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**University of  
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**ICOS**

INTERNATIONAL  
COMMUNITY  
ORGANISATION  
OF SUNDERLAND

# **Back in Control 2 (BIC2) Project Evaluation**

**Interim Report – August 2024**

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# 1. Introduction

This report presents interim findings from the evaluation into the Back in Control 2 (BiC2) project. The evaluation team are academics from The University of Sunderland, within the Public Health Team, in the Faculty of Health Sciences and Wellbeing. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the efficacy of BiC2 Project outputs (results arising from intervention activities), in terms of outcomes (benefits for clients). The evaluation seeks to examine whether, and to what extent, clients are engaging with intervention activities and achieving project outcomes and identify the capacity of the BiC2 Project to generate change.

## 1.1. Background to the BiC2 Project

A continuation of the BiC project, the BiC2 project focuses on identifying and supporting black and minoritised adults in Sunderland and the surrounding area, who have been affected by labour exploitation (LE) and modern-day slavery (MDS), to rebuild their lives. The BiC2 project is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, until August 2025, and is coordinated by International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS), in collaboration with Impact North-East CIC. BiC2 has supported a total of 71 clients, and is currently supporting 61 clients, via holistic, one-to-one support, which includes counselling, health and wellbeing interventions, advice, and advocacy on accessing benefits and entitlements, immigration advice, and support for volunteers.

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### 1.1.1. BiC2 Project Partners

The lead BiC2 partner is [ICOS \(International Community of Sunderland\)](#). ICOS works with minoritised communities in Sunderland and the surrounding area supporting them through the provision of advice, information and advocacy. ICOS specialises in supporting those with limited access to information and support networks, including economic migrants and refugees, to attain stability through accessing housing, welfare benefits, employment opportunities and training. All ICOS staff and most board members have personal experience migration to the UK. ICOS have a particularly strong relationship with the Eastern European community, and work with a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers. Through the BiC and BiC2 projects, ICOS have also been able to establish a relationship with Roma and African communities.

Since 2015, ICOS has gained the experience of supporting people affected by modern day slavery and workplace exploitation. In 2019; ICOS were successful in obtaining funding from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) to support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and workplace exploitation. BiC2 is a multidisciplinary and multiagency suite of holistic support for victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and workplace exploitation. As well as working with local authorities, agencies and public sector organisations, the BiC2 project works in partnership with grassroots organisations and faith groups. Whilst the core function of BiC2 is to support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery, the project also aims to bring together communities affected by exploitation, such as modern-day slavery, labour exploitation and trafficking, to prevent current and future exploitation, and discover new cases of exploitation.

The main BiC2 project partner is [Impact North-East \(INE\) CIC](#). INE are a social enterprise focused on provision of clinical and therapeutic mental wellbeing services. INE's role in the

BiC2 project has been to provide counselling and other types of mental health support to clients who have experienced trauma and abuse. INE triage BiC2 clients experiencing mental health issues and provide bespoke, culturally sensitive, non-judgemental, and flexible interventions, via one-to-one and group counselling, mentoring, training and volunteering, to support them to live full and meaningful lives.

Other BiC2 partners include:

- [Wear Recovery](#): Provides clients with addictions and substance misuse (drug and alcohol) information, advice, treatment, and one-to-one, group, and peer support, in various hubs across Tyne and Wear, for BiC2 clients.
- City Hearts: Sunderland-based anti-slavery charity that provides safe accommodation services for survivors of modern-day slavery
- [North-East Law Centre](#): An established independent charity providing free legal advice, legal representation and individual casework on immigration issues, to clients.
- Sunderland Mission for Seafarers and Stella Maris Seafarers Centre: Take referrals for BiC2 clients, who are seafarers (someone who is employed to serve aboard any type of marine vessel) and are being mistreated and/ or stuck on ships due to situations beyond their control.
- [National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers \(RMT\) the Union](#): Also, take referrals for BiC2 clients, who are seafarers.
- Children's Society: Takes referrals for BiC2 clients to support with EUSS (EU Settlement Scheme).
- [Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority](#): A Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) that works to protect vulnerable and exploited workers. Investigates reports of worker exploitation and illegal activity, such as human trafficking, forced labour and illegal labour provision, as well as offences under the National Minimum Wage and Employment Agencies Acts, via intelligence from inspections, and public, industry and government departments. Also, exchanges intelligence with the BiC2 project about potential abuse taking place in the community.
- Local churches: Take referrals for BiC2 clients and provide community level intelligence on potential modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, from local faith groups.
- Welfare Rights Service (Sunderland City Council): Take referrals for BiC2 clients, who need employment tribunal representation.
- Local Voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and networks: Take referrals for BiC2 clients and advertise the BiC2 project.

- [Action Foundation](#): An established charity based in Tyne and Wear, supporting refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants to integrate successfully into the community and lead more independent and resilient lives. Provides BiC2 clients, who are refugees, with housing, language and employment support to refugees.
- GP practices: Display multilingual information (posters) in Sunderland's GP practices to ensure clients, as well as professionals, are aware of the project.
- Social services: Take referrals for BiC2 clients from professionals working on the BiC2 project, where required. Are provided with regular information to maintain their awareness of the BiC2 project.
- Liberty strategic group: Provide peer to peer learning, benchmarking, exchange of information, and knowledge sharing to the BiC2 project.
- Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Partnership: Provide awareness raising about the BiC2 project, as well as strategic communications and coordination of efforts.
- [Tyne and Wear Citizens](#): Provide exchange of information and sharing of knowledge to the BiC2 project.
- [Changing Lives](#): Take referrals for BiC2 clients who have experienced sexual abuse. Also provide benchmarking, service coordination to minimise duplication, and multiagency events for the BiC2 project.
- [Sunderland Black and Minority Ethnic Network](#) (SBMEN): Provide peer to peer learning, benchmarking, exchange of information, and knowledge sharing to the BiC2 project.
- [Unite the Union](#): Deliver "Rights at Work" course to BiC2 clients.

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### 1.1.2. BiC2 Project Aims and Outcomes

The purpose of the BiC2 project is to support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation. The central aim of the BiC2 project is:

**To ensure the short- and long-term safety, support and stability of victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.**

This aim is achieved via the provision of a holistic, person-centred, long-term support model, that considers individual needs and circumstances, and delivers a broad range of support interventions, to provide safety and stability. These intervention outputs are mapped to BiC2 project outcomes in Table 1.



**Table 1: BiC2 outcomes mapped to intervention outputs**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Intervention (s)</b>
Improved wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling and other health and wellbeing interventions</li> <li>• General support and advice, including support with entitlements</li> </ul>
Improved financial situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic advice and advocacy on accessing benefits and entitlements</li> </ul>
Improved stability for individuals and family units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic advice and advocacy on accessing benefits and entitlements</li> <li>• Immigration advice</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing interventions</li> </ul>
Prevention, discovery and rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise community contacts and community intelligence to discover potential cases of exploitation</li> <li>• Refer clients to GLAA/the police if appropriate</li> <li>• Holistic support to prevent re-exploitation</li> </ul>
Involvement through volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support clients to access appropriate volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• ICOS will identify and support volunteers to work on several aspects of BiC2 project delivery, where appropriate.</li> </ul>

## **1.2. BiC2 Evaluation Aims and Objectives**

The overarching aims of this evaluation are:

1. To assess the efficacy of BiC2 outputs and outcomes.
2. To identify key indicators demonstrating the value and impact of BiC2.
3. To inform the development and progress of BiC2.

These aims will be achieved through the following objectives, in collaboration with stakeholders:

1. Develop a theory of change using existing programme data on BiC2 inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact to date, and identify indicators of quality, quantity, progress, outcomes, and impact.

2. Analyse BiC2 data, including participant data, registration and exit forms, contact logs, case studies, and client discussions, to obtain quantitative measures of outputs and outcomes, identify trends and change, and generate supporting qualitative narrative.
3. Present interim findings, progress and learning about BiC2 in interim reports.
4. Present and disseminate overall findings in a final report and disseminated via further publications and presentations, and as evidence to support policy reform
5. Identify benchmarking material that can be used to help optimise the delivery of BiC2.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

A mixed-methods methodology has been developed and employed for this evaluation, utilising quantitative and qualitative methods. Mixed methods methodologies are endorsed for research that aims to inform policy and praxis. Quantitative data facilitates the generalisability of qualitative data. Whereas qualitative data can play an important role in clarifying, describing, and interpreting quantitative results, as well as grounding the findings in the experiences of participants. Qualitative research is advocated for understanding and valuing the perspectives and experiences of participants, and is especially valuable when gathering data from marginalised, vulnerable and/ or hard to reach populations.

### 2.1. Evaluation Design

A mixed-methods, pre-post design, with intermediate measures, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection, is utilised for this evaluation. This design allows for quantitative measurement of outputs and outcomes at baseline, during and exit from the BiC2 project, to assess change and track progress at different stages. The qualitative arm of the evaluation allows for an exploration of client and stakeholder views, perceptions, and experiences, seeking a more detailed and rich narrative relating to the BiC2 project.

### 2.2. Sampling and Recruitment

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#### 2.2.1. Sampling for Quantitative Evaluation Arm

Total population sampling is utilised to obtain data from all BiC and BiC2 clients at baseline (first registration with the BiC/BiC2 project), annual follow-ups and exit. This is a purposive sampling technique that allows for examination of the entire population containing individuals who have certain characteristics. Thus far, data have been obtained from N = 71 clients at registration (baseline). Follow-up data has been obtained from n = 37 clients, thus far.

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#### 2.2.2. Sampling for Qualitative Evaluation Arm

A non-probability purposive sampling method is utilised to recruit BiC2 clients and stakeholders for semi-structured interviews, as individuals with experience central to the BiC2 project. This technique is a pragmatic method, advocated in exploratory research, that

allows for subjective judgements in selecting an appropriate sample, which aims to draw out the intricacies of the sample being studied.

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#### 2.2.2.1. Sampling BiC2 Clients

Participants were selected from BiC2 clients to ensure a balance of views, according to gender, age, nationality and length of time receiving support from the project. All participants are over the age of 18. Thus far, a total of 11 clients have taken part in interviews with the evaluation team. This includes six clients, who took part in interviews between July and August 2023. A further five clients participated interviewed between July and August 2024. Going forward, the evaluation plan is to recruit a further five to seven clients, in order to reach saturation (where no new information is emerging from the data).

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#### 2.2.2.2. Sampling BiC2 Stakeholders

Invites were sent via email to seven organisations providing support to clients as part of the BiC2 intervention, in collaboration with ICOS (main deliverer), requesting their participation in semi-structured interviews, as part of the evaluation. A total of three BiC2 stakeholders participated in interview discussions with a researcher from the evaluation team. This included senior representatives from three organisations providing support to clients as part of the BiC2 in three key areas including:

- 1. Culturally sensitive, one-to-one and group counselling, mentoring, training, and volunteering.**
- 2. Advice on benefits, employment, finance, housing, immigration, and health.**
- 3. Legal advice and services in criminal, education, employment, family, immigration, welfare benefits, and discrimination laws.**

Going forward, the evaluation plan is to recruit a further five to seven stakeholders, in order to reach saturation (where no new information is emerging from the data).

## 2.3. Data Collection Methods and Measures

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### 2.3.1. Quantitative Data Collection Methods

Data are routinely collected at three points by ICOS, as part of monitoring for the BiC2 project, at the start of the project (baseline), six-to-eight monthly reviews and exit from the programme (follow-ups). Quantitative measures include:

- 1. Client demographics, such as age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, immigration status and employment status.**
- 2. BiC2 outcome survey, which includes a series of measures that assess clients' development against the outcomes listed in Table 1:**
  - Clients are asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with statements relating to BiC2 project outcomes on a scale of 1 to 10.

- Outcome measures relate to clients’ perceptions on personal safety, and on their financial and housing situations, plus views on independent living, knowledge on where to go in a crisis, readiness for work, English Language Proficiency, and knowledge on finding legal employment

### 3. Survey data from the Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS):

- SWEMWBS was developed to enable the measuring of mental wellbeing in the general population for the evaluation of public health projects and programmes.
- SWEMWBS captures and measures domains of mental wellbeing, including feelings of meaning and purpose, social relationships, experiences of pleasure, e.g., happiness.
- Clients are asked to rate a range of statements relating to their wellbeing, on a five-point scale [*1 = None of the time; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Some of the time; 4 = Often; 5 = All of the time*].

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#### 2.3.2. Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Qualitative methods include semi-structured interviews with BiC2 clients and stakeholders, undertaken by the evaluation team. Semi-structured interviews are advocated for providing structure, whilst also facilitating and allowing for free-flowing discussion.

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##### 2.3.2.1. Semi-structured Interviews with BiC2 clients

Semi-structured interviews with BiC2 clients aim to gain a rich, detailed account of their experiences of modern-day-slavery and/ or labour exploitation, support they received from the BiC2 project, plans for the future, and recommendations for service providers, authorities and agencies in supporting victims and survivors. The topic and sub-topics explored in interviews with clients are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: BiC2 client Interview topics and sub-topics**

<b>Client Interview Topics</b>	<b>Sub-Topics</b>
Clients’ understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.</li> </ul>
Clients’ experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiences of modern-day slavery and/ or labour exploitation.</li> </ul>
Clients’ experiences of BiC2 Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discovery and involvement in BiC2.</li> <li>• Support received from the BiC2 project.</li> <li>• Perceptions of stability economic, social and cultural stability.</li> <li>• Prevention of further exploitation.</li> <li>• Suggestions for improvement to the BiC2 project.</li> </ul>

Client Interview Topics	Sub-Topics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future plans and aspirations.</li> </ul>
Wider support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendations for supporting victims and survivors.</li> </ul>

### 2.3.2.1.1. Client Interview Processes

Interviews with clients are facilitated by an appropriately qualified and trained member of the evaluation team. All client interviews take place at ICOS premises in a private room. Interpreters are provided for all clients, who required interpretation services. Participants are asked questions based on the topics and sub-topics outlined in Table 2. Interviews are audio recorded. The duration of interviews is between 40 minutes to 1 hour.

### 2.3.2.2. Semi-structured Interviews with BiC2 Stakeholders

Semi-structured interviews with BiC2 clients stakeholders aim to gain a rich, thick and detailed account of their experiences of supporting the BiC2 project and victims/ survivors modern-day-slavery and/ or labour exploitation. Topic and sub-topics explored in interviews with stakeholders are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: BiC2 stakeholder interview topics and sub-topics

Stakeholder Interview Topics	Sub-Topics
Stakeholder understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern-day slavery and labour exploitation</li> </ul>
Experiences working on the BiC2 Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement in the BiC2 Project.</li> <li>• Experience of the BiC2 Project, as a stakeholder.</li> <li>• Positive aspects of the BiC2 Project.</li> <li>• How BiC2 Project has supported clients, in terms of project outcomes.</li> <li>• Suggestions for improvement to the BiC2 project.</li> </ul>
Wider support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How service providers, authorities and policy makers could better support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.</li> </ul>

### 2.3.2.2.1. BiC2 Stakeholders Interview Process

Interviews with BiC stakeholders are facilitated by a member of the evaluation team and undertaken face-to-face, online via Microsoft teams. Interviews are audio recorded using a digital recording device. The duration of interviews is between 30 minutes and 1 hour.

## 2.4. Data Analysis

### 2.4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data, including client demographic data, and baseline and follow-up data from BiC outcome measures and the data from the SWEMWBS, are imported into SPSS for analysis. All data are analysed using descriptive statistics to gain a picture of trends in the data, including frequencies, percentages and averages (means).

Baseline and follow-up data are analysed using descriptive statistics to gain an overview of trends in the data, between baseline and follow-up. Subsequently, trends in the data are examined further using inferential statistics (paired sample t-tests) to determine whether differences in data trends between baseline and follow-up are statistically significant.

### 2.4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data from semi structured interviews with BiC2 clients and stakeholders is analysed using a thematic analysis framework to gain a detailed narrative of client views, perceptions, and satisfaction with the BiC2 project.

The first stage of analysis involves listening to the recordings in their entirety and transcribe the interviews verbatim. During this stage, transcripts are anonymised, removing client and stakeholder names, and any other identifying information, to ensure confidentiality and anonymity for participants. Interview transcripts are the main units of analysis.

The next stage of analysis involves an in-depth line-by-line reading of the transcripts during which sections of text delineated with codes to attribute meaning. Subsequently, a master list of codes is created, and these codes are refined into preliminary themes using a constant comparative method. Preliminary themes are then further refined into master themes and subthemes via further comparative analyses.

## 3. Interim Results and Findings

This section of the report presents the first set of interim evaluation results. This is presented in five main parts, including:

1. BiC/ BiC2 client demographics.
2. BiC/ BiC2 outcome survey interim results (baseline and most recent follow-up).
3. Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS) survey interim results (baseline and most recent follow-up).
4. Interim findings from BiC2 client interviews.
5. Interim findings from BiC2 stakeholder interviews

## 3.1. Client Demographics

### 3.1.1. Client Gender and Age

The Back in Control projects 1 and 2 have supported a total of N = 71 clients since 2022. This includes n = 36 (51%) female clients and n = 35 (49%) male clients. Clients are aged between 19 and 71 years.

### 3.1.2. Client Country of Origin

Out of n = 69 BiC/ BiC2 clients, who provided information on their country of origin, the largest proportion of clients originate from Poland (30%), followed by smaller proportions of clients from Sudan (15%), Nigeria (9%), Slovakia (9%), Ukraine (6%) and Bulgaria (6%). Small numbers of clients originate from Lithuania, Vietnam, Albania, Algeria, Czech Republic, China, Italy, Morocco, Tanzania, Romania, Sierra Leone, Togo, Kuwait, and Eritrea.

### 3.1.3. Client Ethnicity

A total of n = 66 BiC/ BiC2 clients provided information on their ethnicity. The largest proportion (55%) of clients reported their ethnic origin, as 'white other,' followed by 33%, who reported their ethnic origin as 'black African.' Smaller proportions of clients reported their ethnic origin as 'white gypsy or traveller', 'Chinese', 'Asian other', and 'black other'.

### 3.1.4. Client Immigration Status

A total of n = 62 BiC2 clients provided information on their immigration status at baseline. Almost a third (31%) of clients reported they were EU national, EEA or Swiss citizen with settlement status, followed by 29% of clients who reported they were asylum seekers. Smaller proportions of clients reported they were an EU national, EEA or Swiss citizen with pre-settlement status (15%), European Economic Area (EEA) members (13%), or refugees (10%). A small number of clients reported they were in possession of a UK visa (work/ student).

### 3.1.5. Client Employment Status

A total of n = 64 clients provided information on their current employment status. The largest proportion (41%) of clients reported they were 'unemployed'. This was followed by 30% of clients, who reported they had 'no right to work'. Over a quarter of clients (27%) reported they were employed. A small number of clients reported they were self-employed or retired.

## 3.2. BiC2 Outcome Survey Interim Results

This second section provides the results from an analysis of data from BiC/ BiC2 client data from outcome measures, at baseline (registration) and the most recent follow-up. In total, n = 37 clients have provided baseline and follow-up data, thus far. These findings are presented in three parts, including:

1. Outcome measures for all BiC/ BiC2 clients (n=37) at baseline and most recent follow-up.

2. Outcome measures for female BiC/ BiC2 female clients (n = 23) at baseline and most recent follow-up.
3. Outcome measures for male BiC/ BiC2 female clients (n = 23) at baseline and most recent follow-up.

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### 3.2.1. Outcome measures for all BiC/ BiC2 clients

Data from outcome measures for all BiC/ BiC2 clients (n = 37), who have provided responses at baseline and follow-up were subject to a descriptive analysis to identify mean averages for each outcome measure at baseline and follow-up. Following this paired sample t-tests were used to examine whether trends observed in the data were significant.

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#### 3.2.1.2. Descriptive Results on Outcome Measures

Descriptive results indicate **increasing positive trends in mean averages across seven of nine outcome measures, between baseline and the most recent follow-up** (See Table 4.). Descriptive results showed an increase in positive trends, at baseline and follow-up in:

- Clients' feelings safeness in their current situation.
- Clients' perceptions of their current financial situation.
- Clients' perceptions on their current housing situation.
- Clients' perceptions on their current levels of independence.
- Clients' perceptions on their ability to complete basic daily tasks.
- Clients' perceptions on their level of knowledge on who to ask for help in a crisis.
- Clients' readiness to look for work.

In addition, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends in mean average scores in one outcome measure and a decrease in trends in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up in one outcome measure (See Table 4). This included:

- No change in trends in clients' knowledge on how to find legal employment.
- A decrease in trends in clients' perceptions on their English language ability.

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#### 3.2.1.3. Statistical Results on Outcome Measures

To assess whether the changes in trends on outcome measures for clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-



up were significant. Results showed that changes in trends for two outcome measures were statistically significant. This includes:

- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in outcome measures relating to clients' sense of personal safety;  $t(36) = -2.39$ ,  $p = 0.01$ .
- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in outcome measures relating to clients' perceptions about their current housing situation;  $t(36) = -1.97$ ,  $p = 0.03$

**Table 4: Mean average outcome scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t-tests**

Survey Item	Baseline Average	Follow-up Average	Paired sample t-tests p value 0.05
On a sliding scale, from 1 to 10, where 1 is very unsafe, please describe how safe you feel in your current situation?	M = 6.1 (SD 3.6)	M = 7.5 (SD 2.7)	Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current financial situation?	M = 4.4 (SD 3.0)	M = 5.1 (SD 3.0)	Not Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current housing situation?	M = 6.2 (SD 3.1)	M = 7.2 (SD 2.8)	Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not independent' and 10 means 'fully independent' please indicate your perceived level of independence.	M = 7.2 (SD 3.2)	M = 7.4 (SD 2.9)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'nothing', and 10 means 'everything' please indicate your perceived level of ability.	M = 7.2 (SD 3.2)	M = 7.3 (SD 2.2)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'I don't know' and 10 means 'full knowledge,' please indicate your level of knowledge on who to ask for help if you are in crisis.	M = 7.1 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.8 (SD 2.6)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'no knowledge' and 10 means 'full knowledge' please indicate you level on knowledge on how to find legal employment (Baseline)	M = 7.1 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.1 (SD 3.4)	No increase in trends
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not good', and 10 means 'very good,' please indicate your English language ability.	M = 5.1 (SD 2.9)	M = 4.7 (SD 2.9)	Not Significant
If not in work: On a rising scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means not ready at all, and 10 means 'very ready,' please rate your readiness to look for work.	M = 6.1 (SD 3.8)	M = 6.2 (SD 4.0)	Not Significant

### 3.2.2. Outcome measures for Female BiC/ BiC2 clients

Data were disaggregated by gender to assess for differences in outcome measures for male and female clients, between baseline and follow-up. A total of  $n = 23$  female clients have provided responses at baseline and follow-up, so far. Data were subject to a descriptive analysis to identify mean averages for each outcome measure at baseline and follow-up.

Following this paired sample t-tests were used to examine whether trends observed in the data were significant.

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#### 3.2.2.2. Descriptive Results on Outcome Measures

Descriptive results indicate **increasing positive trends in mean average scores for female clients, across five of nine outcome measures, between baseline and the most recent follow-up** (See Table 5.). Descriptive results showed an increase in positive trends, at baseline and follow-up in:

- Female clients' feelings safeness in their current situation.
- Female clients' perceptions of their current financial situation.
- Female clients' perceptions on their current housing situation.
- Female clients' perceptions on their ability to complete basic daily tasks.
- Female clients' perceptions on their level of knowledge on who to ask for help in a crisis.

In addition, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends in mean average scores in two outcome measures and a decrease in trends in two outcome measures, between baseline and follow-up (See Table 5). This included:

- No change in trends in female clients' perceptions on their current levels of independence.
- No change in trends in female clients' knowledge on how to find legal employment.
- A decrease in trends in female clients' perceptions on their English language ability.
- A decrease trends in female clients' readiness to look for work.

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#### 3.2.2.3. Statistical Results on Outcome Measures

To assess whether the changes in trends on outcome measures for female clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up were significant. Results showed that changes in trends for one outcome measure was statistically significant. This includes:

- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in outcome measures relating to female clients' sense of personal safety;  $t(22) = -1.67, p = 0.05$

**Table 5: Mean average outcome scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t-tests for female clients**

Survey Item (Females)	Baseline Average	Follow- up Average	Paired sample t- tests p value 0.05
On a sliding scale, from 1 to 10, where 1 is very unsafe, please describe how safe you feel in your current situation?	M = 6.7 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.8 (SD 2.4)	Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current financial situation?	M = 4.7 (SD 2.7)	M = 5.5 (SD 3.0)	Not Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current housing situation?	M = 6.9 (SD 2.9)	M = 7.8 (SD 2.5)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not independent' and 10 means 'fully independent' please indicate your perceived level of independence.	M = 7.0 (SD 3.1)	M = 7.0 (SD 2.2)	No increase in trends
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'nothing', and 10 means 'everything' please indicate your perceived level of ability.	M = 7.0 (SD 3.2)	M = 7.4 (SD 2.7)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'I don't know' and 10 means 'full knowledge,' please indicate your level of knowledge on who to ask for help if you are in crisis.	M = 7.3 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.7 (SD 2.6)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'no knowledge' and 10 means 'full knowledge' please indicate you level on knowledge on how to find legal employment.	M = 7.1 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.1 (SD 3.4)	No increase in trends
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not good', and 10 means 'very good,' please indicate your English language ability.	M = 5.1 (SD 2.8)	M = 4.7 (SD 2.5)	Not Significant
If not in work: On a rising scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means not ready at all, and 10 means 'very ready,' please rate your readiness to look for work.	M = 6.7 (SD 3.5)	M = 6.4 (SD 3.8)	Not Significant

### 3.2.3. Outcome measures for Male BiC/ BiC2 clients

Data were disaggregated by gender to assess for differences in outcome measures for male and female clients, between baseline and follow-up. A total of n = 15 male clients have provided responses at baseline and follow-up, so far. Data were subject to a descriptive analysis to identify mean averages for each outcome measure at baseline and follow-up. Following this paired sample t-tests were used to examine whether trends observed in the data were significant.

#### 3.2.3.2. Descriptive Results on Outcome Measures

Descriptive results indicate **increasing positive trends in mean average scores for male clients, across seven of nine outcome measures, between baseline and the most recent follow-up** (See Table 6.). Descriptive results showed an increase in trends between baseline and follow-up in:

- Male clients' feelings safeness in their current situation.

- Male clients' perceptions of their current financial situation.
- Male clients' perceptions on their current housing situation.
- Male clients' perceptions on their current levels of independence.
- Male clients' perceptions on their level of knowledge on who to ask for help in a crisis.
- Male clients' perceptions on their English language ability.
- Male clients' readiness to look for work.

In addition, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends in mean average scores in two outcome measures, between baseline and follow-up (See Table 6). This included:

- No change in trends in male clients' perceptions on their ability to complete basic daily tasks.
- No change in trends in male clients' knowledge on how to find legal employment.

### 3.2.3.3. Statistical Results on Outcome Measures

To assess whether the changes in trends on outcome measures for male clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up were significant. Results showed that no changes in trends in outcome scores for male clients were statistically significant. (See Table 6.)

**Table 6: Mean average outcome scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t-tests for male clients**

<b>Survey Item (Males)</b>	<b>Baseline Average</b>	<b>Follow- up Average</b>	<b>Paired sample t- tests p value 0.05</b>
On a sliding scale, from 1 to 10, where 1 is very unsafe, please describe how safe you feel in your current situation?	M = 5.1 (SD 3.8)	M = 6.9 (SD 3.2)	Not Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current financial situation?	M = 3.9 (SD 3.6)	M = 4.4 (SD 3.0)	Not Significant
On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very bad, please describe your current housing situation?	M = 5.1 (SD 3.3)	M = 6.9 (SD 2.9)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not independent' and 10 means 'fully independent' please indicate your perceived level of independence.	M = 7.5 (SD 3.4)	M = 7.6 (SD 2.2)	Not Significant

Survey Item (Males)	Baseline Average	Follow- up Average	Paired sample t- tests p value 0.05
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'nothing', and 10 means 'everything' please indicate your perceived level of ability.	M = 7.4 (SD 3.3)	M = 7.4 (SD 2.2)	No change in trends
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'I don't know' and 10 means 'full knowledge,' please indicate your level of knowledge on who to ask for help if you are in crisis.	M = 6.9 (SD 3.6)	M = 8.1 (SD 2.7)	Not Significant
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'no knowledge' and 10 means 'full knowledge' please indicate you level on knowledge on how to find legal employment.	M = 6.9 (SD 3.3)	M = 6.9 (SD 3.3)	No change in trends
On a rising scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means 'not good', and 10 means 'very good,' please indicate your English language ability.	M = 5.1 (SD 3.2)	M = 4.6 (SD 1.6)	Not Significant
If not in work: On a rising scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means not ready at all, and 10 means 'very ready,' please rate your readiness to look for work.	M = 5.4 (SD 4.1)	M = 6.0 (SD 4.)	Not Significant

### 3.3. Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS) Survey Interim Results

This section provides results from the analysis of data from clients at baseline (registration) and most recent follow-up from the SWEMWBS measure. A total of n = 37 BiC/ BiC2 clients have provided SWEMWBS data at baseline and follow-up, so far.

Data were subject to a descriptive analysis to identify mean averages for each outcome measure at baseline and follow-up. Following this paired sample t-tests were used to examine whether trends observed in the data were significant.

#### 3.3.1.2. Descriptive Results for SWEMWBS Measures

Descriptive results indicate **increasing positive trends in mean average scores for all client across six of seven SWEMWBS measures, between baseline and the most recent follow-up** (See Table 7.). Descriptive results showed an increase in positive trends at baseline and follow-up in:

- Mean average scores in feelings of optimism about the future, for all clients.
- Mean average scores in feeling relaxed, for all clients.
- Mean average scores in ability to deal with problems well, for all clients.
- Mean average scores in ability to think clearly, for all clients.
- Mean average scores in feelings closeness to others, for all clients.

- Mean average scores in ability to make up own mind about things, for all clients.

In addition, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends in mean average scores in one SWEMWBS measure, between baseline and follow-up (See Table 7). This included:

- No change in trends in clients' feelings of usefulness between baseline and follow-up.

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#### 3.3.1.3. Statistical Results on SWEMWBS Measures

To assess whether the changes in trends on SWEMWBS measures for clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up were significant. Results showed that changes in trends for three SWEMWBS measures was statistically significant. (See Table 7.) This includes:

- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to clients' feelings of optimism about the future;  $t(36) = -1.782, p = 0.04$ .
- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to clients' feelings of being relaxed  $t(36) = -1.782, p = 0.04$ .
- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to clients' ability to make up own mind about things;  $t(36) = -2.465, p = 0.01$ .

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#### 3.3.1.4. Descriptive Results for SWEMWBS Total Scores

Descriptive results indicate **increasing positive trends in mean average total scores for all clients**. (See Table 7.) Descriptive results showed:

- An increase in positive trends in total SWEMWBS scores, for all clients between baseline and follow-up.

The SWEMWBS ranks total well being scores in terms of low, medium and high wellbeing scores [**low wellbeing score = 7.0 to 19.3; medium wellbeing score = 20.00 to 27.00; high wellbeing score 28.1 to 35**].

For all clients, the total mean average score at baseline was  $M = 23.68$  ( $SD 7.83$ ), and at follow-up the total mean average score was  $M = 26.11$  ( $SD 5.86$ ). These results show:

- An increasing positive trend in total SWEMWBS wellbeing scores, for all clients between registration and most recent follow-up.

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#### 3.3.1.5. Statistical Results on SWEMWBS Total Scores

To assess whether the changes in trends on SWEMWBS measures for clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-

tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up were significant (See Table 7.) Results showed:

- BiC/ BiC2 clients significantly increased their total SWEMWBS score on average between baseline and follow-up.

Table 7: Mean average SWEMWBS scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t -for all clients

SWEMWBS Item Measures	Average (Baseline)	Mean Average (Follow-up)	Paired sample t-tests p value 0.05
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	M = 3.2 (SD 1.5)	M = 3.6 (SD 1.1)	Significant
I've been feeling useful	M = 3.8 (SD 1.4)	M = 3.8 (SD 1.0)	No change in trends
I've been feeling relaxed	M = 2.6 (SD 1.4)	M = 3.1 (SD 1.1)	Significant
I've been dealing with problems well	M = 3.3 (SD 1.4)	M = 3.4 (SD 1.7)	Not Significant
I've been thinking clearly	M = 3.6 (SD 1.4)	M = 3.9 (SD 1.2)	Not Significant
I've been feeling close to other people	M = 3.8 (SD 1.4)	M = 4.0 (SD 1.1)	Not Significant
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	M = 3.7 (SD 1.6)	M = 4.3 (SD 0.94)	Significant
Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale Total	M = 23.68 (SD 7.83)	M = 26.11 (SD 5.86)	Significant

### 3.3.1.6. SWEMWBS Results for Female Clients

Data were disaggregated according to gender. A total of n= 23 female clients provided information. Results show **a positive increase in trends in mean average scores at baseline and most recent follow-up for female clients**, across all, but one SWEMWBS measures including (See Table 8):

- Feelings of optimism about the future.
- Feeling useful.
- Feeling relaxed.
- Ability to think clearly.
- Feelings of closeness to others.

➤ Ability to make up own mind about things.

➤ Total SWEMWBS.

In addition, results showed no change in trends for one SWEMWBS measure for female clients, between baseline and follow-up. (See Table 8.) This included:

➤ No change in trends in mean average scores in ability to deal with problems well, for female clients, between baseline and follow-up.

A series of paired sample t-tests was undertaken to assess whether the positive increase in trends for female clients' SWEMWBS scores were statistically significant. Results showed **no statistically significant positive increases in clients' SWEMWBS average scores between baseline and the most recent follow-up for female clients.** (See Table 8.)

**Table 8: Mean average SWEMWBS scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t-tests for female clients**

SWEMWBS Item Measures (Female)	Average (Baseline)	Mean Average (Follow-up)	Paired sample t- tests p value 0.05
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	M = 3.2 (SD 1.5)	M = 3.5 (SD 1.0)	Not Significant
I've been feeling useful	M = 3.7 (SD 1.6)	M = 3.8 (SD 0.9)	Not Significant
I've been feeling relaxed	M = 2.4 (SD 1.4)	M = 2.9 (SD 1.1)	Not Significant
I've been dealing with problems well	M = 3.3 (SD 1.5)	M = 3.3 (SD 1.1)	No change in trends
I've been thinking clearly	M = 3.6 (SD 1.5)	M = 3.8 (SD 1.2)	Not Significant
I've been feeling close to other people	M = 3.7 (SD 1.5)	M = 4.0 (SD 1.1)	Not Significant
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	M = 3.9 (SD 1.6)	M = 4.2 (SD 1.0)	Not Significant
Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale Total (Baseline)	M = 23.6 (SD 8.6)	M = 25.4 (SD 5.1)	Not Significant

### 3.3.1.7. SWEMWBS Results for Male Clients

A total of n = 14 male clients provided information at baseline and follow-up. Results show a **positive increase in trends in mean average scores at baseline and most recent follow-up for male clients**, across all SWEMWBS measures including (See Table 9):

➤ Feelings of optimism about the future.



- Feelings of usefulness.
- Feeling relaxed.
- Ability to deal with problems well.
- Ability to think clearly.
- Feelings of closeness to others.
- Ability to make up own mind about things.
- Total SWEMWBS scores.

To assess whether the changes in trends on SWEMWBS measures for male clients were statistically significant, a series of paired sampled t-tests were undertaken. Paired sample t-tests were used to assess whether the difference in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up were significant. Results showed that changes in trends for two SWEMWBS measures, and total scores, were statistically significant. (See Table 9.) This includes:

- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to male clients' feelings of optimism about the future;  $t(13) = -2.386$ ,  $p = 0.02$ .
- A significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to male clients' ability to make up their own mind about things;  $t(13) = -3.322$ ,  $p = 0.00$ .
- A significant positive increase in total SWEMWBS mean average scores, for male clients between baseline and follow-up;  $t(13) = -2.459$ ,  $p = 0.01$ .

**Table 9: Mean average SWEMWBS scores at baseline and follow-up, and results from paired sample t-tests for male clients**

<b>SWEMWBS Item Measures (Male)</b>	<b>Average (Baseline)</b>	<b>Mean Average (Follow-up)</b>	<b>Paired sample t- tests p value 0.05</b>
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	M = 3.1 (SD 1.7)	M = 3.5 (SD 1.0)	<b>Significant</b>
I've been feeling useful	M = 3.7 (SD 1.6)	M = 3.8 (SD 1.3)	Not Significant
I've been feeling relaxed	M = 2.9 (SD 1.4)	M = 3.4 (SD 1.1)	Not Significant
I've been dealing with problems well	M = 3.2 (SD 1.3)	M = 3.6 (SD 1.2)	Not Significant
I've been thinking clearly	M = 3.5 (SD 1.4)	M = 4.1 (SD 1.3)	Not Significant

I've been feeling close to other people	M = 3.9 (SD 1.3)	M = 4.0 (SD 1.2)	Not Significant
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	M = 3.4 (SD 1.5)	M = 4.4 (SD 1.0)	<b>Significant</b>
Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale Total	M = 23.9 (SD 6.7)	M = 27.2 (SD 7.0)	<b>Significant</b>

### 3.4. Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews with BiC2 Clients

This section provides preliminary results from n = 6 BIC clients, who participated in the first round of interviews. This included n = 3 male clients and n = 3 female clients. A total of n = 3 of the participating clients were Polish, n = 1 participant was Bulgarian, n = 1 participant was Ukrainian, and n = 1 participant was Nigerian. All participants were migrants to the UK, at different stages of residency. Further interviews have taken place with n = 5 BiC2 clients, and more interviews are planned for another five to seven clients, bringing the total to between 16 to 18 clients. Full analysis of data from interviews with clients will be undertaken and reported once all interviews have taken place and saturation has been reached.

#### 3.4.1. BiC2 Client Interviews – Emerging Areas of Significance

Analysis of the data gathered from the first round of BiC2 clients has highlighted several emergent areas of significance. These emergent themes are discussed in more detail in the sections below, and relate to:

1. Factors Increasing Risk of labour exploitation and modern-day slavery for UK migrants.
2. Experiences of labour exploitation and modern-day slavery.
3. Escaping labour exploitation and modern-day slavery.
4. Support from the BiC2 Project and ICOS.
5. After labour exploitation and modern-day slavery

##### 3.4.1.2. Factors Increasing Risk of Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery for UK Migrants

All participants, who took part in interviews, were migrants to the UK, at various stages of seeking settlement status or asylum/ refugee status. During discussions, participants spoke about the challenges they encountered as UK migrants. For instance, all

“For us, having arrived in the UK, we had exhausted our finances. So, probably this is what tricked us into getting involved.”

participants faced insecure residency status, and some participants had entered and/ or remained in the UK 'illegally' before seeking asylum.

In addition, all participants experienced deprivation, including financial insecurity and instability, insecure accommodation, and homelessness, and lacked family and social support networks.

Participants also contended with language barriers, which alongside a lack of experience in the UK employment market, increased their challenges in obtaining legitimate employment and a regular/ stable income.

"We did need the jobs though ... We didn't have a rented accommodation. It was very difficult to find one. That's why we had to stay to do that job."

Further challenges discussed by participants included a lack of knowledge about how important systems worked in the UK, such as health, welfare, and justice. These factors, combined, increased participants' risk of exploitation, and involvement/ entrapment in modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

#### 3.4.1.3. Experiences of Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery

Participants, who took part interviews, were all able to articulate the meaning and definitions of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, yet most participants did not recognise themselves as victims or survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

Some participants believed they were legitimately employed (at the time), and were receiving payslips and documentation, which they later found out to be counterfeit.

"I believed I was registered. I worked because I received pay slips and everything. But like it...it was dodgy because no contributions were paid for National Insurance number."

Whilst other participants, whose residencies were not legitimate (at the time), were aware the work they were undertaking was also not legitimate. However, all participants described experiences of exploitation and abuse, associated with modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, during interview discussions.

"Even though we agreed a payment, when we went there on Friday, the employer would give us less."

The types of labour undertaken, at the time participants were subjected to modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, included manual and physical work, such as car washing, driving, collection and delivery, and cleaning. Participants described working long hours, without breaks. Moreover, participants described carrying out physically demanding work, in dangerous working conditions, without correct safety equipment or workwear.

Some participants reported that they were pressurised to carry out work during Covid-19 lockdown periods, undertaking tasks that were not deemed essential by the UK Government; thereby exposing themselves to infection and risking prosecution for breaching emergency lockdown regulations.

"Even during the lockdown, even though it was forbidden because we were in a lockdown, he still continued to operate ... saying... 'you have to come to work'."

In addition, during discussions, participants reported that payments received for undertaking work did not meet minimum wage, and were irregular, unreliable, and inconsistent, resulting in a cycle of financial insecurity.

Some participants, without legitimate residency at the time, reported they did not receive financial payment for work undertaken. Instead, these participants worked to receive accommodation, resulting in exploitative, controlling, and unequal power relationships with landlords.

“I can't say no because if I say no, he's going to throw me out of the house. So, I keep doing that. I keep doing it for a place to live ... Just to have a place to live.”

Furthermore, participants reported being subjected to verbal and emotional abuse, and physical assault during the time they were involved in modern-day slavery and labour exploitation. Participants stated they were subject to verbal abuse and manipulation if they questioned ‘employers’ about low pay and poor working conditions. Moreover, those participants, without legitimate residency, reported being subjected to frequent verbal abuse and degradation, and physical abuse.

“We were asking him, just as a normal human being, for some payment, as we had no money to buy food. However, he would insult us. He was saying that even if we're not happy with the circumstances, there are plenty of other people happy to take our place.”

Furthermore, one participant reported her husband was subjected to serious physical assault, resulting in hospitalisation, and theft of belongings, upon discovering their employment was not legitimate and reporting this to the authorities.

“When three men from the company approached us, they took us out of the car, and they assaulted my husband up to the point of him losing a consciousness. They stole our car, our documents, our money.”

#### 3.4.1.4. Escaping Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery

During interview discussions, participants also described how they escaped LE and MDS. Most participants reported they escaped modern-day slavery and labour exploitation upon discovering they were not undertaking legitimate employment. Some participants discovered their employment was not legitimate after suffering ill health and being ineligible for statutory sick pay.

For participants without legitimate residency status, escaping modern-day slavery and labour exploitation was more difficult, due to the risk of exposing themselves to the authorities and losing their accommodation and only source of work and income.

“Even though I know that it wasn't easy for me, but if anything happens to take me back to my country, that would be a disaster. But here then it wasn't easy for me. But it's better than where I'm coming from.”

For all participants, escaping modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, resulted in adverse consequences. This included loss of income, whilst also being ineligible for other benefits, due to not being in legitimate employment.

Some participants lost their accommodation and were rendered homeless, with landlords retaining their possessions, due to having no recourse to justice.

“We were literally left homeless because we couldn't go back to our previous accommodation. They did know where we lived, and we had no relatives. No mom, no dad around. So, we spent that 10-days on the streets.”

Furthermore, participants reported being subjected to harassment and threats of violence, following their escape from modern-day slavery and labour exploitation. One participant suffered a serious violent assault, which resulted in hospitalisation, and theft of all personal belongings.

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#### 3.4.1.5. Support from the BIC2 Project and ICOS

In addition, participants discussed the support they received from the BIC2 Project and ICOS. For all participants, the support received from BIC2 and ICOS has been fundamental in facilitating their escape of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation and/ or rebuilding their lives afterwards. In the initial stages, participants stated they received emergency support including support with accommodation, travel, and food via the BIC2 programme, which prevented re-exploitation from modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

In the short and longer-term participants stated they have received day-to-day support to via the BIC2 programme. This has enabled participants to obtain welfare entitlements, health care and longer-term accommodation/housing. Moreover, participants stated they have also received support in gaining employment and accessing education and training; in addition to wellbeing and mental health support, and opportunities to join local groups and activities.

“They help me with filling all the documents needed for the HM Revenue. Then they referred me to some organisation that works with Council. They [ICOS] really paid attention to what's going on and really kept helping.”

For most participants, English language comprehension and communication are significant barriers to communication. These participants reported that interpretation and translation support from BIC2 and ICOS has been essential in aiding their ability to effectively communicate with the necessary agencies, services, and authorities. This has enabled participants to understand and respond to communications and attend appointments.

Finally, another area of significant support provided via the BIC2 programme for participants is that received in gaining settlement status, seeking asylum, and gaining refugee status. Participants stated that this support has been essential to re-build their lives after modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, and plan for the longer term.

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#### 3.4.1.6. Life After Labour Exploitation and Modern-day Slavery

Whilst all participants reported positive developments with their lives, with the support of BIC2 and ICOS, since escaping LE/MDS, many reported having ongoing challenges. Participants discussed receiving benefit sanctions, which have meant being unable to afford food and for females, essential intimate care products.

Moreover, participants are also suffering from the long term mental and physical health effects of LE/MDS. For those participants with caring responsibilities, their employment and education opportunities are limited. All these issues increase the vulnerability of victims/survivors of LE/MDS and their risk of future exploitation.

### 3.5. Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews with BiC2 Stakeholders

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with n = 3 stakeholders during December 2023. Further interviews are planned with five to seven stakeholders. Findings presented in this interim report are an early glance into the emergent themes presenting during analysis of the first three stakeholder interview discussions. Full analysis and presentation of the findings will be undertaken when all stakeholder interviews have been conducted.

#### 3.5.1. BiC2 Stakeholder Interviews Emerging Areas of Significance

Analysis of the data gathered from BiC2 stakeholders has highlighted several emergent areas of significance. These emergent themes are discussed in more detail in the sections below, and relate to:

1. Exploitation, victimisation, and marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
2. Benefits of multi-agency collaborative working to support victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
3. Back in Control 2 (BiC2) support for victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
4. Barriers to supporting victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation and reducing the risk of re-exploitation.

##### 3.5.1.1. Exploitation, victimisation, and marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

During individual interviews, stakeholders discussed the exploitation, victimisation, and marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation they encounter, as part of the BiC2 intervention. Stakeholders highlighted that many clients presented with a range of complex support needs, due to being trafficked, exploited, suffering from trauma and mental ill health, and experiencing racial discrimination and marginalisation.

“When we receive the referrals we appreciate the clients will have gone through a lot of trauma and their stress levels are quite high. So, early intervention is quite key. They’re dealing with a lot of trauma.”



Stakeholders described supporting BiC2 clients who were being actively exploited, and under extreme duress, with many aspects of their lives being controlled by perpetrators of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation. Stakeholders highlighted that many victims/ survivors also presented with low levels of English language proficiency, which was perceived to contribute to clients' risk of labour and other forms of exploitation.

"People are coming to us if to get out of a situation where they're under duress and being controlled. We work with them to find alternative accommodation and additional support for any crisis that they may need in the short term."

In addition, stakeholders described the socioeconomic challenges faced by victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation when encountering services. Stakeholders also highlighted that victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation were typically presenting at services experiencing high levels of poverty, including financial, food and accommodation insecurity.

"We see the poverty issues the lack of housing. In terms of their emotional state, they're not good."

Furthermore, stakeholders discussed the wider marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, via the state and punitive immigration laws and policies. It was considered these laws, policies and restricted access to support services, not only marginalised victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery, but also increased their risk of exploitation.

"It's people who aren't covered or protected legally. They will not have documents. They've been trafficked, and also have the ongoing trauma of not having security, not having a clear status. Very much being outsiders and made to feel, by our social systems as marginalised or second class citizens."

### 3.5.1.2. Back in Control 2 (BiC2) support for victims of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

During interviews, stakeholders discussed the types of support provided via the BiC2 intervention, and the associated benefits of this support for victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

"For us it's the crisis situation in the short term rather than the long term. We are very much let's sort this immediately. Well let's find you some housing. Let's find you some benefits."

In the short term, stakeholders discussed providing emergency financial, food, accommodation, and travel crisis support, to clients experiencing socioeconomic difficulties, such as financial, food and accommodation insecurity.

"We provide them with emergency fuel vouchers and food parcels."

In addition, stakeholders discussed providing clients with support for immigration issues and obtaining pre-settled and settled status, to assist with longer-term stability, access to welfare and benefits and reduce the risks of re-exploitation.

Further support provided to clients by the stakeholders includes legal advice and legal aid, and mental health/therapeutic assessments and support. Stakeholders considered that these services were particularly important for clients with insecure immigration status, who may not have recourse to public funds and therefore not eligible for these support services.

Finally, all stakeholders highlighted the importance for interpretation and translation services, as a fundamental element of the BiC2 intervention. Stakeholders reported that many BiC2 clients have low levels of English language proficiency, which acts as a significant barrier to access, utilisation and understanding of information from support services. It was considered that translation and interpretation services provided an essential conduit between support services and victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

“They can't speak English. They have no rights. They have no accommodation. They have nothing. Absolutely nothing, apart from what they're wearing.”

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#### 3.5.1.3. Benefits of multi-agency collaborative working to support victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

During interviews, stakeholders also discussed the benefits of multi-agency collaborative working, in supporting victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery.

Stakeholders considered that ICOS' long-term working relationships and partnerships, with local authorities, local agencies, and support services, was instrumental in the development of the BiC2 project. Stakeholders considered that these established collaborations between ICOS and the wider local network fostered the mobilisation of a joined-up intervention to support victims/survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

“The client faith requirements an needs. To safeguard the well-being and progress that the client was making, they would also require to be part of the community of faith specific to their own tradition. We facilitate that. Putting them in touch with a member of their own faith was key for safeguarding. They feel supported, even beyond our reach or our resources. Allowing our service users to find their place in society without feeling like outsiders.”

In addition, stakeholders discussed building wider networks as part of their work in supporting BiC2 clients. This included making links with local faith and community leaders to provide support for clients within their own communities and cultures. Furthermore, stakeholders also discussed making links with community police networks, which helped to prevent re-exploitation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

Stakeholders considered that multi-agency collaborative working conferred several benefits, including early intervention, increased access to typically 'hard-to-reach victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, and building trust with clients. Overall, stakeholders felt that this model provided clients with a holistic, personalised approach to meet their multiple and often complex support needs.

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#### 3.5.1.4. Barriers to supporting victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation and reducing risks of re-exploitation.



Stakeholders also discussed the barriers in supporting victims of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation. The primary barrier highlighted by stakeholder was a lack of funding. Most organisations supporting BiC2 clients are small, third sector organisations, working in communities with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation, already supporting individuals and communities, with limited funding, staffing and other resources.

“A way to expand would be to offer more of this kind of holistic support, but of course in providing it quite a bit of resources needed required. So therefore it's not a cheap provision. I don't just mean financial, of course.”

Moreover, whilst stakeholders recognised that the joined-up multi-agency provision provided a support mechanism to rescue and prevent further exploitation for victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, concerns were raised about the risk of re-exploitation.

“It's the longer term safety of victims and survivors of modern day slavery and exploitation. Safety is a difficult one. Unless you remove them from the environment they're in, it is hard to judge the safety. We often find is some are still scared. They're not gonna give up the name of the person that trafficked them to the UK. They think, I'm still in that community, I can't move on from that community. I feel that safety is still an issue for them.”

Stakeholders highlighted a need for safer short and long-term accommodations for victims/ survivors and better community and peer support to prevent re-exploitation. Moreover, a greater focus on plans to support victims/ survivors in the longer term beyond the BiC2 intervention was essential to ensure long-term stability for individuals and their families.

## 4. Key Interim Findings

Key findings from this interim report are presented in four main parts including:

1. Findings from BiC2 outcome measures.
2. Findings from semi-structured interviews with clients.
3. Findings from semi-structured interviews with stakeholders.

### 4.1. Key Findings from BiC2 Outcome Measures

#### 4.1.1. BiC2 Outcome Measures for All Clients

Descriptive results for all BiC/ BiC2 clients, who provided information at baseline and follow-up indicated an increase in positive trends between baseline and follow-up across several measures including feelings of safeness, perceptions of current financial and housing situations, independence, where to seek support in a crisis, and readiness to look for work.

However, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends, in terms clients' knowledge on how to find legal employment, between baseline and most recent follow-up. In addition, a

decrease in trends in clients' perceptions on their English language ability, between baseline and most recent follow-up, was also observed.

Statistical results showed that changes in trends for two outcome measures were statistically significant for all clients, including significant positive increases in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in clients' sense of personal safety and perceptions about their current housing situation.

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#### 4.1.2. BiC2 Outcome Measures for Female Clients

Descriptive results for all female clients showed an increase in positive trends across several outcome measures, between baseline and most recent follow-up. These included feelings safeness in their current situation, perceptions on their current financial and housing situations, ability to complete basic daily tasks, and where to seek support in a crisis.

However, descriptive results also indicated no change in trends for female clients' perceptions on their current levels of independence or their knowledge on how to find legal employment, between baseline and most recent follow-up. In addition, results showed a decrease in trends in female clients' perceptions on their English language ability and their readiness to look for work, between baseline and most recent follow-up.

Statistical results for female clients showed that changes in trends for one outcome measure was statistically significant. This included a significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in outcome measures relating to female clients' sense of personal safety.

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#### 4.1.3. BiC2 Outcome Measures for Male Clients

Descriptive results for male clients indicate an increase in positive trends in male clients' feelings safeness, perceptions of their current financial and housing situation, levels of independence, knowledge on who to ask for help in a crisis, English language ability, and readiness to look for work, between baseline and most recent follow-up.

However, results showed no change in trends in male clients' perceptions on their ability to complete basic daily tasks, or on how to find legal employment, between baseline and most recent follow-up.

### 4.2. Key Findings Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS) Survey

Descriptive results for all BiC/ BiC2 clients who provided information at baseline and follow-up indicate increases in positive trends across several outcome measures. These include increases in positive trends in mean average scores in feelings of optimism about the future, feeling relaxed, ability to deal with problems well, ability to think clearly, feelings closeness to others, ability to make up own mind about things, between baseline and follow-up.

However, results also showed no change in trends in clients' feelings of usefulness between baseline and follow-up.

Statistical results for all BiC/ BiC2 clients showed a significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to clients' feelings of optimism about the future, feelings of being relaxed and ability to make up own mind about things.

#### 4.2.1. SWEMWBS Key Findings for Female Clients

Descriptive results for female clients indicated an increase in positive trends across several SWEMWBS outcome measures. This included increases in mean average scores in feelings of optimism about the future, feeling useful, feeling relaxed, ability to think clearly, feelings closeness to others, and ability to make up own mind about things, for female clients, between baseline and follow-up.

However, results also showed no change in trends in mean average scores in ability to deal with problems well, for female clients, between baseline and follow-up.

#### 4.2.2. SWEMWBS Key Findings for Male Clients

Descriptive results for male clients indicated an increase in positive trends across several SWEMWBS outcome measures. This included increases in mean average scores in feelings of optimism about the future, feelings of usefulness, feeling relaxed, ability to deal with problems well, ability to think clearly, feelings closeness to others, and ability to make up own mind about things, for male clients, between baseline and follow-up.

Statistical results for male clients showed a significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures. Moreover, a significant positive increase in mean average scores between baseline and follow-up, in SWEMWBS measures relating to male clients' ability to make up their own mind about things was also observed.

### 4.3. Key Findings from Interviews with BiC2 Clients

Factors Increasing Risk of Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery for UK Migrants:

- Insecure residency status and this increases the risk of exploitation.
- Deprivation, financial insecurity, insecure accommodation, and homelessness.
- Lack of family and social support networks.
- Language barriers,
- Knowledge about how important systems worked in the UK, such as health, welfare, and justice.

Experiences of Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery:

- Some clients believed they were legitimately employed during periods of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

- Some clients, whose residencies were not legitimate (at the time), were aware the work they were undertaking that was also not legitimate.
- Clients described experiences of exploitation and abuse within their experiences of modern-day slavery/ labour exploitation.
- The types of labour undertaken included manual and physical work, such as car washing, driving, collection and delivery, and cleaning.
- Clients described working long hours, without breaks, often carrying out physically demanding work, in dangerous working conditions, without correct safety equipment or workwear.
- Clients reported that they were pressurised to carry out work during Covid-19 lockdown periods, exposing themselves to infection and risking prosecution.
- Clients reported that payments received for undertaking work did not meet minimum wage, and were irregular, unreliable, and inconsistent, resulting in a cycle of financial insecurity.
- Clients without legitimate residency, reported they did not receive financial payment for work undertaken, and worked to receive accommodation, resulting in exploitative, controlling, and unequal power relationships with landlords.
- Clients reported being subjected to verbal and emotional abuse, and physical assault during the time they were involved in labour exploitation/ modern-day slavery.
- Clients reported being subject to verbal abuse and manipulation if they questioned 'employers' about low pay and poor working conditions.

#### Escaping Labour Exploitation and Modern-Day Slavery:

- Some clients discovered their employment was not legitimate after suffering ill health and being ineligible for statutory sick pay.
- For clients without legitimate residency status, escaping labour exploitation/ modern day slavery was more difficult, due to the risk of exposing themselves to the authorities and losing their accommodation and only source of work and income.
- Clients reported that escaping labour exploitation/ modern day slavery resulted in adverse consequences, including loss of income and accommodation.
- Some clients lost their accommodation and were rendered homeless, with landlords retaining their possessions, due to having no recourse to justice.

- Some clients reported being subjected to harassment and threats of violence, and actual physical assault and theft of all personal belongings, including passports and other important identification documentation.

Support from the BIC2 Project and ICOS:

- Fundamental in facilitating clients' escape of labour exploitation/ modern day slavery and rebuilding their lives afterwards.
- Emergency support including support with accommodation, travel, and food via the BIC2 programme, which prevented re-exploitation.
- Day-to-day support, enabling clients to obtain welfare entitlements, health care and longer-term accommodation/housing.
- Support in gaining employment and accessing education and training.
- Wellbeing and mental health support, and opportunities to join local groups and activities.
- Interpretation and translation support, aiding ability to effectively communicate with the necessary agencies, services, and authorities.
- Significant support in gaining settlement status, seeking asylum, and gaining refugee status.

Life After Labour Exploitation and Modern-day Slavery:

- Whilst clients reported positive developments with their lives, with support, many reported having ongoing challenges.
- Clients discussed receiving benefit sanctions, which have meant being unable to afford food and for females, essential intimate care products.
- Clients also reported suffering from the long term mental and physical health effects of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
- Clients with caring responsibilities reported being limited in their employment and education opportunities.

#### **4.4. Key findings from interviews with stakeholders**

Exploitation, victimisation, and marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation:

- Clients present with a range of complex support needs, due to being trafficked, exploited, suffering from trauma and mental ill health, and experiencing racial discrimination and marginalisation.

- Many clients present with low levels of English language proficiency, which contributes to clients' risk of labour exploitation, and other forms of exploitation.
- Clients face socioeconomic challenges faced by victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation when encountering services.
- Clients present at services experiencing high levels of poverty, including financial, food and accommodation insecurity.
- Stakeholders highlighted the wider marginalisation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, via the state and punitive immigration laws and policies.

Back in Control 2 (BiC2) support for victims of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation:

- Emergency financial, food, accommodation, and travel crisis support, to clients experiencing socioeconomic difficulties.
- Support for immigration issues and obtaining pre-settled and settled status, to assist with longer-term stability, access to welfare and benefits and reduce the risks of re-exploitation.
- Legal advice and legal aid.
- Mental health/therapeutic assessments and support.
- Services were particularly important for clients with insecure immigration status, who may not have recourse to public funds.
- Interpretation and translation services are a fundamental element of the BiC2 intervention.

Benefits of multi-agency collaborative working to support victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation:

- ICOS' long-term working relationships and partnerships, with local authorities, local agencies, and support services, was instrumental in the development of the BiC2 project.
- Established collaborations between ICOS and the wider local network fostered the mobilisation of a joined-up intervention to support victims/survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
- Building wider networks as part of their work in supporting BiC2 clients, including making links with local faith and community leaders to provide support for clients within their own communities and cultures.
- Making links with community police networks, which helped to prevent re-exploitation of victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.

- Multi-agency collaborative working conferred several benefits, including early intervention, increased access to typically 'hard-to-reach victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation, and building trust with clients.
- The BiC model provided clients with a holistic, personalised approach to meet their multiple and often complex support needs.

Barriers to supporting victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation and reducing risks of re-exploitation:

- The primary barrier highlighted by stakeholders was a lack of funding, due to support coming from small, third sector organisations, working in communities with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation, with limited funding, staffing and other resources.
- Joined-up multi-agency provision provided a support mechanism to rescue and prevent further exploitation for victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
- More needs to be done to reduce the risk of re-exploitation.
- Need for safer short and long-term accommodations for victims/ survivors and better community and peer support to prevent re-exploitation.
- A greater focus on plans to support victims/ survivors in the longer term beyond the BiC2 intervention is essential to ensure long-term stability for individuals and their families.

## 5. Interim Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on interim findings presented in this report.

### 5.1. Recommendations for BiC2 Project

- i. BiC2 project to look at increasing support to clients in areas where no changes in trends have been identified or a decline in trends has been identified, including:
  - a. Finding legal employment for all clients.
  - b. Increasing English language proficiency for all clients.
  - c. Increasing clients' feelings of usefulness for all clients.
  - d. Increasing independence for female clients.
  - e. Increasing readiness to look for work amongst female clients.
  - f. Increasing female clients' ability to deal with problems well.

- g. Increasing male clients' perceptions on their ability to complete daily basic tasks.
- i. BiC2 project to build on current model of joined-up multi-agency provision to provide a wider support mechanism, to rescue and prevent further exploitation for victims/ survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation.
- ii. BiC2 partners to develop a stronger long-term plans to support victims/ survivors the intervention to ensure long-term stability for individuals and their families.

## 5.2. Wider Recommendations

- i. Health care, support, and other public service providers to provide more widely information translated in various languages, to support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation access important services to prevent further exploitation.
- ii. Local authorities and community/ regional/ national decision makers to provide funding and clear pathways to support for victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation access important services to provide rescue from exploitation and prevent re-exploitation.
- iii. Public services, including local authorities and the NHS, to establish strong links with local/community service providers, who support victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and labour exploitation to coordinate a more effective and efficient response to their needs, provide rescue from exploitation and prevent re-exploitation.
- iv. Funding bodies, public bodies, local authorities, and service providers to consider translation and interpretation costs in the procurement of services to avoid exclusion of victims and survivors of modern-day slavery.
- v. Evaluation team to continue collecting data on outcome measures that show positive increasing trends for BiC2 clients and focus on obtaining data on areas where no change in trends have been identified or a decline in trends has been identified.

## 6. Next Steps for Evaluation

1. ICOS to continue collecting baseline and monitoring data for BiC2 clients to track potential changes trends in project outcomes.
2. Evaluation team to undertake further semi-structured interviews with a further five to seven BiC2 clients, and a further five-to-seven BiC2 stakeholders, to reach saturation.
3. Evaluation team to undertake full analysis and reporting of all data from semi-structured interviews.



4. Evaluation team to undertake a final evaluation of baseline and monitoring data for BiC2 clients to track potential changes trends in project outcomes.
5. Evaluation team to present subsequent findings in a second interim report (Jan 2025) and a final report (August 2025).