

## #2

**COMPLETE**

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## Page 1: Survey overview

**Q1** Please provide a name or affiliation to be associated with the submission.

The Freedom Fund

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**Q2** Please provide an email address at which we can reach the author.

cbailey@freedomfund.org

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**Q3** Do you consent to the submission being published on this site?  Yes

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**Q4** What can we expect from tomorrow's slavery? The report will consider current trends and dynamics in contemporary forms of slavery. We welcome concise inputs addressing: current prevalence estimates and patterns, modelling of risks and vulnerabilities, to better understand major risk factors for modern slavery, and analysis of how slavery is being impacted by major socioeconomic, technological and political developments, such as: conflict trends, labour market changes, demographic developments, climate change, shifting gender norms, any other relevant major social trends. Please share your views on (1) major slavery risk factors, (2) oncoming risk-multipliers and (3) how you predict these will change what slavery will look like in the future. Please also feel free to share relevant sources you think should be considered. Answer in the box below, up to 1,000 words, or as part of a single 10-page submission to [antislavery@unu.edu](mailto:antislavery@unu.edu).

- Large-scale displacement caused by armed conflict creates transient communities vulnerable to human trafficking. A 2016 Freedom Fund study on the prevalence of modern slavery among Syrian refugees in Lebanon indicated that 'survival sex' and sexual exploitation is a growing issue, with women forced or coerced into prostitution in order to provide food and shelter for their families. Faced with physical and economic insecurity, families may also see early or forced marriage as a way to alleviate poverty and protect girls from difficult or uncertain living conditions (Freedom Fund (2016), *Struggling to survive: Slavery and exploitation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon*). A recent prevalence study on trafficking of women from Myanmar into China for the purpose of forced marriage suggested that conflict and displacement (internal and cross-border) increases the risk of forced marriage due to weakened social networks and the lack of protection systems (Johns Hopkins University (2018), *Estimating Trafficking of Myanmar Women for Forced Marriage and Childbearing in China*). Statelessness of refugee communities and their inability to legally work has a significant impact on their vulnerability to trafficking. Recent reports from Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh have highlighted these issues among Rohingya refugees, and local NGOs working in the area have confirmed an increase in trafficking since 2017.
- Increasingly climate change is being recognised as both a cause and consequence of modern slavery (University of Nottingham (2018), *Modern Slavery, Environmental Destruction and Climate Change*). A clear example of this is in the seafood industry, where the prevalence of forced labour and trafficking in south east Asian fisheries has clear link with ecosystem decline. This is the subject of the Freedom Fund's program in Thailand, where overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing has led to the depletion of resources pushing fishing efforts further off-shore. The increased effort for reduced catch as a result of overfishing/IUU fishing drives up costs, incentivising the use of forced migrant labour. Growing international demand for cheap seafood without government and business action to tackle illegal fishing activities and associated exploitative labour practices is likely to exacerbate the problem.
- A growing body of research highlights the link between purchasing practices of multinational corporations and forced labour in global supply chains. Irresponsible sourcing – including short-term contracts, short production windows, and unfair payment terms – results in suppliers entering into arrangements that are impossible to meet without exploiting workers. In order to meet the demands from companies at the top of supply chains, suppliers may sub-contract to other factories and workplaces that are unregistered, informal enterprises that are more likely to have poor working conditions. This can be seen in the apparel sector, where demand for 'fast fashion' has driven a race to the bottom by companies seeking cheap labour. Looking ahead, there is a risk that this situation could be exacerbated by an increase in automation in certain industries that are reliant on labour intensive production (e.g. apparel, electronics, seafood). This may have significant and negative consequences on domestic labour markets that could result in enhanced precarity and vulnerability.
- New technologies have been identified as a facilitating the commercial sexual exploitation of children online, such as live-streaming sexual abuse. Increased access to the internet in high prevalence countries (e.g. Nepal, Thailand and the Philippines) is a factor increasing vulnerability in relation to child pornography, grooming, advertisement of child prostitution, and has links to child sexual exploitation in Global South tourism. The low financial cost of online commercial sexual exploitation of children, combined with its low-risk nature (it is challenging for law enforcement to secure evidence to prosecute these crimes) and high profitability are driving its rapid growth.
- Migrants are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and exploitation. However, State efforts to govern migration can undermine anti-trafficking efforts. Anti-trafficking discourse is often misused to justify restrictive migration policies and increased immigration enforcement, including deportation. 'Zero tolerance' immigration enforcement may have the effect of criminalising trafficking victims. For example, the introduction of hostile environment policies in the United Kingdom (administrative and legal measures designed to create an environment around illegal immigrants that is as hostile as possible, with the goal of getting migrants to leave voluntarily) has created a situation where victims of trafficking or forced labour are discouraged from reporting crimes because they fear arrest or detention for immigration offences. We have seen the negative effects of immigration policy in our Thailand program. The majority of the fishing and seafood labour force in Thailand are migrant workers from Myanmar and Cambodia. Most arrive in Thailand with debts incurred during the recruitment process, and continuously accrue more debt in a situation of debt bondage that remains commonplace throughout the seafood industry. Although in recent years the Thai government has introduced many new laws to improve anti-trafficking responses and increase convictions of perpetrators, substantial progress has been hindered by the impact of hard-line immigration policies on vulnerable migrant workers. Efforts to manage migrant labour as a national security issue have led to the introduction of registration processes that are overly complex and expensive for workers. Rather than deterring migration, these policies have instead encouraged many workers to turn to brokers or traffickers. New migrant worker registration policies restrict freedom of movement and limit the ability of fishers and seafood workers to change employers. Rather than addressing the systemic causes of abuse in the seafood industry, this approach has had the opposite effect of exposing vulnerable migrant workers to the dangers of exploitation, debt and forced labour.

**Q5** Today's anti-slavery. This section will take stock of the current anti-slavery movement and provide an overview of what we know about what works in tackling modern slavery at the national, regional and global level. The section will then analyse what this tells us about which aspects of tomorrow's potential slavery might be tackled and/or prevented by today's anti-slavery strategies, and which aspects may require new strategies. Please share your views on (1) what is known about 'what works' in anti-slavery policy, programming and strategies, (2) whether contemporary anti-slavery efforts are organized in a way that reflects this understanding of effective strategies, and (3) what might need to be changed in anti-slavery efforts to better build on 'what works' and/or address gaps in our programming and strategies. Again, please feel free to share relevant sources you think should be considered. Answer in the box below, up to 1,000 words, or as part of a single 10-page submission to [antislavery@unu.edu](mailto:antislavery@unu.edu).

- The Freedom Fund uses a 'hotspot' approach in its anti-slavery programming: concentrating resources on a tightly defined geographic area, funding a diverse group of mainly grassroots NGOs to provide services to victims and at-risk individuals, and employing staff on the ground to encourage the sharing of best practice. We believe that community-based, grassroots organisations are the most effective agents of change, especially when it comes to a topic as sensitive as slavery because of its roots in questions of power, ethnicity, caste, gender, religion and nationality. Supporting frontline organisations also makes change more sustainable; investing in them and helping to build their capacity strengthens civil society as a whole means that the benefits of anti-slavery initiatives continue after a project ends. Furthermore, despite the recent growth in attention to the issue of modern slavery, local NGOs still receive very little of the funding available. They can have a transformative impact on a small budget, but governments and many private donors see them as risky and expensive to reach.
- Independent evaluations of our hotspot programs have found that our model of supporting comprehensive, community-based programs can be highly effective in preventing slavery. This type of program is characterised by community-level interventions (e.g. legal rights activities, children's education, livelihood support) that organise community members in high prevalence areas to claim rights and entitlements and challenge discrimination. Evidence demonstrates that these programs work well when a clearly defined target population faces high levels of discrimination and exploitation (e.g. caste-based bonded labour) and the exploitation takes place in the population's home communities (rather than during migration). Under these circumstances it is feasible to engage with the same communities over multiple years to build a grassroots movement to demand rights and protections that exist in law but may not have been extended to a particular marginalised group. However, in other contexts, notably involving migration, prevention programming is difficult to target. In these scenarios it may be more appropriate to concentrate resources at destination rather than source (e.g. helping migrant workers in Thailand to organise and claim compensation) or focus on selected interventions (e.g. in Ethiopia providing practical pre-migration information to prospective migrant workers to help them make informed migration decisions)
- An upcoming report from the Freedom Fund highlights gaps in how the law has been used in anti-slavery programs and strategies. To date, states have primarily relied on the criminal justice system to spearhead efforts to tackle modern slavery. Interventions have focused on improving victim identification and rescue and prosecuting traffickers. On the other hand, policies to provide long-term recovery and reintegration support for survivors, often do not exist or are not implemented in practice. The donor community has also focused its anti-slavery efforts on rescuing survivors and delivering convictions of slaveholders. Accordingly, significant resources have been directed toward efforts to improve law enforcement and judicial responses in countries with a high prevalence of modern slavery. These efforts are undoubtedly critical to tackling modern slavery by remedying rights violations and creating a deterrence effect for would-be traffickers. However, if the aim is to eradicate modern slavery, donors should also channel significant resources towards interventions that focus on 'systems change' by addressing its root causes. Criminal justice solutions should be combined with interventions that encourage legal empowerment of vulnerable populations, connect marginalised communities with local justice systems and improve the capacity of local officials to respond to modern slavery crimes.
- Formal engagement with trade unions to establish and enforce a legal framework for worker rights is a critical element of anti-slavery responses. In sectors with a high risk of forced or bonded labour, workers are regularly denied basic labour rights and protections. Freedom of association and collective bargaining are essential tools to protect workers' rights. Research has demonstrated that in industries with strong trade union representation, there are reduced rates of forced labour and other forms of exploitation. However, in some of the industries and contexts where modern slavery is most prevalent trade unions either do not exist, or exclude from their membership workers who are most vulnerable to exploitation. Promoting the role of trade unions in tackling modern slavery in frontline communities is a long-term goal of the Freedom Fund's programs. However, in light of the contextual challenges in our hotspots, some of our NGO partners are at the same time supporting the development of alternative, non-formal mechanisms to organise vulnerable workers outside of the trade union system. These initiatives do not replace the overarching policy goal of ensuring that workers are provided with trade union representation. However, until that goal can be achieved, they are an innovative way to promote vulnerable

workers' realisation of their rights.

- The “bottom-up” approach used by the Freedom Fund in our hotspot programs should be complemented by other strategies to achieve systems change, by targeting business to reform supply chain practices and pushing governments to adopt and implement legislation. Although the introduction of transparency in supply chains legislation in California, UK and Australia has raised awareness of modern slavery among business, and despite some signs of progress among corporate leaders that have publicly demonstrated their commitment to addressing modern slavery, this has not been accompanied by a concrete shift in business models that fuel the demand for forced labour within supply chains. In the face of corporate pressures, light-touch legislation like the UK Modern Slavery Act that sets certain standards for disclosure yet fails to accompany them with a mechanism for scrutiny or enforcement has not moved the need towards reform. Stronger avenues of regulation – e.g. human rights due diligence – are required to catalyse corporate action. Furthermore, current industry initiatives to tackle modern slavery in supply chains are characterised by a top-down approach where solutions are imposed by companies rather than developed through engaging with civil society or workers. Instead, business responses should place more emphasis on the adoption of enforceable standards focused on the protection of workers' rights and access to justice.

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**Q6** Tomorrow's anti-slavery. This section will explore how the anti-slavery movement can adapt to effectively tackle current and future drivers of modern slavery, including new technologies, methods and partnerships. Please share your views on the new methods and partnerships as well as technologies and tools, including potential risks, that are emerging that could help tackle tomorrow's slavery, today. Once again, please share relevant sources you think should be considered. You can either provide answers of up to 1,000 words in the box below or e-mail [antislavery@unu.edu](mailto:antislavery@unu.edu)

- Technology is increasingly being used to identify and address modern slavery. Satellite imagery is tracking forced labour on fishing vessels and estimate bonded labour in brick kilns. Businesses are using technology to map their supply chains to identify risks of modern slavery. Blockchain is also being deployed by civil society groups to create end-to-end visibility in supply chains, monitor working conditions and track payments of wages. One key innovation that has gained considerable attention is the use of digital platforms to promote worker voice with the aim of improving working conditions. For example, rating and review platforms have been developed to enable migrant workers to share information about their recruitment and employment experiences, with the aim of empowering workers to make more informed decisions. The Freedom Fund, like many other anti-slavery donors, has supported the development of some worker voice tools in our hotspot programs that we believe have the potential to promote effective worker engagement. However, there are key challenges to the utility of these initiatives, including worker access to mobile phones and concerns around privacy. There is also concern around the incentives for businesses to use tech tools as a 'tick box' solution, rather than meaningfully addressing and remediating slavery in their supply chains. There is a place for tech approaches to tackling slavery, including worker voice tools, however it is important that they are promoted to complement rather than displace other initiatives, especially grassroots and worker-led efforts.
- The worker-driven social responsibility model provides an opportunity to reframe current solutions to addressing modern slavery in supply chains by harnessing the pressure for reform from the bottom-up. Tested in the agricultural sector in Florida, USA, and the apparel sector in Bangladesh, this approach empowers worker-led organisations to develop, monitor and enforce programs to improve wages and working conditions. Participating brands and retailers are required to sign legally binding agreements wherein they must provide financial support to their suppliers to help drive up labour standards, as well as stop doing business with suppliers who violate these standards. Compliance is ensured through monitoring and enforcement mechanisms that are responsive to worker voice, including worker rights education, inspection regimes independent of retailer influence and robust complaint mechanisms. For example, the Fair Food Program has been found to be substantially more effective than other corporate compliance programmes tackling labour rights issues, with the focus on resolving workers' problems rather than improving a brand's reputation held out as a key element of its success. The success of the worker-driven social responsibility model has been demonstrated in US agriculture, but there is clear potential to test this approach in different countries and sectors. Any attempt to do so, however, should take into account the needs and concerns of target groups, rather than simply replicating what has worked elsewhere.
- Partnerships between civil society, government and business can create impact, when working collaboratively towards clear strategic goals. However, to date there has been limited investment in expanding these partnerships to grassroots anti-slavery leaders and survivors. To strengthen the global anti-slavery movement, there is a need to incorporate marginalised voices and challenge unequal power structures. We believe that a powerful frontline movement is key to advancing the fight against slavery. This means securing survivor input in anti-slavery programs and investing in survivor leadership – for example through supporting initiatives like the Survivor Alliance.
- In recent years the financial sector has become an increasingly high-profile partner in efforts to identify and disrupt modern slavery. Specific financial sector-led initiatives have emerged (e.g. Project PROTECT) and in the US and Europe financial institutions are increasingly incorporating policies to identify modern slavery into their financial crime compliance and transaction monitoring models. A Freedom Fund-supported report by RUSI (RUSI (2018), *Leaning In: Advancing the Role of Finance Against Modern Slavery*) suggested that the financial sector should go further by using leverage provided through client finance to encourage the raising of standards on modern slavery. One forward-thinking model is the Dutch Banking Sector Agreement that involves collaboration between Dutch banks, government, unions and civil society to ensure respect for human rights in corporate lending activities. However, although there are opportunities for the financial sector as a whole to take a more proactive and forward-thinking approach, greater enforcement, guidance, collaboration and access to data are required to encourage effective engagement with global efforts to combat modern slavery.