

Management Response to the Findings and Recommendations of the ‘Evaluation of the Porticus Asia Anti-Trafficking Programme’ Report

Porticus welcomes the external evaluation to the ‘Creating systemic disruptions to human trafficking in Southeast Asia through private sector engagement and increased access to justice’ programme (2017-2021), conducted by Lighthouse Partnerships from March 2020 to June 2021. We are grateful to all partners, external stakeholders and people with lived experiences who contributed to the programme and provided valuable input for the evaluation.

We agreed to the recommendations and responses to the findings and recommendations of the evaluation team, prepared by the Porticus Programme Manager, are presented in the following matrix.

Findings	Recommendations	Management Response
Recommendation 1: Recognise and seek to understand the complexity of systems change		
<p>Human trafficking and exploitation are highly complex problems, influenced by a wide range of economic, social and political factors with deep structural and systemic roots. All efforts to address these issues need to be based upon recognition and understanding of this complexity.</p> <p>It is also important for change actors, including funders, to consider their own role in the ‘system’ they seek to influence and how their own practices can facilitate or inhibit systems change.</p>	<p>Porticus and partners conduct more in-depth analysis of the complexity of target problems and change processes in strategy development, including analysing systemic barriers and limitations, available evidence and gaps in evidence, and assumptions about how change happens.</p> <p>Porticus analyses and includes its own role in programme strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to use a system lens to analyse the barriers, enablers and pathways to the fulfilment of human rights and labour rights of the target groups. To address systemic challenges and amplify impact, we will be more active in seeking collaboration with other funders and initiatives when developing new programme to complement efforts, build evidence base and mitigate risks. • We will consider our own roles as funder, convenor and influencer in programme strategies. Specific Porticus-focused outcomes have also been developed in the Asia-Europe anti-trafficking programme for learning and accountability purpose.

Findings	Recommendations	Management Response
Recommendation 2: Prioritise and support learning and adaptation		
<p>All areas of the evaluation highlighted a need for stronger systems and processes in the sector for developing evidence and supporting learning about effective approaches for addressing human trafficking and exploitation, and the complex nature of change. Solutions to complex problems, like trafficking and exploitation, cannot be known in advance and must be developed through learning from experience and bottom-up evidence generation.</p>	<p>Porticus maintains an internal culture that promotes critical reflection and learning, and designs formal management processes to support this.</p> <p>Porticus continues to invest in research and robust project-level evaluation, and supports the use of evidence in programming.</p> <p>Porticus and partners design strategies to be ‘living’, with processes for review and adaptation.</p> <p>Porticus and partners design monitoring, evaluation and learning systems that support real-time learning and adaptation, understanding of complex and long-term change, and learning and development for ‘pilot’ initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to invest in learning, including the inclusion of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) partner as <i>critical friend</i> to both Porticus and partners in programmes, and support partners on their learning agenda, approach and process. • Evidence generation and uptake is critical to learning and achieving impact. We will continue to invest in research, and pay special attention to knowledge creation with global south, by global south and for global south, e.g. research team composition, political economy analysis on knowledge creation and uptake.
Recommendation 3: Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships		
<p>Improving relationships and connections among diverse stakeholders is an essential part of addressing complex social problems. This includes including increasing trust between funders and grantees, which this evaluation found was highly valued and of mutual benefit.</p>	<p>Porticus continues to invest in and build strong relationships with partners, and strengthens these relationships through greater communication about strategic priorities and greater capacity building support.</p> <p>Porticus continues to invest in projects that build relationships and facilitate collaboration, as an enabler of other longer-term outcomes.</p> <p>Porticus and partners continue or increase the use of participatory practices by involving key stakeholders when designing, implementing and reviewing projects and programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will strengthen relationships, including organisations led by people with lived experiences, facilitate collaboration amongst stakeholders, and pilot participatory grant-making model to support longer-term outcomes. • We will provide more clarity to our strategic priorities and explore fit-for-purpose capacity building support together with partners.

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<p>Recommendation 4: Adopt and embed a person-centred approach to systems change</p>		
<p>People affected by trafficking and exploitation should be central to efforts to address these issues.</p> <p>In several projects, people and communities affected by trafficking and exploitation played key roles in contributing to positive outcomes and in providing information about the impacts of partners' work, yet these roles were not recognised in the Programme strategy. The Programme also highlighted that unintended harm is a real risk for all organisations that work with or impact vulnerable persons.</p>	<p>Porticus maintains 'participation' as an organisational strategic priority and increases funding for projects that enhance rights, power and participation of people with lived experience, including survivor-led programs and organisations.</p> <p>Porticus and partners consider how to enhance participation, including involving people with lived experience in meaningful ways and using lived experience evidence when designing, implementing and reviewing interventions.</p> <p>Porticus and partners ensure that strategic objectives reflect the rights and interests of people affected, and that there are processes for accountability for positive and negative outcomes.</p> <p>Porticus and partners improve assessment and management of risk to vulnerable persons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are committed to do no harm and focus on safeguarding. We will build on our participatory processes and involvement of people with lived experience as a process to ensure that we live up to our commitment. • We will reflect on our approach and devise mechanism and initiative to centre the experiences and expertise of people with lived experiences in diagnosing problems, identifying solutions and facilitating learning.