

VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE

Agenda Alliance exists to make a difference to the lives of women and girls at the sharpest end of inequality. We advocate for women and girls who have multiple, interconnected needs that are not being met by public services – and sometimes by voluntary sector organisations.

Listen to women speak about their experiences

We recently made a short film, featuring two women, Charlie and Ola, with lived experience of these multiple unmet needs. They share valuable insight into the challenges they have faced whilst seeking support. **Watch it [here](#).**

What does 'multiple unmet needs' mean for women?

Experiencing multiple unmet needs usually stems from experiences of poverty, gendered abuse, or trauma, leading to challenges with employment, mental health, homelessness, drug/alcohol misuse, criminalisation and more. These challenges are often interconnected and overlapping. They are worsened by structural problems like racism and other discrimination, stigma, and a lack of accessible long-term support.



Whilst men also experience cycles of harm, evidence shows the drivers and ongoing impacts for women and girls are gendered. They require specific and tailored responses that take this into account.

We can prevent women and girls from being swept into this cycle of harm, by providing effective tailored support or intervening earlier to stop problems escalating.

**You can support change
for women and girls by
sharing your response to
the film - [click this link](#).**



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON:

After watching the film, we'd love you to reflect on the following questions:

How much do you know about trauma-informed practice?

- Have you received any training about trauma or becoming trauma-informed?
- Is trauma-informed practice embedded across your organisation?

Charlie and Ola's experiences show how badly stigma or racism can affect women experiencing adversity, blocking them from support or creating feelings of exclusion. Stigma can be felt at an interpersonal, environmental or structural level (through policy, rules or regulations).

- Take some time to reflect on your pre-existing views of women who have criminal records, struggled with addiction or homelessness, or migrated to the UK.
- Consider how these might have come up in your interactions with people at work.
- Were your views challenged by anything Charlie and Ola shared in this film?

We hope the film will encourage practitioners to consider how the support they offer could be more accessible to women experiencing multiple unmet needs:

- Is there room for your team or organisation to discuss possible service-wide improvements?
- Are there any practices or policies you have to work within that feel unfair or restrictive to the trauma-informed support you want to provide?
- What is one step the organisation you work for could take to hear and understand more from with women experiencing multiple disadvantage?
- What is one step you or your organisation could take to improve communication or partnership working with other organisations supporting women with multiple unmet needs?

