

# One day at a time

A report on the Recovery Needs Assessment  
by those experiencing it on a daily basis

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**Publication date:** April 2022

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**Images:** Free for use under unsplash license <https://unsplash.com/photos/DNkoNXQt3c>

**Illustrations:** Faltrego.Ltd for Anti-Slavery International

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## Overview

*One day at a time* is the first published report on the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) process. It was researched and co-authored by a team including survivors with lived experience of the RNA. The outcomes of meetings and interviews with survivors, support workers and organisations who support victims of modern slavery and human trafficking formed part of the research.

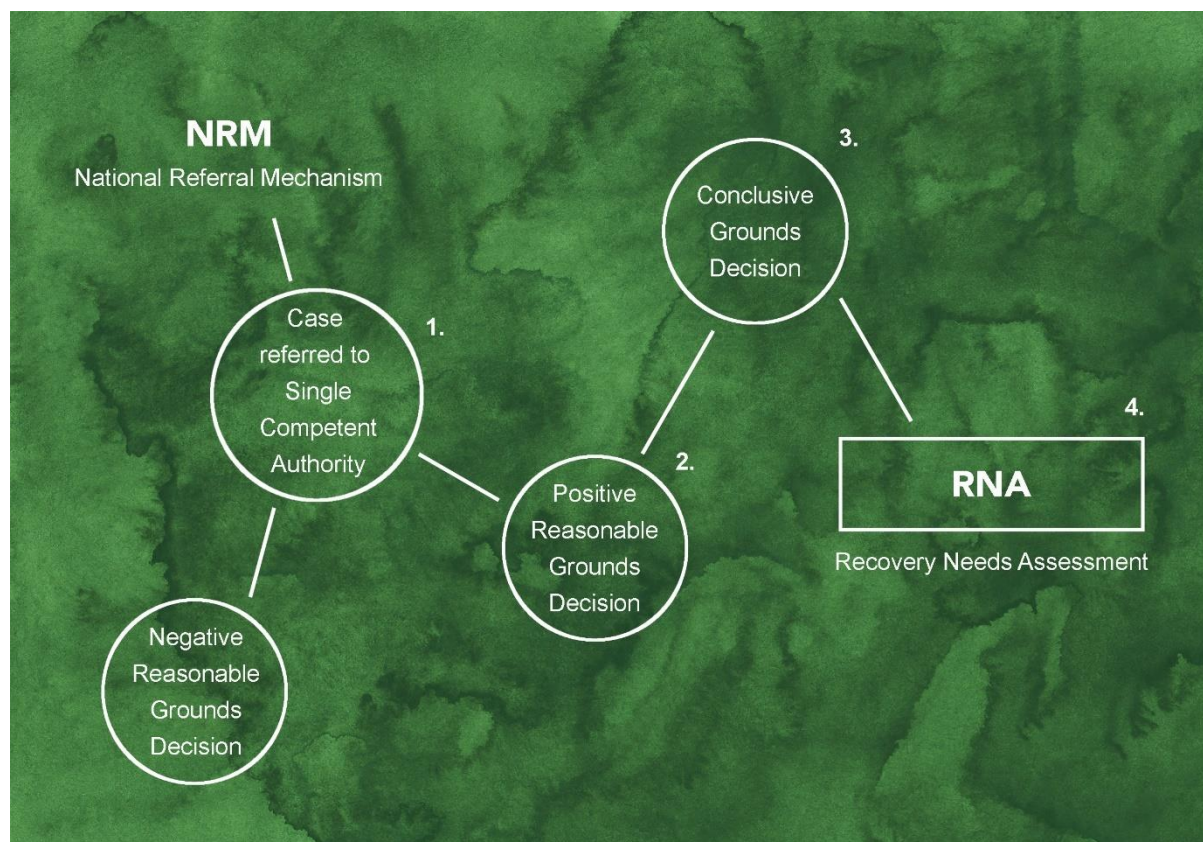
We hope that the report will be read by survivors and people in the anti-trafficking and modern slavery sector, as well as the general public.

***“I was told I was not entitled to things. That I should not expect free things. I was advised I should take perpetrators to court to get compensation and then go back to home”***

## Survivor

## National Referral Mechanism

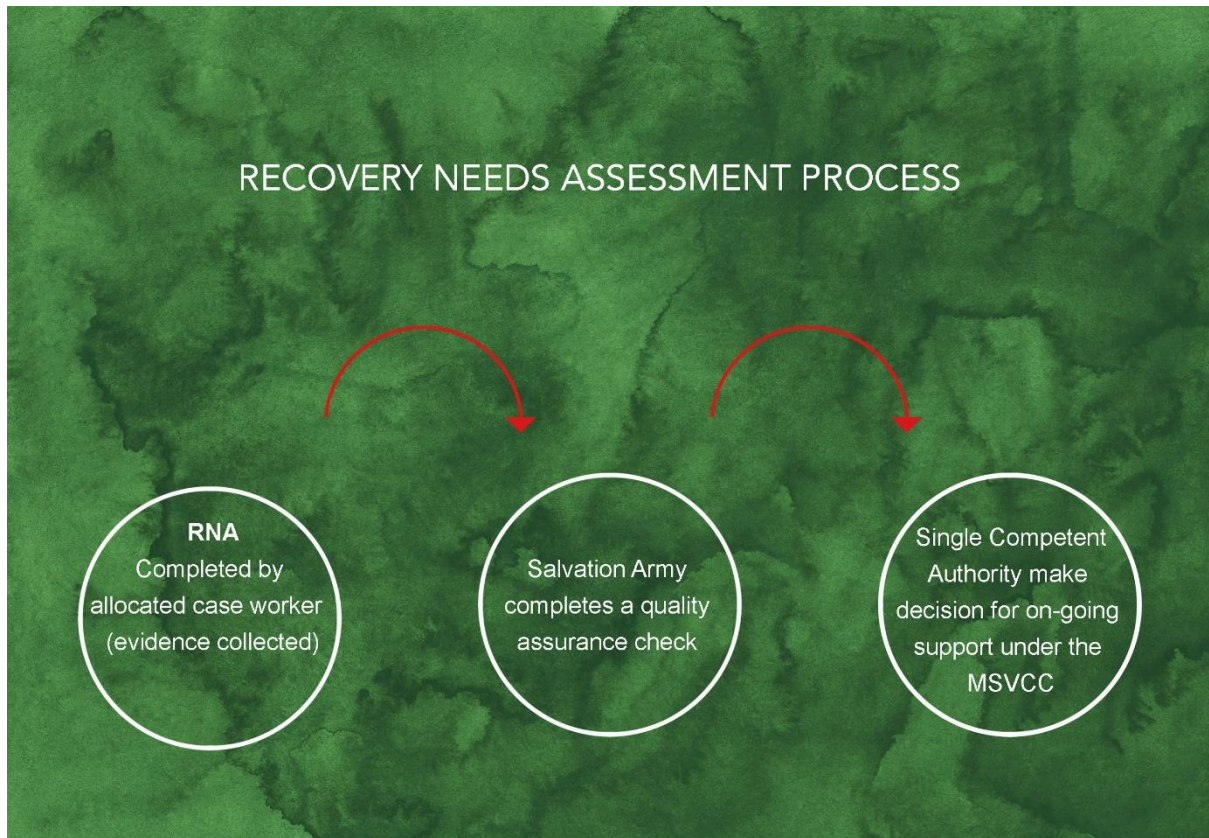
The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK’s framework for identifying and supporting victims of human trafficking and modern slavery. Figure 1: Journey to the RNA - Produced and sourced by: Survivor Collective



**Figure 1: Journey to the RNA**  
Produced and sourced by: Survivor Collective

## Recovery Needs Assessment

The Recovery Needs assessment (RNA) is the process for assessing and making recommendations for ongoing support for confirmed victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. This might include access to therapy, legal advice or financial support. The assessment is carried out once a survivor has been confirmed a victim and received a 'conclusive grounds decision'.



**Figure 2: Processing an RNA form**  
Produced and sourced by: Survivor Collective

*“I put two almost identical RNAs in, one was accepted and one was refused.”*

**Support worker**

*“It’s hard to ask for a supporting letter from friends that I live with. They know I’m destitute and it’s shameful enough for me not having my independence.”*

**Survivor**

This report is the first published review of the RNA process and was researched and co-authored by a team including survivors with lived experience of the RNA. It is hoped the report will be read by survivors

and those working in the anti-trafficking and modern slavery area, as well as the general public. Working together we can make sure the UK's anti-trafficking system works for survivors.

The research found that the RNA is failing survivors, who are not receiving the vital support they need. Survivors told us that they were getting lost in the process which they found confusing, frustrating and over-demanding.

Some survivors said they wanted to leave the support system because of how it made them feel and that their needs were not being taken seriously. They said they felt disbelieved and that the process felt like a personal investigation which was upsetting and triggered bad memories. Many reported having no money, unstable accommodation, no childcare or sufficient emotional support, putting them at risk of re-trafficking or abuse.

These problems could have been avoided if survivors had been included in the design of the RNA process and if the assessment had been properly explained to them.

## Key findings

- **The RNA is exceptionally complex, inefficient, and unclear.** Most survivors reported that they did not know if they were in the RNA process or not, and of having to make very important, impactful decisions with little understanding of their consequences.
- **There is inadequate guidance and inconsistent training.** Support providers need a better understanding of the RNA decision making process and the ability to access clear guidance on it. Training varies across organisations, leading to varying opinions and decisions, and inconsistent levels of support.
- **The needs of children are not met.** Support is generally denied for children of trafficking victims as those needs do not fall into the narrow 'arising out of trafficking experience' category. In turn, this means that survivors have no option but to bring their children to appointments where they have to talk about their trafficking and exploitation, which all parties find distressing. The alternative is to miss meetings and have their future support disrupted.
- **Every survivor said that they had, at times, been destitute.** By failing to provide for basic needs, the RNA hinders recovery, increases debt and heightens the risk of re-trafficking.
- **The RNA is not trauma-informed or person-centred.** The focus is on meeting procedural requirements and providing evidence which can be traumatic and challenging. Survivors say they felt mistrusted and that information demands are invasive. There was a stark lack of consultation with survivors and the anti-trafficking sector in the development of the RNA. The Home Office publicly commits to embedding survivors' voices into policy making, but there is scant evidence of this. The UK is failing to uphold the Trauma-informed Code of Conduct (TiCC), which it has endorsed.

*“It would be better if I had more to do. Sitting alone [because of having no income] is the worst thing – it makes you think about all the things again and again. If I sit for a long time, it makes me feel bad. If I am sitting, I remember. If you can make yourself busy, then you can go forward. It doesn’t matter if a thousand people are helping you, if you are just sitting, you will still feel bad. Not being able to work so I will end up just sitting.”*

## Survivor

*“They are asking people who have been accepted as victims of trafficking to justify their needs.”*

## Support Worker



**Illustration 4: Survivor finds directions difficult to navigate**

## Further information

The report calls for urgent changes to the RNA so that it can meet the needs of survivors, hear voices, and meet the UK’s requirements under international law. A list of recommendations can be seen in the Full report, *One day at a time*.

[http://tiny.cc/one\\_day\\_at\\_a\\_time](http://tiny.cc/one_day_at_a_time)

If you would like to discuss the Recovery Needs Assessment journey further with other advocates, you can contact [info@survivorcollective.co.uk](mailto:info@survivorcollective.co.uk)