

MODERN SLAVERY: AN INTRODUCTION RESOURCE GUIDE

MODERN SLAVERY: AN INTRODUCTION

INDEX

3	Background
4	Hearing Victims'Voices: The Cases
7	Modern Slavery: An Overview of the Data
14	What Makes Up Modern Slavery Today?
19	Terms, Definitions and Emerging Trends
23	Common Human Trafficking Myths
24	Modern Slavery: The Criminal Chain
26	Traditional Counter Trafficking Responses and Responders
33	About the Mekong Club
37	Conclusions
38	References



BACKGROUND

Concern over supply chain labour standards is not a new phenomenon. This topic received significant exposure in the early 1990s, as labour activists and campaign groups began to assess the labour practices of major apparel and footwear manufacturing companies around the world.¹ As a result of several high profile investigative reports by journalists that exposed significant labour violations, a range of changes were made to improve working conditions within these supply chains. Over time, however, as the environmental movement took centre-stage, focus shifted away from labour exploitation to environmental practices, with an emphasis on resource consumption and efficiency.

Supply chain labour conditions have recently reemerged as an important issue facing global companies. This resulted from both the media and the global counter trafficking community placing more emphasis on labour trafficking, which has a strong link with private sector supply chains. This time around, in addition to apparel and footwear manufacturers, many other major manufacturing and supply industries have become targets of investigative journalism, including electronics, fisheries, food packaging and agriculture. Media reports have raised questions about possible links between manufacturing/sourcing and human trafficking/modern slavery, with the aim of influencing consumers to seek “slave-free” products.

HEARING VICTIMS' VOICES: THE CASES



The basic characteristics of modern slavery include the following:

- Use of fraud or deception to trick a person into an exploitative labour situation;
- Use of debt, violence, or threats to hold the person in place; and
- Lack of any payment in exchange for services provided.

In essence, the person loses control of his/her life and is enslaved. Human trafficking goes far beyond women and girls who are forced into prostitution. Men, women, and children are stolen, deceived, or seduced into opportunities that do not exist; instead, they become slaves. One of the best ways to quickly understand the complexity and sheer horror of modern slavery is to listen to their stories.

FORCED LABOUR - FISHING BOAT CASE:

"I was only 16 years old when I was forced onto that fishing boat. I was told that the job was easy and that I'd be paid a good wage. But instead, I ended up working 18 hours a day, every day. For food, we ate nothing but fish and rice twice a day. If I got sick or injured, I worked. I had seen others who had fallen ill and the captain simply threw them over the side of the boat. I still remember their pleas for help as the ocean carried them away to their deaths. I was beaten if I didn't work hard enough, or even if I did. Days often went by with only a few hours of sleep. I was so tired sometimes I felt I'd go crazy. To keep me working, they would force me to take powerful drugs that destroyed my body. When I finally returned to port after four years at sea, I was not given any pay. The captain told me that I was an illegal migrant so he didn't have to give me anything. Having no way to communicate with my family while I was away, my mother and father assumed I was dead. Since they moved away, I don't know where to find them."

Male Cambodian victim exploited in Thailand.



FORCED LABOUR – SWEAT SHOP:

“When I was 16 years old, I heard that many spinning mills in a big city in my region offered work. My family was very poor and I wanted to help, so I went there. I didn’t know which one had work, so I just chose one. The man who managed the mill said I could have a job. We negotiated a salary of US\$50 a month. He said that I had to live in the factory site. There was no contract for me to sign but for me this was a huge amount of money so I accepted and started working immediately. After working 18 hours a day for the first month, I went to the employer and asked for my pay. He smiled and laughed before saying, “I am sorry, I forgot to mention to you that it costs me US\$54 a month to keep you here and I am only paying you US\$50. So you owe me money. Until you pay it back, you cannot leave this place.” With armed security guards, barbed wire, and high walls, I couldn’t escape. For three years, I was not able to leave. I could not contact my family. The more I worked, the more debt I owed. With so much work with nothing in return, my heart was filled with hopelessness and despair. If that fire hadn’t brought the authorities, I would never have been able to leave. I lost three years of my life. Gone... stolen from me. Something I can never get back again.”

Female Indian victim exploited in India.

FORCED LABOUR – PLANTATION:

“Back home in Bangladesh, a recruitment agent offered me a job in a palm oil plantation in Malaysia. He told me that with the high wages I would earn, I could easily pay back the US\$1,500 recruitment fee needed to buy this job. While I knew the work was illegal, because I needed the money, I accepted. My nightmare began from the first day of my journey. To get to the plantation, I endured three weeks in a crowded boat with little food and water. Once we landed, we spent another week walking through the jungle. I saw people die from heat exhaustion, or beatings from the smugglers. After arriving at the plantation, I had to sleep on the warehouse floor. I was forced to work 16 hours a day, seven days a week and use dangerous pesticides without any safety equipment. My boss deducted most of my wage for no reason and I ended up never earning any money. After seven months, I developed severe respiratory problems that I still have today. When the traffickers realized I was too sick to work, they called my family in Bangladesh and told them “If you want your son to come home alive, pay us or we will feed him to the tigers.” My father sold a piece of land and paid the smugglers US\$2,000 through an agent in Bangladesh. While I managed to get home, my family was left with nothing. If I knew all of this would happen, I never would have left home.”

Male Bangladeshi victim exploited in Malaysia.





FORCED LABOUR – DOMESTIC SERVITUDE:

“When I turned 18, my family borrowed money and gave it to an employment agency to get me a job overseas. Since there were passports and plane tickets involved, the costs were high. We were excited because we were told I’d earn US\$120 per month. After the paperwork was done and I completed a one-week training to become a house servant, I flew to the country. At first, I was so excited. I was proud that I’d earn money for my family. But when I got there, everything changed. Nothing they said at the agency was right. They made me work from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. every day. I was never allowed to leave or have any contact with my family. They beat me every time I did something wrong. Since I didn’t understand their language, I was forever making mistakes. When the madam of the house was away, her husband would force himself on me. While I tried to stop him, there was nothing I could do. Since they deducted money for everything – my food, board and medicine – my monthly salary was no more than US\$10. I was a slave in that house. I wanted to die. When the contract was over and I went home, my family blamed me for everything. The agency said I was lazy and talked back. But it wasn’t so. It wasn’t me. Why doesn’t anyone believe me?”

Cambodian victim exploited in Malaysia.



From these profiles, one can see that there are several characteristics that are common in modern slavery: the use of fraud or deception to trick a person into an exploitative labour situation; debt, violence or threats to hold the person in place; and the lack of any payment in exchange for services provided. The person loses control of his or her life and toils in a form of slavery.



**GLOBALY, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE
45.8 MILLION PEOPLE
IN MODERN SLAVERY TODAY**

MODERN SLAVERY: AN OVERVIEW OF THE DATA

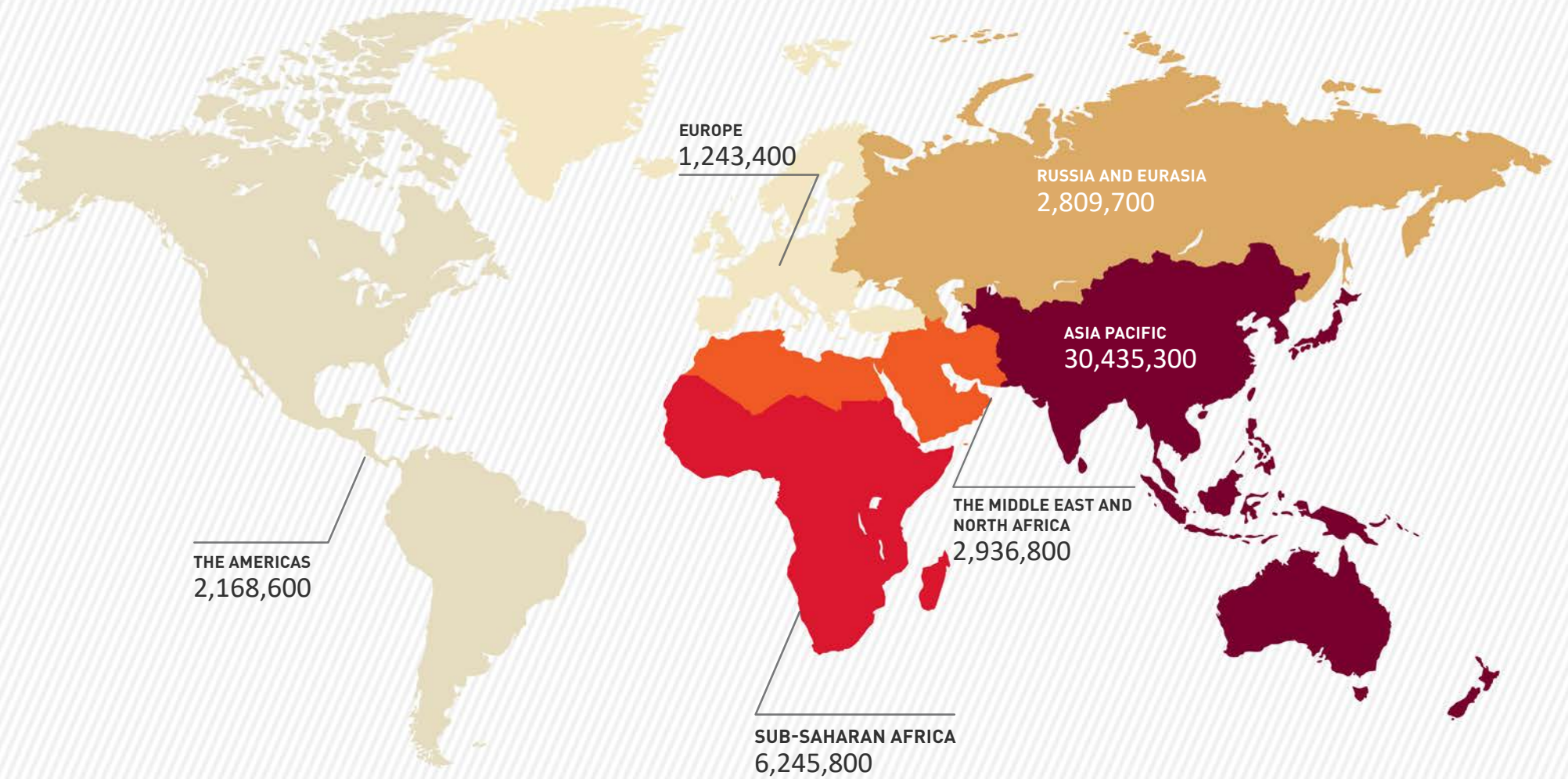
GLOBAL OVERVIEW

The issue of modern-day slavery affects almost all parts of the world. While most people think that slavery was abolished hundreds of years ago, globally it is estimated that there are 45.8 million men, women and children in these situations.² This means there are more slaves today than there are Canadians. In fact, there are more slaves today than at any other time in history. These victims, who can be found in factories, construction sites, fisheries and sex venues, are forced to work for little or no pay, deprived of their freedom and often subjected to unimaginable suffering. Hidden from view, this crime represents one of the biggest human rights violations of our times, but few people know about it.

The results of this survey came from ranking the 167 most populous countries; their combined populations equalling 99 per cent of the total world population. This research incorporates data from standardized nationally representative random sample surveys on modern slavery for 25 countries which represent about 44 per cent of the world population. The study confirms that poverty and lack of livelihood opportunities play a major role in increasing vulnerability to modern slavery. It also points to deeper social and structural inequalities that enable exploitation to persist – xenophobia, patriarchy, class, caste and discriminatory gender norms. In particular, discrimination against minorities traps migrant workers in inhumane working conditions in every continent.

Figure 1. The Global Slavery Index 2016: Region Analysis

Source: [Walk Free Foundation](#)



TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENSLAVED PER REGION

LOW HIGH

SLAVERY BY COUNTRY

Modern slavery is a hidden crime that affects every country in the world. Whilst it happens more frequently in poor, unregulated countries, nations with a high GDP and robust rule of law are by no means immune to this plague. For example, cases of domestic exploitation have been reported in the U.S.³, there have been forced labour cases in Southern Italy's tomato picking regions⁴, and investigations have come to the conclusion that the number of slavery victims is rising in the U.K.⁵, which is considered to be a leading country in terms of anti-slavery regulations.

The number of slaves found from country to country varies greatly, with some countries having high concentrations, while others have few. For example, 58 per cent of those living in slavery can be found in five countries: India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Uzbekistan. Likewise, seven of the ten countries with the highest number of victims are in Asia, resulting in over 30 million slaves or 66 per cent (India, China, North Korea, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Uzbekistan and Pakistan).⁶ Why are there so many victims across Asia? With 60 per cent of the world population in this continent, many of its countries have huge numbers of people. Likewise, throughout Asia, there continues to be remnants of exploitative feudal systems in place that have never been dismantled – even in this modern day and age. In some nations, the proportion of people in slavery is extremely high. In North Korea and Uzbekistan, for example, 4 out of every 100 people live as slaves. Because of the hidden nature of this issue, few of us ever get a glimpse behind the curtain of this terrible human rights abuse – one that is much closer to home than we might expect.

48.5 MILLION PEOPLE TRAPPED IN EXPLOITATIVE WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Highest rates

Percent of population

North Korea 4.37

Uzbekistan 3.97

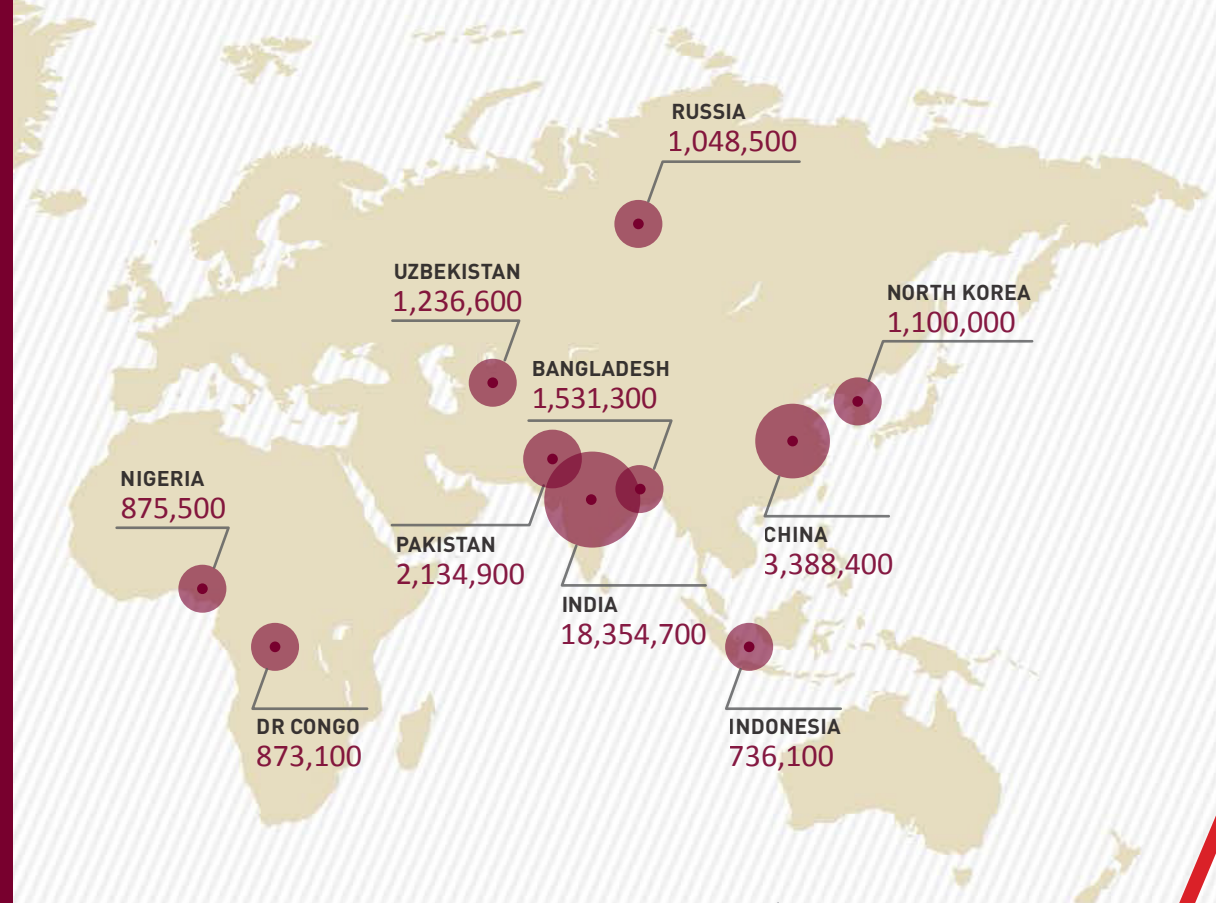
Cambodia 1.65

India 1.40

Qatar 1.36

Figure 2. The Global Slavery Index: Country Analysis

Source: [Walk Free Foundation](#)





9.2 MILLION NEW SLAVES PER YEAR
25,500 NEW SLAVES PER DAY
1,050 NEW SLAVES PER HOUR
A NEW SLAVE EVERY 4 SECONDS

RATE OF SLAVERY

Each year, 9.2 million new people enter slavery. This equates to about 25,500 new victims every day, 1,050 every hour or one new slave every four seconds. It might be a 15 year old girl forced into prostitution, a young boy forced onto a fishing boat to work 18 hours a day for years without coming to port, or a sweat shop worker who toils 17 hours a day without a day off or any pay.

While most people think that modern slavery focuses primarily on women and girls being forced into prostitution, this represents only about a quarter of the total cases. The remaining 75 per cent fall under the heading forced labour. Out of this figure, about 60 per cent of the victims are associated with manufacturing supply chains, which begin with a grower or producer, and end as a finished product purchased by consumers in the retail market. Thus, as consumers, we all support modern slavery because the products we buy are often tainted by this exploitation.⁷

One of the key reasons for the high figures is that global supply chains rely on outsourcing their production stage to Asian countries that offer low-cost unskilled labour. The work is usually labour intensive and provided by migrant workers. The harsh living conditions in the poorest areas of the region push people to migrate to seek better job opportunities in richer neighbouring countries. These migrant workers are often tricked by exploiters who take advantage of their vulnerability and end up in bonded or forced labour situations in industries such as food production, garments and technology. A broader analysis of this process is given in Module 2 of this toolkit.

BREAKDOWN BY AGE AND SECTOR

The age distribution is approximately 24 percent children under 18 years of age and 76 percent adults.⁸

Figure 3. Forced Labour vs Forced Prostitution cases

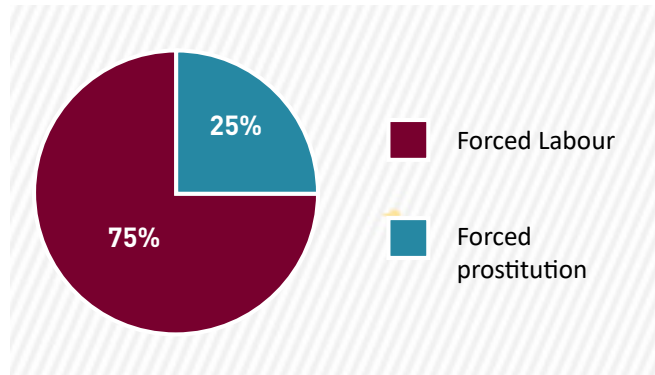
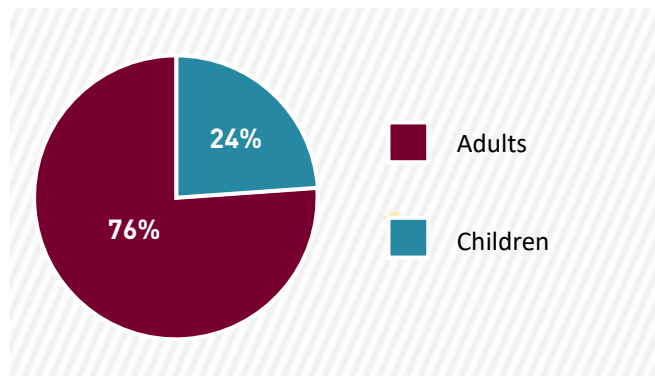
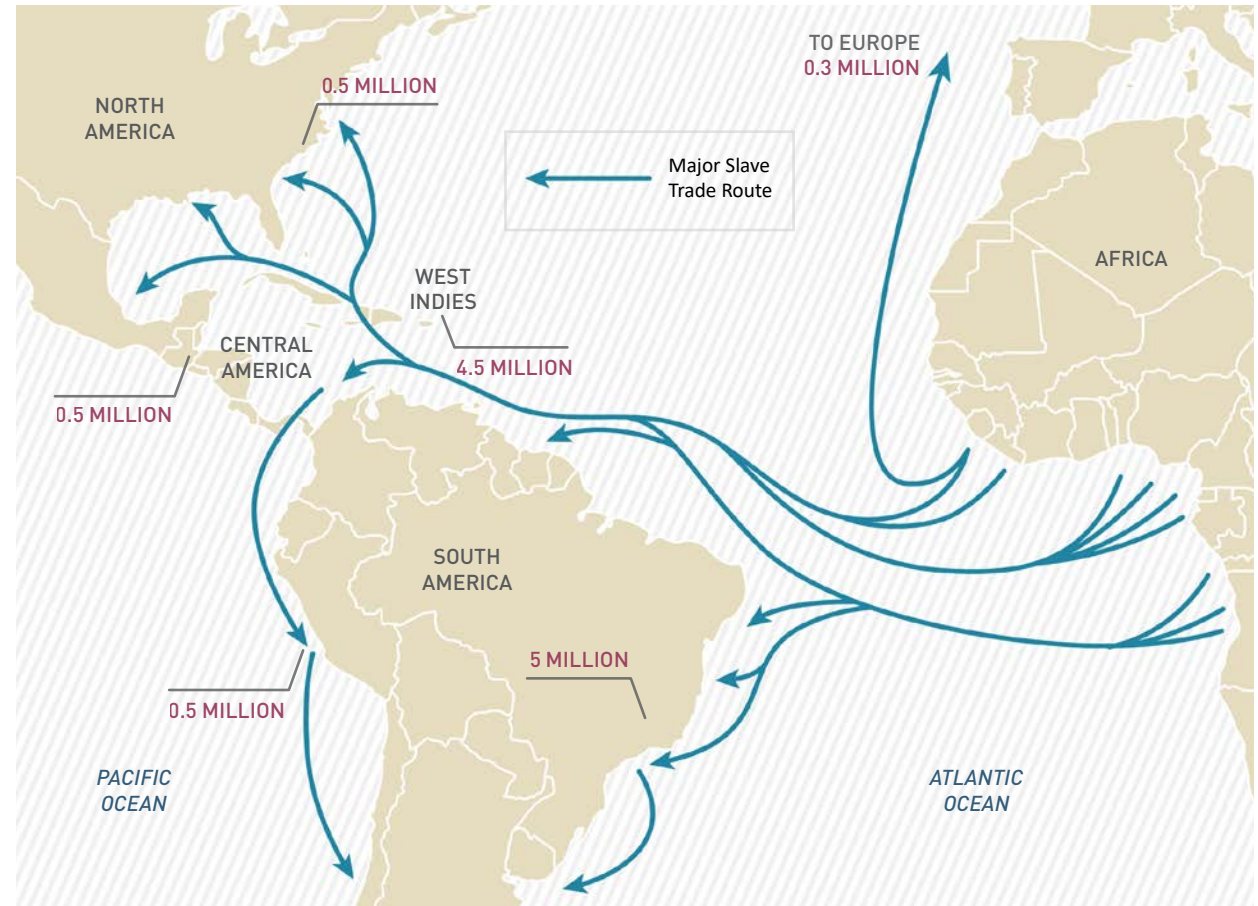


Figure 4. Age Distribution of Slavery Victims



To put this into historical perspective, between the years 1500 and 1870, 11.3 million slaves were taken from Africa to North and South America and Europe. This was over a period of 370 years.⁹

Figure 5: The Transatlantic Slave Trade



HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE MEKONG REGION

Within Asia, a significant proportion of the victims are thought to be in the Mekong Region, which includes Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Although trafficking has existed for centuries, the uneven effects of globalization have, in recent times, contributed to an environment in which human trafficking has flourished into a highly profitable and generally low-risk criminal business. The chart below outlines documented trafficking routes both within the Mekong Region and beyond.¹⁰

The Mekong Region, compared to many other parts of the world, contains very diverse patterns of human trafficking. These include internal and cross-border trafficking; trafficking that is highly organized and also small-scale; trafficking for sex and labour, through both formal and informal recruitment mechanisms; and trafficking that targets men, women, boys, girls, and families. Thus, within the Mekong Region, there is not so much a single pattern of trafficking in persons as there is a range of different patterns, with various victim and criminal profiles. Here are some examples:¹¹

- Trafficking of men, women, children, and families into Thailand from neighbouring Lao PDR, Myanmar and Cambodia, against a background of widespread irregular migration, for forced prostitution, domestic servitude, or forced labour in sweatshops, fishing boats, construction sites, plantations, or farms;
- Trafficking of children from border areas of Cambodia or Myanmar, or rural areas of Vietnam or China, to beg or sell flowers on the streets of larger cities;
- Trafficking of Vietnamese girls and young women for sexual exploitation and virginity selling in Cambodia; and
- Trafficking from rural China, Myanmar, or Vietnam into the interior of China for forced marriage leading to domestic servitude and/or sexual exploitation, and internal trafficking for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.

Figure 6: Human Trafficking in the Mekong Region





Trafficking also occurs from the Mekong countries to destinations further abroad. For example, women and girls from Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam are increasingly being found in forced prostitution or domestic servitude in Malaysia. Many victims used formal labour recruitment agencies in the hopes of migrating safely and legally, but were still deceived and exploited at their destination.

Trafficked Thai women are also found in the sex trade in Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei/ Taiwan, Japan, South Africa, the Middle East, the U.S., and western European countries. Western Europe, especially the U.K., is reporting increasing numbers of trafficking cases involving Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese women. Extra-Mekong Region trafficking is not confined to women or to sex work. In fact, extreme exploitation and slavery of Cambodian, Myanmar, and Thai men in factories and on fishing boats from which they cannot escape extends into the South China Sea area as well as the Middle East. Traffickers lure victims with deceptive promises of good jobs and better lives, and then force them to work under brutal and inhuman conditions, and deprive them of their freedom. Once in place, victims suffer extreme physical and mental abuse, including rape, sexual exploitation, torture, beatings, death threats, and threats to family members.¹²

WHAT MAKES UP MODERN SLAVERY TODAY?

Numerous factors and characteristics make up modern-day slavery. Unlike years ago when men, women, and children were rounded up in Africa and forced onto boats with chains and shackles, today's slavery has a completely different dynamic. Below is a summary of some of the relevant factors:

FRAUD AND DECEPTION

The most common approach traffickers use to recruit and secure victims is fraud and deception. About 90 per cent of the cases fall into this category. Traffickers gain a person's trust and lie about a possible employment or life opportunity. They might offer a young, vulnerable person who faces hardship and poverty the one thing that seems completely out of reach: a better life, an easier life or a life that will not only benefit them but their entire family. They offer a dream, with little or nothing asked for in return.

Whether such promises relate to a well-paid job or a good marriage, the messages are nearly always the same: "If you do what I say, if you trust me, then your life will be infinitely better. Not sometime in the distant future, but today – right now!" For those who seldom have access to any options at all, such offers are too tempting to pass up. They don't realize these fraudulent options come at a terrible price.

As a result, one of the biggest challenges the anti-slavery sector faces is how easily people accept such promises. Most trafficked persons are simply naïve. They want so much to believe the promised opportunity is real that they put common sense and logic aside.

The factors that allow many trafficking scenarios to occur combine two fundamental elements: trust and deception. Human trust is one of the most powerful tools available to traffickers. Many traffickers are people from within a victim's community who are known to them and trusted. It is important to note that many people who are trafficked are not ignorant. In contrast to this misconception, the traffickers are just very convincing liars.



46% OF VICTIMS KNOW THEIR RECRUITERS

EXAMPLE

Qun, an 18-year-old Vietnamese student, is approached by her neighbour, Ngoc Anh. He tells her that if she wants, he can help her get a much better job in China that pays three times as much money than anything she can find locally. Feeling that this might be a good opportunity to benefit her family, she agrees. Upon arriving in China, Ngoc Anh delivers Qun to a small factory where she is confined and forced to work 15 hours a day sewing blue jeans.

DEBT/CREDIT BONDAGE

In this situation, traffickers enslave and hold a victim in place through one of two key mechanisms involving money: debt bondage or credit bondage. Debt bondage is a situation where advances in cash are paid by the trafficker to the victim, her family or others, which the victim must “work off”. Whether through physical force, mental abuse or some other form of coercion, the victim is maintained at the exploitation site until the debt is satisfactorily paid. The lender will often use false accounting methods or charge excessive interest, sometimes in excess of 500 per cent. The bonded labourer does not know when the lender will consider the debt paid, so the length of service is undefined and extensive. Such debts provide the exploiter with justification for maintaining his or her victim in bondage. Credit bondage is a situation where, over time, the trafficker does not pay the victim their wage. The victim remains at the exploitation site in the hope of recouping their earnings and minimizing their losses. This process of waiting can take months or years. Sadly, these employers usually have no intention of ever paying their employees.

Getting a person into slavery through debt is often very easy. The scenario often looks something like this: Take a family that earns no more than US\$2 per day. They live from hand to mouth, using this limited money to cover their food and housing. One day, a family member becomes very ill. To save his life, the family needs US\$20 to buy medicine. Since they have no money to offer, they borrow this amount from a human trafficker. But since they will never earn more than US\$2 per day, they will never be able to pay back both the loan and the interest. To recover his investment, the trafficker will insist that a family member work for a duration of time to pay this debt. With excessive interest, this could take a year or more. This is a common form of human slavery.

EXAMPLE

Mr. Sharma runs a small battery factory in Northern India. The difficult, dangerous work results in a high employee turnover. Mr. Sharma resorts to taking on “trafficked persons”. Realizing that he can obtain far higher profits by forcing people to work longer hours with little or no pay, he continues to demand more and more from his staff. To maintain compliance, he regularly beats and threatens the factory workers. To justify keeping them there, he creates a situation where they fall into deeper and deeper debt with him. He charges them for housing, food, medical care, etc. Before long, his workers are trapped in a cycle of debt bondage. Since he recruits persons from Bangladesh who don’t understand the language or the culture, it is much easier to get them to comply with his wishes. As the existing employment regulations are poorly enforced by the state, his illicit business continues to flourish unchecked.



AVERAGE PRICE OF A SLAVE

In 1809 (adjusted to today's value):



In 2014:



DIRECT SELLING OF A PERSON

In some cases, a trafficker delivers a person to an exploitation site and then receives a cash payment. In essence, victims are sold to the business. For victims to regain their freedom, they are expected to work off the amount of money the business owner paid for them, along with additional fees added to the original amount. This impossible debt holds the person in place. Compared to many years before, slave prices have gone down in modern times. The average price for a slave in the mid-1800s was approximately US\$40,000 (adjusted to current values). Today, depending upon the location, a slave can be acquired for as little as US\$100.¹³

Not all traffickers are strangers. Many are known to the victims and may even be members of the family, as in this next example:

EXAMPLE

Ali is a young man from Bangladesh with dreams of owning his own land. During a business trip to India, he learns that there are people looking for young women to work in sweat shops. A trafficker tells him that he can earn a tidy sum of money simply by bringing young girls to a certain location. Upon returning home, Ali decides to talk his 18-year-old cousin, Sushma, into going with him back to India for a short visit. To avoid trouble with the family, he tells Sushma that he has already received her father's permission to travel with her. Since Sushma lives in a male-dominated society, she accepts his word. They take off for India without anyone else knowing that they have left. Upon arriving, Ali sells the unsuspecting Sushma to a sweat shop owner and walks away with a substantial amount of cash.





ABDUCTION

While some slavery victims are abducted, this tactic is used less than most other approaches. It is much easier to transport a person who is willing, rather than to use force with those who are not. When people can be deceived into believing that they will benefit from going somewhere, transporting them is a much easier task. Compliant victims will help traffickers evade the attention of border police and customs officials. The victims will be unlikely to attempt an escape until it is too late. In contrast, kidnapping victims tend to fight, kick and scream. This presents obvious risks for traffickers. Below is a statement made by a trafficker in Bangladesh:

*“We collected the children from one of the local schools in Khulna. These schools have a fixed van-puller who picks up and drops off the school children. Sometimes these children are taken to parks with the school’s permission. We contacted one of these guys and asked him to bring a few children to us. We agreed to pay him 60,000 Taka. One day, when the van-puller found suitable conditions to abduct the children, he took them to the Rupsha River. He informed us to meet him at a certain spot to collect them. After collecting them, they were trafficked to India through the Bhomra border. Their parents never knew what happened. We only needed five kids but he brought seven.”
The trafficker laughed.*

THREATS AND VIOLENCE

Traffickers violate many laws and human rights during the process of recruiting, transporting, harbouring, selling, and maintaining their victims. This can include torture, rape, beatings, threats of violence, threats of reprisals against family members, deprivation of food and physical confinement. Each of these elements contributes to placing and maintaining the person in a slave-like situation. The following account demonstrates the extent to which traffickers go to hold a person in place:

“After arriving at the factory, one of the first things I was shown was a short video on a mobile phone of a young man being beaten to death with a club. When I tried to turn away, they held my head in place to force me to watch the video to the end. I still remember all of the blood. There was nothing left of his head when they were done. I was told that if I ever tried to run, this would happen to me and my family members. From that point on, I did everything they said.”

ISOLATION AND CONFINEMENT

For many victims, isolation from others and confinement prevented them from seeking help. These factors are often the case for victims of domestic servitude and forced marriage. The tactics used to enforce this isolation often include violence or threats of violence. The following story is from India:

“I worked from 5:00 a.m. until midnight every day for three years. I never had a day off or any time to myself. The compound door was always locked and the walls were so high, there was no way I could escape. One day, I heard children playing in the street. Since I was desperate to leave, I put a note in a plastic bottle and threw it over the wall. All at once, they went quiet. For three days I waited; nothing happened. Then on the fourth day a person from the police came. While my employer tried to say there was no problem, I ran up to the policeman and begged for help. If I hadn't thrown that note, I would still be there today.”



TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND EMERGING TRENDS

The manufacturing world has spent many years addressing the issue of forced labour within its supply chains. This is not at all a new concept. The definition used by most companies includes “all work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily”. This definition places the emphasis on the negative consequences of leaving a job and the fact that the person is forced to accept work against his or her will.

Within the past five years, the topic of **human trafficking** has been combined with this traditional concept of forced labour to expand the range of different potential scenarios. Human trafficking, as a concept, includes forced labour as an outcome, but goes further by placing much of the emphasis on how a person gets into the forced labour situation. For example, the trafficking definition focuses on “the act of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt, by means of threat, use of force or coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, and abuse of vulnerability.”¹⁴ Thus, what happens before the exploitation begins is a major factor.

Since 1926, the traditional definition of slavery has remained relatively unchanged.

Slavery is defined as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised”.¹⁵ In this case, the emphasis is placed on the ownership and loss of control of a person’s life.

In addition to these distinctions, there are other, more refined definitions that focus on variations of forced labour. For example, contract slavery is when a contract is offered that guarantees employment in a factory or service setting. The worker pays a fee, often to a recruitment agency, to find work for them. The expectation is that this fee represents an investment that will bring a much higher return over time. What often happens instead is that the person arrives at the new workplace only to face enslavement and conditions that are much worse than expected. With bonded labour, a person becomes the property of another person, to work for them as collateral against a loan that was made. These debts are often enforced by the threat or use of physical violence against the victim and/or his family network.

Beginning in 2014, “**modern slavery**” has emerged as an umbrella term to include nearly all the definitions listed above within one combined heading. The adjective

modern is offered to identify slavery as a crime whose implications have not changed, but some of its features have adapted to modern times. Also, this terminology choice follows the steps of one of the leading pieces of legislation in the field: the U.K. Modern Slavery Act.¹⁶ The term “modern slavery” may sound harsh to those new to this topic, but many now feel that this is the right combination of words to describe the obnoxious situations victims are forced to endure. Modern slavery is emerging as the new paradigm of our time.

In the section below, a number of terms commonly and broadly used in the anti-slavery field will be further defined and clarified. The necessity of clear definitions lies in three main reasons:

- Clarifying which situations a term refers to helps us to better understand a phenomenon that is quite complex, which is the first, necessary step towards action.
- Narrowing down a problem by defining it helps with targeting action.
- Clear definitions are necessary for quantifying a problem and consequently being able to measure change.
- Enables accurate communication between agents of change.

The most critical challenge is the different applications of internationally agreed definitions at the national level and the lack of common statistical indicators that would allow us to compare data across countries. This is one of the reasons why reports such as the Global Slavery Index, which indicate very high numbers of victims in modern slavery, are questioned by certain audiences. To better understand the differences between the various terms, below is a more detailed summary:

DEFINITION	DESCRIPTION
TRADITIONAL SLAVERY	The internationally accepted definition of slavery was outlined in the 1926 Slavery Convention which states that: “Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.” ¹⁷ Note that this definition equates “slavery” with the “owning” of a person. The Bellagio-Harvard Guidelines on the Legal Parameters of Slavery states: “The exercise of ‘the powers attaching to the right of ownership’ should be understood as constituting control over a person in such a way as to significantly deprive that person of his or her individual liberty, with the intent of exploitation through the use, management, profit, transfer or disposal of that person.” ¹⁸
CONTRACT SLAVERY	The worker pays a high fee, often to a recruitment agency, to find work for them. A deceptive contract is offered that guarantees employment, perhaps in a factory or service setting. The victim signs a contract in a language they cannot read or as an illiterate person they are forced to sign a contract that is not explained to them. If the job is in another country, a prospective worker often pays a full range of expenses related to the acquisition of a passport and other travel documents, transportation, and training costs. The promise offered in this case is that he or she will earn enough money to pay these fees back over a relatively short time. What happens instead is that the person arrives at the new workplace only to face enslavement and conditions that are much less than expected. Travel and identification documents are taken away and the person is forced to pay exorbitant amounts for substandard housing and food. A constant threat of violence prevents the person from leaving or looking for support.
BONDED LABOUR	A person becomes the property of another person, to work for them as collateral against a loan that was made. These debts are often enforced by the threat or use of physical violence against the victim and/or his family network. In many cases, the lender uses false accounting methods or charges excessive interest over time. Thus the bonded labourer does not know when the debt will be paid off, making the length of service undefined. In some cases, this loan is passed down from one generation to another.
CLASSICAL SLAVERY (CHATTEL)	A person is born or sold into a life of permanent servitude. This form of slavery, which has been outlawed in much of the world, continues today in parts of sub-Saharan Africa including Mauritania, Niger and Sudan.
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	The international accepted definition of human trafficking is provided in the United Nations’ Palermo Protocol, which states: “Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal for organs.” ¹⁹

There are also other definitions belonging to the broader concept of ‘modern slavery’, such as forced prostitution, domestic servitude and forced marriage. Some of these cases are related to some of the terms clarified above; for instance, domestic servitude is an example of forced labour and forced prostitution can be a result of human trafficking. However, as this toolkit is dedicated to the specific analysis of slavery occurring in supply chains, we will not cover these forms of exploitation in this instance.

Of all the definitions, the one that has received the most attention in recent years is “human trafficking.” Human trafficking, as a concept, has been and continues to be very politically charged. Over the past twenty years, it has become a topic that has received a great deal of attention in the media, among the general public and across governments. While much of this attention can be attributed to forced prostitution, which is considered by most to be a major ethical and moral issue, over time, the relevance to forced labour situations has also continued to grow. One of the reasons why human trafficking, as a defining concept, is being replaced with “modern slavery” is that this definition places much of the emphasis on how a person moves from their community into the slave-like outcome, without focusing on the end point itself. This emphasis on the “movement” of a person is considered to be less relevant. Many would argue that the “outcome” of this process is more important. Hence, modern slavery is considered the more appropriate term. To illustrate this point, note that two of the three components of the human trafficking definition deal with the process by which a person becomes trafficked – the act and the means by which this happens.

Figure 7. The Defining Elements of Human Trafficking According to the Palermo Protocol

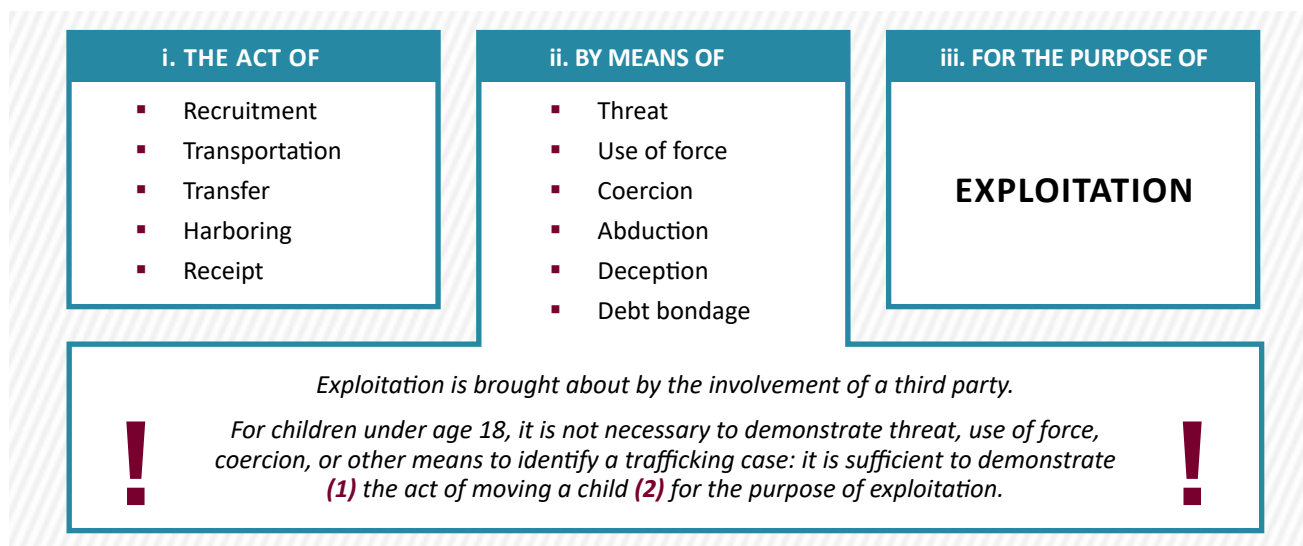
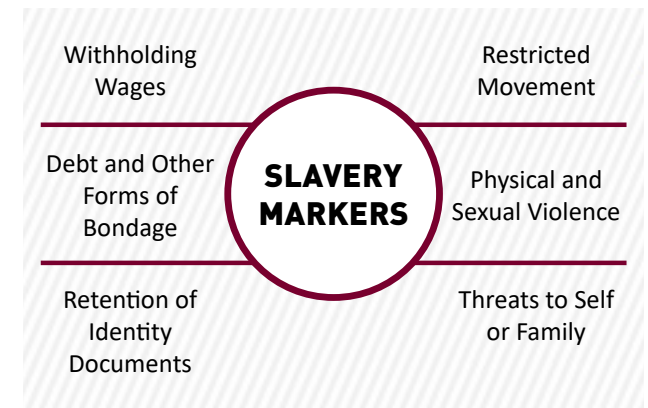


Figure 8: Modern Slavery Markers



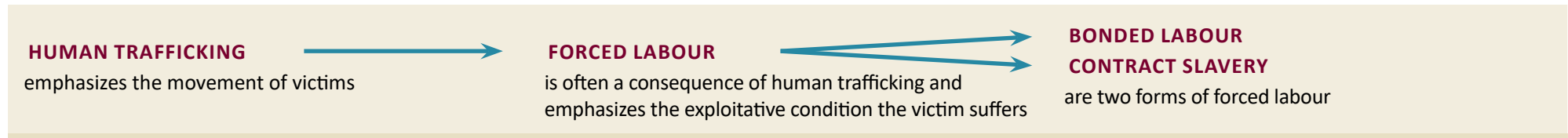
As a final note, it is important to note that not all exploitation is considered human trafficking or slavery. While a worker may be in a situation where he is being cheated out of overtime pay, paid less than is owed, or made to work excessive hours, this would not constitute a human trafficking/slavery case as long as he is free to leave this situation. To clarify the above, we can identify two basic characteristics of modern slavery:

1. Deception in payment agreements, such as withholding of wages (or complete lack of payment) and use of debt of other forms of bondage are in place; and
2. Restriction of movement, obtained by retention of documents, violence and threats holds a person in place.

In essence, the person loses control of his/her life and is enslaved.

Below is a comparison of three of the major international definitions: human trafficking, forced labour and bonded labour.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	FORCED LABOUR	BONDED LABOUR AND CONTRACT SLAVERY
<p>An act (1) carried out by a third party, through different means (2), for the purpose of exploitation (3).</p> <p>For children under age 18 it is sufficient to demonstrate the act of moving a child for the purpose of exploitation.</p>	<p>All work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily.</p>	<p>Bonded labour begins when a worker borrows money from an employer and commits themselves to work for the employer in return.</p> <p>Contract slavery involves deceiving or illegal contracts signed by victims who cannot understand them, and used to justify forced labour.</p>
<p>1. Act of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Transportation Transfer Harbouring Receipt <p>2. By means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat Force or coercion Abduction Fraud Deception Abuse of power Abuse of vulnerability <p>3. For the purpose of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploitation Slavery or similar practices Servitude Prostitution Removal of organs Forced labour and service 	<p>Threat of penalty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical and/or sexual violence. Imprisonment or physical confinement. Withholding of wages, unreasonable fees or financial penalties. Withholding of identity documents. Unfair dismissal or exclusion from future employment. Deprivation of food or shelter. Exclusion from community, social life or denunciation to community/family. Intimidation and other threats. <p>Lack of Valid Consent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worker deceived about the wages they would receive. Worker cannot leave employment as they must remain for an undefined period to repay debts to employer. Worker made to work by family. Deception or fraud during recruitment stages. 	<p>Common features of Bonded Labour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer manipulates interest rates or charges excessive rates. The employer imposes high charges for food, accommodation, transportation, or tools. The employer charges workers for shortfalls in business output or days missed due to worker sickness. <p>Common features of Contract Slavery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts are in a language the victim does not understand. Contracts are presented to victims who cannot read. Victim is told fines and penalties will follow if he breaks the contract.





COMMON HUMAN TRAFFICKING MYTHS

Over the years, human trafficking has become increasingly complex and sometimes confusing, even for those who work to address the problem. There are several important myths that have influenced our collective anti-trafficking responses in Southeast Asia. Some of the “busted” myths are listed below:

MYTH	REALITY
Trafficking is primarily caused by poverty and a lack of education	Being at risk of human trafficking/slavery is often not as simple as poverty or lack of education in terms of what motivates people to migrate or look for opportunities to improve their lives. The common assumptions often do not fully apply in this region, or perhaps others. The real risk factors – inability to access or afford formal migration mechanisms, a desire to utilize education and skills but no local opportunities to do so, lack of citizenship, or inability to access emergency medical loans or quick money when family members fall ill – need to be examined and proven before any intervention is designed.
Large, organized criminal networks drive the human trafficking problem in Southeast Asia	Throughout much of Southeast Asia, human trafficking criminal networks are loosely organized, with often difficult-to-trace linkages. While larger-scale organized trafficking rings certainly exist in the Mekong, the vast majority of networks that do exist are more typically small-scale, loosely connected and opportunistic.
If we could catch all of the ‘traffickers’ and put them in jail, the problem would go away	Focusing mostly on those who trick, deceive and transport a person into an exploitative situation will only solve a portion of the problem. To address the real demand related to modern slavery, the response has to include more of an emphasis on actual exploiters and enslavers – those who own and run the establishments that enslave trafficking victims, and who make the most profits from slave labour.

MODERN SLAVERY: THE CRIMINAL CHAIN

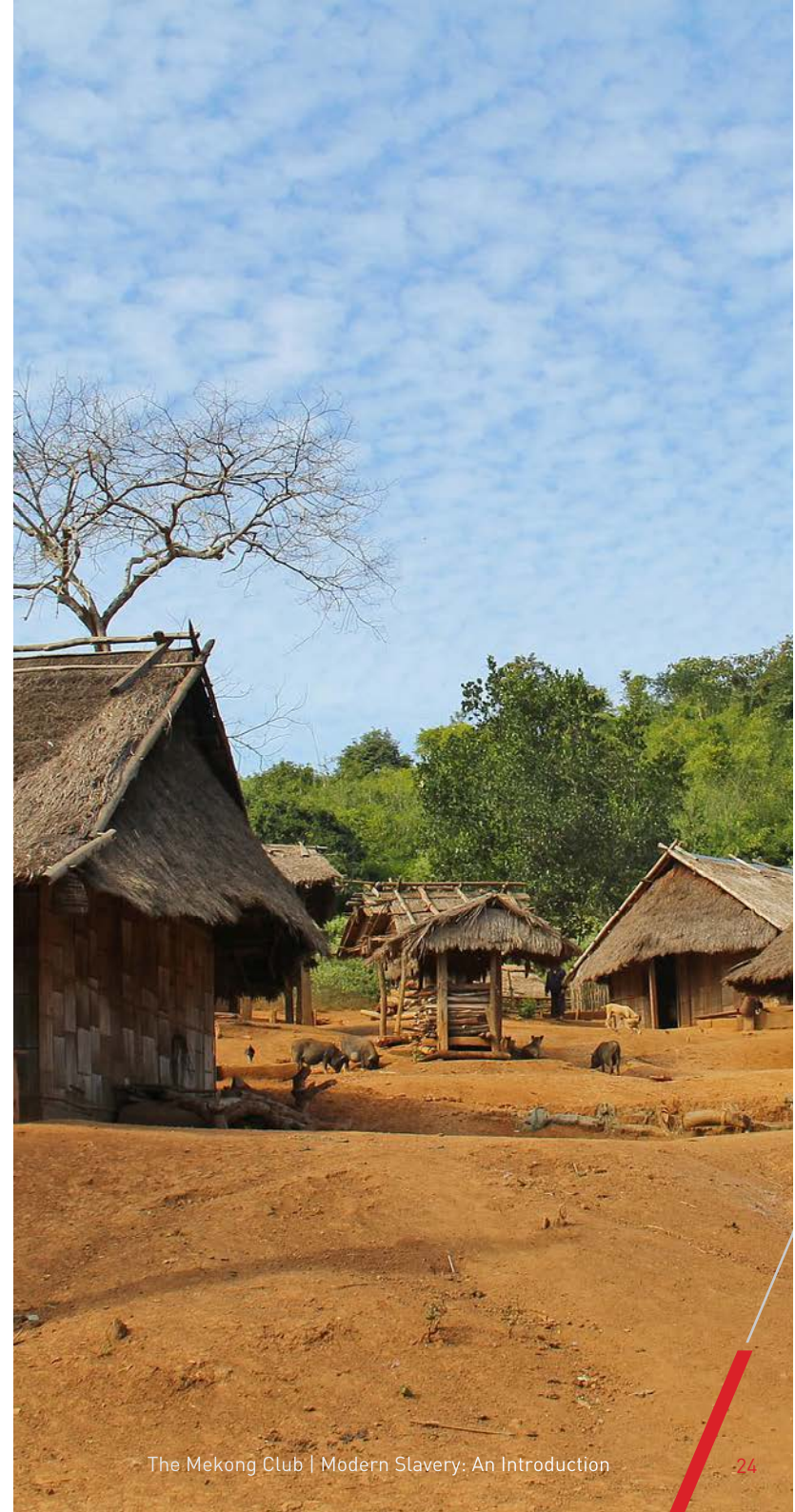
There are two criminal categories associated with modern slavery: 1) recruiters and transporters; and 2) exploiters and enforcers. All of these criminals play a role in the trafficking process, are considered traffickers, participate in criminal activity and should be included when carrying out criminal investigations.

RECRUITERS AND TRANSPORTERS

In some cases, potential migrants are targeted by unscrupulous people from within a community or from along the migration route. These people, who are known as recruiters, influence a migrant's choices. If the recruiter does this with the intent to exploit, then this person is part of the trafficking chain. The recruiter controls the migrant through fraud, deception, and the establishment of some form of debt. A transporter's role in the criminal chain is to assist in transporting and moving migrants to an exploitative site. The transporter's involvement can begin at any point along the migration path: inside the village, at the border, or within the community where the exploitation takes place. If the transporter acts with the intent to exploit, then this person is part of the trafficking chain.

Some recruiters can also act as transporters. The difference between a smuggler and a transporter is that the smuggler simply offers a service – to move a person from one place to another. The intent to exploit is not a motivating factor. The crimes that transporters commit often include fraud, deception, kidnapping or illegal border crossing. It is often the transporter who sells the victim to the exploiter. This, in itself, is a crime.

The difficulty with both recruiters and transporters is that it is not always possible to know that they are involved in a trafficking event until after the victim has been moved to the exploitative site. Intent is nearly impossible to prove until after the fact. Both recruiters and transporters are considered minor players in the human trafficking chain. Trafficking outcomes often include forced prostitution, forced labour including domestic work, and the like. It is important to note that while many trafficking cases happen cross border, there are also significant trafficking cases that take place within a country, known as internal trafficking.





EXPLOITERS AND ENFORCERS

There are basically two categories of criminals involved in the location where the victim is held in slavery. They “break in”, enforce and maintain a person in the slave-like situation. Exploiters are the managers and owners of exploitative sites. They are the ones who put in place a situation where slavery flourishes. They are also the ones who buy and control trafficking victims. While they might not be the ones that actually abuse victims with their own hands, they manage the process. Enforcers are the ones that break in and maintain trafficking victims. Their crimes often include rape, torture, assault, threats, coercion, force and debt bondage. Despite their brutality, the criminals who carry out these heinous acts are seldom sought after in most trafficking cases.

The table below provides a summary of the criminals involved in different modern slavery scenarios.

CRIMINALS	FORCED LABOUR	FORCED PROSTITUTION	MARRIAGE TRAFFICKING / DOMESTIC SERVITUDE
RECRUITER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broker/Agent (formal/informal) ▪ Family/Neighbour 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agency/Agent/Broker (formal/informal)
TRANSPORTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Escort with intent to exploit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Escort with intent to exploit ▪ Public transport
EXPLOITER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foreman ▪ Manager ▪ Business owner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pimp ▪ Madam ▪ Business owner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Household members
ENFORCER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-house security ▪ Foreman/manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Household members

TRADITIONAL COUNTER TRAFFICKING RESPONSES AND RESPONDERS

INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Different interventions are required to address modern slavery/trafficking depending upon where a person is in the process. For example, prevention activities are used before a person is victimized to prevent this from happening in the first place. Protection interventions are used after a victim is out of the exploitative site. The table below provides a summary of the four intervention categories often used to address human trafficking/slavery.²⁰

Before a trafficking event: PREVENTION	During the trafficking process: PROSECUTION	After the trafficking process: PROTECTION
Focuses on potential victims in a community setting.	Person sold and/or held in “slave-like” work situation through debt, threats, intimidation.	Victim out of slave-like circumstance.
Addresses vulnerability factors that may exist: poverty, no understanding of safe migration, traffickers in the community.	Emphasizes a legal response through the use of criminal and civil laws. This might also include the use of labour laws and codes of conduct.	Emphasis on providing victims with immediate food, shelter, medical attention, protection and/or counselling.
Attempts to encourage those seeking work to make informed choices.	This often involves government law enforcement and labour officials working with NGOs.	Victim may require longer-term job training, job placement, medical support.
POLICY		
Policy interventions cut across the three categories listed above to offer an enabling environment for them to be implemented.		

A more detailed description of the four categories of interventions is presented below:

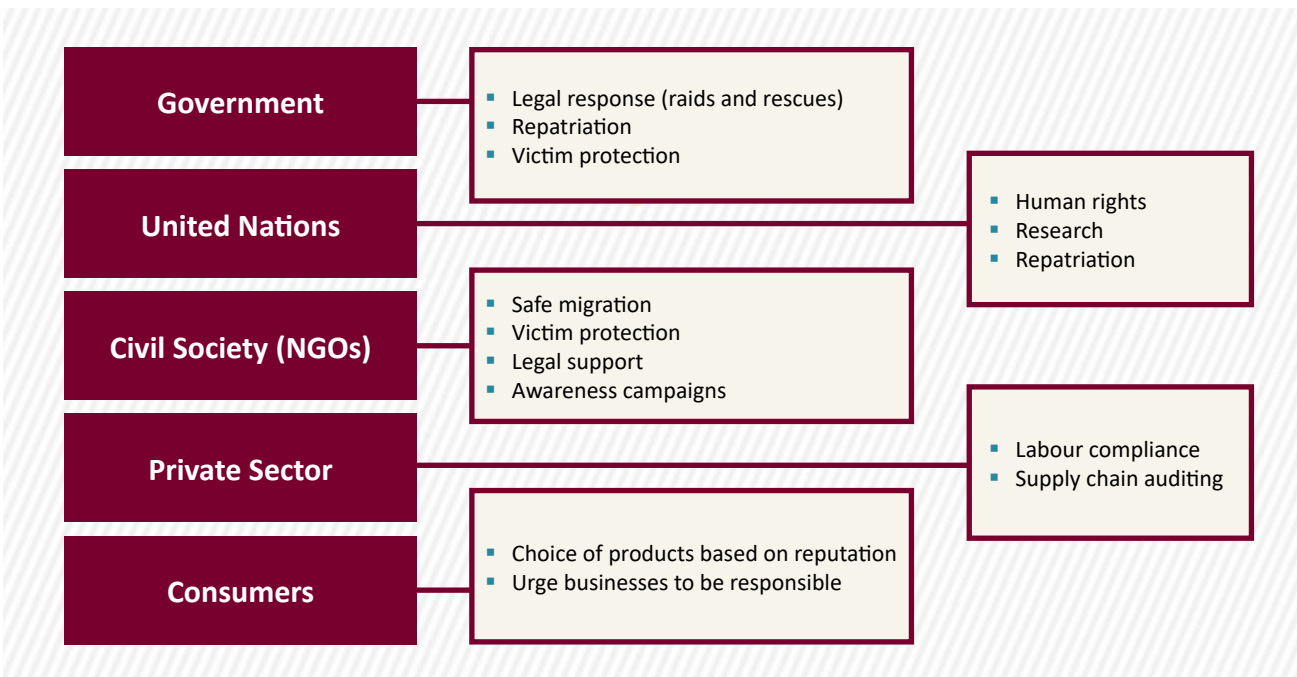
1. To date, **prevention** activities have largely been concentrated on the supply-side, focusing on addressing the vulnerabilities of target communities, such as through awareness-raising campaigns, vocational training, micro credit, or programs to increase access to education for vulnerable children. These programs are now evolving to acknowledge the reality of migration: people will continue to migrate, often with mutual benefits for sending and receiving economies and for the migrant. Awareness-raising campaigns, for example, are thus moving from aiming to reduce migration to a focus on reducing risky or ‘blind’ migration.
2. **Prosecution**-related activities have included development of specific anti-trafficking laws and training of police officers to effectively respond to trafficking. The establishment of specialist anti-trafficking units and task forces in many countries has been a highly significant recent development in this regard. As these units and other measures begin to demonstrate success in the apprehension of trafficking suspects, issues are starting to arise with regard to judicial processes; clearly, more attention now needs to be paid to this area.

3. **Protection** of trafficking victims has been accomplished through providing a wide range of services including shelter, medical and psycho-social support, legal assistance, and support for safe return and reintegration. Bilateral cooperation in the return of victims trafficked across borders has generally been strong and service quality continues to improve.
4. **Policy and Cooperation** includes the development and implementation of national plans and policies, the development of national mechanisms such as multi-sectoral committees and working groups to strengthen coordination and cooperation within and across borders, and research and information collection.

THE RESPONDERS: THOSE WHO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

Human trafficking/slavery is complex and requires remedies that are tailored to the circumstances of every stage of the process. The main partners that implement these actions are listed below.

Figure 9: Major modern slavery responders



The following series of tables summarizes the interventions, activities and desired outcomes for the three main intervention categories: prevention, prosecution and protection.²¹

PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

INTERVENTION	ACTIVITIES / MEANS	DESIRED OUTCOME
Awareness raising (in the appropriate language).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV/Radio – Soap operas, public service messages, documentaries. Informative billboards and leaflets. Community presentations. Concerts with a message. Investigative reporting articles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential migrants make informed choices based on appropriate information. General public (family, friends and community members) offer correct, informed advice to those who are seeking work alternatives.
Employment options offered to communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low interest loans to stimulate local business ventures. Vocational training. Job placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential migrants set up their own business opportunities or remain in their community to address their employment needs as an alternative to migrating.
Support the creation and improvement of legal employment agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation. Capacity building of the business. Regular inspections: both source and destination. Relevant training for employees (skills and language). Legal means to better options other than illegal ones (cost, speed, safety). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrants use legitimate, legal recruitment agencies, offering safe, affordable employment options. Recruitment agencies make changes to comply with international standards.
Support the creation of, or improvement of, labour inspections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building of inspectors. Standard operating procedures refined and improved. Regular inspections. Legal response offered, where needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained labour inspectors provide regular, comprehensive factory inspections to ensure the presence of ethical labour standards in a workplace. Bad businesses make changes to comply with the national labour codes or face stiff penalties or legal recourse.
Support the creation and improvement of supply chain audits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building of supply chain auditors. Convince businesses to voluntarily audit all aspects of their supply chains. Standard operating procedures in place that protect workers. Legal response outlined for authorities and victim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those contractors/sub-contractors who are exploiting workers in slave-like situations are dissuaded from doing so by severe financial and legal outcomes that hurt their business and go after their assets.

PROSECUTION: CRIMINAL JUSTICE

INTERVENTION	ACTIVITIES / MEANS	DESIRED OUTCOME
Support the establishment, refinement, and use of counter trafficking laws, bilateral agreements and special operating procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting and finalization of laws, agreements, and protocols. Capacity building of law enforcement and legal practitioners (police, judges, prosecutors). Legal response used by authorities to assist victims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The legal establishment (police, prosecutors, and judges) understand and use laws to help go after criminals who traffic and benefit from slave labour.
Support the creation, refinement, and use of proactive investigations related to human trafficking that do not rely on the victim.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building of law enforcement. Standard operating procedures in place that protect the victim. Legal response outlined and proactively used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the behaviour of police to move from reactive to proactive investigations of trafficking sites.
Support responsible and well-planned raids and rescues to help victims and go after criminals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building of law enforcement. Standard operating procedures in place that protect the victim and other vulnerable persons. Legal response outlined for authorities and victims. Link with protection operationalized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop criminals who are exploiting workers in slave-like situations from doing so by offering severe financial and/or legal outcomes that hurt their business and go after their assets. Convince law enforcement to use the laws/procedures that are available.
Implement cross-border agreements to share information and evidence on trafficking cases among law enforcers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of bilateral agreements between countries. Operationalization of these agreements. Regular use of the mechanism to improve cross-border cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law enforcement understand and use cross-border mechanisms to go after and unravel entire trafficking networks and help respond to the needs of foreign victims in their country.

PROTECTION: VICTIM SUPPORT

INTERVENTION	ACTIVITIES / MEANS	DESIRED OUTCOME
<p>A full range of services provided to a trafficked person through a shelter or alternative facility that meet ethical and human rights standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food, shelter, security, counselling, legal aid, access to justice, family tracing, medical care, repatriation, vocational placement, and follow-up monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trafficked person develops resilience and is empowered to move on with his/her life, being equipped with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decision-making power. ▪ Access to information and resources. ▪ A range of options from which to make choices. ▪ An understanding of one's rights. ▪ The ability to effect change in one's life and one's community. ▪ The opportunity to learn skills that one defines as important. ▪ Trust in one's competency and capacity. ▪ Increasing positive self-image and overcoming stigma.
<p>Technical support and capacity building provided to address all aspects of victim care and support, from victim identification and rescue, through to reintegration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systems development and testing (guidelines, operating procedures, etc.) ▪ Training and mentoring. ▪ Bilateral negotiations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-trafficking practitioners carry out their roles in an efficient and effective manner that meets ethical and human rights standards following agreed upon protocols and systems. ▪ All victims have access to similar services regardless of how they were identified and with which organization they came into contact.
<p>Employment options offered to trafficked persons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low interest loans to stimulate local business ventures. ▪ Vocational training. ▪ Job placement. ▪ Safe migration. ▪ Opportunity for safe, fair employment where he/she desires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trafficked person is in a situation where he/she achieves a sustainable livelihood for his/her future.
<p>A system is put in place to monitor what happens with a victim.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Periodic meetings. ▪ Phone calls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-trafficking practitioners regularly monitor the reintegration and recovery process of a victim to prevent re-trafficking.

RATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CURRENT RESPONSE

Despite the many activities being implemented, it is generally agreed that modern slavery continues to grow and evolve. It has become evident that traditional approaches, while often generating positive outcomes at a local level, are not sufficient to effectively combat this multi-faceted problem on a national and regional scale. Here are some of the specific concerns:

1. Assessment of impact remains very limited and many interventions therefore remain based on untested assumptions about their value and real results;
2. Anti-slavery programs tend to be dominated by interventions at points of origin for slavery victims, with few activities directed at points of destination where the majority of the abuse and exploitation takes place;
3. Mechanisms for victim identification remain limited. This negatively impacts on all areas of the response to trafficking, including of course the provision of services to victims, but also, less obviously, on law enforcement, which is highly dependent on victims as witnesses; and

4. Information collected from victims by individual agencies is not currently collated and aggregated to provide a better picture of the trafficking situation, to design better services, or to assist in targeting and focusing prevention activities.

Thus, while efforts over the last few years have been commendable, there is a need for new approaches and ways of working together, underpinned by better information on the trafficking situation and the effectiveness of different responses.

IMPACT OF HUMAN SLAVERY EFFORTS GLOBALLY

Victims rescued and helped: After nearly 20 years of donor-funding available for major anti-slavery/trafficking efforts around the world, two indicators are now being tracked on an annual basis. The information in the table below provides a summary of the number of slavery victims identified and supported in 2015. With all of the NGO, United Nations and government efforts combined, the world only helped 0.2 percent of the people in slavery.²²

Prosecutions and convictions: The information in the table below provides a summary of the number of global prosecutions and convictions by year. Note that relative to the number of

human slaves throughout the world (estimated to be 45,800,000), the numbers of prosecutions and convictions are extremely low.²³

Figure 10: Modern Slavery Victims Rescued Annually

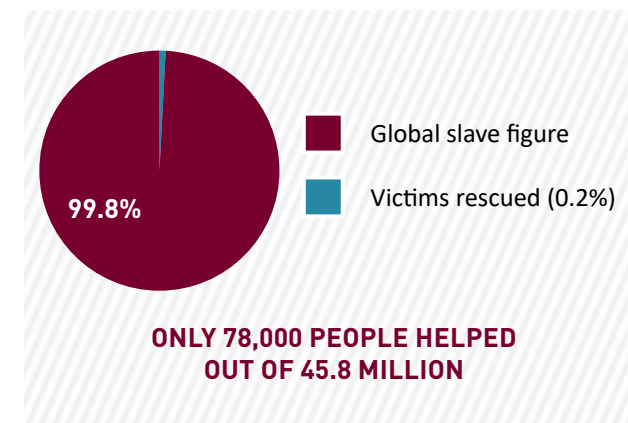
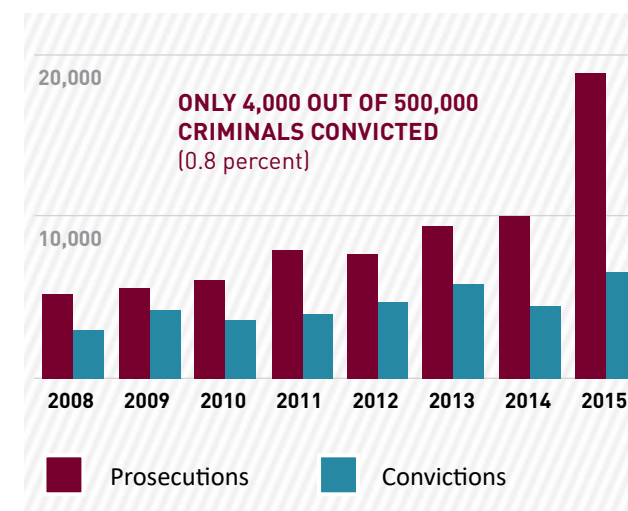


Figure 11: Prosecutions and Convictions





REASONS FOR LOW RESULTS

When looking at the figures for prosecution and victim assistance, one might question the efficacy of the current anti-slavery response. Why are the numbers so low relative to the number of slaves? Are the responders not doing their jobs? Are the interventions not focused enough? The answer to these questions can be found in the chart below. There are four reasons cited for the low results.

REASON	EXPLANATION
EXCESSIVE PROFITS	According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the profits generated from this illicit trade are estimated to exceed US\$150 billion annually. But despite the size of the problem, annual global donor contributions add up to only around US\$350 million ²⁴ , which represents less than one percent of total profits generated by the criminals. It is not surprising that the number of trafficked persons continues to increase. In fact, the UN has indicated that there are more modern slaves in the world today than at any other time in history. Realizing that we are not making a difference in this fight, it is clear that something significant needs to change.
LIMITED NUMBER OF RESPONDERS	It is estimated that there are approximately 15,000 people within NGO, UN and government offices addressing this issue. The number of criminals are estimated to be over 500,000. The number “greed-incentivized” criminals is over 30 times more than the number of people fighting the problem.
HIDDEN NATURE OF THE ISSUE	Because of the clandestine nature of modern slavery, it is not always easy to find the victims. Unless the responders are trained to locate them, they will not be found.
SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSPARENCY LAW	Up until recently, few corporations have looked below the first tier within their supply chains. In the past, there was no incentive to do so. With new legislation in place that expects companies to have an understanding of their overall supply chain, many companies are doing what they can to be in compliance. This is not possible for most organizations at this time. Therefore, modern slavery/forced labour might exist, but it isn’t being detected.



ABOUT THE MEKONG CLUB

The Mekong Club is a membership-based organization that works with companies that want to take active steps to identify potential risk and eradicate slavery from their business. Members are invited to join other leaders determined to impact change, in industry-specific working groups, where they receive up-to-date information and expert training on issues pertinent to the unique challenges of their industry. As part of this approach, members meet regularly to share best practices, learn about tools which provide practical and tangible actions to tackle slavery and network with other like-minded professionals. Member companies also work together on annual deliverables which are used to provide tangible actions in the fight against forced labour.

VISION AND MISSION

The vision of the Mekong Club is to harness the power of the private sector to prioritize slavery and trafficking, thereby changing business practices, which will significantly reduce slavery.

The mission of the Mekong Club is to act as a catalyst for this change – engaging, inspiring and supporting the private sector to lead the fight against modern slavery.

Major objectives include: 1) using a facilitation process to identify the greatest challenges impacting companies addressing slavery; 2) identifying practical approaches and solutions to help address these challenges; 3) increasing the overall understanding and awareness of this issue throughout the business community in Hong Kong; and 4) developing awareness throughout the Mekong region to expand the reach and impact of the Association's work. In summary, the Mekong Club provides the basic foundation for corporate change in the fight against modern slavery within Hong Kong and across Southeast Asia.

FOUR INDUSTRY WORKING GROUPS

As an Association, the Mekong Club targets four industry working groups. They include the following:

Financial Services: Annual profits from modern-day slavery are estimated to be US\$150 billion, most of which goes through the global banking system. Being on the front line of financial transactions, the financial services industry has a distinct advantage in being able to identify suspicious activity. Issues of interest include the importance of using big data to help identify “red flags”, understanding criminal patterns to develop systems to track this activity, and the importance of training to reach employees at all levels.

Apparel and Footwear: With extensive supply chain and manufacturing channels in multiple, usually underdeveloped countries, it can be difficult for companies to monitor their many outlets. Increased understanding of the ways that slavery can appear in supply chains is vital to effecting change. Issues of interest include developing risk assessment tools, standardizing auditing methods and approaches, consolidating information collected from audits across industries, and improving communication within companies across divisions.

Retail: Any amount of product sold that is found to have a link with modern slavery or child labour puts a retailer in a position of liability and huge reputation risk. Urged by public pressure and the need to safeguard their businesses, many of the biggest retailers worldwide have engaged in monitoring activities. Issues of interest include understanding how to inform and educate suppliers, how to identify the boundaries of supply chain involvement, and how to respond to naming and shaming.

Hospitality: There are dozens of touch points where human trafficking can occur in the hospitality industry: staff recruitment and food sourcing are only some of them. Due to the vast size of the industry, eradicating this issue has the potential to affect hundreds of thousands of lives. Issues of interest include how to train staff at different levels, how to address the four potential vulnerabilities within the hotel industry (i.e. forced prostitution, forced labour within supply chains, service contracts and construction), and how to develop standardized responses across hotel chains.





WHAT DOES MEKONG CLUB MEMBERSHIP OFFER?

Below is a summary of the benefits offered to members of the Mekong Club:

Access to Tools and Initiatives

- Practical guidance on best practices and successful case studies related to your industry.
- Knowledge Hub: An online centre of regularly updated information on the relationship between modern slavery and the private sector.
- eLearning Course: A series of educational videos and infographics tailored for a business audience.
- Access to anti-slavery initiatives and practices across a wide range of sectors and industries.
- A range of technical, logistical and support services to aid businesses in their efforts to address slavery.
- The knowledge and expertise of the Mekong Club and global slavery issue experts for advisory services where required.

Access to Industry - Specific Working Groups

- Quarterly practitioner-focused meetings on key issues / trends with expert speakers and closed-door sharing.
- Potential for joint action / advocacy.
- Opportunities for networking and best practice sharing with experts in the field of modern slavery and practitioners focused on this issue.

BASIC PILLARS OF ACTIVITY

ASSOCIATION

The Mekong Club uses an Association model to bring four industry-specific working groups together. This model encourages like-minded companies to share their experiences and work together in a safe environment.

LEADERSHIP

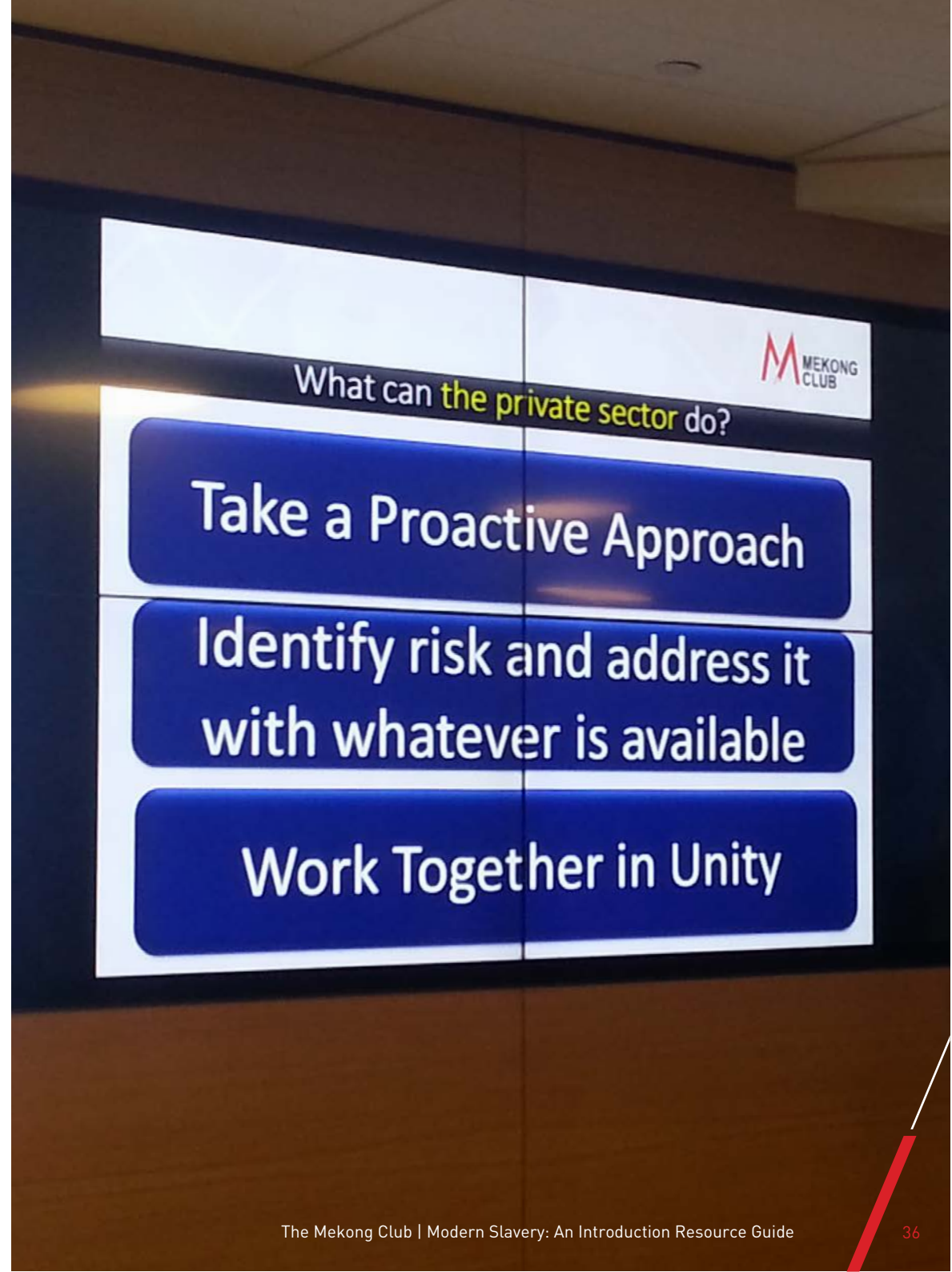
The Mekong Club helps to increase the influence of the private sector in stepping up and taking a leadership role. We identify gaps in knowledge and actions related to modern slavery, offer useful recommendations and encourage private sector partners to take a more active role.

CORPORATE TOOLS

The Mekong Club takes the recommendations made by the association members and operationalizes them with the help of technical experts in the field. Once developed and tested, these outputs are used to improve their responses to this issue.

AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY

The objectives of these efforts are to create a general understanding of the issue; to help companies understand the potential vulnerability to their business; to desensitize the private sector; and to encourage them to join the overall fight.



CONCLUSIONS

With over 30 million people living in conditions of modern slavery in Asia Pacific, it is vital that companies doing business in the region engage all stakeholders, from staff to shareholders, in creating awareness of the complexity of the problem. By ensuring that your company has a thorough understanding of how the dynamics of modern slavery can encroach on your business processes and corporate image, effective responses can be crafted that will eliminate dubious practices in your supply chain and thus mitigate risk.

More importantly though, businesses need to understand that fighting modern slavery is an ongoing process that demands, on a micro level, a comprehensive company strategy, and on a macro level, a dedicated industry commitment.

With this resource manual, we aimed to:

- Define what modern slavery is and how it functions.
- Quantify the incidence of modern slavery across the world.
- Outline the terms, definitions and terminology used in relevant international legislation that targets modern slavery.
- Debunk some of the common myths associated with modern slavery.
- Describe the criminal chain by identifying the key transgressors in a variety of contexts.
- Outline the range of traditional responses in place to combat modern slavery.

Modern slavery poses a great risk, not only to the welfare of individuals, but also to the survival of businesses. Due its clandestine nature, it is often difficult for business to identify these risks. The Mekong Club's mission is to inspire businesses to tackle this global crime.



REFERENCES

1. The Impact of Globalization on Compliance with Labor Standards: A Plant-Level Study Ann Harrison (UC Berkeley and NBER) and Jason Scorse (UC Berkeley) July 2003
2. [The Global Slavery Index 2016](#)
3. [I was a modern-day slave in America, CNN Money, 2013](#)
4. [“Modern slave” migrants toil in Italy’s tomato fields, Reuters, 2009](#)
5. [Modern slavery and human trafficking on the rise in UK, The Guardian, 2016](#)
6. [The Global Slavery Index 2016](#)
7. [Global Estimate of Forced Labour: Results and Methodology , ILO, Geneva, 2012](#)
8. [Global Estimate of Forced Labour: Results and Methodology , ILO, Geneva, 2012](#)
9. The Transatlantic Slave Trade, Abagong, Pearson Education Inc, May 2010
10. Mekong Region: Human Trafficking Data Sheets, SIREN Series, UNIAP, 2010
11. Internal Document, UNIAP, 2008
12. Mekong Region: Human Trafficking Data Sheets, SIREN Series, UNIAP, 2010
13. Harvard International Review, Winning the Fight, 31(1) Spring 2009, Kevin Bales interview
14. [Palermo Protocol, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#)
15. [Slavery Convention 1926](#)
16. [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)
17. [Slavery Convention 1926](#)
18. [Bellagio-Harvard Guidelines on the Legal Parameters of Slavery](#)
19. [Palermo Protocol, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#)
20. Mekong Club, Compliance Training Manuscript, 2013
21. Mekong Club, Compliance Training Manuscript, 2013
22. U.S. State Department’s Annual Trafficking in Persons Report (2011)
23. U.S. State Department’s Annual Trafficking in Persons Report (2016)
24. Estimates of Modern Slavery Donor Expenditures, Internal Document, UNIAP, 2012

