

THE ELKES
FOUNDATION

FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY FORUM

Participant's Handbook

5 – 6 OCTOBER, 2026

**Nairobi, Kenya
Argyle Hotel**



2026 GLOBAL FORUM THEME:

Freedom in a Changing World: Strengthening Protections, Accountability and Transforming the Systems Behind Modern Slavery.

Organized by:



Our Sponsors:



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Welcome

Dear Participants,

It is with great anticipation and enthusiasm that we welcome you to the 2026 Freedom from Slavery Global Forum, taking place in Nairobi, Kenya at the Argyle Hotel. This year's theme, *"Freedom in a Changing World: Strengthening Protections, Accountability and Transforming the Systems Behind Modern Slavery."*

As we convene for the Global Forum, we unite under one purpose: transforming collective power into action. Over the course of two days, we will explore innovative strategies, elevate survivor leadership, and strengthen collaborations across sectors.

We are privileged to bring together a dynamic array of voices: individuals with lived experience, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), government representatives, business leaders, academics, and other experts. Their collective wisdom and unwavering commitment will drive our conversations and empower meaningful change. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our sponsors and the efforts of everyone who made this Forum possible.

Lived-experienced experts of modern slavery possess critical expertise that must take center stage in this movement. Their insights and resilience challenge us to rethink, reimagine, and reshape efforts to eradicate modern slavery effectively. The 2026 Global Forum provides an unparalleled opportunity to elevate survivor leadership, align stakeholder priorities, and amplify the impact of our shared mission to end this global crisis.

This Forum is not just an event; it is a vision, a commitment, and a call to action. It is where ideas ignite, connections deepen, and collaboration transforms into progress. Together, we will coordinate efforts that place lived-experience experts at the heart of this movement and create a future where modern slavery no longer exists. The time for change is now, and the responsibility is ours.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We look forward to welcoming you to Istanbul and embarking on this critical mission together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bukeni Waruzi', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bukeni Waruzi and the FTS Team

History of the Forum

The Freedom from Slavery Forum was started in 2013 by Daniel Elkes with the intention of bolstering the grassroots anti-slavery movement. It was designed as a space for the global leadership of the anti-modern slavery movement to assemble to shape strategies to strengthen the movement and increase its impact. Through fostering discussions among stakeholders from across the movement, collaboration and leadership have improved.

The 2014 Freedom from Slavery Global Forum was designed to facilitate open dialogue among the movement's leaders and to educate the general public about efforts to combat modern-day slavery. Thus, the 2014 Forum consisted of two major components: an off-the-record meeting of organizational leaders and a public forum during which community members could engage with the movement's leaders. The second Global Forum was held at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, U.S., and included 40 leaders from 37 organizations. The main objectives of this Forum were to create a collegial space where leaders could coalesce, create partnerships, and develop a shared agenda for action that would further the anti-modern slavery movement; distill experience and evidence gained from programs; develop knowledge dissemination strategies; identify critical gaps in the evidence base; and craft an informed agenda.

In the year 2015, the third annual Global Forum was once again held at Stanford University and convened 38 leaders from 36 different organizations for two days of sessions initiated by anti-modern slavery experts. The Forum also included a half-day presentation by Martha Mendoza, a Pulitzer Prize-winning AP reporter who has written extensively about modern slavery. Ms. Mendoza discussed the intersections of trafficking and ethical journalism. The Forum focused on four main topics: The Freedom Ecosystem, Evidence and Measurement, Professional Standards and Norms for Survivor Services, and Policy and Advocacy.

The 2016 Global Forum's goals were to advance the discovery and prioritization of promising practices through the identification of evidence of impact and knowledge gaps, to advance the development of standards for community-based care programs, and to set a series of goals and priorities for the creation of a global professional society for the field. At the Forum, 46 leaders from 45 organizations gathered in California for two days of sessions facilitated by experts on anti-modern slavery. These sessions were followed by a public panel discussion on the manner in which the technology and fishing sectors deal with the issues of modern slavery and human-trafficking in their supply chains.

Again, the Freedom from Slavery Global Forum convened at Stanford University in 2017. The Forum's objectives were to advance our understanding of the prevalence and determinants of slavery, address knowledge gaps in the application of technology to anti-modern slavery interventions, encourage and advance survivor leadership and inclusion, and craft a strategy to build a more robust civil society coalition against slavery aligned with the previously identified priorities. The three-day event included off-the-record sessions for the movement's leaders and one evening dedicated to an educational event for the general public.

In 2018, the Global Forum went abroad from the USA and was organized in Bangkok, Thailand. The three-day Forum had three overarching themes: Learning from One Another, Advocacy and NGO Collaboration, and Achieving Scale as a Movement. Eighty-two anti-modern slavery leaders from across the globe convened to strengthen their efforts to eradicate modern slavery. Emphasis was placed on the Bangkok Statement, which outlines civil society's perspective on how to effectively achieve Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. The Bangkok Statement was endorsed by over 70 nonprofit organizations ahead of the 2018 Forum, and signatures increased following the event.



I've seen two major impacts from the Forum. The first is an increased sense of interconnectedness among the people who are in the movement.

The second is really in the ability to facilitate collective action.

Dan Elkes
Founder of the Forum

For the first time, in 2019, the Global Forum was held in Africa at the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Over three days, 58 individuals representing 46 organizations from 18 countries gathered to develop concrete action items to advance the eradication of modern slavery. Based on the previous year's Bangkok Statement, stakeholders effectively mapped out 51 actionable steps to implement in their operations. Participants also created a taxonomy of interventions encompassing everything from human rights education to psychosocial care for survivors to government advocacy. The taxonomy developed enabled researchers to begin estimating the cost of liberating the world's, at the time, 40 million enslaved individuals.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **2020** Global Forum was held virtually over four days. The virtual format offered an opportunity to increase participation, collaboration, networking, and knowledge-sharing. The Forum was structured as four 90-minute virtual sessions, each focusing on a different theme: *The Use of Resources to Fight Modern Slavery*, *Strengthening Advocacy from Grassroots to Global*, *Empowering and Learning from Survivors*, and *Fundraising and Resource Mobilization*. The 2020 Forum featured 27 presenters from governments, multilateral institutions, academia, private foundations, and civil society organizations. 285 individuals from 33 countries participated in the four-day event.

In **2021**, a series of Regional Forums was introduced to complement the annual Global Forum, enhancing accessibility and engagement. The **2022-2023** Regional Forum Series took place both virtually and in-person, ensuring that a diversity of voices and perspectives were amplified within the movement. This Regional Forum series provided the foundations for the **2023** Global Forum. Featuring the theme, "*Time to Act: Galvanizing Around a Survivor-Centered Anti-Modern Slavery Movement*," the 2023 Global Forum convened 187 individuals representing 121 organizations from 35 countries in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

In 2024, we organized seven regional forums: three in-person (North America, the Caribbean, and Europe) and four virtually (Latin America, Asia, Africa, and MENA). Resulting in a total participation of over 1,400 stakeholders and people interested in the topics. In 2025, we built on the regional series and, in collaboration with the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium, we co-organized a regional forum in the face of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive process.



The Freedom from Slavery Forum is a communal space wherein open and honest dialogue helps to backstop individual efforts through collective thinking and problem-solving.

Bukeni Waruzi
Executive Director at Free the Slaves

The Planning Process

We are grateful to have successfully concluded the planning process and are eager to kick off the 2026 Freedom from Slavery Global Forum.

The Global Forum Planning Committee was created to support the democratic preparation of an agenda representing the movement's diverse interests, a reality.

We would like to express our gratitude to the members of the 2026 Global Forum Planning Committee, without whom this event would not be possible.

EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

- **Altilbert Makori**, Assistant Labor Commissioner Child Labor Division, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Government of the Republic of Kenya.
- **Annette Twahirwa Kirabira**, Founder Member and Executive Director of Rahab Uganda, Uganda
- **Bukeni Waruzi**, Executive Director at Free the Slaves, USA
- **Carolina Rudnick**, Executive Director at Fundación Libera, Chile
- **Elisa Franceschinis**, Director at En.v, Kuwait
- **Hellen Rintari**, National Project Coordinator at ILO, Kenya
- **Jason Haynes**, Deputy Head of Postgraduate Research at the University of Birmingham, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, The Caribbean
- **Jeff Morgan**, Senior Advisor for Cocoa Sustainability at Sucden Trade, France
- **John Richmond**, Chief Impact Officer at Atlas Free, USA
- **Marie H  l  ne Bouchard**, Director of Global Engagement, Policy and Advocacy at Free the Slaves, USA
- **Shamere McKenzie**, Anti-trafficking Ambassador to Jamaica & International Anti-Trafficking Speaker/Trainer, Jamaica & USA
- **Zoe Trodd**, Executive Director at the Rights Lab-University of Nottingham, UK

Thank you for your incredible support and expertise.

Visa Requirements



Entry Requirements for Kenya

Kenya abolished visa requirements on January 1, 2024, replacing them with an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA). There is no visa on arrival. Check your nationality here: <https://etakenya.go.ke/general->



Information eTA-Exempt

Citizens of the East African Community (EAC) Partner States — Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda — enter with a national identity card or passport. Citizens of most African countries and some others are also exempt and receive an entry stamp on arrival with a valid passport. Libya and Somalia are excluded and still require an eTA. Holders of Kenya Permanent Residence, valid work permits, and designated Laissez-Passers are exempt.

eTA Required

All other travelers, must obtain an approved eTA before boarding. Each traveler applies separately, including infants. Apply only at <https://etakenya.go.ke> or through the official "Kenya Travel Authorisation" app; unofficial sites charge inflated fees.

Requirements: passport valid at least six months with one blank page, passport-style photograph, contact details, travel itinerary, confirmed accommodation, payment card, and the Forum invitation letter.

Timing and Fees

Standard processing costs from USD 30 (approximately USD 32–34 after card charges) and takes three business days. Applications open 90 days before travel; apply at least two weeks before departure. Expedited processing costs can be an additional USD 100-300 and is almost immediate; use it only if departing within 72 hours or replacing a refused application. All fees are non-refundable.

All Visitors

Carry a passport valid six months from arrival, proof of onward travel, and proof of sufficient funds. A yellow fever certificate is required if arriving from or transiting a yellow fever-endemic country. An eTA authorizes travel but not entry; admissibility is decided at the point of entry.

For more information, visit <https://etakenya.go.ke> or contact the nearest Embassy or High Commission of the Republic of Kenya.

VACCINE REQUIREMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Health and Vaccination Requirements

Requirements are the responsibility of each traveler. Consult a travel health clinic or physician four to six weeks before departure, as some vaccines require multiple doses or need time to reach full protection, and antimalarial medication must be started before arrival.

Required for Entry

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required for travelers aged one year and older arriving from, or having transited through, a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. This includes most of sub-Saharan Africa and parts of South America. The vaccine must be administered at least 10 days before entry. The International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis is valid for life; the 10-year expiry was removed in 2016. Travelers arriving on direct flights from Europe, North America, or Asia are not required to present a certificate. No COVID-19 vaccination, testing, or quarantine requirements remain in force.

Recommended Vaccinations

Travelers should be current on routine immunizations, including measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap); polio; varicella; and seasonal influenza. Hepatitis A and typhoid are recommended for most travelers to Kenya. Hepatitis B, rabies, cholera, and meningococcal vaccination may be advised depending on itinerary, duration, and planned activities. A clinician will advise based on individual health history; yellow fever vaccination carries elevated risk of adverse events for travelers over 60 and for those who are immunocompromised, pregnant, or breastfeeding.

Malaria

Malaria is present across most of Kenya below 2,500 meters elevation, with higher transmission in coastal areas and the Lake Victoria basin. Nairobi and the central highlands are low risk. Prescription antimalarial medication is commonly recommended for travel outside Nairobi; atovaquone-proguanil and doxycycline are among the usual options. Insect bite prevention — repellent containing DEET, long sleeves at dawn and dusk, and treated bed nets where provided — is advised regardless of medication.

General Precautions

Tap water is not considered safe for drinking; use bottled or treated water, including for brushing teeth, and avoid ice and uncooked foods washed in tap water. Travelers should carry adequate travel medical insurance valid in Kenya, along with a supply of any regular prescription medication in original labeled packaging.

This information is provided for planning purposes and does not constitute medical advice. Confirm current requirements with a travel health professional and with the nearest Embassy or High Commission of the Republic of Kenya.

Accommodation Options

The Boma Nairobi

Bellevue, Red Cross Road Nairobi KE, Off Mombasa Road, Kenya. Click here to see on the Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/wzQUw3KWf8VshDz87>

 +254 719 05000

The code to get a special rate for the forum is FTS2026.

<https://www.theboma.co.ke/the-boma-nairobi/>



Boma Inn

 Red Cross, Nairobi, Kenya, P.O Box 26601 - 00100. Click here to see on the Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/WYvTafcThagBL5KG8>

 +254 719 050 500

The Boma Hotel economic option. Our core team is staying here:

<https://www.theboma.co.ke/inn-nairobi/>



Argyle Grand Hotel Nairobi

 Mombasa Road, Embakasi, Nairobi, Kenya. Click here to see it on Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/rTu3v7JtTcnSLY676>

 +254 797 555 888

The Hotel where we are hosting the event. You can contact sales6@argylehotelkenya.ke to get a special rate for the Forum.

<https://argylehotelkenya.ke/>



Medical Facilities

Emergency Numbers in Nairobi



999, 112, or 911 — General emergency number (ambulance, police, fire).

1199 — Kenya Red Cross

0700 395 395 — E-Plus ambulance (24 hours)

In case of a medical emergency, you may visit any of the following hospitals located near the conference. Additionally, you may call our team member, Jaime Moro Saavedra, at this number: +34 634 04 33 48 on Telegram or WhatsApp, and he will arrange everything for you.

RFH Healthcare Syokimau



Pacific Mall, Mombasa Road, near
Katani
Junction, Syokimau, Nairobi



+254 111 033 800



The Nairobi West Hospital



Gandhi Avenue, Nairobi West,
Nairobi



+254 730 600 000



The Nairobi Hospital



Argwings Kodhek Road, Upper Hill,
Nairobi



+254 703 082 000

Engagement and Safeguarding Measures for Experts with Lived Experience

People with lived experience are at the center of our forums and help shape their direction in meaningful ways. We invite them to participate as active thought leaders, experts, and key stakeholders in the movement to end human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor, not to recount personal stories or to be defined by experiences of victimization. We intentionally avoid any form of storytelling that sensationalizes, commodifies, or exploits trauma.

In line with our values and ongoing commitment to engage and uplift individuals with lived experience, we are also attentive to their well-being. We recognize the emotional weight these topics can carry, so we put supportive measures in place, including trauma-informed facilitation and safeguards designed to reduce harm during discussions on human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor.

PREPARATORY MEETING FOR EXPERTS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

Ahead of the Forum, we held a lived experience preparatory meeting to discuss matters, including but not limited to consent, expectations, triggers, language around survivors, and networking.

COMFORT ROOM

For the entirety of the Forum, a comfort room will be available for all participants who need a safe space to handle any emotions that may come up.

Water and snacks will also be provided. Those who may prefer to be outside in such a situation are welcome to exit the building.



Packlist for the Forum

The city sits at roughly 1,800 meters (5,900 feet), so temperatures stay moderate year-round. In October, average daytime highs reach 25°C (77°F), while mornings and evenings drop to around 14°C (57°F). October marks the beginning of the short rains, so expect sunny mornings and the possibility of afternoon or evening showers.

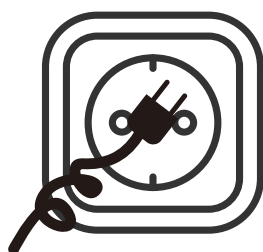
Bring a light jacket or trench coat and a compact umbrella, along with sweaters or cardigans for layering. Pack long-sleeve shirts and blouses for cooler mornings and t-shirts for warmer afternoons. The equatorial sun at altitude is strong, so include sunscreen and sunglasses.



Please note that the dress code for the Global Forum is Business Formal. However, as it's a multicultural forum, participants may enter in their traditional clothing.



Aside from clothing, be sure to bring any prescription medications; and insect repellent.



Kenya uses the Type G power plug (three rectangular prongs) at 240V and 50Hz. If you're traveling from a country with a different plug type, bring a Type G or universal travel adapter.

However, you'll find anything you might have forgotten in local shops.

Useful Swahili Phrases

Habari yako? — How are you? (to one person)

Nzuri — Good / fine

Karibu — Welcome (Karibuni to a group)

Asante / Asante sana — Thank you / Thank you very much

Tafadhali — Please

Samahani — Excuse me / I'm sorry

Ndiyo — Yes

Hapana — No

Kwaheri — Goodbye

ielewi — I don't understand

Bei gani? / Ni pesa ngapi? — How much is it?

Ni ghali sana — It's very expensive

hoo kiko wapi? — Where is the toilet?

Maji, tafadhali — Water, please

Chakula kitamu — The food is delicious

Hakuna shida / Hakuna matata — No problem

Twende — Let's go

Pole pole — Slowly / take it easy

Jina langu ni... — My name is...

FREE THE SLAVES STAFF

BUKENI WARUZI, Executive Director

Speaks English, French, and Swahili

Email: bukeni.waruzi@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for any questions related to the Forum in general and for cooperation with Free the Slaves.



MARIE Hélène BOUCHARD, Director of Global Engagement, Policy and Advocacy



Speaks English, French, Dutch, and Italian

Email: marie.bouchard@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for any questions related to the Forum in general and for cooperation with Free the Slaves.

BRYON LIPPINCOTT, Director of Communications

Speaks English

Email: bryon.Lippincott@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for any questions related to the Forum communications.



MOHAMMAD BADER, MENA Regional Manager



Speaks English and Arabic

Email: mohammad.bader@freetheslaves.net

Reach out regarding housekeeping, event logistics, venue details, speaker sessions, room assignments, or catering.

**JACKLINE MWENDE, Senior Regional Manager - Eastern & Southern Africa/
Survivor Engagement Lead**



Speaks English, Swahili and Spanish

Email: jackline.mwende@freetheslaves.net

Reach out regarding survivor engagement and safeguarding protocols.

LAUREN RICE, Development Coordinator

Speaks English, French and Dutch

Email: lauren.rice@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for questions on welcome reception, Forum travels, and reimbursements.



JAIME MORO SAAVEDRA, Movement Building Coordinator



Speaks English and Spanish

Email: jaime.morosaavedra@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for questions on logistics, forums, and post-forum activities, and communications.

NDI NANCY SAIBOH, Business Engagement Coordinator

Speaks French and English

Email: Nancy.Ndi@freetheslaves.net

Reach out for questions related to business engagement



DAY 1 - Monday, October 5, 2026

CONFRONTING REALITY AND SETTING PRIORITIES

Understanding challenges, aligning perspectives, and defining initial actions.

08:00 – 08:30 | Arrival, Registration & Coffee.

08:30 – 09:00 | Opening Ceremony.

09:00 – 09:30 | Keynote. Frame global priorities

09:30 – 10:40 | Freedom in a Changing World: Key Perspectives.

10:40 – 12:00 | Actionable Agenda for Resetting Freedom.

13:00 – 13:20 | Keynote.

13:20 – 14:20 | Survivor Engagement in Strengthening Protections.

14:20 – 15:45 | 5 Concurrent Parallel Sessions to Explore targeted solutions.

16:15 – 17:00 | Reporting Back on Action and Outcomes.

17:30 – 21:00 | Forum Reception: Survivor Awards & Forum Ambassadors Introduction.

DAY 2 - Tuesday, October 6, 2026

BUILDING THE ROADMAP FOR SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Translating priorities into commitments, solutions, and next steps.

08:00 – 08:30 | Arrival, Registration & Coffee. Informal networking
08:30 – 09:00 | Opening of Day 2 and Reflections from Day 1. Align on priorities

09:00 – 09:30 | Keynote. Frame systems transformation priorities

09:30 – 10:40 | Responsible Businesses and Supply Chain Regulations. Examine the role of business in system transformation

10:40 – 12:00 | Actionable Agenda for Engaging Businesses in Fair Labor Practices.

13:00 – 13:20 | Keynote. Reinforce strategic commitments

13:20 – 14:20 | Tackling the Systems of Modern Slavery and Trafficking Through Accountability.

14:20 – 15:45 | 5 Concurrent Parallel Sessions.

16:15 – 17:00 | Reporting Back on Action and Outcomes from Concurrent Side Events.

17:15 – 17:45 | Adoption of Modern Slavery Narrative.

17:50 – 18:50 | Closing Ceremony and Next Steps.