Chapter 44

Calling All Stakeholders: An Intersectoral Dialogue about Collaborating to End Tech-Facilitated Violence and Abuse

Jane Bailey and Raine Liliefeldt

Abstract

The emergence of technology-facilitated violence and abuse (TFVA) has led to calls for increased collaboration across and among sectors. Growing recognition of the need for multistakeholder collaboration (MSC) between industry, civil society, government, and academia reflects the number of moving parts involved, the need for specialized knowledge and skills in relation to certain issues, and the importance of recognizing the ways in which interlocking systems of subordination can lead to very different experiences with and impressions of social justice issues (Crenshaw, 1991). Numerous financial, professional, and personal factors incentivize MSC. Notwithstanding growing opportunities and incentives for TFVA-related MSC, collaborative efforts bring with them their own set of challenges. This chapter integrates elements of the literature on MSC, particularly those focusing on risks, benefits, and ways forward, with excerpts from a dialogue between an academic and community organization leader who are collaborating on a research partnership encompassing TFVA against young Canadians.

Keywords: Multistakeholder collaboration; intersectoral cooperation; transdisciplinary initiatives; collaborative models; intersectionality; power imbalance

Introduction

As with other complex social justice issues, the emergence of technology-facilitated violence and abuse (TFVA) has led to calls for increased intersectoral collaboration

(Canada, 2017, pp. 44–54). This has been particularly true in the context of violent extremist/terrorist content (New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Industry and Trade, n.d.), which is emblematic of a call for multistakeholder collaboration (MSC) in the development of internet policy more generally (OECD, 2014, p. 8). Issues such as internet governance and TFVA arguably fall within a broad class of "wicked problems,"[1] like sustainability, that MSC "among industry, government, the public, and researchers is widely acknowledged as a critical success factor" in resolving (Foley, Wiek, Kay, & Rushforth, 2016, p. 2). Those focused on sustainability note that the benefits of MSC include "pooling [the] capacities and resources" (Foley et al., 2016, p. 2) of a wide variety of individuals and organizations with "unique perspectives" in a form of "shared inquiry with others" (Krawchuk, 2013, p. 12). MSC models are touted as enabling "a synergy that no one element could have produced on its own" (Krawchuk, 2013, p. 10). Moreover, stakeholders may be less resistant to implementing changes arising from action plans they were involved in creating (Krawchuk, 2013).

Notwithstanding its promised benefits, MSC is rife with equality-related challenges. These include mistrust and power asymmetry (Foley et al., 2016), as well as ensuring participation of and according an equal voice (Wayne-Nixon, Wragg-Morris, Mishra, Markle, & Kindornay, 2019) to women (Grosser, 2014), young people (Bista, 2016; Livingstone, Byrne, & Bulgar, 2015), and members of other marginalized communities. Such challenges are of particular relevance to TFVA-related MSCs given TFVA's negative effects on communities marginalized by intersecting oppressions such as homophobia (see Dietzel, this volume; and Waldman, this volume), transphobia (see Colliver, this volume), and misogyny (see Gosse, this volume). The stark power imbalances between corporations providing internet platforms and services (Henry & Powell, 2016), governments, and the individuals likely to be targeted by TFVA (and community organizations who support them) add further equality-related complexity to TFVA-related MSCs.

This chapter brings literature on MSC's benefits and challenges into dialogue with excerpts from a discussion about our experiences with TFVA-related MSCs. We connect some of the key issues raised in the literature with our experiences. We begin by introducing ourselves, highlighting our connections with TFVA-related MSC. Next we provide an overview of the literature relating to MSC, focusing on some incentives for and related benefits of such collaboration. Finally, we focus on our experiences with making MSC work on the ground, including considering what "success" looks like, the related issues of power imbalance, legitimacy, accountability, and trust, and how to identify and prioritize the needs of those affected. The conclusion summarizes our recommendations and best practices for TFVA-related MSC.

Who We Are

We are members of *The eQuality Project*, a seven-year research project focused on young people's experiences with privacy and equality in networked spaces, which includes a TFVA-focused stream. The eQuality Project is a collaborative partnership involving academic researchers (from Canada, the United States, Hong

Kong, and Finland) and local, provincial, national, and international community organizations, youth groups, educators, and policymakers. Jane Bailey, who is a Full Professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, leads the TFVA project stream and co-leads the overall project with Dr. Valerie Steeves, of the University of Ottawa Department of Criminology. Raine Liliefeldt is the Director of Member Services and Development at YWCA Canada, a community organization partner in The eQuality Project. YWCA Canada is a federated organization with member associations across Canada that acts and advocates to "right injustices faced by women and girls in Canada through timely research, responsive projects, pro-active initiatives and relevant advocacy campaigns" (YWCA Canada, 2020).

Our involvement with TFVA arose at different times and through different paths. Over 20 years ago, while a litigation lawyer in Toronto, Jane was part of a team representing a complainant in the first Canadian Human Rights Tribunal proceeding about internet hate speech. Jane's involvement in that case encouraged graduate work and ultimately led to an academic position where she focuses on topics like internet hate propaganda, online child sexual abuse, and the interactions between privacy and equality in networked spaces. About 14 years ago, Raine recognized the need for work around online safety issues after discussing an 18+ (adults only) site, BlackPlanet, with young women at a local YWCA chapter in Toronto. Raine, alongside these young women and a volunteer from TV Ontario, developed a cybersafety workshop with information about blocking your camera and avoiding identifying markers when posting selfies.

We have experience collaborating with individuals and organizations from sectors outside our own and in relation to TFVA. Prior to The eQuality Project, Jane was involved in another collaborative partnership called The eGirls Project, which included MediaSmarts (Canada's leading digital literacy organization), policymakers, and other academics and examined girls' and young women's experiences of TFVA. Jane met Raine while working on The eGirls Project, leading to their collaboration on The eQuality Project. When they met, Raine was leading a YWCA Canada initiative, Project Shift, funded by the Canadian Minister of the Status of Women. Project Shift brought together the justice, academic, and technology/ information and communications technology (ICT) sectors, and girls and young women with lived experience of TFVA. Raine has been involved in many other collaborative initiatives over the last 18 years in the nonprofit sector.

In order to prepare this chapter, we met in Toronto on October 16, 2019 and were interviewed for approximately two-and-a-half hours by University of Ottawa law student, Vanessa Ford, about our experiences with TFVA-related MSC. Vanessa's questions were framed around issues arising from her research on MSC, including the meaning of MSC, how to define "success," leveraging diverse resources and expertise from stakeholders, and dealing with differences in stakeholder priorities and power. Our intention was to provide on-the-ground perspectives on making MSC "work" based on differing experiences and standpoints: Jane from the perspective of an academic and Raine from the perspective of a community organization leader. We have incorporated transcribed excerpts from our discussion into the next sections in order to bring our TFVA-related experiences into dialogue with the literature around MSC (which itself does not currently focus on TFVA *per se*).

Multistakeholder Collaboration: Working Definition, Benefits, and Incentives

In this chapter, we define MSC as follows:

> Alliances of individuals and organizations from the nonprofit, government, philanthropic, and business sectors that use their diverse perspectives and resources to jointly solve a societal problem and achieve a shared goal. (Becker & Smith, 2018, p. 2)

MSC is used for different purposes, such as governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008) and planning (Oonk, Gulikers, & Mulder, 2016), as well as in relation to different societal issues, including sustainability (Foley et al., 2016), youth violence (Bista, 2016), and international development (Wayne-Nixon et al., 2019). Prominent among incentives for engaging MSC is the emergence (or at least recognition) of wicked problems, the complexity of which requires "pooling capacities and resources" (Krawchuk, 2013, p. 9) from various sectors representing diverse areas of expertise, knowledge, and experience (see also Foley et al., 2016).

We think TFVA is a compelling example of a wicked problem, as part of a long-standing continuum of violence against women, girls, and members of other marginalized communities involving very *real* spiritual, psychological, emotional, and sometimes physical harms. It can be embroiled in preexisting patterns of domestic violence, but it isn't *just* about individual perpetrators. TFVA also involves technical infrastructures, corporate and law enforcement policies, education and awareness, and broader underlying social structures like misogyny and racism. As Raine put it during our discussion:

> It's the ether. I talk about that often. It's everything that's connected. It's not just one avenue. It's the system, it's the structure, its more than systemic, it's atmospheric.

The potential practical benefits of MSC for addressing this atmospheric problem are numerous. From Raine's perspective:

> It's connecting into different sectors, different pockets of air and so I think that for me, MSC is about recognizing that it takes all of us to solve it.

Further, involving multiple stakeholders with a shared concern about a problem means incorporating a range of perspectives and experiences that can lead to creative codeveloped responses where all participants feel invested. In turn, stakeholder investment in cocreated responses can reduce resistance, and develop a greater commitment to shared plans of action – thus improving the odds of implementation (Krawchuk, 2013).

Individual stakeholders may also benefit in particular ways. Community organizations, for example, may benefit from access to research and syntheses of

research that they otherwise would not have the time or money to develop or engage with, as well as through relationships with people/organizations that would otherwise be out of reach. Further, access to funding is increasingly contingent on working collaboratively. In Raine's experience with seeking funding for YWCA Canada initiatives:

> … more and more what's happening is people, whether funders or corporate or government, they are mandating that organizations work together, that various sectors come together to collaborate.

Similar kinds of financial incentives are evident in academia, including the emergence of the Partnership Grant funding model implemented by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (2019), where funding is contingent on intersectoral collaborative partnerships. Academics are also incentivized to engage with MSC by a renewed emphasis on, as Jane put it, signaling "to the community that it is not just … med schools that are doing something of relevance to the community: that research *throughout* universities is relevant to the community." Further, MSC, in emphasizing a bottom-up flow of direction and information from marginalized community members affected by TFVA, also offers intrinsic incentives by allowing scholars to use the privilege of academic freedom to connect with what matters to the community.

Working collaboratively also provides opportunities for thinking beyond silos. For Jane, as a law professor, this means, "start[ing] to think about the wide variety of contributions that can be made to address TFVA that don't involve either law or criminalization." Similarly, working in MSCs has made both of us more aware of the in-sector jargon used, which challenges us to avoid or clarify terms that interfere with others receiving our message. For example, Raine learned through engagement with the ICT sector in Project Shift that common nonprofit sector language about "safety and safe spaces … when … put in front of engineers and developers [was] a total turn off and no one will pay attention from then on." MSCs have also encouraged us not to presume terms like "safe" or "safety" mean the same thing to everyone. As Jane noted:

> Safety in certain circles is … tightly associated with criminalization, policing, and surveillance, whereas safety in other circles means respect for diversity and inclusion where you feel safe to participate because you are respected for who you are. Everyone may say we are all for online safety but then the model for online safety that is for securitization is criminal law; it's telling kids do this and don't do that. It's not looking at what kind of an environment we have created in terms of whether everybody feels safe to participate and who is responsible for that environment. It's a very very different kind of response. If you are all on board with "safety" and then all of a sudden you start talking about programming, you are like "oh no, that's not what I meant by safety." So, unpacking terminology is huge in this context.

Financial, personal, and professional incentives for engaging with MSC are also connected with the growth in popularity of more participatory, transdisciplinary (Ayala-Orozco et al., 2018), and community-centered/engaged research models that may better enable equality-based intersectional research and challenge power hierarchies embedded in traditional social science data collection models (Bailey et al., 2019). These include Community-Engaged Research (CER) (Closson & Nelson, 2009), Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Roche, 2011), and Democratic Dialogue (Pruitt & Thomas, 2007). A detailed discussion of these models is beyond the scope of this chapter.[2]

Notwithstanding the positive potential of MSC and the array of incentives for implementation, MSC is replete with equality-related challenges frequently rooted in power imbalances. These challenges are of special significance in the context of addressing a problem such as TFVA, which itself both reflects and is reflective of intransigent forms of structural discrimination within society (Henry et al., 2020; Henry & Powell, 2016). We now move on to discuss several of those challenges.

Making Collaboration Work: Perspectives from the Ground

Defining "Success": Priorities, Measurement, Intersectionality, and Learning from "Failure"

In our experience in the TFVA context, "success" can mean different things to different collaborators. We suggest that a definition of success inclusive of both process and product can be a unifying force in MSC. For Raine, success means:

> That the process is rewarding and it is collegial and respectful and we are working towards the same process and product and that outcome is also reflective of where everyone wanted to go at the beginning because it can be the other way and a real challenge. It is about the process, the ongoing communication, being able to connect to the work, having a real[lly] clear understanding that we are all multiple limbs of one unit moving in the same direction together. Process and product are the success points for me.

Notwithstanding this broad approach to success, however, misalignments in collaborators' priorities can impede actual and/or perceived success. Often, MSC literature focuses on misalignments arising in collaborations involving private sector corporations which are primarily focused on profit (Adam, James, & Wanjira, 2007). This can be challenging in public/private initiatives, since, as Badré (2017) notes, often the interests of these participants:

> … are not immediately aligned and there is suspicion between the two. In most countries in the world, public authorities think that the private sector is willing to reap the reward without taking any

risk. Vice versa, the private sector believes that the public sector is, in the worst case, corrupt; or is too bureaucratic, too slow, or not reactive enough (para 4).

We have experienced priority misalignments in public/private collaborations. As Jane noted in TFVA-related interactions with government:

> We don't know how to address violence against women and girls to start with and then you add this layer of technology on so you have this intractable problem which means almost inevitably, to me, the solution is long term and progress is not going to be obvious or immediate. [But government works] on election cycles and so often … what happens … is they pass some form of criminal legislation, which … in some circumstances may send an important message, but then it often stops there because that buys them what they need in terms of the electoral impression that the government cares about this issue. … So to be the academic appearing in front of committees and talking about long term social transformation and smashing the patriarchy, … there is such a misalignment in terms of priority.

Misalignments in priority, however, are not, in our experience, limited to public/private collaborations. Raine's experience in a collaborative initiative involving nonprofit organizations with different mandates in health, youth, and justice exemplified this:

> [An external funder requested] for these three/four organizations to work together. The challenge lay in the fact that there was a disparity in the size of the organizations, with the one organization having a greater tie to the funder than the others, [and] one having greater community connections across the country, … but there was never an opportunity for the partners to get together to talk about what success would look like outside of the outcomes and objectives of the project. There were no discussions about what would happen if there was conflict.

From this experience, it became obvious to Raine that:

> Just because non-profit organizations are in the same sector, it doesn't mean we are all working at the same level. We are not all working with a trauma-informed approach or an anti-racism, anti-oppression lens. We are not all connected to our service users in the same way.

In this case, the presumption that same-sector organizations operate similarly meant that mechanisms for resolving disputes and ensuring accountability were

never put in place. Having learned from this experience, Raine's team has developed a charter that emphasizes that their

> focus is on respect, integrity, accountability, empathy, compassion, and trust and we say that this is how we are going to work together. We are going to make sure that we are focused on whether we are keeping this at the front of our mind in our communications – not only internally but in our communications with our partners and recognizing that we are working for women and girls, marginalized people, that is at the top of our mind, so that when those priorities and those mandates aren't aligned and we can start sensing it, here's some common language for us to find.

As Raine noted, constating documents can play an important role in addressing misalignments in TFVA-related collaborative initiatives:

> Some challenges arise [where there are differences in organizational values and mandates] and they can be explosive and how you have to deal with it is with the tools you have and the conflict resolution methods that have been entrenched into your agreements or your MOUs [Memoranda of Understanding].

Measuring and proving "success" are two other problems we encountered in our TFVA-related collaborations. As a complex social problem interwoven with long-standing forms of structural discrimination and oppression, meaningful quantifiable measures of "success" arising from MSC can be difficult to identify. Measurability can play an important role in the evaluation of outcomes by external funding agencies. As Jane noted, community partners may especially feel

> pressure … to have a statistical way of proving success. … The way that you undo TFVA has to do with undoing violence against women and other vulnerable groups more generally and we all know that doesn't happen by one program or creating a product and then evaluating what people learned from a program even though that might be what a funder would require you to do.

The effects of intersecting forms of oppression also present challenges for measuring success in the context of TFVA-related MSC. For example, a perceived "win" that involves eroding privacy to facilitate improved law enforcement against perpetrators can later backfire by diminishing privacy for TFVA targets. For many TFVA targets, inadequate privacy protections are a critical factor in exposure to abuse in the first place (see, Harris & Woodlock, this volume).

Finally, we recognize that current failures can pave the way to future successes. As Raine recalled:

I think that through [one failed] collaboration, I learned so much around what not to do. All my future projects with external and internal partners have been modeled on not repeating that. When another opportunity was pushed upon us to work in a similar way, I had all the tools and tricks and understanding to make sure that did not happen again. … [So that, in another situation where] it was clear to us there wasn't a sense of alignment, we actually pulled out of the opportunity that could have meant a good amount of funding, [because] our values as an organization and as a group of people that work together [were] not matching. … So we stepped away.

Power Dynamics, Legitimacy, Accountability, and Trust

MSC is imbued with power dynamics (McDonald, Jayasuriya, & Harris, 2012), which affect trust between participants (Foley et al., 2016), as well as their perceptions of process legitimacy and accountability (Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 2015).

Having greater power often correlates with greater human and financial resources, which in turn can provide greater visibility, credibility, and access to reports, research, and policymakers (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, p. 28). As noted by Foley et al. (2016), power asymmetry "manifests in instances of withholding information, expertise biases, meeting settings, and exclusive decision making" (p. 9). As a result, those with less resources often have less power to influence or to shift power dynamics in their favor, resulting in underrepresentation of their views and experiences, and sometimes them being abused, overruled, manipulated, or excluded. These realities have led some to argue that marginalized stakeholders should avoid MSC altogether in favor of solidarity networks and social movements (see, e.g., Hiemstra, Brouwer, & Van Vugt, 2012, pp. 5–7).

Power imbalances can also undermine participants' trust in each other. Trust, according to Hiemstra et al. (2012), "is a measure of one party's belief in the honesty, fairness, or benevolence of another party," so if trust is not present, "it has to be created" (p. 15). Meaningful collaboration requires building collaborative processes in which "the fortune of each sector is inextricably linked to the other" (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, p. 340), and collaborators are held accountable to each other (Badré, 2017) and to any constituencies they are representing. Legitimacy is crucial in these circumstances, and "is usually linked to the credibility of the convener, the participants and the process itself" (Global Partnership for Armed Conflict, 2015, p. 30).

Making MSCs work, therefore, requires attending to power relations (McDonald et al., 2012). Large private sector business players, for example, have to "understand that dialogue in the multi-stakeholder context is different from traditional business negotiation" (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, p. 640). Space must also be made for naming and recognizing other forms of power (Hiemstra et al., 2012, p. 16), including on-the-ground experience and the trust of individuals/communities directly affected by the issue at hand.

Power, legitimacy, accountability, and trust have all figured heavily in our experiences with TFVA-related MSC. For example, YWCA Canada was engaged in a pilot project, which from Raine's perspective, "wasn't a success because the service providers in shelters were so suspicious of the process." She explained:

> When women came into the shelter having experienced violence, they were asked by the service providers if there is a risk that their abuser might use an intimate image and share it widely online. [A process had been worked out with Facebook] where [the woman targeted] could upload the photo and it would be hashed and digitized and become a thumbnail that can't be shared after the fact. Women were more, and so, concerned about that entire process that they didn't even give up the photo, even if there was one.[3]

Power imbalances in public/private MSCs can lead to situations where those with less resources end up, as Jane put it,

> feeling like you are there for window dressing and the outcome is the outcome of the party with power and now they want to say you've endorsed it because you were along for the ride.

However, our experiences demonstrate that the problem of "window dressing" isn't just associated with private sector players. Academics and nonprofit organizations also enjoy power and privileges when involved in MSCs. These sectors, too, must ensure that TFVA-related collaborations involving young people and others who have experienced violence provide meaningful and respectful opportunities that center their priorities. As Jane recalled:

> One of the things that we've seen in particular working with young people, whose expertise and contributions are often devalued, is to ensure that all participants are adequately resourced, because that signals a respect for knowledge and expertise. Clarity around responsibilities and duties is also a signal of respect to recognize their expertise, including agreements around the form and timing of their contributions. And then also, obviously working with young people in this context, asking them what their needs and priorities are and really making a genuine effort to center those because the minute the project starts to veer off into something young people have told you ten times is not of interest to them, why would they continue to be interested?

Respectful, inclusive, antioppression communication practices that work to recognize and address power asymmetries also involve devoting resources to support meaningful participation by *all* stakeholders. Jane has derived insights on this issue from negative experiences in policymaking forums:

> You're sort of sitting around a table and the policy maker is priding themselves that they're having a MSC and what's immediately clear is that everyone at the table is not the same in terms of power. So you invite some young women from an activist group and a high school and you sit them across from an officer of a giant social media platform and a couple of professors and everybody is not in equal power position[s]. Even if you manage it so everyone gets to say something, people don't come with the same resources. … Even though we know community organizations and individuals are never going to have the lobbying power corporations do, at [a] minimum … we have to address power asymmetries as much as we can in that process.

Mechanisms for addressing power asymmetries include providing financial supports, informational context, and background to those who need it, using plain language, and offering other sorts of capacity-building initiatives (including open access resource materials) to familiarize participants with new settings so their leadership capacities and expertise can be fully realized and applied. This can also include putting members of affected communities in executive positions within MSC, enabling them to hold collaborators accountable. Finally, as discussed above, specifically incorporating protocols for respectful communication and inclusivity within founding MSC documents, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms and off-ramps, can also be a way to minimize the "window dressing" risk. As Jane suggested:

> [Try] to figure out as best you can in the beginning who has what responsibility and what the limits on outcomes are and [have] the capacity at some point to be able to say, "this is the end of the line for us as part of this collaboration [because if this is where things are going], we can't endorse or be a part of that outcome." It's not to say it may not be a functional outcome for other collaborators, [but it may not be for certain individuals or organizations].

In other cases, coping with power asymmetries and differences in mandate and capacities may best be addressed by recognizing that the dial on intransigent social problems can also be moved forward in multiple ways, including through initiatives by subsets of collaborative participants. As Jane put it, recognizing this

> allows for … situations where maybe one partner's values don't align with another's so they don't want, [for example] to do internal work with a private organization, but that doesn't mean that that work can't get done. There are many ways of going about it and different people can bring different kinds of relationships and expertise and limitations on their values and expectations and still be moving forward to produce something without everybody having to participate with everyone else all the time.

Similarly, in Raine's TFVA-related experience, it was important to recognize the meaningful contributions smaller private players made:

> I was always excited about the smaller tech companies that went along with Project Shift and changed their policies and practices along the way. Uken Games started looking at all the issues around user experience and building empathy into their reporting and having a different relationship with the person on the other end. That I think for me was a bigger shift, and they did a big overhaul compared to larger corporations.

Larger corporations can be less nimble so real change may only be incentivized when problems like those involving Cambridge Analytica, that affect mainstream community members (as opposed to marginalized communities), are publicized.

Identifying and Prioritizing What Community Members Need Most

Since TFVA disproportionately affects members of communities whose time and resources are often stretched by the marginalizing effects of structural oppression, TFVA researchers and nonprofit organizations serving these communities often represent the interests of affected individuals/groups in MSCs. In these cases, being an academic or nonprofit sector participant carries special responsibilities. In our TFVA-related work, we have attempted to prioritize representing the perspectives of girls, women, and young people from marginalized communities by insisting not only that organizations (like YWCA Canada) representing girls and women from a variety of social locations be included but also – as we discuss below – that a diverse range of girls and women from marginalized communities who have experienced TFVA be directly included.

Stakeholder inclusion needs to be planned, as opposed to "organically" happening, in order to avoid, as Jane put it:

> [Being in] kind of the filter bubble where you are attracting those who are not just like minded in values, but maybe represent similar communities, not necessarily diverse communities for example, with a connection to intersectionality.

To minimize that risk, as a project begins, YWCA Canada engages in a stakeholder mapping exercise. As Raine described it in relation to Project Shift:

> It was really clear as I started thinking through the issue in the first phase of the project, which was about bringing partners together. I was around looking at who I wanted [to be included] and it's kind of like the user journey,[4] … where I thought if I am someone who's just experienced TFVA and I'm in high school, what am I going to do? And then what am I going to do after that and who am I going to connect with at all those points up until the justice system?

This approach allowed Raine to recognize that there were multiple different connection points – social media platforms, schools, principals, teachers, community organizations, police, mental health organizations – *and* that "these silos understand and address the issue differently." Police, for example, might say, "it's not a thing … off you go," and elected officials and lawyers weren't necessarily clear on the issues either. Centring the experiences on TFVA targets in the analysis broadened the YWCA's understanding of who needed to be at the table in order to meet targets' needs.

From Raine's perspective, taking a user-centered approach also requires directly connecting

> with service users to identify their needs. With Project Shift, it started with a gender-based analysis and needs assessment and it's how we go about doing our research. It's trauma-informed, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, centering the voices of folks with lived experiences. Those are the key pieces, and valuing the contributions and the knowledge of our program workers on the ground in communities who have a really clear understanding of their service users and the issues they are facing.

The eQuality Project also prioritizes engaging with targeted youth from marginalized communities in a respectful way that acknowledges their experience and expertise. This means moving beyond classic data extraction models toward more collaborative and participatory research models, driven by young people from diverse social locations. In addition to standard social science methods like focus groups and interviews, The eQuality Project also employs approaches like art workshops, concept mapping, Q sorting,[5] and deliberative dialogue (Bailey et al., 2019). As Jane noted, it also relies heavily on partnering with trusted and credible organizations "who have their finger on the pulse and are paying attention to constituents' needs as a way of finding out more about … who to talk to or what the issues are."

That said, we both recognize that, as Raine observed, "people aren't going to jump at the opportunity to consult" just because an MSC is dedicated to taking an intersectional approach that prioritizes inclusion of voices from a diverse range of social locations. As Jane noted:

> Number one, a lot of [marginalized] communities are tapped out because you and a thousand other people want their expertise, and number two, maybe they are just not interested in what you're doing. [I can't assume that just because] I think this is so important that it must be on the top of your priority list, too, [especially] when members of marginalized communities are dealing with life and death situations every day.

Although social media companies play a significant role in the TFVA context, it is also important to ensure frontline service providers have the necessary

technical information to support clients without relying on corporate actors or actions. As Raine reflected:

> If they feel confident in themselves around the understanding of their data, privacy, and security, then they can have those conversations to say this is something you might want to think about because you may not want to upload your photo to Facebook and have it hashed, but maybe you want to think about turning off your GPS locator. Maybe when you go back you get an escort to your former home, you don't grab your partner's phone and they come find you. It's those kind of conversations I can do something about.

For Raine, addressing reasonable doubts about corporate responses and involvement has also meant supporting TFVA survivors when sharing their lived TFVA experiences with corporate stakeholders (that are amenable to change):

> I think that with the smaller [tech companies], building the empathy, … I think breaking down that wall and screen between the programmers and their service users essentially, that I think was really successful because, in some cases, having folks hear the impact of something being shared, having a meme created about part of your body and it spreading widely through your school, like the mental trauma that that causes, I think that continues to be the piece that was a bit of the tipping point.

That said, facilitating survivors' telling of their stories carries with it risks that must be addressed. As Raine noted:

> [So] for me it is about making sure that they know that there is an out for them, that this is a leadership opportunity and we are changing something by them telling their story and it's not just a fluff piece. It's not for the sake of re-injuring you. The information you are entrusting me with is going to the right people who can make decisions.

Finally, our experiences have made it clear how important honesty about what can – and cannot – be accomplished through a collaborative initiative, especially when working with those directly affected by TFVA, is expressed. As Raine put it:

> [W]hen people ask for something specific, we need to deliver and if we can't, we have to tell them why.

Conclusion

MSC is becoming a staple approach for responding to complex social problems like TFVA. Numerous financial, professional, and personal incentives provide impetus for the synergistic benefits of bringing together diverse stakeholders with diverse expertise to address atmospheric problems. Incentives and benefits notwithstanding, MSC carries with it challenges, some of which are of special import in relation to problems like TFVA that are underlain by persistent structural inequality. These include how to define and measure success, misaligned priorities between collaborators, how to meaningfully give effect to intersectionality, and how to deal with failed initiatives.

While there is vast literature on MSC and its challenges,[6] our goal has been to discuss how those issues have manifested in our own experiences with TFVA-related MSCs and to derive insights based on them. Our modest suggestions for maximizing the benefits and recognizing the limits of MSCs in order to meaningfully address TFVA are to:

- Employ user-journey tools, needs assessments, and in-person consultations with those directly affected by TFVA to identify participants and priorities for MSC;
- Spend time up front paying close attention to and discussing the development of constating documents, such as MOUs, to ensure they:
  - define the MSC's objectives in terms of both product *and* process, so that success can be measured not just in terms of quantifiable outputs but also whether the collaboration has been carried out in accordance with anti-oppression and intersectional values based on respect for and actualization of diversity and inclusion;
  - set out procedures for addressing and resolving conflicts/disputes;
  - allow for collaboration between subsections of the MSC, subject to group accountability; and
  - provide "off-ramps" that allow collaborators from marginalized communities to leave the MSC when they can no longer agree with its direction and are concerned about becoming "window dressing."
- Schedule relationship-building time into the MSC;
- Measure success at preagreed designated times throughout the MSC and not just by outputs like programs or legal reform, but also by whether the process lived up to articulated commitments to diversity and inclusion, and centered the voices of those with lived experiences of TFVA and their supporters;
- Actualize the MSC's commitment to intersectionality and diversity by:
  - including people and organizations from diverse social locations;
  - providing informational and financial resources and moral supports to promote equal participation of those from marginalized communities; and
  - ensuring diverse representation in executive positions to maximize accountability to affected communities.
- Develop a charter that expresses the core values of your organization, and be prepared to refuse participation in MSCs that don't align with those values or to leave existing MSCs that are not measuring up;

- Use more participatory, community-led models such as PAR and deliberative dialogue to conduct research; and
- Conduct exit interviews with collaborators at the end of the MSC to evaluate what went right, what went wrong, and to identify how those lessons can and will be incorporated into future collaborative initiatives.

As MSC becomes an increasingly favored approach for addressing wicked problems like TFVA, the importance of realistically evaluating its risks and benefits escalates. We hope that sharing lessons learned from our experiences with TFVA-related MSC will contribute meaningfully to that evaluation process.

Notes

1. Krawchuk (2013), adopting the approach of Denning, Dunham, and Brown (2010, p. 315), uses the term "wicked" to describe "issues 'for which there is no consensus on the problem or on the solution and partisan interests [potentially] block collaboration'" (p. 11).
2. CER research is a collaborative process "between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community" (Virginia Commonwealth University, n.d, Community engaged research, para 1). PAR can be thought of both as a community-based research method and as a tool for strengthening community relationships, where "research questions, studies, and evaluation frameworks are developed in partnership with the group or organization under study" (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 9). Democratic (or deliberative) dialogue is a PAR method, a form of "community inquiry" bringing together experts and citizens to create an understanding of issues relevant to policymaking and development (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 9, citing; Escobar, 2014, p. 483).
3. See Henry et al. (2020) for a discussion of this initiative.
4. See Trebble, Hansi, Hydes, Smith, & Baker. (2010) for further discussion of user journey mapping or client/patient-centered approaches.
5. Q sorting and concept mapping "use traditional quantitative methods … to explore the perspectives of individual research participants" and "are effective for examining conceptual spaces that are complex and admit multiple characterizations or are understood from a variety of lived perspectives" (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 7).
6. See, for example: Wayne-Nixon et al. (2019); Foley et al. (2016); Hiemstra, Brouwer, and Van Vugt (2012).

References

Adam, L., James, T., & Wanjira, A. M. (2007). Frequently asked questions about multi-stakeholder partnerships in ICTs for development. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/catia_ms_guide_EN-1.pdf

Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *18*(4), 543–571.

Ayala-Orozco, B., Rosell, J., Merçon, J., Bueno, I., Alatorre-Frenk, G., Langle-Flores, A., & Lobato, A. (2018). Challenges and strategies in place-based multi-stakeholder collaboration for sustainability: Learning from experiences in the Global South. *Sustainability*, *10*(9), 3271.

Badré, B. (2017). To tackle global challenges, the public and private sectors must join forces, here's why. Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/public-private-cooperation/

Bailey, J., Steeves, V., Burkell, J., Shade, L. R., Regan, P., & Ruparelia, R. (2019). Getting at equality: Research methods informed by the lessons of intersectionality. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *18*(1), 1–13.

Becker, J., & Smith, D. (2018). The need for cross-sector collaboration. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *16*(1), C2–C3.

Bista, B. (2016). Youth engage project. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SFCG_NEP501_YE_Evaluation_Report_FINAL.pdf

Canada, Standing Committee on the Status of Women. (2017). Taking action to end violence against young women and girls in Canada [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/FEWO/Reports/RP8823562/feworp07/feworp07-e.pdf

Closson, R., & Nelson, B. (2009). Teaching social justice through community engagement. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning*, *3*(1), 1–20.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241–1299.

Denning, P., Dunham, R., & Brown, J. S. (2010). *The innovator's way: Essential practices for successful innovation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Escobar, O. (2014). Upstream public engagement, downstream policy-making? The brain imaging dialogue as a community of inquiry. *Science and Public Policy*, *41*, 480–492.

Foley, R., Wiek, A., Kay, B., & Rushforth, R. (2016). Ideal and reality of multi-stakeholder collaboration on sustainability problems: A case study on a large-scale industrial contamination in Phoenix, Arizona. *Sustainability Science*, *12*(1), 1–14.

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict. (2015). Multi-stakeholder processes for conflict prevention & peacebuilding. [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://www.mspguide.org/sites/default/files/resource/gppac_mspmanual_interactive_version_final_jan2016_1.pdf

Grosser, K. (2014). Corporate social responsibility and multi-stakeholder governance: Pluralism, feminist perspectives and women's NGOs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *137*(1), 65–81.

Henry, N., McGlynn, C., Flynn, A., Johnson, K., Powell, A., & Scott, A. J. (2020). *Image-based sexual abuse: A study on the causes and consequences of non-consensual nude or sexual imagery*. London and New York, NY: Routledge.

Henry, N., & Powell, A. (2016). Technology-facilitated sexual violence: A literature review of empirical research. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *19*(2), 195–208.

Hiemstra, W., Brouwer, H., & Van Vugt, S. (2012). Power dynamics in multistakeholder processes. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/29224523.pdf

Krawchuk, F. (2013). Multi-stakeholder collaboration. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://oefresearch.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/msc-digital-final-r.pdf

Livingstone, S., Byrne, J., & Bulgar, M. (2015). Researching children's rights globally in the digital age. [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/62248/1/__lse.ac.uk_storage_LIBRARY_Secondary_libfile_shared_repository_Content_Livingstone,%20S_Researching%20children's%20rights_2015.pdf

Loveridge, D., & Wilson, N. (2017). Engaging with the private sector through multistakeholder platforms. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.enterprise-development.org/wp-content/uploads/DCED-Platforms-Review.pdf

McDonald, J., Jayasuriya, R., & Harris, M. F. (2012). The influence of power dynamics and trust on multidisciplinary collaboration: A qualitative case study of type 2 diabetes mellitus. *BMC Health Services Research*, *12*(1), 63.

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Industry and Trade. (n.d.). The christchurch call to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online. Retrieved from https://www.christchurchcall.com/

Oonk, C., Gulikers, J., & Mulder, M. (2016). Educating collaborative planners: Strengthening evidence for the learning potential of multi-stakeholder regional learning environments. *Planning Practice and Research*, *31*(5), 533–551.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2014). OECD principles for internet policy making. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/sti/ieconomy/oecd-principles-for-internet-policy-making.pdf

Pruitt, R., & Thomas, P. (2007). Democratic dialogue –A handbook for practitioners. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/democratic%20_dialogue.pdf

Roche, B. (2011). New directions in community-based research. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/newdirectionsincbr.pdf

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. (2019). Partnership grants. Retrieved from https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/partnership_grants_stage1-subventions_partenariat_etape1-eng.aspx

Trebble, T. M., Hansi, N., Hydes, T., Smith, M. A., & Baker, M. (2010). Process mapping the patient journey: An introduction. *BMJ*, *341*(1), c4078.

Virginia Commonwealth University. (n.d). Center for community engagement and impact. Retrieved from https://community.vcu.edu/faculty-support/

Wayne-Nixon, L., Wragg-Morris, T., Mishra, A., Markle, D., & Kindornay, S. (2019). Effective multi-stakeholder engagement to realize the 2030 Agenda. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Effective_Engagement_Canada.pdf

YWCA Canada. (2020). Our history. Retrieved from https://ywcacanada.ca/who-are-we/impact-history/