

SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT



Nothing about us, without us

Supported by

**FREEDOM
FROM
TORTURE**
EMPOWERING
SURVIVORS,
REBUILDING
LIVES



OUR STRATEGY 2023-2025

→ OUR MISSION

Our mission is to grow the network and promote the active engagement and empowerment of more survivors. We work to raise awareness of the issues facing survivors of torture including conflict-related sexual torture. We advocate against torture and raise awareness of its harmful impacts. We campaign for a better asylum system in the UK and speak in support of rehabilitation for survivors and for the development of survivor networks worldwide. We strive to be the voice of survivors who have been silenced.

→ OUR LONG-TERM VISION

Our long-term vision is to see a world free from torture and the stigma associated with torture and conflict-related sexual torture, where survivors are empowered and protected, their dignities and self-esteem are restored, and they are able to fight against oppression.

→ OUR VALUES

Our values include respect, integrity, empowerment, compassion, resilience and anti-racism.

← THE PROBLEM

Historical allies in the fight against torture, such as the UK and other democratic governments, are backsliding on their commitments to the absolute prohibition against torture ('the torture ban'). The discourse in UK on torture and asylum is fuelled by racism, demonisation of refugees in the media and parliament, and the belief that torture happens to other people, which creates a culture of them' and 'us. The hostile environment is deterring survivors from advocating on their own behalf and speaking in public. Newly enacted and proposed laws chip away at the torture ban and access to protection in the UK. Private sector actors contribute and profit from torture practices across the world. UK asylum and immigration systems and government agencies undertake practices that violate survivors' rights. There is a growing sense of hopelessness among survivors trying to rebuild their lives in the UK.



→ OUR GOALS

The selected goals for the next three years are:

- **1 GROWING AND DEVELOPING SSO**
- **2 DEFENDING THE TORTURE BAN**
- **3 FIGHTING THE ANTI-REFUGEE AGENDA IN THE UK**
- **4 PROMOTING THE MODEL OF SURVIVOR EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD**



WHAT STRATEGIES CAN WE USE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

HOW DO WE DISRUPT AND TRANSFORM STRUCTURE?

- Winning more resources for survivor-led initiatives
- Achieving more survivor roles and leadership in organisations that support survivors
- Halting harmful laws and policies through lobbying parliamentarians and public engagement (campaigning, media etc.)
- Halting harmful practice through advocacy with the Home Office and other relevant government agencies
- Halting harmful behaviour by private sector actors by raising the costs for businesses profiting from policies and practices that harm survivors

HOW DO WE CREATE CULTURAL CHANGE?

- Ensuring the expertise of survivors on key issues is recognised
- Humanising survivors using traditional and social media platforms
- Raising awareness and educating the public about torture and the issues facing survivors
- Partner with stakeholders and mechanisms, international and local organisations to promote the model of Survivor Empowerment

WHAT ARE THE

TACTICS AND TOOLS

THAT WE NEED TO USE?



CHALLENGING HARMFUL LAWS AND POLICIES



- Utilising survivor experiences to show the human impact
- Working with partners to produce persuasive lobbying materials targeting parliamentarians
- Strengthening our cross-party relationships with parliamentarians through meetings/events etc.
- Working with partners to ensure that advocacy and campaigns center on survivors' experiences and challenge the government on harmful policies and laws and failing in its duty to protect

CHALLENGING HARMFUL PRACTICE



- Promoting the model of Survivor Empowerment by not limiting contributions from survivors to sharing personal experiences
- With partners, working with the Home Office to pressure them to do their jobs better
- With partners, campaigning against private sector complicity in actions that harm survivors



HUMANISING SURVIVORS' STORIES



- Ensuring survivor visibility on communication platforms
- Exploring opportunities to work with partners for research to show the impact that policies have on people
- Collaborating and sharing the value of survivor leadership by including survivors' stories and experiences during key events, including across a range of formats such as videos, reports, interviews etc.

RAISING AWARENESS AND INFLUENCING



- Speaking at universities and colleges, and high-profile events
- Advocate for schools to help students understand refugees and asylum seekers and the impact of torture and persecution
- Organising and inspiring communities to support our global movement initiative such as contributing to Freedom from Torture's movement building work.
- Engaging high profile personalities and religious groups to raise awareness on torture



→ GOAL 1

GROWING AND DEVELOPING SSO

EXPECTED OUTCOMES 2023–2025

- SSO to have 45 members across different UK regions
- More SSO members to engage in campaigns and events
- Improved skills for network members

OUTPUTS 2023–2025

- Events to talk about SSO's work are held in all Freedom from Torture centres to inspire more survivors to join
- More members are recruited via referrals and SSO event days
- Capacity of SSO members is increased through training, mentoring and work experience
- More SSO members are active in campaigns



→ GOAL 2

DEFENDING THE TORTURE BAN

EXPECTED OUTCOMES 2023–2025

- More parliamentarians publicly condemn laws and policies that violate the torture ban
- Proposed legislation is amended to respect the torture ban
- Wider reach of anti-torture messaging including survivors' voices
- More allies recruited through our platforms
- Model of survivor advocacy adopted by national and international organisations
- Targeted private sector companies end complicity in torture

OUTPUTS 2023–2025

- SSO contributions help shape parliamentary briefings and other lobbying materials on three key legislative issues and UK relations with governments that torture
- Meetings held with key parliamentarians on key legislative issues and UK relations with governments that torture

- High profile personalities and religious groups engaged as public-facing allies on the torture ban
- SSO contributes to creative and traditional engagement outputs (reports, documentaries, podcasts etc.) on the torture ban
- A new platform to raise survivors' voices rolled out as a website and/or podcast
- SSO messaging shared through traditional and social media platforms on the torture ban
- Event held about the impact of torture and the role the UK is playing
- Events held at universities and elsewhere about raising awareness of torture
- Working partnership established with selected UN bodies and mechanisms and international and local organisations through which survivors' voices can be amplified on the torture ban working towards a global survivors' network
- Targeted private sector companies violating the torture ban exposed and held to account



→ GOAL 3

FIGHTING THE ANTI-REFUGEE AGENDA

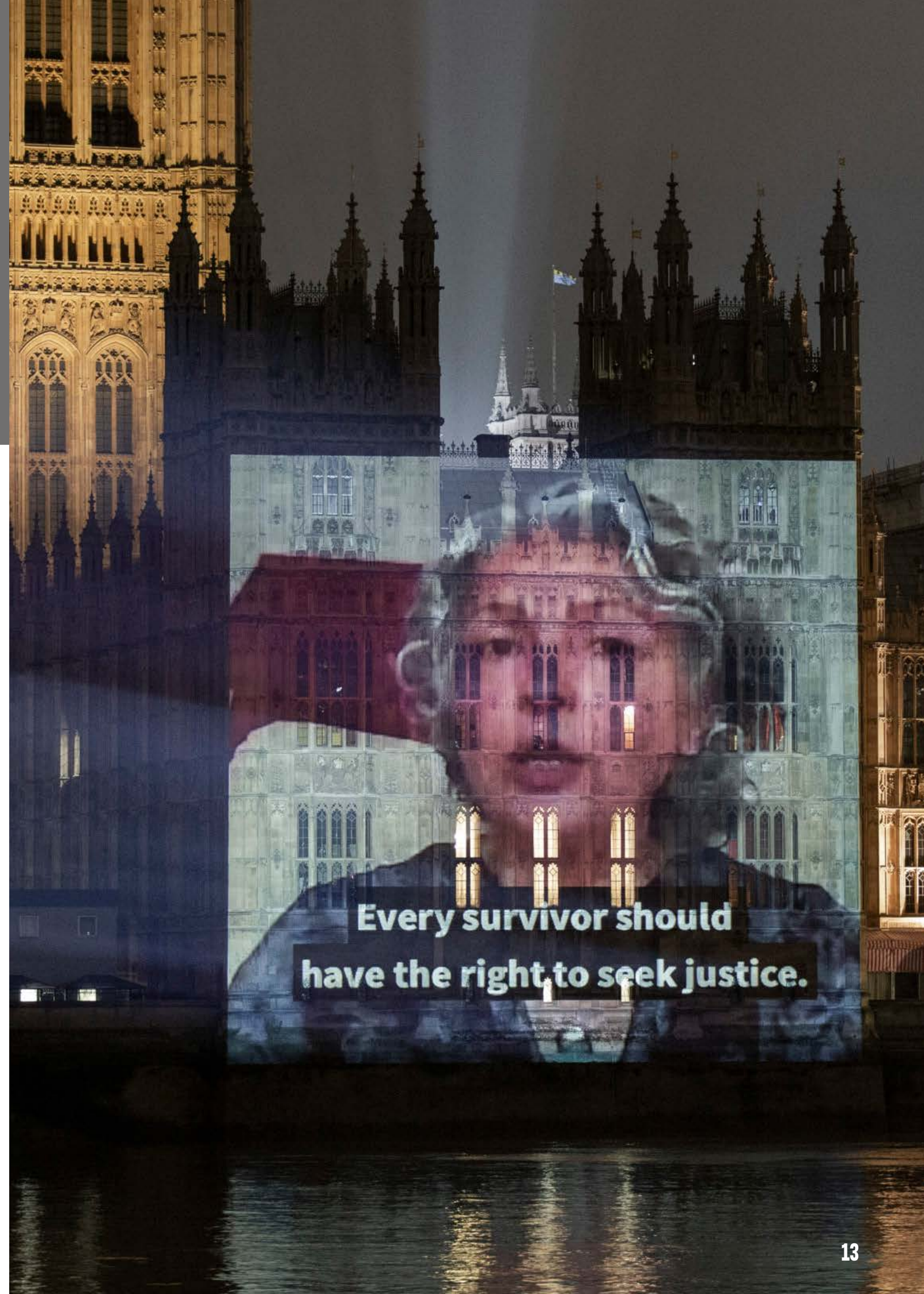
EXPECTED OUTCOMES 2023–2025

- Home office policy and practice improved
- More parliamentarians actively call for repeal of Nationality and Borders Act and the Illegal Immigration Bill
- Wider reach of refugee rights messaging including survivors' voices
- More allies recruited through our platforms
- Children formally educated on refugee issues

- Working partnership established with five key organisations to campaign against the anti-refugee agenda
- SSO has contributed to creative and traditional engagement outputs (reports, documentaries, podcasts etc.) on anti-refugee agenda
- A new platform to raise survivors' voices rolled out as a website and/or podcast
- Increased presence of people with lived experience and messages through traditional media and contribute to positive narrative to fight anti-refugee agenda
- Inspired more survivors and different communities to support our movement building on fighting the anti-refugee agenda
- SSO has contributed to Freedom from Torture supporter groups and community events held at universities and other venues
- Process has begun to start collaborating with organisations for a module to be introduced on refugee and asylum seekers in schools
- SSO has delivered impactful campaigning activities against the NBA – specifically the two-tier system, the Rwanda scheme, and the Illegal Immigration Bill

OUTPUTS 2023–2025

- Successful meetings with the Home Office officials to influence policies and practices so that people's experience and outcomes can be improved during the process
- SSO contributions have helped to shape briefings and other lobbying materials targeting key parliamentarians on repealing elements of the Nationality and Borders Act (NBA) and the Illegal Immigration Bill, and ending the Rwanda plan



→ GOAL 4

PROMOTING A MODEL OF SURVIVOR EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD

EXPECTED OUTCOMES 2023–2025

- Key organisations are inspired and supported to adopt the survivor empowerment model
- Wider reach of anti-torture messaging including survivors' voices
- More allies recruited through our platforms

- ### OUTPUTS 2023–2025
- Video clips created for social media, school and universities
 - Working partnership established with survivors' networks in key countries
 - Manual developed on SSO's experiences to support global network partners
 - SSO's new platform to raise survivors' voices features global network members
 - Global network messaging shared through traditional and social media platforms on the torture ban
 - Encourage other organisations to implement the model of survivor empowerment





WHAT CONDITIONS NEED TO BE TRUE?

- SSO members need to be willing to engage more and commit at different levels
- More funding/resources
- Survivors need to be trained in media and social media and other key skills
- New SSO members need to be recruited to bring new energy
- Expert legal adviser OR partnership
- Members' wellbeing must be taken care of
- Bring more survivors and people with lived experience on board

PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT



SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT

Nothing about us, without us

Survivors Speak OUT



sso@freedomfromtorture.org



ssoonline

Freedom from Torture

Chichester House,
91 Moss Lane East,
Manchester M15 5GY

Unit 005, 1st Floor,
Caroline Point,
62 Caroline Street,
Birmingham B3 1UF

The Alan Smithson Rooms,
City House, 1-3 City Rd,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2AF

Room 27, Adelphi Centre,
12 Commercial Road,
Glasgow G5 0PQ

111 Isledon Road
Islington
London N7 7JW
020 7697 7777

www.freedomfromtorture.org