partnerships at many levels and in many capacities, from that of delivering direct victim services in local communities through to national and international collaborations to influence legislation and policy.

These collaborations can vary significantly in scope and objective. However, they have in common that they attempt to foster collaboration and draw upon the skills, experience, and roles of organizational partners in some form of anti-trafficking activity. Partnership activities often align with one or more of the three Ps that have become institutionalized across anti-trafficking work: prevention, protection, and prosecution. Some of the approaches taken by collaborations act as strategic platforms, are about building networks and facilitating knowledge exchange, while others are more operationally focused, attempting to mobilize frontline practitioners and members of the community to identify and prevent individual instances of exploitation.

2.1. UK Anti-Trafficking Partnerships

Since the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, the UK has seen a "patchwork" of multi-agency partnerships emerge [19]. These partnerships, typically organized along police-force boundaries [19], have been signposted as vital components of the national human trafficking response and are cited within key national policy documentation, such as the Home Office Modern Slavery Strategy, as "essential" and established as a top priority [20]. These partnerships typically involve both private and public sector organizations and seek to bring together their skills, responsibilities, and expertise [21,22].

The most visible examples of collaboration exist where organizations have existing legal responsibilities related to human trafficking—such as statutory safeguarding responsibilities (in the case of local authorities) and police. It is understandable, then, that in these instances relationships are forged and driven by individuals within the police or a local authority. However, other government organizations, including the national labor inspectorate and immigration authorities, are also regular collaborators. These groups are often focused on work including victim identification, law enforcement, intelligence collection, and "days of action" targeting particular risk areas—such as airport arrivals or particular business types, such as car washes and beauty parlors [23].

A year after the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the UK government commissioned an independent review into the Act's effectiveness as a criminal justice response to human trafficking. The resulting report indicated that partnerships have a potentially significant contribution to make in local-level responses. The report also advocated for partnerships to take a more active role in the collection and synthesis of data and intelligence from different partners, building on pre-existing relationships and networks in some UK regions between police, local authorities, the voluntary sector, and other partners in relation to child sexual exploitation [10].

While there has been support and some advocacy for partnership work within the UK anti-trafficking discourse, it is not a legal requirement. Moreover, the Home Office[1] has not significantly acknowledged the role of partnerships in the national human trafficking response. In fact, Gardner has argued that while national implementation of modern slavery responses are mostly joined-up and coupled with policy, policy solutions, and political advocacy, they are not being translated into practical solutions at the local level [11], leading to inconsistent and extremely localized responses in different areas of the country. For example, staff churn appears to be a significant inhibitor in this area. This was observed as a trend across five UK regions in a study by Brewster [23], with partnerships often shown to be contingent on key policy entrepreneurs or "special people" to drive forward activity [11]. High levels of churn across organizations means that impetus is prone to stalling, as key individuals change roles or organizations. On the other hand, the formal structure and culture of many law enforcement agencies, specifically means that portfolio responsibility is handed over more effectively even during times of turbulence and high staff churn [19,24].

Noting the above, it is perhaps unsurprising that official guidance on the implementation of multi-agency work is also limited. However, other organizations have stepped up to fill this gap in the absence of statutory support. For instance, the UK National Audit Office's "Stolen Freedom" report on reducing modern slavery and the Local Government Association's guide to modern slavery, which has been developed in conjunction with the Office of the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC), provides some guidance on multi-agency work [25–27]. Moreover, an online toolkit of resources curated by the IASC and University of Nottingham Rights Lab provides a repository of guidance including examples of promising practice, provided in-kind by antislavery partnerships themselves [28]. The toolkit includes information on topics that include partnership membership, objectives, resourcing, monitoring, and evaluation. Progressing through the resilience cycle to develop a clear diagnosis of local or regional issues can also be a key step towards building sustainable, place-based, antitrafficking efforts [8].

The lack of clear official guidance on which organizations should be involved in partnership work, and what they should do, means that the structures that emerge do so organically, and with relative autonomy, driven by local anti-trafficking entrepreneurs. While this gives flexibility in responding to local needs, it also means that there is inconsistency in the organization, the activities that partnerships undertake, and their overall focus. This is also impacted by the largely unfunded nature of partnerships, making them reliant on the commitment, knowledge, and often the drive of a few individuals to build and sustain momentum [11]. This inconsistency is even visible through the interchangeable use of "network" and "partnership"—despite public policy and local governance scholars making clear differentiations between partnerships as organizational structures and networks as modes of governance [21].

Multi-agency partnership structures in the UK have their origins in safeguarding (i.e., statutory efforts to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of citizens, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect [29], most notably in relation to children [22,30]). However, the activities undertaken by UK-based antislavery partnerships are seldom limited to safeguarding [24]. In fact, research shows that safeguarding is not even the most common activity anti-trafficking partnerships engage in. Instead, intelligence acquisition, training, and awareness-raising feature as common and well-received

activities [23,24]. Survivor support, victim identification, and referrals were also shown to be common [24].

2.2. US Anti-Trafficking Collaborations

This section briefly introduces US anti-trafficking collaborations for two reasons. First, several US collaborations were involved in one of the studies from which we draw conceptually in this paper. Second, we will ultimately suggest that "profiling the problem" of human trafficking can be an impactful and worthwhile exercise for galvanizing local anti-trafficking work not only in the UK (where most of the studies we appeal to were focused) but in the US.

Speaking broadly, US human trafficking collaborations—often called task forces—are the counterparts to UK antislavery partnerships. They are cross-disciplinary or multi-sector, they acknowledge the strength of coordinated anti-trafficking efforts, and they are focused on ending human trafficking locally [31]. Like UK partnerships, task forces are not uniformly structured or resourced and not all of them provide the same services or follow the same focus on prosecutions or prevention. The phenomenon of naming task forces is also inconsistent in the US, though "task force" is the prevailing label regardless of what descriptors precede it (e.g., Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, Tennessee's Human Trafficking Task Force Initiative, etc.) [32].

There are also dissimilarities between UK and US collaborations. For example, many US task forces are funded, at least in part, with federal money. They are often also co-led by a law enforcement agency and a victim service provider (often an NGO). The latter fact is connected to the required "co-leadership model" for applicants to the Office for Victims of Crime's "Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking" grant scheme [33].

At the federal level and trickling down to the regional and local levels through the influence of funding, the US as a nation operates on the three Ps paradigm: prosecution, protection, and prevention. Occasionally, agencies and organizations will appeal to a fourth P: partnership. Task forces in the US embody the fourth P as a mechanism for achieving the others.

3. Resilience

The concept of resilience is key to our proposed approach to galvanizing local anti-trafficking partnership work. Our rationale for discussing resilience is linked to the role of localized efforts in building not only resilience but landscapes that are sustainably unfertile for human trafficking. Our rationale is also linked to the reality that anti-trafficking collaborations exist, in part, because trafficking is already present in their localities. This means that there are victims and survivors—not just vulnerable people and potential victims—who need to be considered in building those landscapes. Two resilience studies are described below, followed by a statement on the significance of resilience for local anti-trafficking work.

3.1. Conceptions of Resilience

The first of the two studies about resilience that we synthesize is by Gardner et al. This work conceptualizes "resilience" as a process for understanding and addressing local "social determinants" of resilience to exploitation [8]. The approach is adapted from Holling's model of eco-systems resilience, which argues for the idea of resilience as the adaptive capacity of a system to respond to change—or, as a response to vulnerability (p. 394, [34]), [35]. In it, Gardner et al. posit that the capacity to build resilience is dependent on different local or regional resources (or "assets") to address human trafficking. However, the availability of such assets can vary significantly. For example, the range and density of services in large and densely populated urban environments can be vastly different from smaller rural towns and villages, requiring that interventions be shaped accordingly. Gardner et al. conceptualize such assets as "social determinants of resilience."

Within their model, these assets exist across two axes. On one axis, assets are arranged according to whether they are at the personal (individual) level, are related to culture and locality, are legal and regulatory, or structural. On the other axis, they are arranged according to whether they play a role in prevention, discovery, respite and recovery, or sustainable resilience (see Figure 1) [8]. For example, such assets might include spot-the-signs training at a personal level to aid in the discovery of victims; at the locality level, the availability of safe and suitable housing to provide respite, and at the regulatory level, the legal mandate to provide victims with adequate physical and psychological health support.

Figure 1. The social determinants of a slavery-free community (originally in Gardner et al. [8]).

Gardner et al.'s [8] contextualized model outlines the resilience cycle and draws upon four conceptual phases to inform the development of local communities that are free from slavery (see Figure 2). This approach is based on established principles from the field of ecosystems[2] and identifies four stages of activity that are strengthened after each cycle.

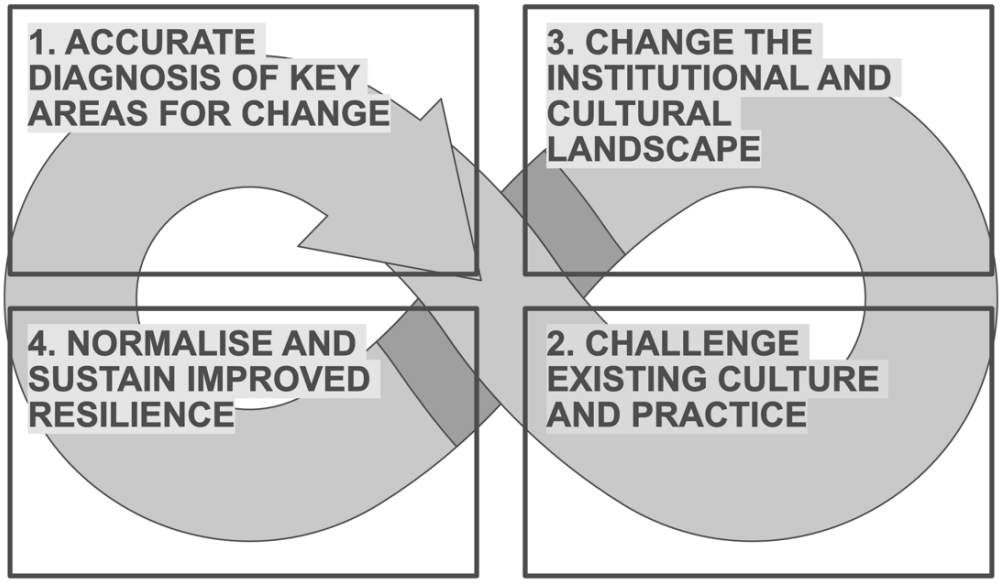

Figure 2. Adaptive cycle of resilience to build slavery-free communities (originally in Gardner et al. [8]).

The first stage of the cycle concerns the *diagnosis of problems and potential solutions*. Building resilience involves, first, an understanding of vulnerability and risk. Local manifestations of trafficking and exploitation can be understood more clearly through the analysis of risk factors, and by illuminating geographic, demographic, or sectoral weaknesses that can manifest as threats. This process can also contribute to the recognition of community assets that can help to address different forms of trafficking. By taking inputs, tools, and datasets from different local stakeholder organizations, local trends and intervention points can emerge.

When we describe the development of a problem profile later in this paper and argue for its use in local anti-trafficking partnerships, we are describing an approach to working through the first diagnostic stage of the resilience cycle.

In its second stage, the cycle encourages the *challenging of hierarchies and systems*, and initiates a process of community development involving a broad and varied range of actors who meet, validate, and exchange ideas on the risks and vulnerabilities identified during stage one. During this process, actions are prioritized for implementation, and learning from both within and outside the shared community. The process may also be informed by the input and voices of trafficking survivors, who are well positioned to challenge systemic weaknesses and imbalance.

The third stage of the cycle aims to begin the process of *changing the cultural and institutional landscape*. Specifically, this phase explores the assets and innovation that are needed to enable and foster change, especially in response to the structural determinants that were identified as promoting local vulnerability to human trafficking in stage one. This process is not isolated to government and law enforcement partners; however, others, such as the media and local business, can play important roles in creating the necessary context and will to enable and embed change.

Finally, the fourth stage considers any changes to governance, legislation, and policy that are needed to effect positive change and to embed, *normalize, and sustain resilience*. This stage focuses on monitoring and evaluating the progress being made to address trafficking, share learning, and further initiate governance changes—if they are considered necessary. The adaptive cycle is a continual process. Its purpose is not to be used as a singular linear exercise with a definitive endpoint, but as something that is continually used to adjust, adapt, and re-evaluate local work, enabling continuous improvement in a locality's response to human trafficking. Although not every problem can be resolved at a local level, by working together across key areas of action, anti-trafficking collaborations can create a context in which it is more difficult for diverse forms of exploitation to take root or retain their footing.

The second study about resilience that we draw from in this paper was undertaken by Rinaldi-Semione. In it, resilience was identified as a key component of the definition of "freedom from slavery"[3]. The full definition of freedom revealed by this qualitative–quantitative study in the UK and US was, "having free will, or the ability to do things without feeling controlled, coerced, pressured, or forced to do so; usually experienced together with choice or resilience" [14]. This is a composite definition that represents 11 unique conceptions of freedom that were discovered. The research found that free will is always paramount to freedom, and that the secondary characteristic of freedom will either be choice or resilience (pp. 208–210, [14]).

Within this research, resilience itself is broadly understood as the ability to overcome challenges or thrive, despite a previous experience of slavery. This can be experienced at the individual level (e.g., "Never seeing yourself as a slave and never accepting slavery, even if others once treated you like a slave") or at the community level (e.g., "a community deciding to work together to end human trafficking") [14]. Of the 11 conceptions of freedom, four were characterized by an emphasis on resilience. These four conceptions are:

1. Freedom as personal resilience and a positive experience of the world, "[placing] a high value on personal, internal resilience and on positive experiences of the external world";

2. Survivor-centered comprehensive resilience, where resilience is twofold. First, it means that "an individual is able to recover from their previous experience of slavery and to withstand future threats of victimization." Second, resilience "is society's ability to recover from slavery and withstand future instances of it";
3. Resilience against past enslavement and future harm, which is focused on survivors as individuals and contains three elements. Resilience against "past enslavement" "involves recovery from all aspects of that experience, culminating in a survivor's ability to live a day without reference to the physical and psychological experience of trafficking. Resilience against future harm involves having the ability to protect oneself against various types of harm, including . . . the recurrence of enslavement." This conception of freedom "also involves the internal resolve of 'never seeing yourself as a slave and never accepting slavery, even if others once treated you like a slave'"; and
4. Resilient self-perception and dignity, which "emphasizes an individual regaining control over their self-perception" and, secondarily, "being healed from the damaging effects [of trafficking] and healed from the physical harm [caused by trafficking]" (pp. 145, 152, 155, 173, 187–189, [14]).

Community-level resilience against trafficking was linked to individual resilience for survivors and to conceptions of freedom at large. This was one of the major findings related to resilience to emerge from Rinaldi-Semione's research. Within the conceptions of freedom named above, there were several specific elements identified as important for the community or societal level. These are:

- Access to justice against traffickers, which "speaks to a survivor's access to legal justice against their perpetrator . . . but is predicated on the idea that justice would be available to them in the first place. A society that facilitates justice not only supports the resilience of survivors but its own resilience to modern slavery through the righting of wrongs";
- The ability to defend oneself "against people who try to limit your well-being, dominate you, or traffic you", which both refers to an individual's resilience and "also speaks to . . . the societal level because it implies that perpetrators will have less success committing future modern slavery crimes against survivors and, by nature of being less successful in their designs toward individuals, will have less success in . . . society . . . If an individual is less vulnerable, society is less vulnerable." The ability to defend oneself "might include making use of the structures society has in place to protect and maintain individuals' rights or well-being, including making use of programs aimed at supporting survivors";
- "A community deciding to work together to end human trafficking," which is indicative of a community-level commitment "to a resilient future alongside its commitment to the resilience of individuals within that community who have already been victimized";
- Having dignity and having one's "humanity recognized by others," which is an aim in which an individual can only have limited success if their community does not acknowledge their dignity. This community responsibility has some structural elements at its core, but must also be implicit in the ethos and behavior of community members toward one another—including toward victims and survivors;
- "Living in a world without abuse or oppression," which is, similarly, a quality of society that an individual can only have limited success in securing for themself;
- Being "given an equal opportunity with everybody else to thrive" is, again, an element of resilience that depends upon a community and that cannot be created by an individual; and
- Being "protected in the areas of life where you are vulnerable," which can play out differently in the lives of specific individuals, but which relies wholly on structures and norms at the society or community level (pp. 155–156,189, [14]).

3.2. The Significance of Resilience in Local Anti-Trafficking Partnership Work

The link between resilience and freedom offers additional impetus to resolving effective, efficient pathways to resilience in local partnership working. There has been a recent discussion of resilience in the context of anti-trafficking efforts. When Gardner et al. introduced their resilience framework and social determinants model, they borrowed from the field of ecosystems studies. They said, "we ground our analysis in the eco-systems resilience of Holling (1986, 2001) who argued that resilience is the adaptive capacity of a system, and 'can be thought of as the opposite of the vulnerability of the system' (Holling, 2001, p. 394)" [8]. While the resilience framework and community-level social determinants of resilience (tailored to human trafficking) that they provide are significant contributions to the anti-trafficking field, this conception of resilience can be strengthened by a focus on the place and substance of resilience as more than the "opposite of vulnerability." Rinaldi-Semione's work provides an understanding of resilience itself that is grounded in community-level anti-trafficking efforts. Together, the two pieces of research create a more complete picture of the links between human trafficking, anti-trafficking community efforts, and resilience. Additionally, together they provide rich, operationalizable concepts and frameworks that can be of great benefit to the various actors engaged in anti-trafficking collaborations.

According to the results of Rinaldi-Semione's study, resilience can be understood as communities' and individuals' ability to overcome challenges or thrive, despite a previous experience of slavery. This conception of resilience, coupled especially with Gardner et al.'s social determinants model, can be readily operationalized in location-specific efforts to build resilience and the freedom it bears out—both at the community and individual levels. As a consistent conception, it is relevant at all stages of the resilience cycle.

Take, for example, the description of "survivor-centered comprehensive resilience"—one theme in how anti-trafficking collaborators and survivors explained the details of how "thriving despite a previous experience of slavery" plays out. Under this theme, achieving individual recovery from a "previous experience of slavery and [the ability] to withstand future threats of victimization" might be accomplished through a focus on social determinants across multiple levels of society, such as support for survivors, support for the vulnerable, and access to employment (see Figure 1). These example determinants are relevant to all four stages of the resilience cycle (see Figure 2).

4. The Problem Profile

4.1. Overview of a Problem Profile

The third piece of research that is central to our paper is by Brewster et al. and centers on the creation of a problem profile within one UK anti-trafficking partnership [15]. Problem profiles are a form of intelligence product used in UK policing, as defined by the UK College of Policing's Authorized Professional Practice (APP) database, and are part of the UK National Intelligence Model. Problem profiles are also recommended at the UN level. Problem profiles are typically developed by police forces to provide understanding of established and emerging crime, to establish details on crime trends and hotspots, and to highlight potential prevention, intelligence, and enforcement opportunities [36,37]. APP guidance goes on to state that problem profiles should consider a range of information sources (including those external to police) with the purpose of answering the "what, where, when, who, and how" of crime issues in the processes assessing the risk posed by a particular issue—in this case, human trafficking. When used within policing, problem profiles and other intelligence products are used to prompt action to address identified issues through the management of enforcement plans and operations and the allocation of policing resources, according to local requirements. In a practical sense, this can include the deployment of preventative measures—such as surveillance initiatives, community awareness campaigns, increasing resources to investigate incidents linked to specific crime trends, the proactive targeting of suspected offenders, or crime and disorder hotspots.

Used within a partnership context, however, problem profiles take on a different and additional meaning—and here we position the problem profile as a part of the first stage of developing resilience, and as a key mechanism through which to *diagnose local problems and identify possible solutions*. Within policing, data collection, intelligence analysis, and tasking and coordination are vertically integrated internal functions. However, within partnership settings, organizations are bound by their own objectives, functions, and resourcing constraints. While police may be well placed to play a role as key conveners of partnership activity—due to their inherent ability to attract organizations' attention [23]—they are not necessarily able to task and coordinate partner organizations in the same way as they would their own resources. In this sense, the role of the problem profile shifts from directly influencing policing action to galvanizing the activity of partners, and influencing and focusing partnership action-planning activity onto key problem areas identified throughout the development of the profile. The development and utilization of a problem profile can then demonstrate the collaborative benefit of multi-agency work, and can combine the skills and expertise of multi-sector partners as a means of further developing a locality-specific multi-agency anti-trafficking response.

The idea of collaborative advantage is especially important. We posit that anti-trafficking stakeholders have the potential to be more "than the sum of their . . . parts" through effective partnership working [23][4]. That is, by working together, organizations that share the remit to address human trafficking can achieve more by working together than in isolation. These partnerships, regardless of the public program or agenda on which they are focused, usually involve both public and private sector organizations.

4.2. How a Problem Profile Can Galvanize Local Anti-Trafficking Partnership Work and Build Resilience

Developing a "sustainable place-based resilience against exploitation" is one of the underpinning bases and benefits of creating a problem profile. Empowered with a rich understanding of resilience, collaborators undertaking a problem profile can target their efforts not only toward addressing identified issues of exploitation, but also toward supporting and building freedom for survivors who are already known to them—and for those who will be discovered through ongoing anti-trafficking efforts. For example, in Nottinghamshire, where local collaborators have gone through the process of creating a problem profile, labor exploitation was found to be the most common type of human trafficking affecting the area, and the dominant demographic was non-British nationals [15]. One potential application of resilience as "communities' and individuals' ability to overcome challenges or thrive, despite a previous experience of slavery," [14] could be to target the use of assets toward developing safe migration pathways (addressing the community level for future protection of community members) and access to employment (supporting both current and future individual survivors) (see Figure 1).

The problem profile can act as a catalyst for cohesion and actionable commitment for partners in anti-trafficking collaborations. It sits very naturally in the first stage of the resilience cycle and its assessments of assets and challenges—together with a plan for leveraging the former to address the latter—can guide progression through to the following three stages of that cycle (see Figure 2). If a collaboration were to follow the flow of the resilience cycle, partners should reevaluate the problem profile and update it on their return to the first stage.

5. The Methods and Process of Developing a Problem Profile

In this section we offer a discussion of the methods and process of operationalizing stage one—problem diagnosis—of Gardner et al.'s resilience cycle [8] by creating a "problem profile" of human trafficking. Our discussion builds on an abbreviated description of this work within Brewster et al. [15], and offers additional reflection, an insight into the process of co-creating the problem profile with stakeholders operating within one UK police force jurisdiction (which corresponded to the geographic remit of an anti-trafficking partnership),

describing several layers of co-development that were built into the process at different stages of the profile's completion.

Our research involved an initial analysis of data which was then combined with qualitative insights and case studies elicited from anti-trafficking partners during the consultation period to develop a report. Further consultations were then held through a series of workshops with partnership members and other local area anti-trafficking stakeholders to discuss the findings and to plan actions for future partnership activity. Using the problem profile, we sought to inform the decision-making of core partnership members, such as the police and local government, and with them, plan actions to be taken forward by the partnership and its members. At its core, the report provided contextual insights into the specific nature of human trafficking and its reported scale in the focus area, foregrounding in the process any relevant emerging or current criminal trends or threats.

For example, it revealed that criminal exploitation and labor exploitation accounted for around two thirds of recorded incidences in the area, with child criminal exploitation accounting for a significant proportion of the exploitation in the area—broadly reflecting national trends of recorded victims taken from the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)[5] during the same period. Criminal exploitation in the UK frequently involves the exploitation of children and young adults through a process known as "county lines," which involves the migration of illegal drugs (frequently, heroin and crack cocaine) between urban and rural or coastal areas [38–40][6].

Additionally, and through consultation with non-police partners, we sought to establish any intelligence gaps by qualitatively examining whether the representation of trafficking within the profile was consistent with what they understood and encountered professionally, the reasons for any disparity, and opportunities for collaboration between organizations that may assist in the illumination of previously unknown or misunderstood issues. Through the profile we also sought to create a map of local assets (support services, accommodation, etc.), highlight potential vulnerabilities within local service provision, and assist in the prioritization of risk and action planning to enable the informed operational resourcing of actions both by police and the partnership more widely—aligned to the national modern slavery strategy that follows the paradigm of the four Ps: pursue, prevent, protect, and prepare.

These aims were realized following four thematic workshops with organizations involved in the partnership. Partners were encouraged to challenge the initial draft of the problem profile—recognizing that organizations that interact with different aspects of anti-trafficking work hold valuable contextual insights based on their professional experiences and knowledge—such as those who work in survivor support settings. These discussions were used to negotiate access to additional data that could be used to close intelligence and evidence gaps, and to develop joint actions to address key challenges identified by partners. Inputs from the focus group were added alongside initial findings from the police data to inform our analysis.

Within the resilience context, this period of consultation and workshops formed part of how we practiced phase two of the resilience cycle introduced earlier, the *challenging of hierarchies and systems*. Having identified locality-specific determinants and assets during the process of developing the problem profile in stage one, these workshops were positioned as a community development process—sometimes even beyond the core membership of the partnership. The workshops involved the discussion and validation of risk and vulnerability and were used as a vehicle through which to prioritize and implement action and to share effective practice.

The first of the themes covered in the workshops related to assets, accommodation, and survivor support. Partnership members cited a need for an iterative review of survivor care practices in line with national "Survivor Care Standards," including the development of a unified referral pathway within the police-force area, and further engagement with organizations whose operations intersect with anti-trafficking work but that are not formally a part of the partnership. The second theme focused on the then emerging challenge of

child criminal exploitation (CCE) and county lines. An increase in the number of children being referred through the NRM referrals meant that they were conscious of the need to raise awareness and educate young people on issues, including grooming and CCE, to engage more effectively with parents, and to involve additional partners linked to youth justice and gang intervention services as part of their work. The third theme focused on communicating with communities. Partnership members identified a need for targeted engagement with specific communities where they understood there to be a high risk of exploitation, but where the perception of risk was not resulting in high numbers of referrals. Young people, people with cognitive impairments or who are homeless were specifically referenced as examples of groups needing to be targeted more proactively. Finally, one workshop focused on other emerging threats and trends. Partners identified emerging concerns related to the exploitation of young people as money mules, and communities that have little engagement with statutory organizations. The limited availability of intelligence from neighboring counties on cross-border issues was identified as a another gap.

The problem profile itself contains sensitive information. As such, it was shared locally within the partnership but is not more widely available. However, a publicly available research briefing summarizes the core components of the problem profile and a supplementary guide outlining why and how to create a problem profile has also been published [15,41].

6. Addressing the Preponderance of Police Leadership: Reflections after Completing a Problem Profile

In both the UK and the US, police and other law enforcement actors are frequently found in leadership roles over multi-agency anti-trafficking collaborations. The issue of who is best placed to chair and coordinate partnerships has been quietly debated among and between partnerships in the UK for several years. In the UK, "the majority of police forces . . . are working with an anti-slavery partnership at strategic or operational level" [24]. In both the UK and US, police lead a significant number of partnerships and task forces [19,24], as was the case in the studies that this article draws from. In the UK, this is at least partly because partnership funding is scarce, and where it does exist one likely source is Police and Crime Commissioners [19]. It has further been suggested that this trend of police leadership as either partnership chairs or coordinators is "symptomatic of a high level of emphasis on enforcement, and not enough on victim identification and survivor support, reflecting some wider criticisms of the overall national agenda" within the UK's anti-trafficking movement [19,24]. However, the reverse may also be indicated in this trend. That is, this leadership may well be interpreted as "a policing acknowledgement that modern slavery is not a problem that can be managed effectively through enforcement alone. And in this respect, the policing drive for partnerships, and the involvement of other statutory and non-statutory organizations can be considered as a recognition of the need for a joined-up and victim-focused response" [19].

Previous research identified funding and resourcing as key topics of discussion within UK-based antislavery partnerships [19,24]. The research identified that much of the activity and partnership work in the UK did not receive dedicated funding, with work typically funded from the existing individual budgets and staff time of participating organizations. Whilst the research identifies that organizations still view partnership activity as part of their core remit, the lack of dedicated resources for partnership activity makes it very difficult for any specific activity to be undertaken to address challenges that were identified, and puts partnerships on precarious footing, at risk of becoming a series of meetings with no actions or outcomes. The same report finds a divide between partnerships that saw multi-agency work as a core function that did not necessarily require or warrant specific dedicated funding, and those that perceived a lack of dedicated funding to be a significant barrier that limited the abilities of partnerships to effectively coordinate work and render them vulnerable to funding cuts and changes in organizational priorities. For partnerships that did attract funding, such as from Police and Crime Commissioners, NGOs, or the

police, this was often limited in scale—and provided only the means for secretariat and meeting costs rather than specific funding for service delivery and other activities.

In the US, the prevalence of police as leaders in anti-trafficking collaborations is at least partly driven by the OVC's requirement that task forces under the federally funded Enhanced Collaborative Task Force Model have a law enforcement co-lead [33]. There are documented challenges around non-police partners collaborating with police in the US anti-trafficking context, though these are not exclusive to police in collaboration leadership roles [42]. Anecdotally, from within task forces, there have also been complaints about the police as being heavy-handed, arrest-focused, or uneducated about human trafficking and engaging with victims. These complaints are regular enough that police even on long-established and generally successful task forces can be the first to point them out. One police partner interview for the study concerning freedom (introduced above) said that he and his police colleagues were used to being viewed by other partners as the "bad guys" in collaborations [14]. Therefore, in the US, as well as in the UK, there can be an animosity or resentment over whether police are the best stakeholders to be leading collaborative anti-trafficking efforts—especially those with a focus on delivering victim support.

Speculatively, a further reason law enforcement leadership might be so prevalent in both countries that are the focus of this paper may be that funding for law enforcement bodies themselves is far more stable than it is for many of the non-profit, business, and lower-profile public agencies with which they partner. That is, law enforcement bodies are likely to survive financial ebbs where other partners may not, because even if their remit is affected by changes in funding, their existence will not be threatened in most cases. Additionally, as a result of their government-pronounced mandates, they are also endowed with an authority that other partners probably are not, and that authority—under at least some circumstances—will by default include authority over their partners [42].

However, research conducted in both countries shows that police and other law enforcement partners may, in fact, be very well-suited to the task. While one common complaint against law enforcement collaborators is that they are not victim-centered enough; Rinaldi-Semione's research shows that in local collaborations, direct victim service providers do not have a strong advantage over law enforcement partners in understanding victims' and survivors' perspectives; "law enforcement professionals are not as aloof to survivors' perspectives or as coldly operational as commonly traded narratives could lead us to believe" [14]. This is true at the national level, but it is also apparent at the local level, within individual anti-trafficking collaborations. Survivors and direct victim service providers held shared conceptions of "freedom from slavery" seven out of 17 times and at four of six UK and US research sites. By comparison, law enforcement professionals and survivors held shared conceptions of freedom within those same communities six out of 17 times and at four research sites [14]. Despite research suggesting that UK-based partnerships would be better led by organizations other than the police, due to some of the challenges, partnerships continue to be overwhelmingly driven, led, and coordinated by police.

During our action research in developing the problem profile in one UK police-force area, some factors led us also to reconsider whether the police were better suited to coordinating than we initially thought.

Firstly, police were open and willing to volunteer data to create the profile—despite critiques that they can lack transparency with partner organizations or hide behind security classifications. We found a real willingness from police to invest in identifying appropriate mechanisms to sharing data—and resourcing, making raw crime, intelligence, and victim referral data available for the work—something we were not able to replicate with other organizations in the partnership, we suspect due to issues with resourcing and churn.

Police also played a key role in galvanizing and cajoling other partners around the table—inviting key personnel from different organizations to meetings, providing meeting space, and driving participation from other organizations.

Police—for better or worse—tend to have comparatively more resources at their disposal than other organizations in the partnership. A key follow-on activity following the development of the problem profile was a participatory process of identifying thematic priority areas, defining action items to address them, and assigning ownership to partners to take work forward. For example, one thematic priority area focused on the need to improve the cohesion of the multi-agency response to CCE, with actions including developing a joint county lines strategy across the partnership, identifying training needs, and mapping existing institutions working on different aspects of CCE across the region. However, with little resource or capacity available to resource work, assigning responsibility to different organizations proved challenging, with police often the ones left driving work forward.

7. Conclusions

Within this paper, we position "resilience" as a concept that equally applies to the individual ability to overcome challenges or thrive, and to "places" in their attempts to foster communities that are sustainably unfertile for human trafficking. In doing so, we offer proof of concept for a process of community-resilience building underpinned by a clear assessment of vulnerabilities and assets or levers for change [11,19,43].

We note that anti-trafficking collaborations exist, in part, because trafficking is already present in localities, and that there are victims and survivors—not just vulnerable people and potential victims—who need to be considered in building communities that are resilient to trafficking. In recent research, resilience was identified as a key component of the definition of "freedom from slavery" [14]. We apply this concept to both the individual and community and posit that the relationship between resilience and freedom gives additional impetuous to resolving efficient, effective pathways to resilience in local partnership settings. With that conceptualization, this paper discusses the operationalization of the initial stages of a collaborative, partnership-based approach to developing resilience within one UK police-force area.

We explain the role of a problem profile as a collaborative mechanism for *diagnosing a local problem and identifying solutions*, mapping community assets, and, as a catalyst, challenge *hierarchies and systems* at the local level so that communities may better address human trafficking through the identification of place and context-specific problem areas and local partnership-based actions to address them. We offered further examples of how partnerships might identify aims or the effects of resilience within their community when designing their own problem profiles and when embarking upon a resilience cycle-based approach to local partnership working.

By triangulating findings from action research in one local partnership setting with two additional studies by the authors in partnership settings across the UK and US, we also reflected upon some of the additional challenges and complexities associated with multi-agency anti-trafficking/slavery partnership work. For example, our research highlighted partnership challenges regarding leadership—particularly related to the suitability of police as coordinators and convenors of partnership work and funding. We suggest that by embarking on collaborative problem diagnosis and asset-mapping work as a first step towards a partnership approach that is grounded in the concept of resilience, partnerships can better establish a shared understanding of local assets, resources, and objectives. When seen in terms of striving towards resilient localities, this can help alleviate some challenges—for example, it ought to assist in the determination and establishment of appropriate collaboration leadership.

We believe that while the problem profile as a mechanism must be localized, its value and relevance are widely applicable across multi-agency anti-trafficking collaborations in both the UK and the US—especially when seen as a tool developed by and for a range of collaborative stakeholders from across sectors. While its roots may originate in policing, the development of a problem profile in a collaborative anti-trafficking context provides clarifying opportunities for collaborators and a valuable occasion to assess assets in a locality rather than focusing solely on challenges such as crime trends, and we would

encourage collaborations and partnerships in different settings to contextualize and adapt the approach for their own needs. Furthermore, the finished product acts as a guiding document for the decisions and strategies that were decided by collaborators during that process. Additionally, collaborators might find that the evaluation of progress against the problem profile is both straightforward and further clarifies future rounds of local anti-trafficking efforts.

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Notes

[1] The Home Office is the UKs equivalent to the US Department of State. The Home Office leads and coordinates UK activity on passports and immigration, drugs policy, crime, and counterterrorism.

[2] The adaptive cycle is taken from C.S. Holling's 2001 paper on Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological, and Social Systems in Ecosystems, 4 (5), 390–405.

[3] "Slavery" follows UK anti-trafficking vernacular and is used here because the study was undertaken by a researcher at a UK institution.

[4] On Huxam's *Creating Collaborative Advantage*

[5] The National Referral Mechanism, or NRM, is the UK government's policy mechanism by which trafficking survivors in the UK access government-funded support.

[6] "County lines" is so-called due to the centrality of the mobile phone line which is used by dealing networks to establish a database of active drug users, using the phone as a "deal line" that connects new customers to the "out of town" dealers operating in their area.

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