

THE ELKES
FOUNDATION

FREEDOM FORUM
FROM SLAVERY

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Executive Summary
Prepared by Free the Slaves

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The 2014 Freedom from Slavery Forum was designed to facilitate open dialogue among the leaders of anti-slavery organizations, as well as to educate the interested general public about efforts to combat modern day slavery. Accordingly, the Forum consisted of two major components – an off-the-record meeting of organizational leaders and a public forum where community members could engage with leaders in the anti-slavery movement.

The Forum was designed by gathering input from the participants and under the guidance of an Advisory Committee representing participating organizations. Working Groups led by participants played a key role in designing individual sessions and preparing background papers that enriched the discussions.

The convening leadership was designed to achieve two major objectives:

- To create a collegial space where leaders could coalesce, create partnerships and develop a shared agenda for action that would further the anti-slavery movement
- To distill experience and evidence gained from programs, develop knowledge dissemination strategies, identify critical gaps in the evidence base, and craft a knowledge agenda

Forty leaders representing 37 different organizations attended the convening leadership. The agenda for their discussion comprised four topics:

- Landscape of the Movement: This session covered the continuing debates over terminology, the development of global directors of anti-slavery organizations, the emergence of new sources of revenue, successes and progress in fighting slavery, shared premises and values among the organizations, and challenges that lie ahead.
- Models and Approaches: In this session, participants defined and reviewed major approaches used to fight slavery. These included community-based models; law enforcement and perpetrator accountability; supply chain and market-based approaches; hotlines; street outreach; survivor empowerment, care and support; behavior change; economic empowerment; and worker organization and labor rights promotion. It was noted that the approaches are not mutually exclusive and many organizations use a combination of approaches. Participants also spoke of the need for a synthesis of the different approaches in order to define a more holistic theory of change for fighting slavery.
- Public Policy: The discussion focused largely, though not exclusively, on the resources available to fight slavery. Whereas the International Labor Organization estimates that slavery generates \$150 billion/year in profits, a Walk Free study estimates the combined contribution of OECD countries to fighting slavery at \$124 million/year. The proposed Global Fund to End Slavery is one potential mechanism for encouraging greater government contributions to the fight against slavery. The importance of and tactics for securing greater donor government support, with leadership provided by the U.S. government, were discussed.

- Collaborations and Intersections: This session focused on opportunities for anti-slavery organizations to collaborate in pursuing goals of mutual interest. The participants identified the following areas for potential collaboration: monitoring, evaluation and measurement; university research; professional standards; learning from other sectors; the global anti-slavery directory; architecture for collective action; and services for survivors. Small group discussions were held around each topic, where potential follow-up actions were identified.

In addition to these four sessions, two speakers were: Alison Friedman, representing the State Department Trafficking in Persons Office, and Evelyn Chumbow, a survivor advocate.

Participants completed evaluations of the Forum, which showed high ratings for content, logistics and venue. There was clear interest in having a similar Forum in 2015, building on lessons learned from the 2014 experience and changes in the movement and its environment during the intervening period.

Subsequent to the leadership convening, there was a half-day public event titled “The Frontlines of Freedom.” This part of the Forum consisted of three panels: “Future Directions of the Anti-Slavery Movement” (an overview of the state of the movement), “Freedom on the Frontlines” (which focused on strategies and programs of grassroots NGOs), and “Beyond Freedom: Supporting Survivors” (meeting the needs of slavery survivors). Representatives of 11 organizations participated in the three panels. The panels were well attended and included lively question and answer sessions.

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