



Global Forum

**“Revitalizing the Anti-Modern Slavery Movement:
Enabling Local Responses – Coordinating
Global Solutions”**

2021 Regional Priorities

www.freedomfromslaveryforum.org

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Table of Contents

Introduction	3
African Priorities	4
Asian Priorities	8
Latin American Priorities	13
MENA Priorities	16
European, North American, and Caribbean Priorities	21
European Priorities	23
North American Priorities	24
Caribbean Priorities	25

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Introduction

This document serves as an overview of the regional priorities established in the five regional forums held in 2021 concerning the issue of modern slavery in Africa, Asia, Latin America, MENA, Europe, North America and the Caribbean. Considering the objective of the global Freedom From Slavery Forum 2021 in Marrakech, Morocco, the priorities will serve as a basis of knowledge to come up with global priorities. Based on these, the goal will be to find regional and overarching global solutions that can be implemented by the anti-slavery movement in the next three years.

All participants of the forum are active in at least one of the regions. In order to engage in discussions, Free the Slaves encourages all participants to read through this document to get an understanding of the priorities in the regions they are not active in. This will allow a common ground of knowledge at the beginning of the Forum to encourage fruitful discussions.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





African Priorities

Overview

Throughout the Forum, workshop sessions were focused on discussing several facets of the anti-slavery movement, including the vulnerabilities that exacerbate slavery to the possible solutions that should be priorities for movement leaders going forward. Despite coming from different backgrounds and country-contexts, participants were quite unified in discerning and defining the issues they saw as the most threatening to freedom in their region.

Priority Issue Areas

Participants identified several priority issue areas, many of which were interconnected. A great deal of these issue areas were exacerbated by the COVID-19 global pandemic. For example, overwhelmingly, participants pointed to increased poverty and unemployment levels as a result of **COVID-19**, especially amongst populations working in informal sectors of the economy. This in turn led to increases in several other types of exploitation, as more people were in need of alternative ways to make ends meet.

Young girls and boys became increasingly **vulnerable to exploitation** due to the combined factors of **schools moving online** and being unable to have steady access to education and their parents having greater economic stability. This change manifested in several ways. Street begging, especially by children, is on the rise, and a visible indicator of child exploitation and poverty.

Additionally, **forced prostitution** of young girls by their parents for economic reasons has increased, has have the related issues of procurement of services and pimping. Relatedly, there are more young girls in maternity homes than in schools in some areas, a phenomenon that is exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the unsafe conditions of traditional education routes. There is also the phenomenon of children being more susceptible to exploitation in brothels/licensed houses.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Women and girls have faced greater challenges to freedom, as **violence against and harassment of women and girls** has become more prominent. Relatedly, the exploitation of women in mines, including the exploitation and sexual slavery of girls in mines and the use of pregnant women in mine work, were all noted as areas that need prioritization going forward.

Priority Actions for the African Movement

As well as identifying priority focus areas that the movement should work on, participants also identified which actions are most prescient to solve these issues.

Nearly all participants noted that it is necessary to increase the **awareness** of the general public with a **community-based approach**. Because in most local communities modern forms of slavery are little known for lack of popularization and awareness, there is much room to grow in this area. Additionally, **research** is an integral part to defining the problem of modern slavery. Participants noted that this should be done more at a national and subregional level to enable policy coherence in combatting modern slavery.

In this same vein, it was noted that more attention needs to be paid to **government actions** that have negatively impacted the fight against modern slavery due to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Unfortunately, due to the dire public health emergency, many countries revised their national and local budgets to direct funds from other public works to pandemic-related relief. However, this left critical infrastructures under- or unfunded throughout the pandemic, further increasing the number of people vulnerable to slavery and exploitation. Some of the infrastructure negatively impacted include: slowness of the procedures for compensating victims who are repatriated without receiving funds, leaving them again vulnerable to modern slavery to make ends meet; increased hardship for reception centers to take care of the victims due of the decrease in funds, leaving more victims without assistance; and, government funds usually donated to CSO projects was instead redirected to organizations focused solely on COVID-19.

Sponsored by:



**Center to Combat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



Organized by:





Participants were also adamant that more **media engagement** needs to happen, and the media needs to be more aware of the actions of the anti-slavery movement as a whole as well as the individual actors on a more local level. Journalists and media companies can play a critical role in the movement by sending out the right messages to communities and drawing the attention of donors to organizations and leaders doing great work that empowers and emboldens freedom. The media also can act as a catalyst to building community resilience by spreading awareness and knowledge about forms of modern slavery in authoritative and informative ways.

It was also mentioned that **community systems**, such as local informal economies, kinship systems, and community resource-pooling, should be utilized as key mechanisms in combatting modern slavery, especially at the local and regional levels. These systems exist due to a lack of formalized safety nets that would otherwise help to protect against the vulnerabilities that lead to modern slavery and exploitation. However, due to their existence outside the traditional government systems, they are often overlooked as partners in the anti-slavery movement. Instead, local and national governments should engage with these actors and work to ensure they are as resilient as possible, ensuring those on the frayed edge of society who are most vulnerable to slavery can be reached and assisted. This is increasingly necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic, as these local systems, by virtue of being created by and from the local communities, will therefore be the most connected to and most trusted by vulnerable community members, especially with regard to public health initiatives.

Priority Actions for the International Movement

In addition to determining priority actions for the African anti-slavery movement, leaders also identified actions for the global movement that would best benefit them, as these movements do not work in isolation from one another.

Many participants noted that COVID-19 has made society especially vulnerable, but that **funds** were not being appropriated in ways that were most effective. In fact, due to budget revisions in some countries, anti-slavery programs, especially those focused on prevention and services, were underfunded. Therefore, victims and survivors were not getting the aid and resources necessary to be resilient to slavery and exploitation. While

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





governments have turned funding away from anti-slavery efforts, no matter how unintentionally, anti-slavery leaders noted that non-governmental donors were not stepping up to adequately fill this gap in funding. They noted a reluctance of donors to donate funds due to their restricted movement for supervision and restricted in-person deliverables. For the ongoing projects already funded, the restriction had caused the reduction of participants in the activities, as difficulties of target audiences accessing the internet and the restrictions on meeting in person deterred many donors from extending funding.

In addition to needing more donor support, movement leaders also requested more international support for the **capacity** of their governments on higher levels. Participants noted that their governments needed more **international and inter-regional support** to cut off sophisticated and global human trafficking rings and migration routes. Specifically, they noted that increased **cooperation** was needed in areas such as security, prosecution, border control, and business policies.

Finally, participants nearly unanimously agreed that there needs to be greater **engagement** between African movement leaders and international movement leaders. They hope that this strengthened partnership would allow for more incorporation of their expertise into broader actions, which would be more cross-regional, larger in scope, and more effective in nature.

Sponsored by:



**Center to Combat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



Organized by:





Asian Priorities

Overview

Throughout the Forum, workshop sessions were focused on discussing several facets of the anti-slavery movement, including the vulnerabilities that exacerbate slavery to the possible solutions that should be priorities for movement leaders going forward. Despite coming from different backgrounds and country-contexts, participants were quite unified in discerning and defining the issues they saw as the most threatening to freedom in their region. To aid in directing the discussions, participants were asked to categorize their priorities for three main audiences: the Alliance 8.7 and the global movement to end modern slavery; Asian government leaders; and, private sector and civil society actors in the region. These recommendations and priorities are detailed below. It is noteworthy that cross-collaboration between sectors and entities was highlighted in all three categories, clearly at the forefront of the discussion and the primary priority identified by participants.

Priority Actions Related to the Alliance 8.7 and the Global Movement

Participants prioritized recommendations for the global movement as well as the Alliance 8.7 as the embodiment of this movement at the governmental and international levels. They emphasized that collaboration amongst governments, regional bodies, unions, CSOs, academics, and service providers is lacking and is hindering individual efforts to combat modern slavery throughout the region. It was noted that greater **collaboration at the global level** would allow for strengthened protocols around **border security**, increased and expedited **victim identification**, and more realistic prevention measures, which would all in turn benefit vulnerable populations most at risk for modern slavery or human trafficking.

Participants also recommended that governments take advantage of and invest more heavily in **technological advances**. They advised that technology could be better incorporated and embedded into individual programming as well as collaborative processes across governments and borders.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Forum participants shared many recommendations for governments with regard to the way that projects are created, funded, and at the global level. In order for **CSO-led projects** to be more successful and impactful, CSOs recommended that governments, especially those that regularly make **funding** anti-slavery projects a priority, make changes to funding calls in order to emphasize and support trauma-informed care programs that strongly rely on partnership building with survivors. CSOs also shared that governments could do a much better job at enhancing **awareness** raising in local communities in form of grants and collaboration programs in addition to the normal route of going through larger organizations in a trickle-down approach. Additionally, there should be **increased communication** on the donor side to make sure that CSOs are aware of compliance requirements as well as foster CSO networks where grantees could learn from one another. Participants also noted that continuous government reviews of long-term projects should be done in order to ensure that they are continuing to address the most recent root causes that are affecting vulnerable populations in real time.

Additionally, participants had several recommendations centering around the Alliance 8.7 and Pathfinder country process. They noted that there is increasing need to bring more countries into the fold of the **Alliance 8.7** and formalize their commitments to end modern slavery on a global stage. It was recommended that CSOs in current Pathfinder countries in the region (such as those in Vietnam and Nepal) share their **best practices** for how to pressure non-Pathfinder governments into buying into the Alliance 8.7. In turn, it was emphasized that CSOs should keep a close eye on current Pathfinder countries to ensure that there is indeed progress on the commitments they promised to make as a result of their participation in the Alliance 8.7.

Priority Actions Relating to Asian Governments and Asian Movement Leaders

The second set of recommendations that participants curated applies specifically to Asian governments and the leaders of the Asian anti-slavery movement. These actors are especially crucial to ending modern slavery given the wide breadth of actions they are able to take.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





As stated previously, the number one recommendation for Asian governments and the Asian anti-slavery movement was increased collaboration, amongst themselves, but especially with CSOs and national and local government bodies.

Along with greater **collaboration**, increased **support** and capacity was at the top of the list of priorities that the participants created. They noted that increased **capacity building** for government frontline workers would better equip them to not only recognize vulnerable individuals or victims, but would also make them more likely to intervene on their behalf. Participants discussed that increased support is also needed for migrants and overseas workers, especially during the pandemic, which has proven an extremely trying and difficult time for all types of groups, but especially so for those already vulnerable to modern slavery pre-pandemic. With more people economically disadvantaged and looking for more work with fewer jobs available and larger obstacles to travel, human trafficking and labor exploitation has increased in the region. There is a need for increased collaboration in support efforts and a more concerted effort to aid these newly vulnerable populations. Participants highlighted that inclusion of **recovery programs, healthcare, housing programs** into this support would be an effective use of government resources at this time.

Relatedly, it was emphasized that there needs to be **increased unison** amongst Asian countries, not just collaboration, especially with regard to laws and policies. It was noted that because there are not many **coordinated legal frameworks or policies**, it creates a confusing web for potential labor migrants, leaving them more vulnerable to exploitation.

Not only should there be increased coordination between countries, there should also be **increased cooperation between the government and the private sector**, especially in the creation of labor laws and regulations. With both parties being on the same page from the beginning, there is less room for malpractice or confusion that could lead to trafficking and exploitation.

The patchwork of legal frameworks is also a barrier to access for victims and prosecutors alike that continues to exploit them long after they have been rescued. There needs to be increased focus on the **prosecution** of traffickers and exploiters with

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





increased **access to the legal system** for victims and survivors. Relatedly, it was noted that **reintegration programs** need to be a complementary part of this process, ensuring that survivors have the resources and treatment necessary to remain resilient to further exploitation and trafficking.

In this vein, participants noted that ASEAN and SAARC should consider focusing on larger, more encompassing legal frameworks as well as strengthening mechanisms for the implementation of these laws and policies.

Some recommendations for specific governments included:

- Nepal should create and adopt a standard operating procedure for repatriation and rehabilitation.
- India should pass the Human Trafficking bill that has been drafted and proposed.

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

Participants also had many recommendations for the private sector and civil society actors in the fight against modern slavery, principle among them being increased **collaboration** and **support**. It was noted that prioritizing **capacity building** for grassroots organizations, especially with regard to increasing knowledge on trauma-informed care, would greatly benefit the movement. CSOs should make it a priority to share their best practices and success stories with others working in the same space to ensure that as many vulnerable individuals are helped or made resilient to modern slavery as possible.

CSOs and private sector actors would be best utilized by the movement in greater focusing on **community prevention measures** that would enhance awareness of modern slavery and exploitation at the grassroots level. They should focus more intensely on addressing root cause preventions and spend more efforts on educating themselves and the public about push factors and community issues that are most likely to result in exploitation. It is in this arena that CSOs could most effectively utilize and **educate** community youth leaders, **empowering** them to be advocates and more resilient to modern slavery at the same time. Survivors, as well as youth, should be more integrated into anti-slavery programming at large.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





It was noted that while governments need to make it easier to access legal resources, it is also important that CSOs and private sector actors increase awareness of relevant policies and laws, especially with an emphasis on how to use legal frameworks to their advantage. Relatedly, witness protection should be ensured and a priority for those CSOs working in the rescue and survivor-empowerment spaces of the movement.

Sponsored by:



**Center to Combat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



Organized by:





Latin American Priorities

Overview

Throughout the Forum, workshop sessions were focused on discussing several facets of the anti-slavery movement, from the vulnerabilities that exacerbate slavery to the possible solutions that should be priorities for movement leaders going forward. Despite coming from different backgrounds and country-contexts, participants were quite unified in discerning and defining the issues they saw as most threatening to freedom in their region. To aid in directing the discussions, participants were asked to categorize their priorities for three main audiences: the Alliance 8.7 and the global movement to end modern slavery, Latin American government leaders, and private sector and civil society actors in the region. These recommendations and priorities are detailed below. It is noteworthy that the integration of indigenous perspectives and survivors of human trafficking was highlighted in all three categories, constituting the primary priority identified by participants.

Priority Actions Relating to the Alliance 8.7 and the Global Movement

Participants prioritized recommendations for the global movement as well as Alliance 8.7 as the embodiment of this movement at the governmental and international levels. Prior to the Forum, many of the participants had limited or no knowledge of Alliance 8.7. Given the important role of the Alliance 8.7 in promoting a consolidated and cohesive anti-modern slavery response, they recommended increased **awareness** raising efforts in Latin America on the work of the Alliance. Participants also pointed out that the Alliance would benefit from an **integrated system** where other actors work jointly with the Alliance and share common goals, objectives, and activities. This would be beneficial to enhance coordination among a wide range of stakeholders. It is key that any materials produced, including those by Alliance 8.7 actors, reach diverse stakeholders, especially those that are not closely linked to these processes. Furthermore, another recommendation was to ensure that the research processes undertaken are rooted in a gender perspective.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Overall, it is important that at the global level, perceptions of human trafficking shift to consider the role of a wide plethora of factors, including **corruption**. There must also be a focus on cross-cutting and territorial approaches to tackling the phenomena, especially internal trafficking, since the focus seems to be primarily on international forms of trafficking. **Indigenous communities and survivors**, especially in Latin America, must also be brought into discussions surrounding human trafficking. The approaches undertaken must be **trauma** and victim informed and rooted in the experiences of vulnerable groups in order to protect trafficked persons. Justice system actors in particular must be involved in anti-human trafficking efforts for a rapid and effective coordination. At their core, all efforts must address the issue at the **structural level** in order to transform the exploitative system that enables such exploitation in the first place.

Priority Actions Relating to Latin American Governments

The second set of recommendations that participants curated applies specifically to Latin American governments. These actors are especially crucial to ending modern slavery given the wide breadth of actions they are able to take, especially at the higher level. On a conceptual level, participants agreed that there is a need for governments to tackle human trafficking from a **human rights perspective**, rather than a criminal or human security perspective. There is a need for governments to safeguard the rights of victims of human trafficking generally, and especially among indigenous communities and those who are deported and not screened for human trafficking indicators. Among these vulnerable groups, there is a need to establish robust **mechanisms** to **identify victims** and ensure their protection.

Especially in the context of the **COVID-19** pandemic, where governmental focus has been diverted, it is central for the government to position human trafficking on the public agenda. Participants indicated a need for governments to follow the **best practices** of Latin American countries leading in an effective anti-modern slavery response, such as Costa Rica. This can be done by **allocating specific resources** to combat human trafficking and introducing tax policies to gather resources. Governments should also facilitate an environment that is **interinstitutional**, where diverse stakeholders such as service providers and the judiciary can safeguard victims' rights through a

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





well-coordinated response. This can be done through the establishment of effective mechanisms for coordination that have judicial and political elements. One participant highlighted the need for a **standard penal code** to combat all forms of exploitation.

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

Participants also had many recommendations for civil society actors and the private sector in the fight against modern slavery, principle among them being **increased collaboration between organizations and authorities** for protection and assistance to victims of human trafficking. There is also a need for these actors to consider indigenous communities.

Civil society would benefit from the establishment of an **advocacy plan** with guidelines and strategies for civil society organizations to engage the government regarding national policies surrounding human trafficking. This would promote better synergy between civil society and government and ensure that advocacy efforts have maximum impact. Leaders and activists should also push government to prioritize human trafficking issues and bring them to the forefront of the public agenda.

Participants also recommended **increased corporate social responsibility** that holds actors accountable and addresses victims' needs. They also called for a larger role for international bodies with regard to coordination and mediation between government and civil society stakeholders. For **academia**, participants suggested increased engagement on the ground ("in the field"), increased collaboration with civil society actors, and a better integration of academia and civil society.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





MENA Priorities

Overview

Throughout the Forum, participants gained knowledge on numerous topics related to modern slavery and human trafficking in the MENA region. The last day concluded with a workshop in which participants discussed priorities for the region. The recommendations are listed below in an effort to construct an agenda for the regional movement.

Priority Actions Relating to the Alliance 8.7 and the Global Movement

Considering the problems that were discussed in the forum, a variety of recommendations on how to tackle modern slavery were made at the global level. On the legal front, there is a need for **effective reviewing mechanisms** of international conventions. Though they may exist on paper, the reality is that many human rights abuses that are illegal under international law still go unnoticed. A possible way to do this would be to introduce a peer review process in which countries assess each other on their application of international conventions.

Another recommendation that surfaced was developing an **international database** to collect data on crimes in order to understand trends, root causes and effective tools. This would allow a more detailed analysis of the ongoing abuses and would aid stakeholders to tackle the issues in cooperation. **Delta 8.7** can serve as an international body to push forward development in this field, as they are continuously researching the ongoing trends and are testing hypotheses of effective solutions.

Additionally, participants emphasized that **collaboration** among governments, regional bodies, unions, CSOs, academics, and service providers is lacking and is hindering individual efforts to combat modern slavery throughout the region. It was noted that greater collaboration at the global level would allow for **strengthened protocols** which would in turn benefit vulnerable populations at risk of modern slavery.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Participants also emphasized the need for governments around the world to **raise awareness of trafficking vulnerabilities**; greater awareness in countries of origin may prevent migrants from becoming victims. Furthermore, **supporting vulnerable groups** with offers and contracts they may receive to migrate to the GCC can help counteract legal loopholes that could otherwise be used to exploit migrants.

Another recommendation that was given during the forum is the development of an **international hotline** for victims of exploitation and modern slavery. This requires all stakeholders to work closely together.

Priority Actions Relating to MENA Governments and MENA Movement Leaders

The second set of recommendations that participants curated applies specifically to MENA governments and the leaders of the MENA anti-slavery movement. These actors are especially crucial to ending modern slavery given the wide breadth of actions they are able to take.

To begin with, an important recommendation for MENA governments and the MENA anti-slavery movement was **increased collaboration**, between country governments, as well as with CSOs and national and local government bodies. A few countries were mentioned as examples (i.e. Sudan, Egypt, among others).

Along with greater collaboration, increased **support** and **capacity** was at the top of the list of priorities identified. Participants noted that increased capacity building for government frontline workers would better equip them to not only recognize vulnerable individuals or victims, but would also make them more likely to intervene on their behalf. This includes identifying potential cases of suicide among migrant workers as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, migrant workers' capacities to recognize trafficking must be increased post-migration in order to prevent their exploitation. Another important recommendation is acknowledging the role of local CSOs in assisting migrant workers with **translation** (especially of their contracts). Contracts and other legally binding documents are provided in Arabic only, increasing the chance of exploitation due to a lack of understanding. In general, a **community-based approach** to ending exploitation

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





was recommended throughout the forum. This includes the need to educate communities in order to reduce stigma and reduce barriers to reintegration.

Regarding migrant workers' position within the **kafala** system, it was deemed necessary that local movement leaders educate migrant workers on their rights under the system. By assisting them in gaining **access to the justice system**, human rights abuses can be avoided. By cooperating with legal aid centers in countries of destination, migrant workers can be supported in achieving justice. In cases where migrants are falsely accused of theft, engaging local legal aid centers is essential to ensure justice in these cases. Furthermore, MENA leaders need to make an effort to unite to abolish, or at least tinker with, the kafala system. This includes providing an alternative to the live-in model which gives migrant workers more independence, as well as a community to live in. In order to achieve this, it is also important to find affordable housing for workers. Furthermore, **training** and orientation for employers, workers, and recruitment agencies should be conducted in order to establish a better relationship between the parties. A **blacklist** of employers could help mitigate impunity in the GCC and awareness between employers (household members) with regards to the rights of domestic workers and clear communication between both parties in terms of the contract details (vacation days, working hours, what to work on, ...) would also support this.

Nonetheless, the role of the government is instrumental, since MENA movement leaders cannot solve the problem of lack of housing and lack of childcare on their own. Furthermore, governments need to implement the necessary **legal and policy reforms** for a transformed system that prevents the exploitation of migrant workers. It is therefore crucial for all GCC countries to protect migrant workers in their labor laws, as well as all other legal frameworks that are connected to the problem of modern slavery. This can be done through the introduction of laws against discrimination towards migrant workers and vulnerable groups and the rectification of definitions and legal language surrounding exploitation to best protect the rights of migrant workers.

Additionally, participants emphasized the importance of **involving embassies** in the GCC countries to support migrant workers. This refers to both the legal reforms described above, as well as cooperation with local CSOs. Embassies can be brought on board to guarantee that migrant workers have access to passports or necessary documentation. Through communication with employers, embassies can also identify

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





cases of human rights abuses and exploitation. Furthermore, embassies can serve as middlemen between CSOs and migrant workers by communicating with victims' families in their countries of origin.

A final recommendation was the **establishment of worker committees** to ensure that migrant workers' voices are heard. This would also imply implementing legal reforms, as many countries in the GCC currently prohibit this establishment, and enhanced collaboration between diverse actors, especially activists, victims, and survivors.

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

Participants also had many recommendations for the private sector and civil society actors in the fight against modern slavery, principle among them being increasing **collaboration** and **support**.

In general, CSOs are the central actors supporting migrant workers with regard to rights education and justice system access. However, international organizations can take appropriate action as well by cooperating with local CSOs and **pooling resources** for maximum impact.

Considering the need to **raise awareness on the international conventions** that apply to crimes of modern slavery, CSOs can serve as educators for judges and lawyers that can then in turn help victims access justice. The **media** can also play a big role by engaging not only the legal elite, but the public as well. Additionally, participants recommended CSOs commit to training individuals on the technicalities of investigating and prosecuting to increase the number of cases that are actually processed. As of now, this number is alarmingly low, meaning that most migrant workers suffering from abuse never obtain justice.

Regarding the private sector, companies are largely responsible in recruitment and must abide by UN principles and eradicate modern slavery. Although bodies like the IOM are raising awareness on human trafficking issues among businesses and recruitment agencies, more has to be done. The International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) of the IOM needs to be promoted more frequently and implemented by recruitment

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





agencies in order to guarantee **ethical recruitment**. To achieve the best possible results, it is crucial for all stakeholders to cooperate and collaborate.

Sponsored by:



**Center to Combat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



Organized by:





Europe, North America and the Caribbean Priorities

Overview

On the last day of the Forum, a workshop sessions focused on discussing several facets of the anti-slavery movement, from the vulnerabilities that exacerbate slavery to the possible solutions that should be priorities for movement leaders going forward. Despite coming from different backgrounds and country-contexts, participants were quite unified in discerning and defining the issues they saw as most threatening to freedom in their region. These priorities and subsequent recommendations are detailed below. To get an overview of all priorities, they were split into regional and overarching priorities, alongside with a division between the private and public sector.

International/Overarching Priorities

The following priorities can be seen as to apply to each of the regions and to the international community as a whole.

Priority Actions Relating to the International Community

The most important recommendation that can be implemented by the international community including all actors involved that was repeated numerous times throughout the Forum is the need for **increased cooperation** between states themselves, between states and the private sector, and between CSOs and movement leaders all over the world, including the building of **public-private partnerships**. One of the participants recommended strengthening cooperation between states in regard to the **trade of products made with forced labor**. While individual states are taking actions, the problem cannot be tackled unless the demand comes to an end worldwide. Furthermore, it was deemed necessary to invest in collaborate efforts to eradicate slavery by including other actors, such as investors, insurances, the media and the public.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Regarding the existing global partnership **Alliance 8.7**, who promotes efforts to eradicate modern slavery to meet the UNSDG 8.7 was given the recommendation to provide for better coordination between organizations attempting to comply with the Pathfinder guidelines and international provisions.

CSOs play an important role in the international fight against modern slavery and can function to coordinate and listen to the voices of victims. Throughout the Forum, a large emphasis was placed on the need to **include survivors in the international conversation** as they are the knowledge holders of the problem on the ground. They can inform CSOs of the situation who can then inform policy makers and engage in **lobbyism** in order to make a change on the public level. Furthermore, taking into account the growing importance and threat of **technology**, CSOs were recommended to serve as educators. They can work with families to inform the parents how to best protect their children from falling into the traps of abusers on the internet. This includes making sure that the children understand that they shouldn't be friends with people they haven't met in real life, as well as that they should not put any pictures online that the parents haven't seen. It was recommended that parents have these conversations regularly with their children and that they make use of parental controls and take the time to go through their children's phones.

Priority Actions Relating to the Legal Field

In general, there were several strong recommendations to **integrate legal frameworks** to achieve more cooperation and unity. Especially concerning the Palermo protocol, it was deemed crucial to promote the provisions therein.

Additionally, it was strongly recommended to all parties to the international legal framework to find a broader framework that observes the respective provisions and protocols better in order to punish perpetrators. A suggested solution was the establishment of **working groups** to develop laws against human trafficking in the respective projects and to work on legislative assistance projects, as well as on knowledge management and technical assistance projects. Furthermore, these working groups should work as a space to discuss, debate and challenge the existing legal

Sponsored by:



**Center to Combat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



Organized by:





documents, as well as recommend international instruments for the national implementation of international provisions.

The Forum established an overarching problem of gaps between the national and international legal framework in all regions. Governments must prioritize to **budget more money** and invest into **institutional training** in order to implement these laws better. The participants established a lack of knowledge concerning the international legal framework, especially the **Palermo protocol**, which needs to be solved in order to prosecute perpetrators and hold abusers accountable. CSOs can help to close this gap, but they need more support from governments, financially and logistically. Moreover, governments must invest in technology to benefit from the opportunities it brings into the field. Thereby, governments must work with **big data companies** to gain insight into their data to find a connection between the use of apps and websites and human trafficking.

Priority Actions Relating to Private Companies

Furthermore, it was recommended to all regions to get businesses on board to tackle modern slavery. Large intranational companies are gaining ever-increasing power and with that comes responsibility. Especially **internet companies** who make their millions by encouraging children to join their online platform must be held accountable to the immense responsibility they have to keep the children safe. It is therefore crucial to include them in the fight against modern slavery. Furthermore, businesses need to learn to deal with the coming change of legislation concerning supply chains and the move away from forced labor in order to support this positive shift in international and national frameworks.

European Priorities

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

Focusing especially on the region of Europe, participants paid special attention to the issue of **prostitution** as a form of sexual exploitation. It was thereby emphasized that it remains important to take consent out of the equation when establishing a case of

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





sexual exploitation and possible human trafficking connected to it. Pretending that these women would consent results in victim-blaming, which only strengthens the stigma around prostitution. Furthermore, it was mentioned that the **recovery of victims** must be in the foreground. This includes an offer for work outside the sexual servitude sector, as well as benefits for them as soon as they leave the field, such as the possibility to rent houses, etc. CSOs and movement leaders can help in this regard by providing their services and expertise, as well as by raising awareness of the consequences of victim-blaming.

Priority Actions Relating to European Governments

For European governments, it was highly recommended that they establish an **abolitionism model** regarding prostitution as the only functioning model to help victims, mostly women, out of this situation. This model sees a criminalization of traffickers and sex buyers, and a decriminalization of prostitutes, who are rather helped to get out of the field. Considering the globalization of human and sex trafficking, the only way to stop the mafia who controls this field is to establish sanctions against them. In this way, the mafia will need to make more calculations and take more risks to traffic women for sexual abuse. This model has been implemented in some countries with positive results in the fight against sexual exploitation.

North American Priorities

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

The most important recommendations given to CSOs and anti-slavery movement leaders were all related to the **involvement of survivors** at the forefront of the movement. Therefore, emphasis was placed on partnering with and supporting survivor-led organizations, as well as to give a bigger voice to survivors so they can explain their experiences and push for change on the legislative level. Attention must thereby be given to recognizing the experience, expertise and skills that survivors bring with them. It is important to not bubble wrap them, but to see them as equals who deserve their voices to be heard. Furthermore, it was suggested to use the experience that survivors of human trafficking and exploitation to **train** and **educate** younger people

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





to gain and raise awareness. Especially in the United States, it was underlined that CSOs and leaders must pay attention to American and male victims as well, as these are often forgotten in the conversation.

Additionally, CSOs were recommended to engage in **capacity building** and **training**. This includes the use of specialized tools to investigate the dark web, train police and other legislative workers such as judges and prosecutors on how digital evidence is obtained and why the evidence is valid to be used in court. Additionally, the private sector should target the persisting **accountability** and enforcement gap in legal implementation of national and international laws. The CIW fair foods program serves as an example for this. Related, actors in the private sector should also urge companies to make binding legal agreements with worker organizations in order to protect them from being exploited.

Moreover, connected to the act of lobbying, it was recommended to approach governments with a **holistic approach**. This means that the focus should be placed on all forms of slavery in all ministries, thereby reaching to approach all federal agencies.

Priority Actions Relating to North American Governments

The participants of the Forum also gave a set of recommendations for the governments in North America. It was emphasized that they would have to get **better at law enforcement** in order to tackle modern slavery. Specifically in the United States, the government was urged to increase support for domestic survivors as the current situation might look like they are helping, but the reality looks different and leaves victims unsupported and reliant on the private sector. As for CSOs, survivors must be at the forefront in the public sector as well. The government needs to increase efforts to establish better **access to complaint mechanisms** in order to strengthen their voices. Furthermore, the United States government needs to renew the **Trafficking Victims Protection Act**.

Caribbean Priorities

Priority Actions Relating to Private Sector and Civil Society Actors

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





Experts of the Caribbean region appealed to the participants and the international community as a whole to place more **focus** on the issues of trafficking in the region, as it is often overlooked in the current conversation. It was deemed crucial to better understand the situation in the area, not only regarding the crimes committed, but also regarding the culture and its understanding of trafficking and exploitation. Thereby, children are expected to help in the household which blurred the lines between helping with chores and forced labor and leaders of the movement have to be aware of this in order to work against **intrafamily** exploitation. It is moreover important to realize and accept that many law enforcers are often involved in the trafficking of people.

Furthermore, CSOs should engage in different types of **training**. This includes the training of border workers in order to detect human trafficking in the area, as there is a persisting lack of knowledge of what these crimes look like. Safe migration measures must be taken to work against exploitation, especially of unsupported girls traveling alone. Additionally, it is important for CSOs to establish plans within **conflicts and natural disasters** that are not uncommon in the region, as these often exacerbate exploitation. The participants also recommended CSOs to cooperate with tech companies in order to create new tools to identify criminals and detect online sexual abuse. Another important factor that CSOs can be of great support for is the improvement of **access to justice**, especially for women. The legal sector needs a large revision in order to investigate, prosecute and convict.

These revisions need to include a **more broadly defined interpretation of 'exploitation'** so more cases can be prosecuted on the basis of that. Furthermore, judges must be trained on how to prosecute people. This includes the necessity to raise awareness of the Palermo protocol and the legal responsibilities encompassed therein. As in the other regions, it is especially important for the Caribbean that national legislation be upheld to international standards. CSOs can claim their role in informing national legislators of international changes and to **raise awareness** of gaps in the legal framework. Additionally, it was recommended to open cases against traffickers on other issues than trafficking, such as weapon or drug trade, if applicable. Another important step to hold more perpetrators accountable is the need to move away from relying on victim testimonies in order to make a conviction. Moreover, the **legal revision** needs to

Sponsored by:



Organized by:





include the alteration of provisions such as those containing minimum sentences that are far too high to be accepted as a punishment by a judge. In many cases, the cases are then dismissed.

Priority Actions Relating to Caribbean Governments

As for the regional governments, participants emphasized the general need for a **more effective public policy** and an **assessment of the law execution system**, including the generation of better access to justice for victims. There is a high necessity for **communication**, joint measures and networks among public prosecutors, lawyers and judges, that should be facilitated and encouraged by the governments. Not only is there a need for coordination between the public institutions, but also between the different fields of law. The law against trafficking of persons is more than just connected to the human trafficking area. Therefore, mechanisms need to be followed to include other areas, such as migration and border control as well. Additional recommendations were given to increase efforts to translate existing legislation into practical measures and real actions.

A further problem to be tackled by the government is the need to **increase the national budget** and funding in order to tackle the problem. For example, Haiti's government budgeted zero cents for this field in 2014. Additionally, the governments need to **work against poverty** as this is the main reason for child trafficking. Connected to child trafficking, it is important to **improve the foster system** as many cases of exploitation and trafficking can be found within this area. CSOs can help to facilitate all of this, which is why the governments were strongly encouraged to cooperate with the private sector.

Participants gave a recommendation to the **Haitian government** specifically, which related to the need to mention, criminalize and punish the crime of modern slavery in their **legal code**. As of now, there are many concepts that have the same meaning as modern slavery but are not mentioned in the legislation, resulting in legal loopholes that can be exploited by abusers.

Sponsored by:



Organized by:

