



Meaningful Engagement of People With Lived Experience

A framework for measuring and increasing Lived Experience Leadership within organizations

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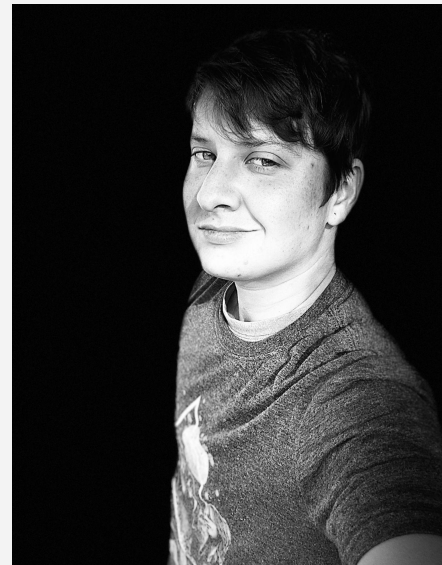
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“Nothing About Us Without Us”

What does meaningful engagement of people with lived experience look like?



“Nothing about us without us”

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Meaningful engagement means making sure that people who are or have been impacted by lived experiences are strategically and mindfully involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of all policies, procedures and strategies implemented within organizations involved in the work. It means that we are not just involving people with lived experience as a practice because it is the right thing to do, but that we value the input, leadership and expertise that is shared and implement it to the best of our ability.

*Meaningful engagement of people with lived experience in the anti-trafficking movement begins at the moment you realize someone might be experiencing human trafficking. (Ash, *Survivor engagement in international policy and programming in human trafficking and modern slavery: North America, Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre*, 2022.)

Lived Experience Engagement Spectrum



Adapted from the International Association of Public Participation's [Spectrum of Public Participation](#) by Chris Ash for [Expanding Our Reach](#), 2019.

“Huwezi Fanya Hii Kazi Kama Hupendi Watu,
Kwa Sababu Utakua Dictator”.

Sophie Otiende.

The Importance of Terminology & Language

Say something about language/terminology

Varies by Culture/Experience

- Tone. The way people express politeness, respect or informality in language can vary widely
- Greetings. In some cultures it is very important for you to offer greetings before you start engaging them
- Slang. Every culture has its own slang which has to always be put into consideration.

Changes and Evolves Over Time

- Every generation has their own unique evolution of how they speak/etc.
- People learn and grow: (find out something is offensive or problematic)

Inform

Impacted people (PWLE) are made aware of important decisions that may impact them through transparency and accountability.



Inform

What does this look like in practice?

Ask

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**Seek out & review
survivor feedback &
incorporate when
possible**

Ask

What does this look like in practice?

Involve

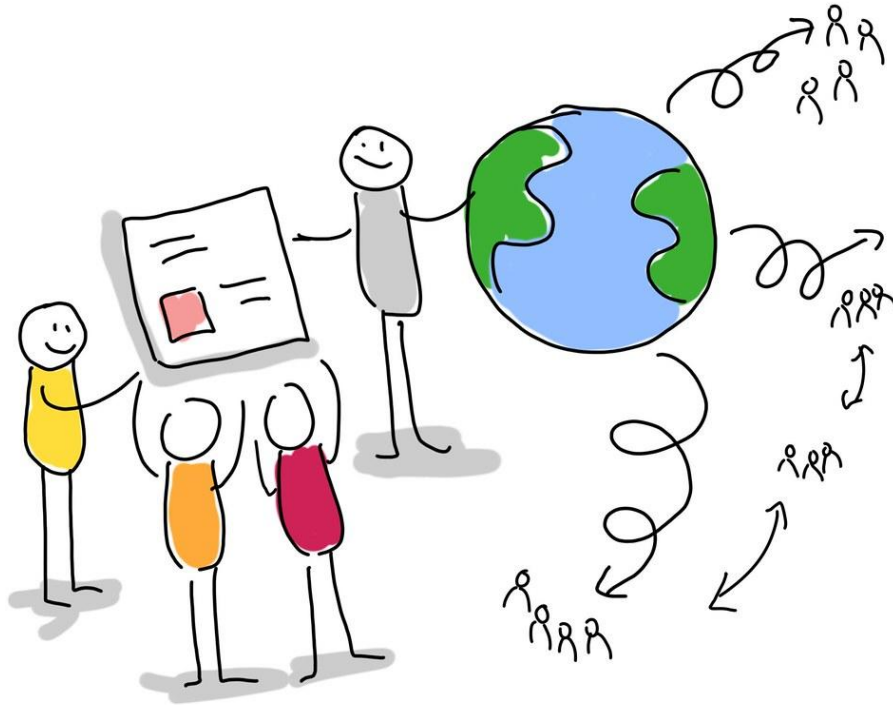
People with lived experience are involved in the beginning, through the continuation up to the end of a project.



Involve

What does this look like in practice?

Collaborate



At this level the organization works closely with People With Lived Experience.

Collaborate

What does this look like in practice?

Empower

People with lived experience have final decision-making power over policies, programming, research, and implementation.



Empower

What does this look like in practice?

Organizational Readiness

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Inform

Keep survivors informed about decisions that impact them



Ask

Seek out & review survivor feedback & incorporate when possible



Involve

Work with survivors throughout planning & implementation to consider survivor concerns



Collaborate

Work closely with survivors on each aspect of program development & implementation, from exploring options to making final decisions



Empower

Your program will leave final decision-making power to survivors & will implement the strategies & decisions they develop

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

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How can we move
to the next stage
of readiness?

Each stage of change can have many steps

Precontemplation

- Not ready yet
- Feel like they should do "survivor leadership" but aren't sure if it would make a difference

Contemplation

- Thinking about it
- Excitedly reaching out to "survivor leaders"
- Developing an advisory board without noticing tokenization
- Noticing that they aren't seeing much change

Preparation

- Reading resources on survivor engagement
- Reaching out for review of policies or for TA on survivor engagement.

Each stage of change can have many steps

Action

- Assessing organization's engagement
- Creating mentoring/development programs
- Developing an action plan and working it step by step over time to do it well

Maintenance

- Regularly assessing protocols for ways to improve
- Regularly surveying staff, contractors, and clients to ensure it's working well
- Continuing investment in survivors as well as public, legislator, and funder education

Selecting the right form of engagement

How do we know what form of engagement is appropriate?

Anti-Trafficking CBO

A community based organization is looking to get perspective from people with lived experience as they plan for an upcoming fundraiser event.

Considerations:

- Have we engaged PWLE before?
- How do we prevent retraumatization?
- What is fair compensation?

Selecting the right form of engagement

How do we know what form of engagement is appropriate?

Trade Union

A domestic workers organization looking to engage with survivors of domestic servitude as they plan to offer them representation to the government with their concerns

Considerations

- How do we engage with survivors without tokenizing them?
- Do we have understand what it means to be trauma informed?

People Are Complex



**Honoring
Survivors Full
Humanity**

- Brilliant
- Ill-informed
- Right about some things
- Wrong about other things
- Empathetic
- Horrible to other people
- Victims
- Perpetrators
- Hard workers
- Bad employees
- Someone who makes mistakes
- Complex
- (Just like everyone else)



Asante Sana
