



10th Annual Freedom from Slavery Forum
**“Enabling Local Engagements and Global
Synergies for Addressing Modern Slavery in
Africa”**

2022 Africa Regional Forum Report
November 21-24, 2022

www.freedomfromslaveryforum.org

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Introduction

The Freedom from Slavery Forum was established in 2013 to gather anti-slavery leaders from around the world to create a collegial space to coalesce, create partnerships, discuss promising practices, and develop a shared agenda for action. Participants have built relationships and prioritized actions in advocacy and collaboration with other sectors.

In 2021, the annual Global Forum was supplemented by a series of Regional Forums divided into the following regions: Latin America, North America and Europe, Africa, Asia, MENA, and the Caribbean. Last year's series took place online and thereby provided opportunities to increase access, ensuring grassroots ideas and voices were amplified within the movement. The 2022/23 series are divided into three in-person Forums (North America and Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean) to increase collaboration between actors in the region and three online Forums (Latin America, Asia, and MENA). The series will be closed with the global convening in May 2023.

The theme for the series is “Enabling Local Engagements and Global Synergies for Addressing Modern Slavery.” The respective agenda and expected outcomes are developed in consultation with survivors and other key local and regional partners. Therefore, the focus will vary slightly for each region, responding to the situation and needs of each region.

For the Africa Forum, anti-slavery movement leaders came together in Kigali, Rwanda for three days to discuss issues most pertinent to the region that was identified by some of the main stakeholders in the region. Thus, the first day considered survivor inclusion and ethical engagement to integrate survivors further into the anti-slavery movement and ensure their rightful position at the forefront of the fight against modern slavery. The second day focused on research and policy engagements to establish the limitations to making research and policies more impactful on the continent, and the third day focused on cross-regional and cross-sector synergies in an attempt to explore possible partnerships and collaborations to increase cooperation between different actors, all over the continent.

General Objective

The general objective of the Regional Forums is to explore and define key strategies for local engagements, identify the best approaches to revitalize the movement and increase resilience and resistance and determine the ways in which these engagements may inform the global synergies. The Forum serves as a collegial space to bring stakeholders together to unify in pushing forward the anti-modern slavery movement. The panels and workshops serve to discuss opportunities, challenges, and practices to promote strategies and actions

to eradicate forced labor in the region among stakeholders from different countries and sectors.

Specific Objectives

The Africa Regional Forum this year specifically served to promote collaborations at the regional, national, and local levels and discuss best and promising practices and lessons learned in the fight against modern slavery. The focus on survivor inclusion was set with the intention to improve and increase survivor engagement in the region. Furthermore, sharing best practices of research projects was set to give participants more ideas about increasing research in the region.

Day One: Survivor Inclusion and Engagement

Introduction

The ethical inclusion and engagement of survivors of human trafficking is central to the success of the anti-modern slavery movement. Their lived experience plays a fundamental part in formulating prevention practices and implementing policies. It is crucial for all stakeholders in the movement to improve their services to survivors and elevate their voices to take their rightful place at the forefront of the anti-modern slavery movement.

Therefore, organizations must rethink their structure to make space for survivor voices. Policy-makers must take survivors into their midst, include their recommendations in their policies, and implement them.

Furthermore, the diverse identities of survivors should be considered. Each individual has a different character, experience, and different needs. To truly engage survivors, we must move beyond a one-size-fits-all type of response. Moreover, individual perceptions and cultural and religious beliefs shape identities. Thus, biases must be overcome.

Lastly, the vast majority of survivors of human trafficking carry with them a trauma that can impact them their entire life. As such, all stakeholders must incorporate survivor-centered and trauma-informed practices into their activities. Survivors may need mental health support, and allies must improve their efforts to empower them in this regard. Furthermore, stigmas around human trafficking persist on the African continent, which makes reintegration harder. Civil society organizations can work to raise awareness and educate communities to make it easier for survivors to go back to a life in which they thrive and blossom.

In order to discuss these topics and more, the first day of the Africa Regional Forum had a keynote speech, two panel discussions, and two rounds of workshops with two simultaneous sessions, each surrounding survivor engagement and inclusion. Survivors played a central role, leading discussions in seven out of nine sessions throughout the day (77.78%). The facilitators and speakers established the status quo of survivor engagement in the African anti-modern slavery movement to showcase the current problems. Participants also learned about best practices to engage survivors ethically. In group discussions, the participants attempted to come up with creative solutions to the presented problems and more.

Speaker Overview

- **Introduction:**
 - Shivan Alungnat | Independent Survivor Consultant | Kenya

- **Keynote Speaker:**
 - Awah Mbuli | Survivors' Network | Cameroon
- **Moderators:**
 - Aicha Traore | CenHTRO Sierra Leone Country Office | USA
 - Paul Athoch | Trace Kenya | Kenya
- **Speakers:**
 - Dr. Annette Kirabira | Rahab Uganda | Uganda
 - Florence Among | Hope for Justice | Uganda
 - Eunice Foloh | Survivors' Network | Cameroon
 - Bernadette Agano | Free the Slaves | The Democratic Republic of Congo
 - Mrs. Awah Mbuli – Survivors 'Network Cameroon
 - Miriam Mango'ka | HAART Kenya | Kenya
 - Sister Jackline Mwongela | Religious Against Human Trafficking | Kenya
 - Umaru Fofanah | CenHTRO | Sierra Leone
 - Grace Kalekye | Forum Ambassador | Kenya
 - Patriciah Wanja Kimani | HAART Kenya | Kenya
 - Shivan Alungnat | Independent Survivor Consultant | Kenya
 - Antonia Musunga | Freedom Fund | Kenya
 - Joanna Ewart-James | Freedom United | UK
 - James Lual Atak | New Life Ministry | South Sudan

Summary of Day One

The first day of the Africa Regional Freedom from Slavery Forum considered survivor inclusion and ethical engagement to integrate survivors further into the anti-slavery movement and ensure their rightful position at the forefront of the fight against modern slavery.

The day was opened with a keynote speech on survivor engagement delivered by **Awah Mbuli**, who highlighted the need for survivors to play a key role in human trafficking responses as this would ensure that no other persons fall victim. She concluded by calling for survivors' voices to be heard.

Panel: Learning from Survivors: Why Survivor-Centered Solutions and Ethical Engagement Matter

The keynote was followed by the first panel of the day on "Learning from Survivors: Why Survivor-Centered Solutions and Ethical Engagement Matter." The moderator, **Aicha Traore**, gave an overview of why survivors' integration and empowerment were crucial to advancing the anti-modern slavery movement before introducing the four panelists.

Dr. Annette Kirabira delved into the meaning of survivor engagement in program design and implementation by emphasizing it meant inviting survivors to the table and, more importantly, allowing them to express their opinions on the program design and its implementation. She further underscored the need for an organizational culture where survivors' voices are heard. Any level of survivor engagement should consider the potential impact that retelling lived experiences could have on their mental health.

The second panelist, **Florence Among**, reemphasized the relevance of involving people with lived experience in program design, implementation, and monitoring. Her main argument was that survivors are experts whose involvement is crucial to the success of any intervention in modern slavery. The lived experience of a survivor is of great value, and there is no input more important than their testimony.

Eunice Foloh, the third panelist, observed that most of the survivors shy away from speaking about their stories in public for different reasons. She called for more efforts to have survivors at the table during discussions on programs, as they understand the issues very well.

Finally, **Bernadette Agano** lamented the fact that many persons facing modern slavery have no information on where to report cases. Furthermore, failure to address the underlining causes of vulnerability could lead to re-trafficking.

The panel was closed with a round of questions and answers.

Workshops: Expanding Survivor Engagement in Different Sectors (Case Studies and Lessons Learned)

After a break, the participants chose between two workshops: “Survivor Engagement in Civil Society and Community Mobilization” and “Survivor Engagement and Policy-Making.”

The first workshop was led by **Miriam Mango'ka** and **Sister Jackline Mwongela**. The group emphasized the importance of organizations avoiding tokenism when working with survivors. Rather than only seeing them as their experiences and hiring them to tell their stories, survivors should be key personnel in organizations, especially in community mobilization, awareness-raising, and advocacy. Furthermore, it was suggested to include survivors in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Lastly, organizations need to improve their skill-building capacities. To truly empower survivors, stakeholders need to work with survivors to improve or learn new skills, even if those lay outside the movement.

Umaru Fofonah facilitated the second workshop, and participants reflected on survivors' engagement strategies in policy-making and potential outcomes. Participants emphasized the need for policymakers to improve accessibility in terms of language and geography. Providing the relevant material in a common language and those languages that the targeted populations speak is a crucial step. Furthermore, policymakers should travel outside the capital to increase geographic accessibility. Moreover, it was deemed crucial that

governments recognize their responsibility in tackling human trafficking. Participants suggested the establishment of a coordination task force or action group to ease communication and knowledge-sharing between stakeholders.

Panel: Diversity and Survivor Engagement: Making Room for the Diverse Identities of Survivors within the Movement

The second panel of the day considered ways to integrate the diverse identities of survivors within the movement. The moderator Paul Adhoch gave an introduction to the topic and introduced the four panelists of the session, who are all survivor leaders within the movement.

Awah Mbuli, the first panelist, explained that any response had to take into account diversity, such as men versus women, and children versus adults, to name a few. She further explained that age groups need to be considered. She advised the audience to engage with survivors in their diversity fully.

Grace Kalekye, the second panelist, emphasized survivors' psychological support. According to her, what survivors have in common is that they have gone through an ordeal, but still, the support must take into account the specific needs of individual survivors.

Furthermore, **Patricia Wanjah Kimani** reminded the audience about the uniqueness of every survivor. She underscored that each case was unique and therefore had to be treated as such. She observed that every human trafficking case brings new insight.

Lastly, **Eunice Foloh** placed emphasis on paying attention to the survivor's background in intervention design. The panel was able to showcase how each survivor is unique in their identity, personality, and lived experience. To empower them and bring them to the forefront of the movement, allies must listen and give each survivor the space they need to blossom.

Workshops: Intersectionality and Allyship

After the panel, participants were split into two groups to discuss emerging best practices for successful allyship with survivors and the intersectional factors contributing to survivors' vulnerabilities (Gender, culture, LGBTIQ+, etc.) respectively.

The first group reflected on the intersectional factors contributing to survivors' vulnerabilities (Gender, culture, LGBTIQ+, etc.). Led by **Shivan Alungnat** and **Antonia Musunga**, participants discussed that individual perceptions and cultural and religious beliefs shape identities. Nonetheless, they emphasized the need to adopt a dignified approach when responding to the needs of the survivors while considering the intersectionality factors contributing to vulnerabilities.

The second workshop was facilitated by **Joanna Ewart-James**, who drew from the recommendations given at the North America and Europe Regional Forum on allyship the

month before. First and foremost, all group members recognized that the African context is very different from that in North America and Europe. Nevertheless, it was recommended to the African Region to embrace flexibility and adaptability to enable opportunities, mindset change, and openness about diversities in terms of identities and dreams as survivors come from different religious and cultural backgrounds.

Day Two: Research and Policy Engagement

Introduction

An important part in combatting modern slavery is the research. Research provides the latest data to inform policies and helps understand the issue of modern slavery in the given context. Furthermore, the data gathered in research projects present an opportunity for credibility when presented to decision-makers and when advocating for change.

Unfortunately, conducting research requires resources and too often those are scarce on the African continent. The second day of the Africa Regional Forum thus focused on research and policy engagement to make research and policies more impactful. At the same time, limitations were discussed, and stakeholders reviewed possible solutions. Moreover, the Forum served as an opportunity to foster dialogue on key areas for improvement in anti-trafficking policies in the region and elucidate the steps needed to close the gap between research and implementation.

To make research and policies more effective, the Forum Day considered research in the African context, paying attention to culture, traditions, limitations, etc. Furthermore, two research institutions presented their work on different aspects of human trafficking in Africa and shared their experiences with successful implementations based on research findings.

Continuing the conversation from the first day, participants were encouraged to reflect on survivor engagement within research.

Several research projects were considered throughout the day, and best practices were discussed. This gave all participants creative ways forward in increasing and improving research on the African continent.

The second day was opened with an introduction, followed by a panel and two presentations on research projects and their implementations. A first round of workshops gave participants the opportunity to choose between two topics before a facilitated discussion took place among all those present. After, a second round of workshops with two simultaneous sessions took place before the Forum Day was closed.

Speaker Overview

- **Introduction:**
 - Dr. David Okech | CenHTRO | USA

- **Moderators:**
 - Grace Mukwaya | Platform for Labor Action | Uganda
 - Jodom Mwebi | Free the Slaves | Kenya
- **Speakers:**
 - Biram Dah Abeid | Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement | Mauritania
 - Janvier Murairi | Coalition des Organisations de la Société Civile Anti-Esclavagiste | DRC
 - Bukeni Waruzi | Free the Slaves | USA
 - Aicha Traore | CenHTRO Sierra Leone Country Office | USA
 - Umaru Fofanah | CenHTRO | Sierra Leone
 - Hope Dockweiler | CenHTRO | USA
 - Dr. David N. Tshimba | Refugee Law Project - Makerere University | Uganda
 - Dr. David Okech | CenHTRO | USA
 - Pamela Vargas Gorena | University of Nottingham Rights Lab | UK
 - Katarina Schwarz | University of Nottingham Rights Lab | UK
 - Brenda Odhiambo | Survivor Advocate | Kenya
 - Shivan Alungnat | Independent Survivor Consultant | Kenya
 - Patriciah Wanja Kimani | HAART Kenya | Kenya
 - Bernadette Agano | Free the Slaves | DRC

Summary of Day Two

The second day focused on research and policy engagements to establish the limitations to making research and policies more impactful on the continent. In his opening remarks, Professor **David Okech** stated that the research aimed to provide accurate data to use for programming and not to exaggerate or minimize the issue for the governments and NGOs.

Professor Okech highlighted the fact that the African continent was lagging behind in terms of research. He reported that in 2019, he started to question the global estimates in terms of modern slavery, especially the methodology used. Nevertheless, he admitted that there was no perfect research methodology as science is an improving process. According to Professor Okech, NGOs need to link their programs to research to provide the best-evidenced responses and services to survivors.

Panel: Policy Engagement in the African Context

The panelists discussed different ways in which policy engagement is conducted in Africa. After giving an introduction to the topic, moderator **Grace Mukwaya** introduced her panelists.

According to **Biram Dah Abeid**, talking about the issue of slavery can be political and more confrontational in the Sahel region, depending on the country the conversation takes place.

Mr. Abeid referred to Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Niger as countries where slavery is still practiced. Thus, Mauritania was the last country to abolish slavery and the first to criminalize it. He shared some challenges the anti-modern slavery movement faced in the long journey related to advocacy that led to the abolition and enactment of a law that criminalizes slavery in Mauritania. He noted that the movement had engaged the population on the slavery issue. Still, there was a need to engage the Parliament more to put pressure on the Government of Mauritania to eradicate slavery. He concluded by emphasizing the need to build a strong partnership between the Anti-Slavery Movement and Government to eradicate slavery as a human rights issue.

Janvier Murairi observed that policy engagement requires the involvement of the population and, more importantly, the survivors. Mr. Murairi shared the pillars of the Coalition he represented. He explained that the Coalition collected reliable data and worked closely with the survivors to understand their needs to respond adequately. He explained that the Coalition has been putting in place a sustainable program to ensure that people don't fall into the same trap through capacity-building activities such as literacy, education, training, and economic empowerment. He further emphasized that working in isolation won't have a huge impact on the issue and advocated for community, national, regional, and international partnerships.

After the panel discussions, **Bukeni Waruzi** gave a presentation on Alliance 8.7, starting with some background information about its objectives and function. Alliance 8.7 is an inclusive global partnership committed to achieving target 8.7 of the 2030 sustainable development goals. He further explained the requirements to be met for a country to become a Pathfinder country and the obligations stemming from such membership. Mr. Waruzi pointed out that the majority of Pathfinder countries were African countries. He concluded by stating that Free the Slaves has been advocating to have a fourth NGO of survivors as a member of the Global Coordinating Group of Alliance 8.7.

Presentation: Bridging the Gap between Research and Implementation

This session served as an opportunity for two research institutions to share their studies on human trafficking, as well as lessons learned and recommendations to successfully implement the findings of their research.

Professor **David Okech** started by sharing some background information on the study that was conducted in Sierra Leone between 2019-2020 by APRIES in partnership with the Conflict Management and Development Associates (CMDA) called "Providing and Managing Trafficking Data for Policy Development and Program Intervention."

Aicha Traore told the audience that research findings helped her organization better design its programs. The research has enabled them to understand the issues facing children. Furthermore, the new data was helpful in informing their programming. She further shared some ongoing interventions with World Hope International Sierra Leone Country Office and

United Nations on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), focusing on a project in the prosecution of child trafficking aiming at increasing the capacity of law enforcement agents, prosecutors, and judiciary in the context of child trafficking.

Next, **Umaru Fofanah** reminded the audience about the need to understand the country's context within which a study is conducted. In the case of their research project, in the Northern part of Sierra Leone, the research was both qualitative and quantitative. The researchers interviewed the youth on child labor and child trafficking and visited more than 4,000 households. The research identified policy and services gaps in implementing the 3Ps (Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution). They established a lack of protective measures at chiefdoms, where often there is no community structure, limited capacity of NGOs, and no punishment of the perpetrators, as well as overall weak law enforcement.

Hope Dockweiler continued the discussion by acknowledging the existing cooperation with regional and national stakeholders in prevention efforts concerning human trafficking in Sierra Leone. She concluded by pointing out the need to support the government of Sierra Leone in its anti-trafficking efforts.

The last panelist, Dr. **David Tshimba**, provided some brief information on the ongoing research his organization was carrying out that focused on human trafficking and forced migration in Uganda. Dr. Tshimba pointed out that Uganda currently hosts more than one million refugees, with the Bidi-bidi refugee camp being the largest in the World. Furthermore, he observed that the Bidi-bidi refugee camp is a hub for human trafficking due to forced displacement contributing to the likelihood of human trafficking. Dr. Tshimba touched on procedural ethics when an organization or individual is conducting research on human trafficking, such as seeking clearance from the relevant agencies, getting informed consent from the participants, and maintaining confidentiality. He emphasized the need to interview people with whom one has established a long-term relationship and further insisted on the duty of the researcher to respect the dignity of the respondent(s) during the data collection exercise. He concluded by stressing that programming and knowledge production generated by data collection must work hand in hand.

Workshops: The Intersection of Research and Policy/Legislation

To continue the discussion, a round of workshops discussed the intersection of research and policy/legislation. Participants got to choose between workshops on “Data-Driven Anti-TIP Policies: Challenges and Opportunities” and a Legislative Framework Study from the University of Nottingham’s Rights Lab.

The first group was led by Dr. **David Okech**, and they singled out the Anti-Smuggling Act in Sierra Leone as a milestone piece of legislation for being comprehensive. This group observed that behind every data, there was politics. The group further underscored the intertwined relationship between politics and policies as politics drive policies and policies drive politics.

The second group came together for a research project presented by Dr. **Katarina Schwarz** and **Pamela Vargas Gorena** from the University of Nottingham. The aim of the research project is to co-develop frameworks for evaluating domestic legislation in addressing slavery and related practices with regional stakeholders. Participants contributed to identifying legislative indicators applicable to the region's legal systems that can test the strength and shortcomings of domestic legislation and to a broader discussion on the importance of different indicators. Furthermore, Pamela shared a preliminary set of indicators based on international laws, standards, and guidelines as the foundation for the workshop discussion. Participants stated that for human trafficking legislation to be comprehensive, it had to include four aspects: prevention, prosecution, support, and compensation. The members of this group further suggested that the law had to provide for victim rehabilitation. This group also suggested that any employment contract had to include a clause dealing with the safety of the employee as a preventive measure against human trafficking. They observed that some countries did not have a law on human trafficking and suggested that those states consider enacting laws that comply with the United Nations Model Law on Human Trafficking.

Facilitated Discussion: Limitations to Research in Africa (Culture, Lack of Resources, etc.)

Professor **David Okech**, the moderator of this session, observed that the African continent lags behind in terms of research due to limited funding for research institutions. He further gave the example of Asia, having been in the same position some years ago but since then has invested many resources, which made notable progress evident.

Dr. **Katarina Schwarz** and **Umaru Fofana** joined the discussion. Mr. Fofana hinted at challenges posed by some grant requirements to NGOs with limited capacities, hence a need for these NGOs to partner with those with proposal writing skills.

Dr. Katarina Schwarz added that a high potential exists in terms of partnership with research institutes/centers and stressed that data could better be utilized through partnership at national, regional, and international levels. Dr. Schwarz further observed that partnership with institutions with expertise in data collection and analysis on human trafficking would be helpful in overcoming challenges faced by NGOs in securing funding as some donors require proposals to provide data and be research-driven.

Panel: Ethical Survivor Engagement in Research: Case Studies and Lessons Learned

The second panel of the day was moderated by **Jodom Mwebi** who gave an insight into a research project on survivor engagement conducted by Free the Slaves in East Africa before introducing the panelists of the session, who are all persons with lived experience.

The first panelist, **Shivan Pavin**, talked about personal safety before and after data collection. Mrs. Pavin noted that a researcher had to be emotionally ready before commencing a research project. She added that sometimes the interviewee would not give direct signs that they are uncomfortable and would like to stop the interview even if they have given consent and are aware of their right to pause or end the interview at any time. Therefore, the interviewer needs to pay close attention to the body language of the interviewee. She concluded by advising those involved in research and communication to upload the information to the platform and then dispose of the hard document/proof for safety purposes.

Patriciah Wanja Kimani shared her experience with the informed consent process by reminding the participants that the consent sought from participants must be informed. She further mentioned that consent forms had to be in a language the participant understands. Researchers must ensure that any information is explained in a user-friendly way. She pointed out that any sort of reimbursement or payment must be clearly communicated with the research participants so as to be transparent. Furthermore, it must be ensured that participants understand that any sort of compensation may not lead to them adjusting their responses to satisfy the data collector. She concluded by reminding the audience that a researcher/interviewer must avoid any confrontation with the respondents. In the case of a focus group discussion, the researcher should not take sides but try to mediate, if possible.

Next, **Brenda Odhiambo** emphasized the safety of the participants before, during, and after the data collection process. She stated that the identification of the respondents was very crucial as the researcher or data collector needed to consider the needs of the respondent, as well as their cultural or religious backgrounds.

Finally, **Bernadette Agano** discussed the confidentiality and privacy of the respondent(s). She further observed that the interviewee or respondent had to be assured that their privacy would be respected even when findings were shared with partners or the public. Mrs. Agano further noted that not everyone within the research organization should have access to the information recorded. Information may, therefore, only be shared with those involved in the research. She concluded by underscoring the importance of obtaining informed consent from the respondent or interviewee and thus suggested that the respondent or interviewee had to be informed about their right to pause or end the interview in case they felt uncomfortable.

Workshops: Moving Forward and Finding Solutions

Building on the discussions of the Forum's second day, participants were split into two groups to discuss solutions for addressing barriers to effective research in Africa, as well as for survivor engagement in research.

Professor **David Okech** led the first group. Participants in this group observed that the timeline researchers are given to write proposals and conduct research is very short. Further, and more worrying, skills and expertise within many organizations are not sufficient to conduct meaningful research in Africa. This group also stressed the importance of continuous

communication between the organization conducting the research and the community to be considered. They finally suggested the assessment of the effectiveness should take place in partnership with local communities. The participants reported that patience is key in terms of the learning process and research process.

The second workshop was led by **Patriciah Wanja Kimani**. Participants therein identified some of the barriers, such as family and economic problems. The group recommended that organizations look at how they could involve some of the survivors in research as researchers rather than only as subjects of the research projects. Naturally, this requires training for survivors, which civil society organizations should cooperate to offer.

Day Three: Partnerships and Collaboration

Introduction

Partnerships are an essential part of the success of a movement if not arguably the most important one. Partnerships and collaboration increase knowledge and expertise, and the sharing of resources allows for more effective work for better results. Furthermore, partnering with other stakeholders in the anti-modern slavery movement increases the impact a project can have, as well as the work can reach a larger audience.

The Freedom from Slavery Forum was founded with the aim of creating a space for partnerships and collaboration to blossom, so the third day concentrating on this lays at the heart of the Forum's objective. Long-term partnerships have proven to be beneficial to all parties involved.

There are several forms of partnerships, ranging from public-public, public-private, and private-private partnerships to local, regional, and cross-regional collaborations, etc. Organizations may want to collaborate on a specific topic that both are active on, or it may be beneficial to consider partnerships between stakeholders who specialize in different fields on projects that are overlapping.

Furthermore, there are different ways to establish partnerships. All of these aspects were taken up on the last day of the Africa Regional Forum. Moreover, the day provided an opportunity for conversations on the sexual exploitation of youth and children, forced marriage of children, and particularly forced labor in the supply chain.

The day was opened by a keynote on partnerships and collaboration, after which a panel was held that addressed labor trafficking in the supply chain. Furthermore, a facilitated discussion on models of effective collaboration and partnerships gave an opportunity to share best practices. The first round of workshops focused on building synergies for effective problem-solving. A second panel on migration and sexual exploitation with a focus on root causes, current trends, and promising practices followed this. The last round of workshops focused on effective collaboration and engagement against labor and sexual exploitation. The Forum was closed with a concluding session in which feedback and ideas for the next Africa Forum were shared.

Speaker Overview

- **Introduction:**
 - Joha Braimah | Free the Slaves | Ghana

- **Keynote Speaker:**
 - Victoria Klimova | International Organization of Migration | Burundi
- **Moderators:**
 - Cromwell Awadey | International Needs Ghana | Ghana
 - Vani Swaraswathi | Migrant-Rights.org | India
- **Speakers:**
 - Grace Mukwaya | Platform for Labor Action | Uganda
 - George Achibra | Partners in Community Development Programme | Ghana
 - Joha Braimah | Free the Slaves | Ghana
 - Andrews Kananga | Legal Aid Forum | Rwanda
 - Mary Musoni | Legal Aid Forum | Rwanda
 - Andati Morris Shapwala | Smart Talk Café | Rwanda
 - Paul Adhoch | Trace Kenya | Kenya
 - Dr. David Okech | CenHTRO | USA
 - Janvier Murairi | Coalition des Organisations de la Société Civile Anti-Esclavagistes | DRC
 - Victoria Klimova | International Organization of Migration | Burundi
 - Rima Kalush | Migrant-Rights.org | Lebanon
 - Cromwell Awadey | International Needs Ghana | Ghana
 - Dr. Annette Mbogoh | Kituo cha Sheria | Kenya
 - Dr. Annette Kirabira | Rahab Uganda | Uganda

Summary of Day Two

The third day focused on cross-regional and cross-sector synergies to explore possible partnerships and collaborations to increase cooperation between different actors all over the continent.

After an introduction by **Joha Braimah**, **Victoria Klimova** delivered a keynote speech on collaboration and partnership. She started by stating that collaboration and partnership are powerful tools. She further noted that countries and organizations benefit from collaboration and partnership. She gave an example of Burundi, where in 2021 the then Prime Minister made a public statement that denied the existence of human trafficking in Burundi, which made it very difficult to build any partnership with NGOs. She reported that the government of Burundi has since changed its stance on human trafficking, thanks to NGOs' advocacy efforts. Mrs. Klimova explained different collaboration and partnership tools, namely referral mechanism pathway, memorandum of understanding (MoU), social sub-contracts, and protection cluster. She finally mentioned national referral mechanisms and MoU as being the collaboration and partnership tools mostly used by the International Organization for Migration.

Panel: Addressing Labor Trafficking in the Supply Chain

The first panel of Day Three was moderated by **Cromwell Awadey**, who gave an introduction on the prominence of labor trafficking in the supply chain in Africa and introduced his panelists, who discussed root causes, trends, challenges, and promising practices in relation to child labor trafficking in the supply chain in agriculture in Uganda and mining and fishing industry in Ghana.

The first panelist, **Joha Braimah**, explained that mining in Ghana is part of the formal and informal sectors. Human trafficking is ripe in the informal mining sector as it is not regulated. Mr. Braimah further explained how the supply chain works in the mining sector. He touched on forced labor therein by referencing the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention. Regarding promising practices in Ghana, he mentioned specific interventions which have worked, such as the certification of cocoa using the reference tool and the European Union Human Rights Diligence regulation. Nevertheless, he observed that corporate companies were still not engaging with the tools sufficiently. He introduced methods of certification and traceability, such as the Dodd-Frank Law in the United States, as well as the human rights environmental due diligence for companies to ensure that their products and commodities are not a result of forced labor. Furthermore, Mr. Braimah suggested that artisanal mining, taking place in the low-scale mining sector, needs to be formalized and regulated instead of being dismantled as currently provided in the mining legislation of Ghana.

Grace Mukwaya continued the discussion by calling agriculture the backbone of Africa, as it constitutes 80% of livelihoods in the continent. She further noted that the assumption that anyone could do agricultural work in Africa often led to children being trafficked in the sugar, tea, rice, or coffee industries. Furthermore, Mrs. Mukwaya raised the issue of the vulnerability of orphans to human trafficking in the agriculture sector due to a weak and informal system that fails to provide protection and support to children in host families. Related, poverty is one of the major root causes of trafficking in agriculture. Mrs. Mukwaya went on by sharing initiatives in Uganda that attempt to trace the presence of child labor in the production of commodities at all stages. Furthermore, she observed that the anti-human trafficking law in Uganda provides heavy punishment, but enforcement is still an issue as few cases have been prosecuted. She concluded by pointing out that Covid-19 played a role in the increase of human trafficking in Uganda. Thus, many traffickers exploited children who have dropped out of school as a result of Covid-19 measures.

To conclude the panel, **George Achibra**, the last panelist, picked up Grace Mukwaya's point on poverty being the root cause of human trafficking and confirmed this was the case in the fishing industry as well. He added some cultural practices as root causes. Therefore, if an unmarried woman gives birth to ten children before getting married, these ten children would be left at the mercy of their community upon her marriage and thus face increased vulnerability to being trafficked. According to Mr. Achibra, when the fishing industry faces challenges in catching fish, they tend to increase the labor force and, more importantly, cheap labor. Therefore, children become an easy target for traffickers. He raised the alarm by

acknowledging the fact that traffickers are getting smarter, such as changing the names of the children, for example. He observed that Ghana has good laws, but their enforcement is very weak.

Facilitated Discussion: Models of Effective Collaboration and Partnerships (Law Enforcement, INGOs, NGOs, Government)

Following the panel, the conversation shifted from forced labor towards collaboration and partnerships within the anti-modern slavery movement in Africa. The moderator, **Andrews Kananga**, saluted the role played by CSOs in the enactment process of the human trafficking law in Rwanda. He briefly took the audience through the process that led to the enactment of the Anti-Human Trafficking law in Rwanda, starting from the non-acceptance of the recommendation in relation to human trafficking made to the government in 2011 during the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review to the subsequent progress made since then. He further indicated that in 2021, the Ministry of Justice issued guidelines on support for victims of human trafficking.

His colleague, **Mary Musoni**, touched on the existing referral mechanism in Rwanda in the context of human trafficking. She shared the example of how their organization, the Legal Aid Forum, has been working closely with Hope Initiative through information sharing among its partners. She concluded by highlighting the fact that victims were not forthcoming to give information. Keeping in mind the need to apply trauma-informed and survivor-centered practices, information-sharing between organizations can be a good way to avoid the re-traumatization of victims and survivors of human trafficking as they don't have to retell their stories.

The last speaker, **Andati Morris Shapawalla**, shared examples of effective collaboration where, during their discussions with the Ministry of Justice of Rwanda, they managed to identify some gaps in the response, such as that victims and the community lack information on human trafficking. He further emphasized the need for collaboration with investigators and prosecutors. He concluded by calling for the dissemination of information to the community level, as victims do not know where they can get support.

Workshops: Building Synergies for Effective Problem-Solving

Participants were divided into two groups for the first workshop round of the day. One group reflected on “Leveraging Cross-Sector Partnership at Multiple Levels (Local, Regional, International) to Address Modern Slavery in the Region,” and the other group focused on “Ideas for Sustainable Resource Mobilization in the Region.”

The first workshop was facilitated by **Paul Adhoch**, who gave an overview of the work being done by his organization Trace Kenya in terms of migration rights, child safeguarding, and

gender as its areas of intervention. This group acknowledged the advantages of partnership as access to funding is made possible, as well as the growth of organizations from an institutional standpoint. The group also observed that partnerships benefit the anti-modern slavery movement as it counteracts the individualistic mentality and rather fosters collaboration, which is more effective. Furthermore, the participants noted that the referral system helps civil society organizations focus on their core mandate.

Janvier Murairi led the second group. The participants shared ideas for sustainable resource mobilization in the region and noted that compliance with the law in terms of registration of the organization is a crucial starting point. Formal and proper registration is key to starting any mobilization. Thus, registering a civil society organization is a prerequisite for funding eligibility. The members of this group alluded to internal income-generating activities to diversify resource funding to absorb shock in case the organization fails to secure funding.

Panel: Migration and Sexual Exploitation: Root Causes, Current Trends, and Promising Practices

The final panel of the Forum discussed on the link between migration and sexual exploitation and paid particular attention to the roots, trends, and promising practices. This session was moderated by **Vani Swaraswathi**, who pointed out the difficulty in terms of accessing justice for the victims of sexual exploitation in the context of human trafficking.

The first panelist, **Victoria Klimova**, then shared that most of the victims of human trafficking are women but stated that men are also exposed to sexual exploitation. She went on by sharing an example of a man who was promised to go to work in the construction sector overseas but ended up being coerced to have sex with clients of the traffickers. She observed that people close to the victims most often are the ones who play a role in their recruitment. She further emphasized the fact that in some African countries, immigration detention facilities for illegal migrants are turned into brothels. She concluded by highlighting the importance of prosecuting those involved in sexual exploitation and abuse in the context of migration and the need to work with the community for reintegration.

The second panelist, **Rima Kalush**, shared some challenges faced by migrant workers in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse. The labor law in the context of migration in the Gulf region puts domestic workers at risk of being sexually exploited, as law enforcement is weak as far as rape and sexual harassment are concerned. She further observed that undocumented migrants often hesitate to report cases of sexual exploitation and abuse due to the fear of being detained and then deported. Mrs. Kalush concluded by recommending increasing the conversation around sexual exploitation and abuse when talking about migrant workers.

Lastly, **Cromwell Awadey** observed that in Africa, people are subjected to sexual exploitation and abuse either in the country of destination or in transit. He noted that some people see

migration as one form to escape from poverty. He further pointed out that migrating to Europe and the Gulf has led to many women being trafficked for sexual purposes. He observed a trend of internal migration within Ghana where women are trafficked from the Northern to the Southern part of the country for sexual purposes. Furthermore, and increasingly, Nigerians and Chinese women and girls have been trafficked to Ghana for the same purposes. Mr. Awadey noted that progress had been made on the ground where the Cyber Security Authority in Ghana has been tracking people who recruit children online. Another successful example is the establishment of a hotline for victims to call or send a message to while they are in distress.

Workshop: Effective Collaboration and Engagement Against Labor and Sexual Exploitation

For the last session of Day Three and the African Regional Forum in general, participants reflected on sexual exploitation of children and youth, forced marriage of children in the context of human trafficking, and forced labor in the supply chains in the form of workshops.

The first session on the “Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth” was facilitated by Dr. **Annette Mbogoh**. The participants emphasized that a lack of data made it difficult to understand the magnitude of sexual exploitation of underaged individuals. Furthermore, sexual exploitation is evolving into different forms, including, but not limited to, online exploitation and sex tourism. The rapid development makes it difficult for the anti-modern slavery movement to keep up, so stakeholders need to develop new mechanisms to get ahead of the traffickers. Furthermore, participants drew attention to the issue of courts often tolerating the ignorance towards the victims’ age by those accused of issues related to child sexual exploitation. Finally, the collaboration between the movement and organizations working with sex workers was recommended during this workshop.

The second group focused on “Forced Marriage of Children,” which was led by Dr. **Annette Kirabira**. As the facilitator, she pointed out that there was a huge gap in relation to boys’ protection, as much emphasis had been placed on girls. This group identified and then discussed the reasons leading to child marriage and thus recommended strategies on how to eradicate child marriage. Among those were poverty, cultural traditions, the role of girls and women in societies, and more. Thus, a cultural shift is needed to tackle the issue of forced child marriage.

The third group was led by **Cromwell Awadey**, and participants reflected on “Forced Labor in Supply Chains” as a continuation of the panel earlier in the day. They considered the definition of forced labor as provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which considers forced labor to be “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily.” The group then discussed in depth the issue of forced labor in the supply chain and finally

emphasized why companies have the duty to pay particular attention to it as it is a reputational risk.

Conclusion of Africa Forum and Preparations for Next Year

To close the Forum, participants came back together to the plenary room to discuss the main problems and solutions identified, which will be mentioned in more detail below. Furthermore, **Bukeni Waruzi** represented the organizers of the event in a feedback session, and participants were given the opportunity to share their ideas for the following Africa Regional Freedom from Slavery Forum.

He was joined by **Andrews Kananga**, whose organization, Legal Aid Forum, was the co-organizer of the Africa Regional Freedom from Slavery Forum. After thanking the participants, he stressed the importance of collaboration among the regional and sub-regional actors.

Problems Identified

Over the three Forum days, speakers shared their expertise on various topics, and participants learned more about survivor engagement and inclusion, research and policy-making on the African continent, forced labor in supply chains, and best practices of partnerships and collaboration. The following presents the main problems that were identified.

Denial of Human Trafficking by African States

In countries such as Burundi, the work of coalitions of NGOs has made the problem of human trafficking visible. Nevertheless, the government continues to try to hide the issues, which hinders progress in responding to the problem effectively. Furthermore, NGOs are often dependent on government funding. By ignoring the problem, politicians hinder any real progress being made. Though the problem persists, it has to be mentioned that coalitions have been successful in changing the narrative of governments regarding modern slavery all throughout the continent in recent years.

Weak Law Enforcement

Although in countries like Uganda, there are laws that heavily punish trafficking, there are challenges in law enforcement. The number of traffickers prosecuted is significantly low. This, in turn, leads to the fearlessness of perpetrators, and they become more ruthless and successful in recruiting victims of all forms of modern slavery.

Prevailing Practices of Forced Labor in the Mining and Agricultural Sectors

Being the main economic activity in the region, the prevalence of human trafficking in these sectors is of great concern. Furthermore, it is worrisome that the problem has significantly increased after the Covid-19 pandemic. To counter the problem, commercial partners in Europe and the United States need to enforce legislation that protects the workers' rights who are involved in producing those goods that it imports from the region.

Poverty is one of the main causes of trafficking in the agricultural sector, which means the solution requires an integral approach. Furthermore, it is difficult to trace trafficking in family agricultural businesses, where children are often forced to work.

Sexual Exploitation in the Region

Sexual exploitation and abuse are still pressing issues in the region. Regarding the sexual exploitation of children and youth, it was reported that there is a lack of data to understand the magnitude of the problem. Furthermore, sexual exploitation is evolving in different forms, including online and sex tourism.

Lack of Focus on Child Survivors

It was pointed out during the Forum that the human trafficking-related discourse left out the discussion of child survivors of human trafficking.

Poor Governance

Throughout the Forum, participants repeatedly referred to poor governance in Africa as one of the causes of human trafficking. The lack of opportunities and increasing desperation drive people to seek new opportunities and make them more vulnerable to being trafficked.

Lack of Mechanisms to Report Human Trafficking

Many victims of modern slavery struggle to leave their trafficking situations because they lack information as to where to report the cases and get help. This leads to many situations staying unreported. The failure of the anti-modern slavery movement to address this issue is one of the reasons why victims are re-trafficked.

Difficulties to Conduct Research

The African continent lags behind in terms of research due to a lack of sufficient funding for research institutions. Participants have agreed that, as a result, there is not enough quality data to address modern slavery issues. Furthermore, difficulties in reaching out to survivors to conduct research while protecting their identities and providing a safe space to gather data is another problem that hinders successful research projects in the region.

Language Barriers to Communicating

In numerous African countries, survivors and staff speak different languages. Considering that rural areas are most affected by human trafficking and that people living there often have their own dialects, this can create language barriers to communicating. This becomes a

relevant issue in outreach programs, education materials, awareness-raising campaigns, as well as research. Furthermore, it is a bigger challenge for grassroots and other organizations that do not have the capacity and resources to provide translation services.

Lack of Protective Measures to Address Modern Slavery

Although many countries are part of international conventions related to modern slavery, many governments still lack the commitment to enforce the agreements on these international instances. Civil society organizations must pressure African governments to adhere to their commitments to combat modern slavery in their territories.

Solutions Proposed

Improve Aftercare for Survivors

It is paramount for any intervention to take into consideration the mental health of survivors. Modern slavery survivors usually carry trauma from their experiences that can have a toll on their mental health. Designing programs that address these issues can guarantee that we can work with survivors while taking into consideration their well-being.

Centering Survivors at the Forefront of Program Design and Implementation

Putting survivors at the forefront of our projects will guarantee that our interventions respond to the reality of the population that we are serving. Survivors with lived experience should be at the center of any intervention aimed at improving the lives of those who have experienced any form of modern slavery. This is a crucial step all stakeholders of the anti-modern slavery movement have to take to ensure its success.

Building Partnerships to Address Modern Slavery

Building partnerships has proven to be successful in increasing the visibility of human trafficking in all African countries. Participants of the Forum stressed the importance of creating coalitions and partnerships to end modern slavery in all of its forms. These partnerships should be cross-sectoral and cross-regional, responding to the intersectional nature of human trafficking.

A specific form of partnership that was suggested during the Forum is partnerships between research institutions. Hereby, institutions with built-in capacities to research modern slavery should collaborate with institutions that have the expertise to collect data and analyze human trafficking. Such partnerships can be helpful in overcoming the challenges faced by NGOs to secure funding, as some donors require proposals to provide data and be research-driven. It was suggested that these partnerships start at the proposal stage, considering how complicated some proposals are.

Addressing Barriers to Survivor Engagement in Research

During the workshops, some participants identified some of the barriers to effectively including and engaging survivors of human trafficking in research, some of them being family and economic problems. It was recommended that organizations offer training

opportunities for survivors to improve their research skills. After having undergone training, survivors can then be a part of the research project as conductors rather than merely being the objects of the study.

Main Outcomes of the Forum

The main outcomes of the Forum were established considering both how well the expected outcomes were met, as well as based on the feedback received by participants.

The biggest goal of the Africa Regional Forum was to promote collaboration at the local, regional, national, and international levels. According to the feedback, 92.86% of all respondents were able to form meaningful connections that would continue after the Forum. Among these are connections with and among survivor leaders, researchers, and other organizations who can work together mainly on referral. National and International Organizations were able to network together. Furthermore, an East Africa collaboration was established with the goal to lead network development in Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda.

The Africa Forum was also an excellent opportunity to address and discuss some of the pending issues in the region. Committing a full day to the discussion of survivor inclusion was perceived as helpful. Survivors shared their gratitude for having been included in the discussion, and participants shared that they were able to make connections with survivors, as well as take away new knowledge on how to improve inclusion in their organizations.

Moreover, attendees reported that the day on research was helpful. Having bigger International Organizations and research institutions, such as the University of Nottingham's Rights Lab, the University of Georgia's CenHTRO, and the University of Makerere's Refugee Law Project, was helpful to foster connections and presented funding and partnership collaborations.

Furthermore, the number of attendees exceeded the expected number.

Therefore, the overall experience of participants of the Forum was very positive, and the Forum can be considered a success.

Next Steps

It is hoped that this Forum will lay the groundwork for future exchanges of practical experience and lessons learned about various approaches to combating modern slavery in the Africa. Additionally, the organizers of the Forum hope for a continuation of the connections made and collaborations formed at the Forum.

Participants left the Forum with a better understanding of the various forms of modern slavery in Africa, as well as the challenges that communities, governments, and civil society face in combating it. They were also able to share their experiences, expertise, and lessons learned from working in the field. A focus on survivor engagement in the movement provided attendees with best practices that can be implemented to bring survivors of human trafficking to the forefront of the movement. Furthermore, the challenges and opportunities of conducting research in Africa were discussed in detail. Participants were able to connect with research organizations to further their knowledge and form potential partnerships.

Given the Forum's connections and partnerships, we hope participants will benefit from the corporations formed and further the anti-slavery movement.

This Forum was one of a series of Regional Freedom from Slavery Forums that convened in 2022 and 2023 in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, Europe, and the Caribbean before concluding with the Global Forum in the Dominican Republic in May 2023. Check out our [website](#) and follow us on Twitter at [@FFS_Forum](#) to keep up with each of the regional Forums.

Participation and Evaluation

Before the Africa Regional Forum, 80 participants had registered. Across the three days, 89 individuals from 17 countries representing 46 organizations attended the event. The countries with the most representatives included Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and the United States.

An evaluation form was sent to all participants to receive necessary feedback, which can be implemented in future Forums, both for the Africa Regional Forum, other Regional Forums, as well as the Global Forum.

The comments shared indicated that participants were overall pleased with the Forum experience. Questions on the logistics, presenters, panels and workshops, audio, video, translation, and accommodation were all responded to with “excellent” or “good.” 100% of all participants who filled out the evaluation form stated they would attend the Forum in the future.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to learn more about survivor inclusion and perspectives specific to the African continent. Furthermore, the opportunity to network and a focus placed on collaboration was well received by participants. There was also positive feedback on the choice of presenters, as their knowledge was valuable to attendees. Moreover, participants had a great interest in learning more about research.

The only recommendation was to extend the Forum to an additional day to fit more content.

Participants were also asked to share some suggestions for topics to be incorporated into the agenda of future Africa Regional Forums. Below are their proposals:

- Safe labor migration
- Campaigns and advocacy
- Survivor leaders’ personal economic empowerment efforts
- Monitoring and evaluation of all agency actions from policy to survivor intervention
- Child marriage
- Legal representation
- Social and economic empowerment of survivors
- LGBTQI+ focus
- Effective strategies for preventing human trafficking and modern slavery
- Building evidence based on TIP to inform policy and practice
- Difference between human trafficking and smuggling
- Side events to highlight some of the best practices done by survivors themselves
- Examples of successful interventions

Bios of Speakers and Presenters



Aicha Traore is currently the Program Manager for Sierra Leone at the Center on Human Trafficking Research and Outreach (CenHTRO) housed at the University of Georgia in the US where she supports anti-TIP projects related to child trafficking/child labor, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude in the country.

Prior to CenHTRO, Aicha served as Program Coordinator for the Francophone portfolio at Pathfinder International, where she provided administrative and technical support to three country programs (Burkina-Faso, Ivory Coast, Togo) in implementing projects on Sexual Reproductive health and rights and access to informed family planning resources.

She also acquired experience in community and social capital development during her time as Program Associate at Heifer International, overseeing the West Africa Portfolio (Ghana, Senegal, Ivory Coast) in the implementation of nutrition, women empowerment, and market systems development projects.



Andati Morris Shapwala is a Sustainable Development consultant whose focus has been working with young people and making sure they get the proper skills in order to sustain themselves and create community solutions. He serves as Executive Director and Founder of Smart Talk Café in Rwanda, where he is the Programs and Project Coordinator.

Andati is deeply passionate about young people, art and culture, human rights, especially gender equality, justice, climate action, development, and the rule of law. He has gained his experience through human rights engagements in the past five years in SDGs, event organization, gender and youth affairs, training, and economic empowerment.

Previously he worked with Strimid Consulting as the Capacity-Building Program Coordinator. Andati is a trained Sustainable Development expert accredited by Springdale College Foundation. He is also a bamboo consultant with 1-year of experience in training under its various value chains. He has worked under Moonlight Initiative and consulted for International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation and Kenya Forest Research Institute. He seeks to create safe spaces that promote healthy colloquy, discourse, and social change among the youth.



Me. **Andrews Kananga** is currently the Executive Director of the Legal Aid Forum – Rwanda, a position he has held since 2008. From 2004 – 2008, he was a Senior Legal adviser to National Semi-traditional Courts (Gacaca) that were charged with trials of people suspected of having committed Genocide in Rwanda. In 2012, Andrews was among the three Legal experts nominated by the Ministry of Justice in Rwanda to oversee the development of a legal aid policy in Rwanda. He has contributed enormously to legal reforms in Rwanda which ushered in the legal aid policy, legal aid bill, reform of the penal code and criminal procedure code, and many more pieces of legislation that favor access to justice for the poor and vulnerable in Rwanda. Andrews is a founding member of the African Centre of Excellence for Access to Justice (ACE-AJ) and head of research in the same center.



Annette Twahirwa Kirabira is a Counseling Psychologist by profession and holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership. She is a founder member and Executive Director of Rahab Uganda; an NGO that works to contribute to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and human trafficking (HT). Currently, Annette is the Interim Chairperson of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Persons-Uganda (CATIP-U); a coalition of NGOs in Uganda working to address various aspects of Human Trafficking both in Uganda and across its borders. After 16 years of working with victims and survivors of sexual exploitation, she has a wealth of experience in trauma-informed responses and client-centered approaches to assisting victims and survivors. She also has experience in lobbying and working with various government and non-government agencies and stakeholders in enforcing the various laws and ensuring the protection of victims and survivors of Trafficking in Persons. She is a seasoned trainer and facilitator in various areas related to anti-trafficking, leadership, and counseling.



Dr. **Annette Mbogoh** is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya with fourteen (14) years of standing. She undertook her Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) degree at the University of Nairobi and a Postgraduate Diploma in Law at the Kenya School of Law in Nairobi. She later pursued a Master in Women's Law (MWL) and a Doctor of Philosophy in Law (DPhilLaw) from the Southern and Eastern Africa Regional Centre for Women's Law at the University of Zimbabwe. She has conducted empirical research work on trafficking and sex tourism involving the youth in the Coast County of Mombasa, gender and public participation of women in land governance and transitional justice processes, disability rights, and human rights in general. She is the Executive Director of Kituo cha Sheria-Legal Advice Centre. She has ten (10) years of teaching experience garnered from the University of Nairobi's School of Law.



Antonia Musunga is an intersectional feminist who is passionate about protecting human rights, gender equality, social justice, inclusion, governance, and development. She is the Co-Founder of Azadi Kenya, a collective of survivors of human trafficking and currently advises on strategy and programs.

When not at work, she enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with her friends and family. She is also passionate about African Literature and is part of vibrant feminist collectives in Kenya and the East African region. Currently, she is the Programme Manager Movement Building Portfolio at the Freedom Fund.



Awah Francisca Mbuli is a survivor of sex and labor trafficking. She is the founder of Survivors' Network (SN), a Cameroonian-based, female survivors-led NGO that fights against all forms of human trafficking. SN rescues and provides temporary housing, psychosocial services, vocational training, and economic empowerment programs to victims of human trafficking and internally displaced women. She advocates both with governments and the general population.

For her efforts, Awah has been awarded numerous distinctions, including, but not limited to, being one of the 50 Most Influential Cameroonians and an Obama Africa Leader and having received the African Dream Achievers Award, the US Trafficking in Persons Hero award, and the World of Difference Award 2022 for Economic Empowerment of Women.

Furthermore, Awah is one of the Freedom from Slavery Forum Ambassadors.



Bernadette Agano, better known as Dety Darba, is a human rights activist, entrepreneur, and singer located in the DRC. Bernadette is committed to using her music and notoriety in the DRC to raise awareness about the issue of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Concerned about the care of youth and the initiation to entrepreneurship, she created YOLA Collection, which is a training platform for young girls in the DRC in the trade to encourage them to become more independent.

She is also an ambassador of the movement BIG TOLYO which is a group of Congolese women leaders who fight for the self-acceptance of African women (disabled, round, albino, etc.).

Bernadette is serving Free the Slaves as the DRC County Coordinator.



Born in the mid-sixties near Rosso into a poor family, **Biram Dah Abeid** is the only one of many siblings to attend modern school. His main concerns are the protection of human dignity (Fight against slavery, protection of women and children) and strategies for the defense of human rights. To defend this commitment, he was kidnapped, demonized, tortured, and stayed in prison in 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2018. For his efforts, he has been awarded several distinctions, including the prestigious United Nations Human Rights Prize in 2013 and the Front Line Defenders Human Rights Award.

Today, Biram Dah Abeid, whose organization, Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) gained official recognition after more than ten years of denial, maintains peaceful and collaborative relations with the current President of the Republic, Mohamed Cheikh Ghazouani, and its high-level Governmental officials.



Brenda Odhiambo is a Survivor Advocate at HAART Kenya where she has been working with fellow survivors of Human Trafficking for the past year. She has a diploma in Community Development. She is passionate about helping people to get out of Human Trafficking and offering advice to survivors of Human Trafficking. Brenda also works as a consultant on the matter.



Bukeni Waruzi is the Executive Director of Free the Slaves. He works closely with the board, the global team, and headquarters to provide strategic leadership and set a vision for one of the world's most widely-known and respected anti-modern slavery organizations.

Waruzi has documented human rights abuses, designed and implemented advocacy campaigns, made public presentations around the world, and trained hundreds of human rights advocates and activists in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas.

Waruzi has spoken to high-level audiences including the United Nations Security Council, the International Criminal Court, and the Children's Caucus of the U.S. Congress. He currently represents anti-slavery groups as a civil society member of the Global Coordinating Group of Alliance 8.7, the global initiative to attain Sustainable Development target 8.7, the end of child and forced labor worldwide.



Cromwell Awadey is a Development Worker by profession and works on child rights and child protection as well as gender and empowerment issues. He is the Executive Director of International Needs Ghana.

Cromwell leads the team in Ghana in delivering interventions in Child Rights, Education, Gender and Empowerment, and Health. He has been involved in working to end sex and labor trafficking in Ghana. Cromwell and his team implemented several projects in this space. In partnership with Free the Slaves, International Needs Ghana is implementing the community model of the Cooperation agreement under the USA and the Government of Ghana Child Protection Compact, with funding from the USA State Department through Free the Slaves. The team has collaborated with the Ghana Police Service and other partners to rescue children from trafficking, prosecute the slaveholders and provide aftercare support to the children rescued and their families.



Dr. **David Okech** is a Professor at the University of Georgia and Director of the Center on Human Trafficking Research & Outreach, the African Programming and Research Initiative to End Slavery, and the Prevalence Reduction Innovation Forum. He is a board or working group member of numerous global anti-trafficking agencies. He focuses on building research and evidence for building responsive programs and policies in the human trafficking field, with a special focus on Africa.



David Ngendo Tshimba is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Refugee Law Project (RLP), School of Law at Makerere University. He earned his Ph.D. (History and Political Studies) from the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme at the Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR). Prior to joining the RLP, David benefited from a host of research fellowships, including with the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) on a book project on peace and security in Africa's Great Lakes region, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) on its African Great Lakes Project; the University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars Program (UMAPS) for his doctoral study on historicizing political violence in the Rwenzori region astride the Congo-Uganda border; and Action for Development (ACFODE) research project on violated bodies in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, western Uganda. David's research interests pertain to thematic issues of (political) violence, (forced) migration, and (social) justice.



Florence Soyekwo is the Uganda Country at Hope for Justice. Hope for Justice works with partners across the public and private sectors, to ensure a safe future for survivors and to mitigate the risk of trafficking within supply chains.

Florence empowers families and communities in Uganda to prevent, identify, and report cases of human trafficking. For this, she worked in close collaboration with the Ugandan police and other NGOs to support the investigation and targeted rescue of child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

To restore the lives of survivors, Hope for Justice provides trauma-informed care at our Lighthouse shelters.



George Achibra Senior is the Executive Director of Partners in Community Development Programme (PACODEP). He is a passionate human rights activist who has championed the fight against human trafficking and, most especially, Child Trafficking on the Volta in Ghana. Through his organization, over 700 victims of human trafficking have been rescued and reintegrated with their families and guardians. As Executive Director, he is responsible for providing advice on policies and programs that are being implemented by the organization, effectively engaging board members of the organization on strategic plans for the growth of the organization.



Giselle Balfour, Ph.D., is a native of Trinidad and Tobago. She has garnered over ten years of experience working with children and families impacted by various forms of child maltreatment, specifically child sexual exploitation. Prior to coming on board at Free the Slaves, Giselle served as the Project Director of the Envision Project at the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy, providing specialized reintegrative services to survivors of child sex trafficking survivors in Georgia, USA. Giselle recognizes that Modern slavery is an egregious abuse of one of life's most basic human rights and believes it is our obligation to continue this work until everyone is free.



Grace Mukwaya is currently the Executive Director of Platform for Labour Action (PLA) where she is responsible for Managing the organization and change management. Platform for Labour Action is a National Civil society organization founded in 2000 to advocate for the promotion and protection of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized workers in Uganda. PLA is an accredited legal aid service provider by the Law Council in Uganda.



Grace Kalekye is a survivor of human trafficking and a member of the Free the Slaves advisory board in Kenya. She is an upcoming musician and a professional dancer.



Hope Dockweiler is a second-year Master of Social Work Student at the University of Georgia who has worked as a Graduate Research Assistant and Programming Assistant for the Center on Human Trafficking Research and Outreach (CenHTRO) on the African Programming and Research Initiative to End Slavery (APRIES) project throughout the duration of her study. She also works as an intern within the Survey Research and Evaluation Support unit at the university's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, with an emphasis on qualitative data evaluation. This work follows the completion of her undergraduate degree in Journalism with minors in African Studies and Religion from the University of Georgia in December 2020. Upon completion of her master's degree in May of 2023, Dockweiler intends to continue, through work and education, within the realm of international human rights research and policy efforts. Her interests lie at the intersections of gender equity, economic inclusion, environmental justice, and human trafficking.



Sr. **Jackline Mwikali Mwongela**, from the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, commonly known as the Loreto Sisters. The Project Coordinator for Religious against human trafficking (RAHT Kenya). A highly motivated Change Agent with over ten years of experience in the administrative and socio-economic industry. Offering expertise in Social Transformation, Human rights-based approach to development, community-based development, planning, implementation, and monitoring in different fields. Well-versed in handling people of different ages and social strata, mobilizing and facilitating them to achieve their desired goals. She has previously managed a number of projects to a successful outcome. Currently, Jackline coordinates a project within the 25 catholic dioceses in Kenya fighting against human trafficking at the grassroots level.



James Lual Atak is the Founder and Director of New Life Ministry cooperation with Lift Up the Vulnerable, both human trafficking organizations in South Sudan and Sudan.

Being part of the South Sudanese Lost Boys, James had to watch other children die and had to endure child soldier ship and slavery himself. Eventually, he made it to Nairobi, Kenya, where he was able to receive an education. Despite being offered a new life in the United States, he decided to return home with the plan to help alleviate ongoing Sudanese suffering. He began teaching severely malnourished children in slavery and orphans under the trees where he was found by Lift up the Vulnerable in 2005, after which he started working with them.

Today, James' New Life Ministry with Lift Up the Vulnerable (NLM) is now Home to 750 Children and many more women from war slavery. They also help students to graduate from secondary schools and universities in an attempt to give them a chance at a better life. He also built two other orphanage centers in South Sudan, as well as schools and health clinics throughout Sudan and South Sudan.



Joanna Ewart-James is Co-Founder and Executive Director of Freedom United, a global community against modern slavery powering action for change. Joanna is also a trustee at Labour Behind the Label Trust - campaigning for workers' rights in the clothing industry. At the end of 2021, she completed her term as Chair of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative UK, during which she received an innovation award for the newly created Commonwealth 8.7 Network on modern slavery. Joanna was previously with Walk Free and Anti-Slavery International, where she developed and directed their work on business engagement, including coordinating the Cotton Campaign in Europe. Her international human rights experience spans the UK diplomatic service, academia, and philanthropy, managing multi-million-dollar budgets.



Jodom Mwebi has over eight years of work and experience in Access to Justice, Human Rights, and Governance. He has worked for Forced Migration, Transitional Justice, Education, Land, Labor, Housing, and leadership at non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Mwebi has ensured that refugees, asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, and internally displaced persons have access to and enjoy their rights in accordance with international humanitarian law, human rights law, and national laws. He has offered legal aid and advice on labor, land, and housing and facilitated out-of-court settlements. He has also advocated and lobbied for policies and legislations favorable to vulnerable persons, including on basic education, and empowered communities and persons to be monitors and champions of their human rights and legal entitlements.



Joha Braimah is the West Africa Regional Director at Free the Slaves. Joha has over eighteen years of practical experience in human rights and community development. He has helped to design and implement programs in migration governance at the national level and anti-slavery in sectors such as fishing, cocoa, mining, and sex trafficking as well as coalition building and fundraising. Joha also serves on the board of the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), Geneva, where he is also an Executive Committee member. He is a member of the Ghana National Steering Committee on Child Labour and the Technical Working Committee of the Ghana Anti-Human Trafficking Management Board. He is an active participant in the development and formulation of national policies such as the Ghana National Action Plan on Child Labour, Ghana National Action Plan on Human Trafficking, Standard Operating Procedure on Human Trafficking, and Child and Family Welfare Policy among others.



Dr. **Katarina Schwarz** is an Associate Professor in Antislavery Law and Policy at the School of Law and Associate Director of the Rights Lab at the University of Nottingham. Her research explores the intersections between slavery and the law, from the historical to the contemporary.

In her role leading the Rights Lab's Law and Policy Programme, Schwarz works at the interface of research and policy to deliver evidence-based guidance for contemporary antislavery action. Her Rights Lab research interrogates the law and policy frameworks operating at the global, regional, and domestic levels to determine the elements of effective antislavery governance and map trends, successes, and failures.

Schwarz is the lead author of the Antislavery in Domestic Legislation Database, the world's first comprehensive database of international obligations and domestic legislation on slavery and related practices. This project, initiated in 2015, maps the current state of domestic legislation prohibiting slavery, servitude, forced labor, institutions and practices similar to slavery, and human trafficking in all 193 UN Member States, providing new insights for the global antislavery movement.



Mary Musoni is the Senior Legal Empowerment Officer at the Legal Aid forum in charge of assessing and managing client files and needs as well as the coordination and supervision of legal empowerment activities at LAF. She holds an LLB from the National University of Rwanda, a Diploma in Legal Practice from the Institute of Legal Practice and Development of Rwanda, and is a registered member of the Rwanda Bar Association as well as the East African Law Society.

She formerly worked for Lamèsè, a global public health start-up, with footprints in the UK and Africa, and Forzley & Associates, an international public health law company with headquarters in Washington, DC, before joining the Legal Aid Forum in 2016. Her work with both companies included using the law to protect and restore accountability by tackling injustices in health systems in developing countries.



Miss. **Miriam Muthio Mang'oka** is a Social Development Practitioner. She has an educational background in Community Resource Management, Leadership, and Community Engagement. Her working background has been in the Criminal Justice System and Community Development sector. She has contributed to the review and development of the Kenya Through Care Guidelines Second Edition, National Youth Strategy, and the Children's Act 2022.

She currently works at Awareness Against Human Trafficking (HAART) as the Head of Prevention. HAART is a Kenyan NGO founded in 2010 exclusively dedicated to ending human trafficking. HAART is guided by the United Nation's 4 P Strategy against Human Trafficking (Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, Partnerships). As Head of Prevention Miriam is in charge of various community engagements and will be bringing this perspective to the forum.



Murairi Bakihanaye Janvier is a frontline anti-slavery activist in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He is the secretary general of the Coalition of Anti-Slavery Civil Society Organizations (Coscae), the first platform in the country to specialize in slavery issues. Janvier was awarded the Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty by Human Rights First in 2016 for his work in the fight against slavery in the mines of the DRC.



Ngwepekem Eunice Foloh is a Human Trafficking and Gender Based Violence advocate, a survivor of Labor Trafficking, countless harassment, and almost a victim of rape. She has been working in the humanitarian field for more than four years with Survivors' Network, a female-led not for profit making organization that advocates against Human Trafficking, Gender Based Violence, and associated abuses perpetrated on women and girls. She serves as the Human Resource Officer, Gender Based Violence and Case Manager of the organization where she manages staff and intervenes in all Gender Base Violence and Human Trafficking issues when it comes to helping survivors become reintegrated and self-reliant in their societies.



Pamela Vargas Gorena works as part of the Rights Lab's Law and Policy Programme, conducting contextual research and engagement focused on antislavery law and policy frameworks to deliver bespoke legislative toolkits. She contributes to the expansion of a database of domestic legislation and international obligations of all UN Member States, maps global legislation to understand trends, successes, and failures, and identifies factors contributing to positive legislative change. Her research background includes comparative law and jurisprudence, as well as the assessment of government law, policies, and capacities. As a qualified Bolivian lawyer, she previously held management positions in government, contributing to the development of law and public policy at central and local levels. She also has been part of UN-Habitat, working on the Urban National Policy, and has frontline experience working with vulnerable youth in the non-profit sector.



Patriciah Wanja Kimani is a survivor advocate at HAART Kenya and a research consultant for Free The Slaves. As the reigning Mrs. Congeniality Kenya, she fights human trafficking, especially from a gender-based violence perspective.

She is a teacher by profession and a survivor of labor trafficking in the Middle East. Part of her campaign includes creating awareness through mainstream media and performance arts events.



Paul Adhoch is the Executive Director of Trace Kenya, a counter-trafficking in persons organization based in the coastal region of Kenya. With over seventeen years of experience in working to combat human trafficking and slavery, Paul has vast knowledge and skills on issues related to child protection, child labor, commercial sexual exploitation of children, sex slavery, forced street begging, domestic servitude, and migrant labor both at community and policy level.

After graduating from university, Paul worked briefly in the private sector and government before joining the civil society. He has supported research in child protection, social development, and youth development. Paul has contributed to various social studies publications over the last eight years; and participated in think tank meetings in Africa, Europe, and North America on diverse topics such as Migration and Sexual Exploitation – Women victims of human trafficking in the context of migration; Mental Health for Children Victims of Human Trafficking; Justice and Peace; Security Training for Human Rights Defenders; Services Delivery for Education for Children and Leadership Initiative for Good Governance in Africa.



Rima Kalush is the Deputy Director of Majal.org, and editor of Migrant-Rights.org. She joined Migrant-Rights.org in its infancy and has overseen its financial and programmatic growth. Her work has been published and referenced by institutions including Al Jazeera, the International Labor Organization, Jadaliyya, Gender Across Borders, and the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights. She holds a Master of Philosophy in Middle Eastern Area Studies from the University of Oxford.



Shivan Pavin Alungnat is a musician, artist, queer activist, feminist, and survivor leader whose presence, energy, and personality light up any room. Her music has been heard around the world, including in Africa Nalia, which addresses modern slavery. Her lived experience and her impeccable ability to rise above the cards that she is dealt makes her a leader and a beacon of hope for our community. She has been a voice for the voiceless and an incredible force in the counter-trafficking movement with her unique voice and perspective, bringing focus to the queer intersection with trafficking and the way art can be used for storytelling. Her lived experience, and her role in the movement mean that she has incontestable knowledge and perspective.



Umaru Fofanah serves as the Country Coordinator - Sierra Leone for APRIES. He comes to APRIES from the Parliament of Sierra Leone as Head of Programs. Umaru has served on the board of two parliamentary projects in an officer capacity and has facilitated the review of the parliamentary Standing Orders in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) – DISP project. Umaru is the Founder and Executive Director of Next Generation Leaders, Sierra Leone. A non-profit organization registered in Sierra Leone.

Umaru has also served as Project Delivery Coordinator at the British Council. He also coordinated the Commonwealth Scholarship Program through Scholar and Alumni engagement programs on behalf of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom. He has successfully implemented a Governance and Security grant awarded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), where one thousand Police Officers in Sierra Leone were trained in the use of English for Effective Policing (EEP) and the United Nations Peace Keeping Mission. Umaru has also coordinated a Higher Education grant awarded by the Department for International Development (DFID); he worked closely with the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education and Universities to implement the program.



Vani Saraswathi is the Editor-at-Large and Director of Projects at Migrant-Rights.org and the author of *Stories of Origin: The Invisible Lives of Migrants in the Gulf*. The book is an anthology of reporting from seven origin countries over a period of three years.

Since 2014, in her role with Migrant-Rights.org she reports from the Gulf states and countries of origin. She also organizes advocacy projects and human rights training targeting individual employers, embassies, recruitment agents, and businesses in Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, working with nationals and long-term residents in these countries. A special emphasis is on female migrants, including domestic workers. Much of her advocacy effort is geared towards mainstreaming issues facing female migrant workers.

She is also a member of the Migration Advisory Group (previous Policy Advisory Committee) of ILO ROAS, the Policy Advisory Group of Freedom Fund's Ethiopia hotspot, Humanity United's Advisory Group on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking, and Steering Committee member for GAATW's cross-regional (Asia-GCC) work.



Victoria Klimova is the MPA Programme Coordinator at the International Organization of Migration (IOM) in Burundi. She was born in Belarus and had 18 years of experience with IOM in the prevention of trafficking in persons and the protection of victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants.

She has been involved in giving direct assistance, as well as the return and reintegration of survivors of trafficking in persons and gender-based violence, whereby the recipients of her services were both children and adults, as well as male and female. Furthermore, Victoria has worked within shelter operations, institutional and operational capacity strengthening of partners, and development and institutionalization of NRM/SOPs and other protocols in Belarus, Ghana, Iraq, and Burundi.