



ARAB STATES REPORT

THE
**GLOBAL
SLAVERY
INDEX**
2018



WALK FREE
FOUNDATION

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Further reading

This report is part of a series that builds on the information presented in *The Global Slavery Index 2018* to provide an in-depth look at modern slavery at a regional level. The reports will be available from <https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/resources/downloads/> as they are released. *The Global Slavery Index 2018* is now available to download.

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ARAB STATES

REGION HIGHLIGHTS



Estimated Number of
People in Modern Slavery

520,000

Forced labour
percentage

67%



Average Vulnerability Score

57/100



Regional Proportion
of Global Estimate

1%

Forced marriage
percentage

33%



Average Government Response Score

AAA

AA

A

BBB

BB

B

CCC

CC

C

D

SPOTLIGHT ON PROGRESS



While much remains to be done in the Arab States region to better address all forms of modern slavery, some positive steps are being taken. Most notably, after several years of persistent lobbying from international rights groups and worker's unions, the Government of Qatar has pledged a series of labour reforms to improve the treatment of migrant workers there.

In 2016, Qatar announced a landmark decision to replace the *kafala* system with a contract-based law system aimed at ensuring greater protection for workers.¹ Under the *kafala* (sponsorship) system, a migrant's right to work and live in the host country is dependent on the sponsor, so workers are unable to enter or leave the country or seek alternative employment without their sponsor's written consent.² In 2017, Qatar ratified Law No.15 (Domestic Workers Law) granting labour protections for domestic workers. This new law guarantees domestic workers a maximum 10-hour workday, a weekly rest day, three weeks of annual leave, an end-of-service payment, and healthcare benefits.³ Despite this, the law is still weaker than the country's general labour law and does not fully conform to the International Labour

Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention.⁴ The government has also announced its intention to introduce a minimum wage rate for all workers and undertake the renewal of residence permits directly with migrant workers in effort to replace the *kafala* system. Labour Dispute Resolution Committees established by Law No. 13 of 2017 will also be operationalised to offer effective and timely remedies to workers' grievances.⁵ The government had also taken steps to reimburse the recruitment fees paid by migrant workers constructing the World Cup stadiums and to cover the fees of future constructions workers, a move that will see £3.6 million return to, or remain in, the hands of migrant workers.⁶ In early September 2018, the government removed the requirement for migrant workers to obtain an exit visa to be able to leave Qatar, allowing most migrant workers to now be able to leave the country without seeking their employer's permission.⁷ This doesn't extend to domestic workers, however, the government is currently working with the ILO to grant this group of workers the same rights.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Slavery has a long history in the Middle East. Dating back to the emergence of the first civilisation, slaves were named in the Code of Hammurabi as one of three social groups that comprised Mesopotamian society. Studies of archives documenting the activities of businessmen and private families that date back thousands of years reveal the central role played by slaves in ancient economies. Along with houses, slaves were the most important purchase made by families. They were used as a guarantee to secure loans, were traded or sold as property, and were often mentioned in legal documents relating to dowries or division of property.⁸ They were also often obtained through war, and this connection between conflict and slavery carries through to the present.

In a 2015 report with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), we noted the two migration crises affecting the Arab States: on the one hand, the unprecedented movement of people throughout the region in response to the rise of Islamic extremism, sectarian conflict, and unrelenting hardships, and, on the other, the large number of migrant workers from South Asia, South-East Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa who are highly vulnerable to modern slavery and exploitation.⁹ We stated then that while international headlines focused on the “protracted regional crisis....the exploitation and trafficking of migrant workers in the region continues unabated.” In the intervening years, little has changed.

The Arab States are currently both the source and recipient of the largest numbers of refugees and internally displaced people globally. As the region experiences conflict and resulting displacement – and given its position at the junction of migratory paths for Afghans, Sudanese, and Somalis fleeing conflicts in their homelands – vulnerability to modern slavery in the Arab States has sharply increased. An estimated 5.7 million refugees originated in the region since mid-2016 and 12 million people were displaced internally in Middle Eastern countries.¹⁰ This displacement, accompanied by severe economic decline, widespread violence and psychological distress, collapse of essential public services in many districts, and weak labour laws has contributed towards the vulnerability of refugees, internally

displaced persons, minority groups, and ordinary citizens to trafficking and exploitation.

In addition to the high number of refugees and internally displaced persons, this is a region that hosts 17.6 million migrant workers,¹¹ representing more than one-tenth of all migrant workers in the world. This includes an estimated 2.4 million domestic workers, which is one of the most vulnerable groups of workers due to the private nature of their workplace in a family home and the limited rights they have. The exploitation of migrant workers, particularly in the construction and services sectors, is widely reported across the region. Migrant workers are subject to practices that may amount to forced labour including extortionate recruitment fees, illegal confiscation of identity documents, withholding and non-payment of salaries, hazardous working conditions, unhygienic living conditions, unlawfully excessive work hours performed under the threat of deportation, and physical and sexual abuse.¹² Migrant workers accept high interest loans in their countries of origin to afford the exorbitant and often illegal recruitment fees they are coerced into paying.¹³ Systematic under-, delayed-, and non-payment of migrant worker wages across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, coupled with growing debt at home, increases workers’ dependence on their employment and reduces confidence to leave exploitative jobs or demand better working conditions.

Estimating modern slavery in the Arab States

In 2017, Walk Free Foundation (WFF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), produced the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, estimating that 40.3 million people were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2016. Of this number, an estimated 520,000 men, women, and children were living in modern slavery in the Arab States. Although these are the most reliable estimates of modern slavery to date, they should be interpreted cautiously and considered very conservative, given the gaps and limitations of data generally and for this region in particular.

The current Global Estimates of Modern Slavery do not cover all forms of modern slavery; forms such as trafficking for the purposes of organ removal, child soldiers, or child marriage cannot be adequately measured at this stage. In the Arab States, efforts to produce accurate estimates of modern slavery were hampered by substantial gaps in the available data, which include lack of data from countries in conflict, on forced marriage, and on forced labour experiences of migrant workers in the region. It is typically not possible to survey in countries that are experiencing profound and current conflict, such as Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, and data from these states are likely to understate the problem.¹⁴ Of the two national surveys conducted in the region, none was in a GCC country, they were conducted only in Arabic (which most migrants in the region do not speak), and they did not capture people in work or refugee camps. Taken together, these gaps point to a significant underestimate of the extent of modern slavery in this region.

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*The Arab States is the
 second most vulnerable
 of the five regions.*

Key findings from the Global Slavery Index

In the Arab States region, there are two main trends that arise from an analysis of the regional and national estimates of prevalence, measures of vulnerability, and assessment of government responses.

First, the countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery in the region are all severely affected by protracted or recent conflicts. Within the region, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen had both the highest prevalence of modern slavery and the highest absolute number of victims, accounting for 76 percent of victims in the region.

The role that conflict plays in compounding vulnerability to slavery in both the short and long term is widely recognised and is reflected in our assessment of vulnerability across five dimensions – governance issues, nourishment and access, inequality, disenfranchised groups, and effects of conflict – which suggest a far higher risk of modern slavery in the Arab States than is evident in the prevalence data. The Arab States is the second most vulnerable of the five regions (57 percent). The region performed relatively well on the nourishment and access dimension of the vulnerability model but performed relatively poorly on the governance and effects of conflict dimensions. The regional score in the conflict dimension hides diversity among countries within the region, with Yemen, Syria, and Iraq scoring much higher than others. The regional average on measures of inequality points to slightly higher vulnerability than the global average on this dimension and, again, there is a great deal of diversity within the region, with scores ranging from a low of 25 percent in the UAE to a high of 65 percent in Iraq.

Countries with high vulnerability due to effects of conflict generally have higher vulnerability scores across the remaining four dimensions. This is not surprising given the disruption to, and often complete dismantling of, the rule of law, as well as damage to critical infrastructure and diminished access to education, health care, and food and water as a result of conflict. Across all dimensions of vulnerability, the highest score was found in Syria (92 percent). Similarly, WFF's government response data highlights the disruption caused by conflict to government functions. Due to the ongoing conflict and extreme disruption to government functioning, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen were excluded from the government response assessment this year.

Second, while prevalence of modern slavery in the Arab States region, and particularly the GCC countries, appears low due to significant gaps in data, **there is a large body of evidence pointing to high levels of forced labour among migrant worker populations that is not matched by an adequate level of action.** Government responses to modern slavery in the Arab States were often characterised by inadequate victim protection and a weak criminal justice response. The region scores an average CCC rating on government response. When correlated against GDP (PPP) per capita, the GCC member countries, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates all stand out as taking relatively limited action despite the size of the problem and resources they have at their disposal to address it. These more stable governments in the Arab States region, which might be expected to act, have taken only minimal steps to protect the rights and safety of the millions of migrant workers who make up their construction and service sectors. However, Qatar has, notably, pledged a series of labour reforms to improve the treatment of migrant workers, including replacing the *kafala* system with a contract-based law system,¹⁵ granting labour protections for domestic workers through ratification of a Domestic Workers Law, announcing an intention to introduce a minimum wage rate for all workers, moving to reimburse the recruitment fees paid by migrant workers constructing the World Cup stadiums and to cover the fees of future construction workers, and, most recently, removing the requirement for most migrant workers to obtain an exit permit in order to leave the country.

The UAE took the most steps to respond to modern slavery, achieving the highest (B) rating within the region while Kuwait and Saudi Arabia achieved the lowest (CC) ratings. Even a seemingly strong national response is undermined where there are subgroups of people, whether citizens or not, who suffer high levels of discrimination, as they are likely to be “left behind” where responses to slavery are concerned. This can be linked to a lack of legal status in a country; for example, women in Saudi Arabia or domestic workers who fall outside the protection of labour laws in

most GCC countries. Although recent moves to address gender equality for Saudi women have been deservedly lauded, it is unlikely that female domestic workers will see a similar improvement in their rights for some time.

Other countries in the region, such as Jordan and Lebanon, have put in place some protections for migrant populations but struggle to deal with ongoing conflict in Syria and Yemen and the flow of people fleeing these crises. State actors and international organisations continue to grapple with the enormous logistical and operational challenges of providing support to tens of millions of people – 22.2 million in Yemen¹⁶ and 13.1 million in Syria¹⁷ – requiring humanitarian assistance in the region. Looking elsewhere, there should be serious concern about the safety and services available

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to current and future trafficking victims in Iraq and the potential for the post-conflict phase to exacerbate human trafficking amid intensifying ethnic sectarian tension, widespread presence of militias in retaken villages, rising gang violence, gaps in the tracing of people on the move, widespread lack of identification documents potentially leading to statelessness, and rejection from communities. These conditions, previously

described as creating “a perfect storm” for exacerbating vulnerability for many in the region, have worsened.

Some progress has been made by governments and civil society actors in efforts to protect and assist victims of trafficking and exploited migrants despite the enormous challenge of operating in a region where conflict has weakened the rule of law, aggravated economic crises, compromised physical safety and security, and fuelled risky migration and displacement of millions of people. Countries in the region continue to show generosity in allowing millions of displaced people and refugees to remain, despite growing unease from local populations. However, a great deal more is required to ensure that modern slavery is tackled at all levels – from countering the persisting patriarchal and xenophobic attitudes that allow modern slavery to thrive in the Arab States, to ensuring that changes in law are enforced and perpetrators are tried.

Recommendations

- › **Wealthy countries in the region with greater capacity must do more to address modern slavery.** The government of Qatar has made moves in the right direction and sustained progress on migrant protections and victim support is urged. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE have vast economic resources at their disposal to actively combat modern slavery within their borders and across the region and now must demonstrate the political will to do so.
- › **Leadership from governments is needed to prioritise the prevention of all forms of modern slavery across the region and ensure that this leads to direct action.** This should include governments reporting annually and publicly on the steps they are taking to end modern slavery. This should include reporting from all relevant departments and ministries – interior, foreign affairs, labour, health, and justice.
- › **Governments must address pervasive discrimination against migrants and women, which creates and exacerbates vulnerability to modern slavery.** This should begin by generating public awareness that discriminatory and exploitative actions will be publicly addressed. Utilise the media and the criminal justice sector to call out individuals and companies for discriminatory and exploitative treatment, and fine or convict perpetrators for non-compliance.
- › **Governments must address lack of protection in labour law of migrant workers and particularly high-risk groups such as domestic workers.** This must include the ratification and implementation of relevant international conventions and instituting equal rights and protections for migrant workers at a national level, including the freedom to leave or transfer jobs and to exit the country without employer consent. It must also include the regulation of recruitment agencies nationally to ensure recruitment meets ethical standards and, where it does not, withdrawal of the practicing licences of recruitment agencies.
- › **Governments must improve identification of victims across the region.** As a first step, governments must ensure that law enforcement personnel prioritise victim protection and referral to services instead of detention for absconding.
- › **Governments should focus greater attention on the impact of conflict, which exacerbates vulnerability to slavery.** This includes areas in which the conflict is active, as well as neighbouring areas which are dealing with the flow on effect, such as is the case in Lebanon and Jordan. In order to prevent further exacerbating these risks, GCC countries should allocate and increase direct funding to organisations (CSOs, INGOs, UN) providing targeted anti-trafficking services to vulnerable groups and identified victims. Further, governments across the region should repeatedly and forcefully condemn the practices of terrorist and militia groups, particularly those engaged in the enslavement and sale of women and girls.

ABOUT THE INDEX

Walk Free Foundation

Modern slavery is a complex and often hidden crime that crosses borders, sectors, and jurisdictions. The Walk Free Foundation believes that a strong multifaceted approach is needed to end modern slavery. This includes building a robust knowledge base to inform action, driving legislative change in key countries and harnessing the power of businesses and faiths. Through a combination of direct implementation, grassroots community engagement, and working in partnership with faiths, businesses, academics, NGOs, and governments around the world, the Walk Free Foundation believes we can end modern slavery.

The Walk Free Foundation provides the Secretariat for the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, and champions business sector engagement in this regional program. It is also advocating strongly for all leading global economies to enact laws to ensure all organisations are held accountable for taking proactive steps to remove modern slavery from their supply chains.

The Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index has developed world leading research to provide measurement of the size and scale of modern slavery, as well as assess country-level vulnerability and governmental responses. Together with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Walk Free Foundation developed the joint Global Estimates of Modern Slavery.

Alongside this, the Global Freedom Network is working to catalyse world faiths in the fight against modern slavery. The Walk Free Foundation is also scaling effective anti-slavery responses in partnership with the Freedom Fund and seed funded the global activist movement, Freedom United, whose community of eight million supporters are campaigning for change. The Walk Free Foundation continues to work with faiths, governments and NGOs throughout the world to agitate for change and support initiatives dedicated to the eradication of modern slavery in all its forms.

What is modern slavery?

FIGURE 1

Modern slavery is an umbrella term



Terminology

Countries use differing terminologies to describe modern forms of slavery. This includes how they describe slavery itself, but also other concepts such as human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, forced or servile marriage, and the sale and exploitation of children.

In this report, *modern slavery* is used as an umbrella term that focuses attention on the commonalities across these concepts. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, abuse of power, or deception.

Refer to Appendix 1 in the 2018 Global Slavery Index for full terminology, available for download at www.globalslaveryindex.org.

About modern slavery

Modern slavery is a hidden crime that affects every country in the world. In the period between this Index and the last (published in 2016), modern slavery was found in many industries including garment manufacturing, mining, and agriculture, and in many contexts, from private homes to settlements for internally displaced people and refugees. Instances have been identified in Thai fishing, coal mining in North Korea, in the homes of diplomats in Australia, car-wash stations in the United Kingdom, cocoa agriculture in Côte d'Ivoire, and cattle ranching in Brazil, just to name a few examples.

Modern slavery impacts on all of us, from the food we consume to the goods we purchase. It is everyone's responsibility to address and eliminate this crime everywhere it occurs.

Nearly every country in the world has committed to eradicate modern slavery through their national legislation and policies. Governments have a central role to play by enacting legislation, providing safety nets to their populations, and pursuing criminals who participate in this heinous crime. As no single actor can address all these challenges, governments need the support and engagement of the private sector, civil society, and the community at large.

The Index

The Global Slavery Index is a tool for citizens, non-government organisations (NGOs), businesses, and governments to understand the size of the problem, existing responses, and contributing factors so that they can advocate for and build sound policies that will eradicate modern slavery.

All supporting data tables and methodology are available to download from the Global Slavery Index website:

www.globalslaveryindex.org.

METHODOLOGY

Estimating prevalence

In 2017, the inaugural Global Estimates of Modern Slavery were produced by the ILO and the Walk Free Foundation in partnership with IOM.¹⁸ The regional estimates produced through this collaboration form the starting point for the national level estimates presented here for 167 countries.

These national estimates were calculated¹⁹ using individual and country-level risk factors of modern slavery. The analysis draws on data from nationally representative surveys implemented through the Gallup World Poll, including a module on modern slavery in 48 countries, and data from the Global Slavery Index Vulnerability Model.

The final set of risk factors were selected from an exhaustive list of variables to optimally predict confirmed cases of forced labour and forced marriage. The model was then used to generate average predicted probabilities of modern slavery by country. The regional totals in the 2017 Global Estimate were then apportioned based on each country's average predicted probability of modern slavery. A final calculation accounting for state imposed forced labour was performed to reach the final estimated prevalence of all forms of modern slavery.

A detailed description of the methodology is set out in Appendix 2: Part B of the Global Slavery Index, available for download at www.globalslaveryindex.org.

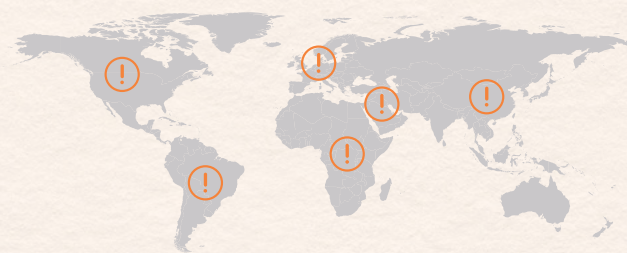


Interviewer for Gallup conducting an interview in Nepal.

Photo credit: Gallup.

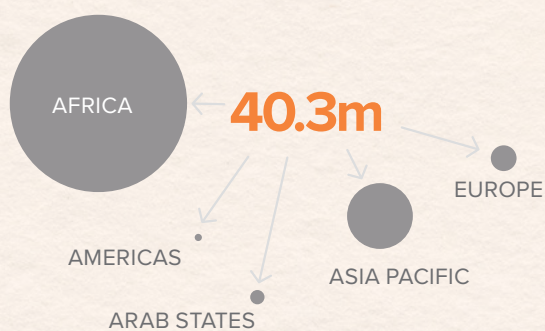
FIGURE 2

Estimating the prevalence of slavery at the national-level



1/ Individual and country-level risk factors were identified and then used to build a model that predicts modern slavery. This drew on data from the Global Slavery Index Vulnerability Model and nationally representative surveys.

2/ Individual predictions were aggregated into country-level risk scores.



3/ Regional-level population estimates of modern slavery from the 2017 Global Estimate were allocated to individual countries in the region, proportionate to each country's relative risk.

4/ The number of victims was then estimated by applying the country prevalence estimate to population data for each country and estimates of state imposed forced labour added to arrive at the final estimate of all forms of modern slavery.

Measuring vulnerability

The Global Slavery Index Vulnerability Model is built on statistical testing and processes to identify the factors that explain or predict the prevalence of modern slavery. The 2018 Vulnerability Model provides a risk score for 167 countries based on an analysis of data covering 23 risk variables across five major dimensions.

Refer to Appendix 2: Part A in the Global Slavery Index, available for download at www.globalslaveryindex.org.

FIGURE 3
Vulnerability Model 2018



Measuring government response

The Government Response Index provides a comparative assessment of the legal, policy, and programmatic actions that 181 governments are taking to respond to modern slavery. This is based on data collected on 104 indicators that are relevant to understanding how each government is tracking towards achieving five milestones:

- 1/** Survivors of slavery are identified and supported to exit and remain out of slavery.
- 2/** Criminal justice mechanisms function effectively to prevent modern slavery.

3/ Coordination occurs at the national and regional level, and governments are held to account for their response.

4/ Risk factors such as attitudes, social systems, and institutions that enable modern slavery are addressed.

5/ Government and business stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labour.

Refer to Appendix 2: Part C in the Global Slavery Index, available for download at www.globalslaveryindex.org.

FIGURE 4
Government Response Index 2018





PRACTICAL AND FAIR LABOUR SOLUTIONS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

James Sinclair | International lawyer and co-founder of FSI Worldwide



The crowded employment migration corridors that link South Asia and East Africa with the Gulf Co-Operation Council (GCC) countries are notoriously beset by bonded and forced labour abuses. The problems are well understood, but tangible solutions have been difficult to identify. This is because of the myriad, interlinking tiers of corruption, vested interests and poor law enforcement. However, real advances are being made by progressive organisations who are keen to demonstrate the benefits of best labour practice and who embrace innovative collaboration between key stakeholders.

However, we must not underestimate the scale of the task before us; it is nothing less than the retooling of the commercial ecosystems that currently support illegal and unethical working practices.

The change needs to start with a granular understanding of the reality of labour exploitation. At FSI we own our entire ethical recruitment infrastructure, down to the village level. We are the first handshake for a job-seeker and we stay with them all the way through their working journey, from training, deployment, welfare, payroll and management. In so doing, we can guarantee to employers that their staff are trained, motivated and happy. This produces significant productivity and quality benefits for the employer.

However, we are not naïve to the current commercial reality, which is that many contractors currently pay little or nothing for lower-skilled migrant worker recruitment and some benefit from large kickbacks paid by recruiters. How can we convince them away from their old commercial models and their embedded supplier relationships?

The truth is that appeals to ethics, quality and productivity have not succeeded in driving significant demand for fair labour services. We need a more integrated approach. One that recognises the need for a level commercial playing field and the importance of integrated, collaborative engagement between governments and contractors at all levels of the supply chain.

Key to unlocking significant demand for fair labour services will be the use of technology and innovative approaches to peripheral services such as banking and insurance. FSI is currently in the final stages of concluding agreements with a progressive company in the GCC to provide several thousand fair labour workers onto a project. Their employment contracts and other key documents will be held on a secure but auditable central system and their payroll will be executed via auditable mobile banking apps. The company's insurance regime will be significantly cheaper to reflect their reduced risk profile. This alone offsets the marginal increase in costs to facilitate the fair

labour model. The insurance underwriting world is rapidly evolving its labour risk protocols. Just as it did with health and safety regulations, labour insurance regulations and claims enforcement will play a major role in future corporate governance. Progressive companies understand this and are keen to ensure they are ahead of the curve.

FSI has also held discussions with various governments to try and evolve procurement procedures to require the introduction of transparency technology and fair labour principles as a pre-contractual requirement for government contractors. Such changes will take time to negotiate but it is clear that the direction of travel is towards greater transparency, accountability and law enforcement.

The increasing incidence of strategic litigation in the home jurisdictions of multinationals operating in the GCC is going to bring ever greater pressure to bear on companies employing lower-skilled migrant workers from Asia and Africa. In the event of a lawsuit, they will be required to demonstrate effective control measures to prevent illegal labour exploitation within their supply chains.

By embracing cost-effective but demonstrably ethical and compliant supply chain practices now, companies can insure themselves against suit whilst also gaining a competitive advantage over their 'old model' competitors. Appeals to ethical concerns alone have not significantly changed corporate behaviour. However, lower insurance costs, better project outcomes, improved marketplace reputation and the knowledge that the lawyers will leave you alone, are proving to be persuasive arguments.

Ultimately, if we are to solve the problem of illegal and unethical exploitation of lower skilled workers, it is going to require an integrated and collaborative approach. It is also going to require innovation and leadership. Those companies who are prepared to take the first steps in this area should be applauded and supported. Those who remain wedded to the practices of the past will increasingly find that the tide of technology, law and market sentiment is against them.

If you would like to know more about the work of FSI, please contact us at www.fsi-worldwide.com.

New Delhi, India, 29 September 2016.

Indian workers from the eastern state of Bihar gather in a hotel in New Delhi, after they were repatriated by the Indian government from Saudi Arabia. They initially left India to earn money to send back to their families, but have returned with only harrowing tales after an oil price slump threw the economy into turmoil, leaving thousands of poor migrant labourers stranded. Migrant workers from South Asia working in Gulf Cooperation Council countries can face situations of debt bondage, where they pay exorbitant fees to recruitment agencies and are forced to work for little or no pay until this debt is repaid. While working they can also experience poor or dangerous living and working conditions, have their passports withheld, and are subject to threats of and actual violence.

Photo credit: Money Sharma/AFP/Getty Images.



REPOSITIONING THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK IN LEBANON ONE EMPLOYER-WORKER RELATIONSHIP AT A TIME

Olivia Grace Boueri | Program Coordinator, Equip-Center for Employers of Domestic Workers, Beirut, Lebanon



“But if I give her a day off, she will get pregnant or run away!” is a reaction Equip Center for Employers of Domestic Workers hears more often than not. It should be expected in Lebanon, where a staggering 75% of migrant domestic workers (MDWs), women hired from various African and Asian countries to live and work as “nannies” or “maids” in private households, are not given an independent day off.

In a country with an estimated 250,000 MDWs, that number quickly becomes alarming. And it doesn’t stop there. Detrimental and mainstream employer practices extend beyond not giving the “help” an independent day off. It is reported that 30% of employers lock their “maid” inside their homes, 40% deny their “girl” access to a phone, 90% confiscate their legal and travel documents, such as passports, 60% of employers deny their “Sri Lanki” sufficient food, and an estimated 60% do not pay or underpay their “helpers”. (“Girl”, “the one at mine”, “the girl who helps” and the “Sri Lanki” are common terms used to refer to domestic workers, terms that reveal the possessive and derogatory language surrounding domestic work and the misconception domestic work is excluded from the professional sphere of “employment”).

The United Nations and International Labor Organization constitute these working conditions as modern day slavery. Yet for Lebanese employers, socialised under the *kafala* system (an informal visa sponsorship system that ties workers to their employers with restrictive immigration rules), these practices are not only normative but, by most, are considered good measures to safeguard employment relationships.

Two workers are dying in Lebanon each week (from failed escape attempts, suicide, natural causes or murder) a signifier that these “good measures” are ending in anything but good. And if the employment relationship doesn’t end because of death, there’s a high likelihood it may end in the worker ‘running away’ or if she’s able, to terminate the contract legally. In spite of the high rate of failed relationships, the demand for cheap labor in Lebanon is only projected to increase and employer mentalities projected to remain the same – detrimental and benefitting neither employer nor worker.

Equip-Center, launched in November 2016, seeks to change this status quo and radically alter how Lebanon recruits and employs live-in domestic workers. In its one and a half years of operation, Equip has engaged more than 160 employers into at least one of its six needs-based services all designed to improve and professional employer-worker relationships.

Employers seeking a solution on how to build positive and professional employment relationships with the worker they employ can enroll into (1) **Getting Started** (ethical recruitment via direct-hire or an agency), (2) **Airport Welcome** (a comprehensive integration and onboarding program), (3) **Language Learning** (to boost worker’s

communication abilities to improve trust and reduce frustrations, (4) **First Aid** (vocational training to empower workers and reassure employers with young or elderly), (5) **Organised Outings** (fun day off programs for workers who do not have access to an independent day off), (6) **Mediation** (employer-worker or employer-agency dispute resolution), and eventually enroll into Professionalising Child Care, Professionalising Elderly Care, Hygiene and Safety in the Kitchen, and Managing Documents.

While some services, such as First Aid and Getting Started attract the widest range of employers, others such as the Organised Outings and Airport Welcome attract fewer clients, a reminder that Equip's concept is progressive and challenges almost 50 decades of behavior and thinking, a feat not all employers are receptive to.

"Equip will never succeed," said Fady, a client who enrolled Zeny, the Filipina worker he employs, into a First Aid training and one Organised Outing program before dropping out. "As long as we are paying thousands of dollars in recruitment fees to the agencies, we will never be open to give her a day off, or a phone or anything that could risk her running away".

Others, still wary of Equip, are willing to test out its merits. "After two failed employment relationships, I had to grapple with maybe I was doing something wrong. That's why I called (Equip)." said Sara, a mother of two and recent employer of Tegest, a worker from Ethiopia. "All these concepts are new, you have to realise it's scary for us (employers) but since my previous relationships failed, I thought, 'why not test this out'."

And for others, Equip couldn't have come fast enough. "Equip is exactly what we need in Lebanon," said Tamara, who enrolls the person she employs into Organised Outings and Getting Started. "It opened my eyes to the brilliant fact that I am an employer and my help is an employee and we both have rights and responsibilities."

Exchanging normalised abuse for rights-based employment practices will not happen overnight or even in a generation. Yet, gradually, one client at a time, Equip-Center raises awareness on the value of domestic work as a profession.

Beirut, Lebanon, 28 April, 2013

Foreign nationals working as domestic workers take part in a parade to mark Labour Day. Many migrant domestic workers experience forced labour and sexual exploitation while working as "nannies" or "maids" in Beirut. There are reports that significant numbers of domestic workers are not given a day off, while others are locked in their homes, denied access to a phone, have their passports withheld, receive little or no payment, or experience violence and sexual assault.

Photo credit: /AFP/Getty Images.



CHILD MARRIAGE AMONG SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

Gabriella Nassif | Researcher at the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World



In 2016, the United Nations estimated nearly 13.5 million Syrians were in need of humanitarian assistance. Neighbouring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon are home to nearly half of the estimated 5 million Syrians living as refugees outside of Syria. In both countries, the continued influx of refugees is putting major pressure on an already weakened national system and humanitarian aid networks, both of which are unable to adequately respond to the needs of these communities. Limited access to humanitarian aid services and the legal limitations to working as a Syrian refugee has pushed many Syrian families into extreme poverty, putting pressure on all family members to work and earn an income through often precarious and high-risk means.

The disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls is today well known, and Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, Jordan, and other Arab countries are not exempt from the increasing prevalence of violence. In Lebanon, sexual and gender-based violence is one of the primary risks affecting female Syrian refugees, with the most commonly reported forms being domestic violence, sexual violence – including rape and physical assault – and early marriage. Social stigma and conservative gender norms contribute to low reporting rates, and women and girls are further discouraged from reporting given the common belief that Lebanese authorities will not pay similar attention to Syrian cases versus Lebanese cases.

Child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) has been the centre of international focus during the last few years of the Syrian crisis. In both Jordan and Lebanon, rates of child

marriage have increased almost twofold since the start of the conflict: in the past three years, the percentage of child Syrian marriages in Jordan from 15 per cent to nearly 36 per cent.²⁰ In Lebanon, accurate statistics vary given that the many marriages among Syrian refugee communities are not formally registered, but current estimates note that more than a third of Syrian women in Lebanon were married before the age of 18, with nearly 24 per cent of Syrian refugee adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 17 currently married.²¹

Reasons for CEFM among Syrian refugees vary. In Lebanon, a study conducted by the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) in collaboration with the American University of Beirut found that fears of sexual violence, and the desire to protect the reputation and honour of young women and girls both contributed to family decisions to marry off their

daughters.²² Other reports cite the strain on households to provide for themselves as the main reason for child marriage. Limited income, unfavourable living situations – such as camp settings, or the informal tented settlements (ITS) in Lebanon, and limited access to humanitarian services all contribute to heightened vulnerabilities for Syrian refugees; for families of young girls, marriage is understood to be comparably better than the perceived and actual threats of sexual and physical violence single women and adolescent girls are susceptible to.²³

Contrary to the belief that marriage will protect young girls, CEFM negatively impacts the livelihoods of young women and girls. CEFM is a violation of human rights, and is often accompanied by sexual, physical, and emotional violence at the hands of their new husbands. Young girls are often completely unaware of the gender-normative requirements of marriage, including care of the household and children.

Many of these young girls are not physically ready to bear children, and often find themselves at risks for complications both during and after pregnancy, including malnourishment. Finally, for many young girls, marriage often means their forced removal from any formal education. In fact, keeping girls in school is cited as one of the best mechanisms for lowering and ultimately preventing instances of CEFM.

Many non-government organisations, UN agencies, and universities are working to map the current landscape of CEFM among Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University in collaboration with both WRC and Johns Hopkins University is currently conducting a prevalence survey on CEFM in South Lebanon as part of such nationwide efforts to collect accurate data on child marriage. This project and others like it all aim to highlight the gender-specific outcomes of forced displacement, including the increasing prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence.

Atmeh, Syria, January 2013.

Refugee camp for displaced persons in Syria. Refugees who have fled from Syria are currently housed in camps and in communities in Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq. In Lebanon, rates of child marriage among Syrian populations have increased twofold in the past three years. Limited access to humanitarian aid and legal restrictions on ability to work has pushed Syrian refugees to extreme poverty. Coupled with fears of sexual violence and the desire to protect the reputation and honour of young women and girls has contributed to family decisions to marry off their children early.

Photo credit: Joel Carillet/Getty Images.

MODERN SLAVERY IN THE ARAB STATES



The Arab States are currently both the source and recipient of the largest numbers of refugees and internally displaced people globally. As the region experiences conflict and resulting displacement – and given its position at the junction of migratory paths for Afghans, Sudanese, and Somalis fleeing conflicts in their homelands – vulnerability to modern slavery in the Arab States has sharply increased.

An estimated 5.7 million refugees originated in the region since mid-2016 and 12 million people were displaced internally in Middle Eastern countries.²⁴ The war in Syria has seen more than five million people flee into neighbouring Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, and Egypt, as well as Europe and other destinations. Similarly, in Iraq, conflict has caused the displacement of more than 2.7 million people within the country, and 3.6 million displaced people who have returned home as of March 2018.²⁵ This displacement, accompanied by severe economic decline, widespread violence and psychological distress, collapse of essential public services in many districts, and weak labour laws has contributed towards the vulnerability of refugees, internally displaced persons, minority groups, and ordinary citizens to trafficking and exploitation.

There appear to be organised groups within refugee camps making work arrangements for refugees and unaccompanied children. It is reported that Iraqi and Syrian refugee children in Lebanon, for example, work in the food service industry, textile factories, construction sector, and agricultural labour in conditions analogous to forced labour. In Iraq and Lebanon, Syrian refugee children are trafficked for purposes of exploitation, including begging and selling items on the street. In 2015, at least 1,500 children (75 percent of whom were Syrian) were reportedly begging and working as street vendors in and close to Beirut, working excessive hours to earn income for their families.²⁶ Some instances of illegal forced begging on the streets by women and children refugees and asylum-seeking in Jordan also exist.²⁷

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Ethnic and religious minorities such as the Assyrian and Yazidi communities are still suffering from the coordinated, systematic attacks and abductions from 2014 – the largest single capture of women this century.
.....

Children in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen are recruited into armed groups and militias. There are clear cases of mass abduction and forcible recruitment by the Islamic State (IS). In 2015, IS militants told families in Mosul with two or more sons that one son would have to join the group.²⁸ Children were generally separated into two groups – five – to 10-year-olds were placed in religious education camps, while 10 – to 15-year-olds were forced into military training.²⁹ Children

took direct and indirect part in hostilities, shooting captives, planting explosive devices, engaging in armed attacks, acting as spies, transporting military supplies and equipment, and conducting patrols. Children were forbidden from speaking their own languages and forced to watch graphic propaganda videos including beheadings.³⁰ They were flogged, tortured, raped, and killed for resisting.³¹ Massive challenges now exist for the global community for the rescue, rehabilitation, and long-term reintegration of these children and others in similar circumstances.

Ethnic and religious minorities such as the Assyrian and Yazidi communities are still suffering from the coordinated, systematic attacks and abductions from 2014 – the largest single capture of women this century. Women and girls were forcibly transferred to IS holding sites and homes, forced to convert to Islam, forced to marry IS fighters, raped and sexually assaulted, disposed of as “gifts,” and sold in markets as slaves.

Despite the liberation of Mosul in 2017, where many Assyrian and Yazidi girls and women were held, few victims were released.

In addition to the high number of refugees and internally displaced persons, this is a region that hosts 17.6 million migrant workers,³² representing more than one-tenth of all migrant workers in the world and one in three workers in the Arab States. The Arab States region continues to be a destination for men and women from South and South-East Asia, and Sub-Saharan and North Africa, who are attracted to the region with promises of employment in the construction, manufacturing, agricultural, and hospitality sectors, and in domestic work. In most countries these migrant populations make up a large percentage of the workforce. For example, in 2015, the 1.7 million migrant workers living in Qatar accounted for more than 90 percent of the country's workforce.³³

The exploitation of migrant workers, particularly in the construction and services sectors, is widely reported across the region. Migrant workers are subject to practices that may amount to forced labour including extortionate recruitment fees, illegal confiscation of identity documents, withholding and non-payment of salaries, hazardous working conditions, unhygienic living conditions, unlawfully excessive work hours performed under the threat of deportation, and physical and sexual abuse.³⁴ Migrant workers accept high interest loans in their countries of origin to afford the exorbitant and often illegal recruitment fees they are coerced into paying.³⁵ Systematic under-, delayed-, and non-payment of migrant worker wages across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, coupled with growing debt at home, increases workers' dependence on their employment and reduces confidence to leave exploitative jobs or demand better working conditions.

Domestic workers remain one of the most exploited groups of workers in the Arab States. The GCC region has an estimated 2.4 million migrant domestic workers, most from Asia and Africa.³⁶ Many families and expatriate households depend on migrant domestic workers for household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for children or the elderly; however, the nature of the work carries substantial risk. Isolated in private homes, they often work within a cultural context where patriarchal, xenophobic, racist, and sexist attitudes converge to create a high degree of vulnerability to exploitation and physical/sexual abuse.³⁷ Exploitation is reported to take on various forms, including confiscation of passports, non-payment or partial payment of salaries, working long hours without breaks or days off, inadequate food and housing conditions, restrictions on communication, confinement, and cases of physical or sexual abuse. In Oman, domestic workers have reported employers threatening to kill them or falsely accusing them of crimes if they sought to leave. One Bangladeshi domestic worker who demanded her wages was falsely accused of theft, and once returned to her employer by the police she was abused for two days with her employer cutting her hair and burning her feet.³⁸

.....
*Domestic workers
 remain one of the most
 exploited groups of
 workers in the
 Arab States.*

In Kuwait, domestic workers report abuses including deprivation of food, sleeping on kitchen floors or balconies, confinement, and psychological abuse, including racist and xenophobic statements.³⁹

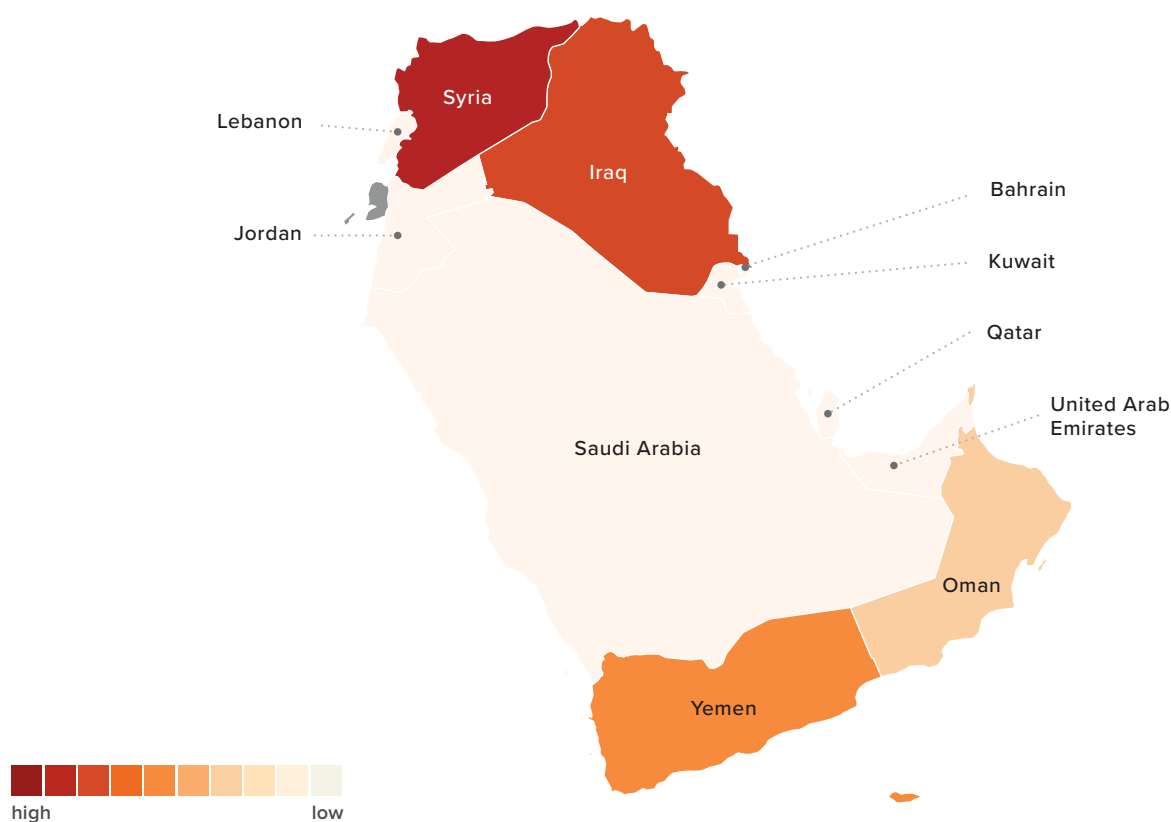
There is a significant gap in research and information on commercial sexual exploitation and forced marriage in the Arab states, but these continue to be issues, especially when linked to conflict. A rise in child marriages has been documented among Syrian refugee populations in Jordan, with the prevalence of early marriage among all registered marriages for Syrians increasing from 25 percent in 2013 to 31.7 percent in the first quarter of 2014.⁴⁰ Families are reportedly agreeing to early marriages to protect girls from sexual violence in times of conflict and to lessen economic burdens.⁴¹ Forced marriages used to traffic women into commercial sexual exploitation in foreign countries is also common. In Islamic State controlled areas, recent reports suggest Syrian and Iraqi women and girls face pressure to marry IS fighters and that some parents felt it important for their daughters to do so for economic security and physical protection.⁴²

Cultural and belief systems are core drivers of forced marriage, not only in the Arab States but in other regions, as well. As such, these marriages also take place outside of conflict situations, and in these cases women and girls are at greater risk of experiencing conditions similar to slavery and of being subjected to other forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and other forms of forced labour. There are many reasons for forced marriage, some of which are closely linked to longstanding cultural practices and understandings of gender roles, while others reflect financial needs. Across the Arab States region there are a number of customs/practices, such as *fasliyya*, *al-shighar*, *jin be jin*, *muta'a*, and *misyar*, under which women and girls can be married off and, accordingly, face an increased risk of exploitation. Some involve young girls and women being married in exchange for payment to their families, the cancellation of debt, or to settle family disputes. Forced marriages can also occur when a rapist is permitted to escape criminal sanctions by marrying the victim, usually with the consent of her family. Other practices take the form of trading one woman in marriage for another between tribes to avoid paying dowries, or of temporary marriages that bind a woman or girl to her husband for an agreed period of time – sometimes days or weeks, and in some cases only hours – but do not afford them any legal rights. This leaves them vulnerable to domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, and in many cases denies citizenship to any children from the marriage.⁴³

PREVALENCE

FIGURE 5

Prevalence rating by country



In 2017, Walk Free Foundation and the International Labour Organization (ILO), together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) produced the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, estimating that 40.3 million people were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2016. Of this number, an estimated 520,000 men, women, and children were living in modern slavery in the Arab States. This is a prevalence of 3.3 victims per 1,000 persons. When considering the forms of modern slavery, the largest share of those in modern slavery were victims of forced labour (2.2 victims per 1,000 people). The rate of forced marriage was 1.1 victims per 1,000 people.

Over half of all victims of forced labour exploitation (51 percent) were held in debt bondage and this affected a greater share of female victims than male victims. The Arab States accounted for 1 percent of the world's victims of forced sexual exploitation.

Within the region, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen together have both the highest prevalence of modern slavery and the highest absolute number of victims, accounting for 76 percent of all victims in the region (Table 1).

Although these are the most reliable estimates of modern slavery to date, they should be interpreted cautiously and considered very conservative given the gaps and limitations of data generally, and for the Arab States in particular. The current Global Estimates of Modern Slavery do not cover all forms of modern slavery; forms such as trafficking for the purposes of organ removal, child soldiers, or child marriage that could also constitute modern slavery cannot be adequately measured at this stage. Further, efforts to produce accurate estimates of modern slavery in the Arab States were significantly hampered by substantial gaps in the available data.

Comparability of the prevalence estimates with the previous Global Slavery Index

This edition of the Global Slavery Index introduces important improvements to the ways prevalence of modern slavery is measured. Building on the collaborative work undertaken with the ILO and IOM on the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, the Global Slavery Index results reflect changes to scope, methodology, and expanded data sources. The estimates are presented as a stock (or point in time) calculation rather than a flow (total over a period of time), include state imposed forced labour, and better estimates of sexual exploitation, and children in modern slavery. Further, we were able to count exploitation where it occurred more consistently due to a considerably larger number of surveys.

As a result of these advancements, the national prevalence estimates are not comparable with previous editions of the Global Slavery Index. Nonetheless, the strengthened methodology reflects stronger data, increased levels of data, and more systematic coverage of different forms of modern slavery. As such, while comparability from previous years is lost, the changes are justified by the need to continually improve our knowledge base. A detailed description of the changes to the methodology is set out in Appendix 2: Part B of the Global Slavery Index, available for download at www.globalslaveryindex.org.

These gaps include:

- › Lack of data on the large migrant worker population working in the region. Surveys were conducted in only two countries in the region (Lebanon and Jordan) and in a language (Arabic) that most migrant workers do not speak. Further, no surveys were conducted in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, due to issues of access to the migrant worker populations of interest, despite the incidence of forced labour reported by various sources in such sectors as domestic work and construction in GCC countries.
- › Lack of data on forced marriage where there are no surveys. Additional research is needed to unpack understandings of forced marriage in the region because, even where surveys can be conducted, there is some reluctance among respondents to consider a traditional cultural practice as a criminal act – and this impacts upon the veracity of data.
- › Lack of data from countries in conflict leads to a significant underestimate. It is typically not possible to survey in countries, such as Syria and Yemen,

that are experiencing profound conflict. However, it is known that conflict is a significant risk factor for increasing the vulnerability of civilian populations to exploitation. In some cases, this exploitation amounts to modern slavery. As conflict-affected populations face decreasing economic opportunities, many adopt negative coping mechanisms and dangerous survival strategies; as people flee anticipated or actual fighting, they may be pushed to settle in unsafe temporary locations where they may become targets for exploitation. Often the rule of law erodes and protection mechanisms for vulnerable people, if they existed, are diminished by lack of funding and inability to access people in unstable security conditions.

In light of the barriers to accurate measurement, the massive number of vulnerable people – whether they are migrants workers or internally displaced people and refugees – and the numerous reports of forced labour and forced marriage across the region, the reported 520,000 men, women, and children living in modern slavery in the Arab States is undoubtedly a significant underestimate.

TABLE 1

Estimates of prevalence of modern slavery by country⁴⁴

Regional rank	Country	Estimated prevalence (victims per 1,000 population)	Estimated absolute number of victims	Population
1	Syrian Arab Republic*	7.3	136,000	18,735,000
2	Iraq*	4.8	174,000	36,116,000
3	Yemen*	3.1	85,000	26,916,000
4	Oman*	2.1	9,000	4,200,000
5	Saudi Arabia*	1.9	61,000	31,557,000
6	Bahrain*	1.9	3,000	1,372,000
7	Jordan*	1.8	17,000	9,159,000
8	Lebanon*	1.7	10,000	5,851,000
9	United Arab Emirates*	1.7	15,000	9,154,000
10	Qatar*	1.5	4,000	2,482,000
11	Kuwait*	1.5	6,000	3,936,000

*Substantial gaps in data exist for the Arab States region and Gulf countries in particular. These gaps point to a significant underestimate of the extent of modern slavery in this region. As a result, the country-level estimates presented here are considered very conservative and should be interpreted cautiously.



Haifa, a 36-year-old woman from Iraq's Yazidi community who was taken as a sex slave by Islamic State group fighters, stands on a street during an interview with AFP journalists in the northern Iraqi city of Dohuk on November 17, 2016.

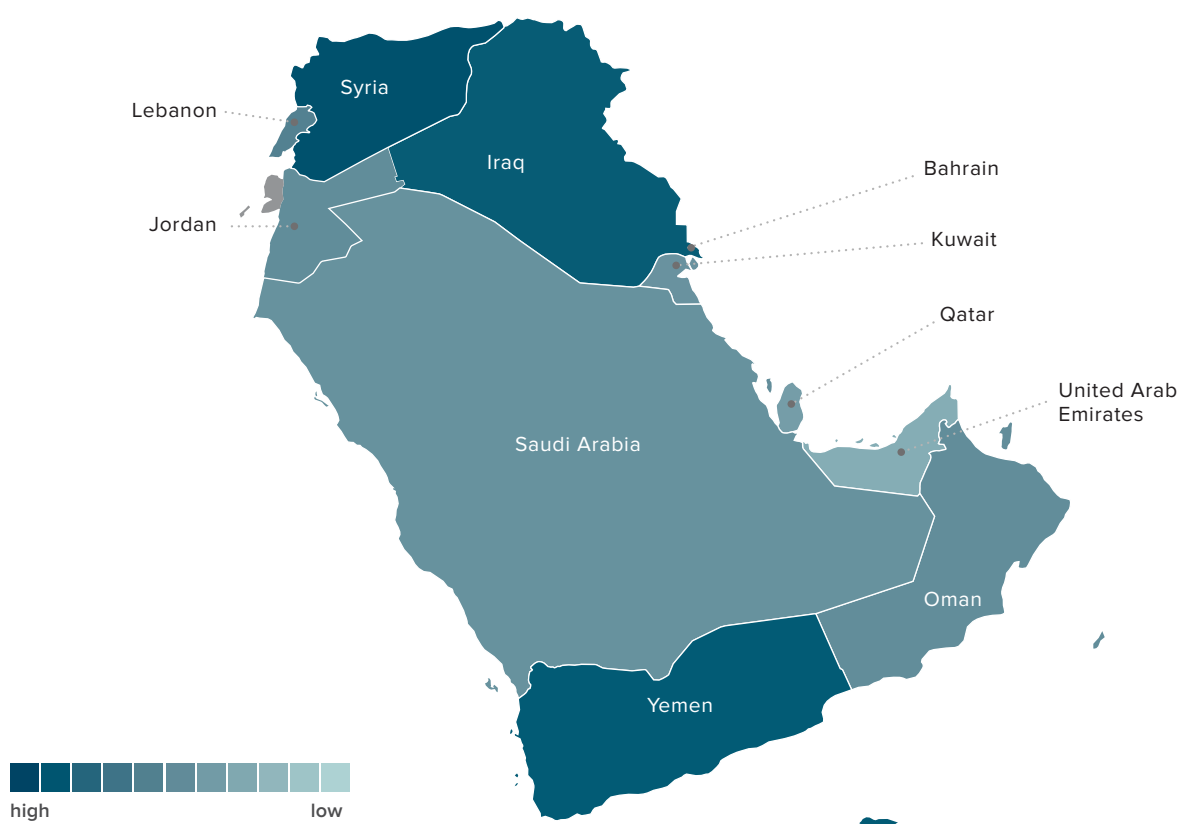
Haifa and her family were among thousands of members of the Yazidi minority shown no mercy by IS when it swept through areas north and west of the Iraqi capital in 2014. Men were gunned down and thousands of women, including Haifa and her younger sister, were taken as sex slaves.

Photo credit: Safin Hamed/AFP/Getty Images

VULNERABILITY

FIGURE 6

Overall vulnerability scores map



Our assessment of vulnerability is conducted at the national level and covers five dimensions: governance issues, lack of basic needs, inequality, disenfranchised groups and effects of conflict. A regional analysis of our vulnerability measures suggests higher risk of modern slavery in the Arab States than is evident in the prevalence data, with the Arab States rating as the second most vulnerable region (57 percent). The Arab States performed relatively well on the lack of basic needs dimension of the vulnerability model, but relatively poorly on the governance and effects of conflict dimensions (Figure 7). The regional score in the conflict dimension hides diversity within the region, with some countries such as Yemen, Syria, and Iraq scoring much higher on this dimension than other countries in the region. The regional average on measures of inequality points to slightly higher vulnerability than the global

average on this dimension (41 percent cf 38 percent) and, again, there is a great deal of diversity within the region, with scores ranging from a low of 25 percent in UAE to a high of 65 percent in Iraq.

Syria, Yemen, and Iraq had the highest overall vulnerability scores in the region (Table 2). United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait had the lowest overall vulnerability scores in the region, although each of these countries was found to have a substantial number of modern slavery victims. Countries with high vulnerability due to effects of conflict generally have higher vulnerability scores across the remaining four dimensions. This is evident in an analysis of our vulnerability measures, which consistently rank Syria, Iraq, and Yemen among the most, if not *the* most, vulnerable countries across the five dimensions of vulnerability.

Certain countries in the region continue to exhibit political instability and weak rule of law, and they appear to allow crimes to occur with impunity, particularly against certain populations such as undocumented migrants or women, all of which increase individual risk to modern slavery. **Syria, Yemen, and Iraq had the highest vulnerability scores relating to governance issues.** This includes political instability, women's physical security, weapons access, and the government's response to modern slavery. In Syria, political instability derived from the ongoing conflict there is adding to increasing unrest and uncertainty, as the government, in conflict with various opposition forces and the Islamic State, is focused primarily on waging military action to consolidate its control, and under these circumstances is certainly not prioritising protection for people who may be vulnerable to modern slavery. Conversely, the UAE, Qatar, and Jordan had the lowest vulnerability scores for this factor.

Severe economic decline and the collapse of essential public services persist as serious challenges within the region. According to our vulnerability assessment, **Yemen, Syria, and Iraq were rated with the highest vulnerability in terms of nourishment and access.** This includes undernourishment and lack of access to water, health services, and social safety nets. In Yemen, an estimated 17.8 million people are food insecure.⁴⁵ Due to conflict, closure of Yemen's ports for commercial shipping has resulted in a sharp increase in prices of basic commodities, accelerating food insecurity and the collapse of already fragile basic services.⁴⁶ Access to health services remains severely restricted with only half of all health facilities in the country still functioning, and those that are still in operation face severe shortages in medicines, equipment, and staff. Furthermore, more than 16 million people are without access to safe drinking water and sanitation.⁴⁷

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In Syria, since the start of the war, more than 4.8 million people have fled the country, and 6.1 million have been internally displaced.

The destruction of infrastructure and breakdown of government services has left the population without basic services, exacerbating their vulnerability. Intense violence also means that humanitarian aid services are often suspended, further contributing to the vulnerability of people. Qatar, the UAE, and Jordan were rated with relatively low vulnerability to the above factors, but this does not mean populations within these countries were not vulnerable.

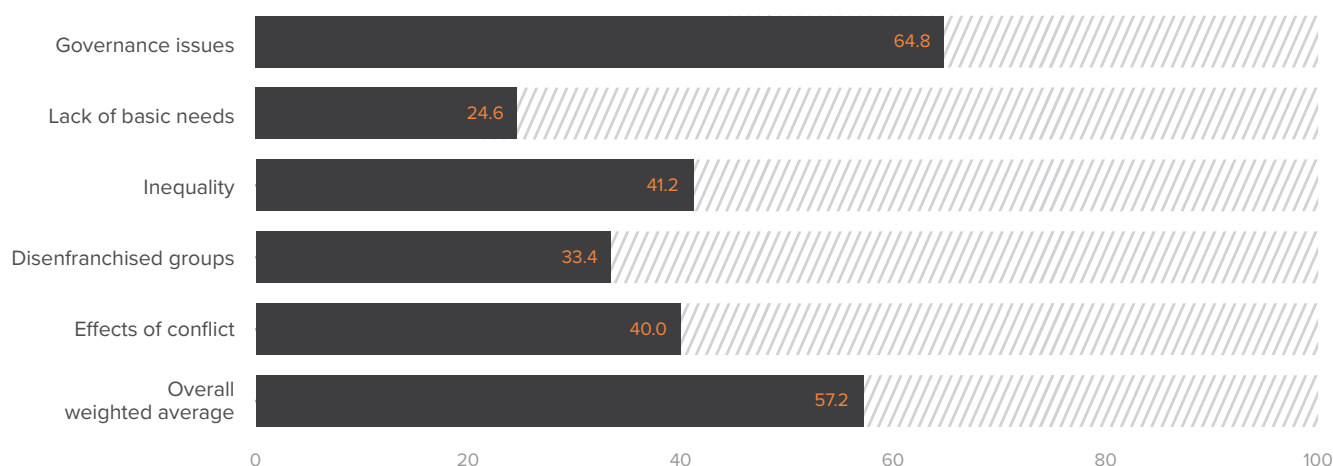
Iraq, Syria, and Yemen are also the highest rated in terms of inequality. This includes violent crime, income inequality, and confidence in judicial systems. Inequality as experienced in the region between the rich and poor intensifies vulnerability. The UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar were rated with relatively low vulnerability to the above factors.

In terms of disenfranchised groups, including immigrants and minorities, populations in Yemen, Jordan, and Iraq have the highest vulnerability. Throughout

the region, xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants and foreign workers from Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa persist due to attitudes that most migrants are uneducated, inferior, and suited only for "dirty" or low skilled jobs.⁴⁸ The *kafala* sponsorship system continues to operate, allowing employers to exert control over an employee's movement and employment.⁴⁹

Such a system amplifies the existing vulnerability of immigrants by restricting a worker's ability to change employers without the employer's permission or to escape exploitative situations and leave the country.⁵⁰ Attempts to escape exploitative situations may result in the worker being criminalised for "absconding," with punishments ranging from detention to deportation.⁵¹ In Iraq, bureaucratic and institutional discrimination continues against minorities including the Kurds, and religious minorities such as the Assyrians and Yazidis, among others.

FIGURE 7
 Regional average vulnerability scores by dimension, Arab States



While the “Arabisation” policy that forced minorities to change their ethnic identity ended in 2003, decades of deliberate exclusion of minorities from policy development, politics, decision-making, and education have led to greater vulnerability among these groups.⁵² Without adequate protections provided by the Kurdish and Iraqi governments in the post-conflict phase, the vulnerability of these groups will be exacerbated.

Our vulnerability data highlights Syria, Iraq, and Yemen as having the highest vulnerability to modern slavery due to high levels of conflict, terrorism, and displacement. Ongoing conflicts in the region continued to create vulnerability through displacement; displaced populations are at a higher risk of being exploited in a new environment with limited or no economic resources or social networks. In Syria, since the start of the war, more than 4.8 million people have fled the country, and 6.1 million have been internally displaced.⁵³ Refugees have fled to neighbouring states such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, straining already weak infrastructure and limited resources.

The situation is replicated in Yemen, where more than 3 million people have been forced to flee their homes since the escalation of conflict two and a half years ago, including 2 million who remain displaced.⁵⁴ Vulnerability remains high even when the conflict has ended. In Iraq, efforts to regain IS-controlled land have displaced close to 5.4 million people.⁵⁵ Major offenses against IS have resulted in extreme violence and mass civilian casualties. Abduction, kidnapping, trafficking, and slavery have been used by armed groups, militias, and state-supported actors to instil panic, generate fear, and control communities. Parties to the conflicts and opportunistic locals have profited from the mass displacement by selling abducted women and girls into sexual slavery and coercing internally displaced people in camps to sell organs for a fraction of their worth. In such cases, persecuted minorities and children have a heightened risk of being trafficked by such groups. Conversely, the wealthiest nations in the region appear to have evaded the effects of neighbouring conflicts, with the lowest vulnerability scores for this dimension reported for the UAE, Qatar, and Oman.

TABLE 2

Estimated vulnerability to modern slavery by country (%; the higher the score, the higher the level of vulnerability)

Country name	Governance issues	Lack of basic needs	Inequality	Dis-enfranchised groups	Effects of conflict	Overall weighted average
Syrian Arab Republic	85.6	36.9	62.5	33.4	95.4	92.3
Yemen	79.2	43.1	49.2	53.0	69.9	86.4
Iraq	72.6	34.9	65.2	46.6	89.4	85.7
Lebanon	59.1	22.6	48.1	44.8	47.8	58.9
Oman	68.7	20.5	37.8	33.4	6.4	50.1
Jordan	57.9	15.7	41.8	47.4	26.2	49.9
Bahrain	63.0	25.8	34.5	24.0	25.4	49.6
Saudi Arabia	63.2	21.9	30.1	14.2	32.2	46.3
Kuwait	59.7	20.1	29.3	29.3	28.5	45.9
Qatar	56.3	13.8	29.5	33.4	7.0	37.7
United Arab Emirates	47.9	15.1	24.7	7.8	11.9	26.8

IMPORTING RISK:

G20 countries in the Arab States region and import of products at-risk of modern slavery



An analysis of imported risk in the Global Slavery Index confirms that, generally speaking, citizens in G20 countries enjoy relatively low levels of vulnerability to this crime within their borders, and many aspects of their government responses to preventing this crime are comparatively strong. Nonetheless, businesses and governments in G20 countries are importing products that are at risk of modern slavery, with hardly any effort being applied by governments to regulate the labour conditions involved in their production. Accordingly, we conducted research globally to identify and validate a short list of products at risk of modern slavery, and then map out the extent to which these products are imported by G20 countries.

Saudi Arabia is the only G20 country in the Arab States region. In addition to the high level of vulnerability to modern slavery within the country discussed earlier in this report, an analysis of G20 imports indicates that a substantial amount of risk is being imported into Saudi Arabia. While this list is not exhaustive, the top five products at risk of modern slavery (according to US\$ value) imported by Saudi Arabia are (1) apparel and clothing accessories, (2) laptops, computers, and mobile phones, (3) rice, (4) fish, and (5) sugarcane. These products are sourced from 11 countries and are valued at US\$5.8 billion. These imports are sourced primarily from China (66 percent) and India (25 percent).

While G20 countries have imported risk for some time, they are in the early stages of responding to the connection between modern slavery and supply chains of businesses and public procurement. The Government Response Index tracks the progress of governments towards achievement of five milestones, including “Government and business stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labour,” and it is clear that existing efforts fall short of what is required. G20 countries achieved an average score of only 11 percent for their efforts to stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labour. Saudi Arabia is among the G20 countries that scored zero on these indicators, while the highest score was reported for the United States (65 percent). Saudi Arabia has yet to implement laws to minimise the risk of modern slavery in public supply chains or to encourage businesses to practice due diligence.

Labourers protect their faces from scorching sun as they take a break at the construction site of a new track for the Dubai Metro, on 22 May 2013. Thousands of foreign workers, mainly from South Asia, employed by Dubai's construction company Arabtec went on strike in 2013 to demand a rise in their wages. Despite labour reforms in UAE in recent years, migrant workers continue to be subjected to abuse that amounts to forced labour.

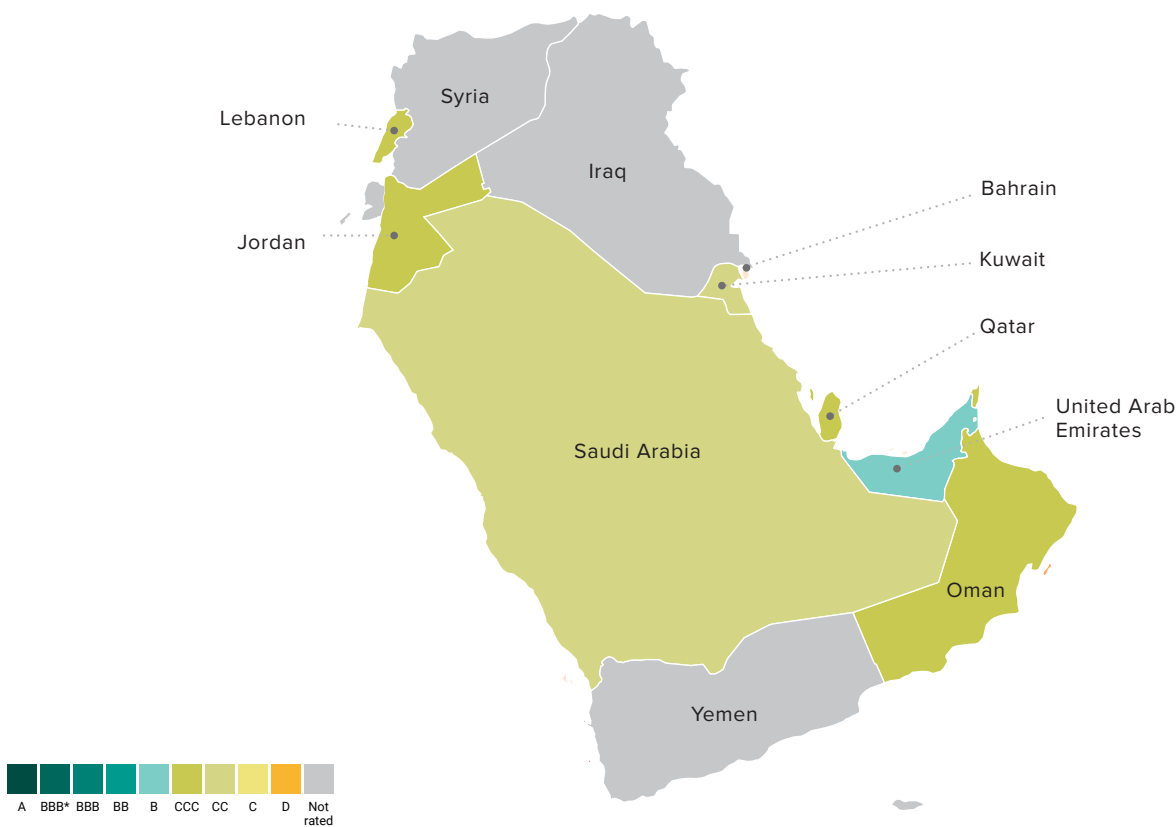
Photo credit: Marwan Naamani / AFP / Getty Images.



GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

FIGURE 8

Government response rating to modern slavery by country



Those in grey were not included in this year's government response index due to ongoing conflict, or due to a non-functioning government.

Government responses to modern slavery in the Arab States region were often characterised by inadequate victim protection and a weak criminal justice response. Due to the ongoing conflict and extreme disruptions to government functioning, we have not included ratings for Iraq, Syria, and Yemen this year.⁵⁶

The UAE took the most steps to respond to modern slavery, achieving the highest (B) rating within the region while Kuwait and Saudi Arabia achieved the lowest (CC) ratings. Jordan's rating dropped from B to CCC this year (Table 4). When correlated against GDP (PPP) per capita, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates all stand out as taking relatively limited action despite

the size of the problem and resources at their disposal. Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and Lebanon all maintained their CCC ratings.

Some notable improvements have been made. Qatar has pledged a series of labour reforms to improve the treatment of migrant workers. In 2016, Qatar announced a landmark decision to replace the *kafala* system with a contract-based law system aimed at ensuring greater protection for workers.⁵⁷ Under the *kafala* (sponsorship) system, a migrant's right to work and live in the host country is dependent on the sponsor, so workers are unable to enter or leave the country or seek alternative employment without their sponsor's written consent.⁵⁸

In 2017, Qatar ratified Law No.15 (Domestic Workers Law) granting labour protections for domestic workers. This new law guarantees domestic workers a maximum 10-hour workday, a weekly rest day, three weeks of annual leave, an end-of-service payment, and healthcare benefits.⁵⁹ Despite this, the law is still weaker than the country's general labour law and does not fully conform to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention.⁶⁰ The government has also announced its intention to introduce a minimum wage rate for all workers and undertake the renewal of residence permits directly with migrant workers in effort to replace the *kafala* system. Labour Dispute Resolution Committees established by Law No. 13 of 2017 will also be operationalised to offer effective and timely remedies to workers' grievances.⁶¹ The government had taken steps to reimburse the recruitment fees paid by migrant workers constructing the World Cup stadiums and to cover the fees of future constructions workers, a move that will see £3.6 million return to, or remain in, the hands of migrant workers.⁶² In early September 2018, the government removed the requirement for exit visas for migrant workers seeking to leave the country.⁶³ Previously, migrant workers had to seek their employer's permission to be able to leave, but with this new law, all workers covered by the Labour Code will be able to leave Qatar without a permit. The law does not apply to those not covered by the Labour Code, such as domestic workers, however, the government is currently working with the ILO to grant this group of workers the same rights.⁶⁴

Bahrain is also attempting to take positive steps away from the *kafala* system, with its cabinet approving plans to launch a pilot project in 2017 in which workers can sponsor themselves and work for multiple employers under new work permits.⁶⁵ At the time of writing, Bahrain had introduced a mandatory contract that employers seeking to hire a domestic worker must complete. Although the contract requires information on the nature of the work, work and rest hours, and days off, these conditions are still determined by the employer rather than regulated by law. A Wage Protection System is to be introduced in May 2018 and will include domestic workers.⁶⁶ In Kuwait, the government has been criticised for appearing to be "satisfied merely by the [Domestic Labour] law's existence,"⁶⁷ and for allowing migrant workers to remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to a lack of enforcement.⁶⁸ The lack of protection available to domestic workers in particular is highlighted in the many dangerous escape attempts or suicides that have been recorded over the years, including an incident involving an Ethiopian domestic worker who was captured on video by her employer as she first dangled, then fell from the seventh floor of an apartment building.⁶⁹ Further, a recent amnesty that allows workers with expired residencies to return home without penalty has been criticised for circumventing any real action on workers' rights, as under the amnesty workers are forced to leave without receiving the pay owed to them. Despite this, about

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The UAE took the most steps to respond to modern slavery, achieving the highest (B) rating within the region while Kuwait and Saudi Arabia achieved the lowest (CC) ratings.

TABLE 3

Movements in government response rating for the Arab States 2016 to 2018

Country	2016 Rating	Change in rating	2018 Rating
United Arab Emirates	B	◀▶	B
Jordan	B	▼	CCC
Qatar	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Bahrain	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Oman	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Lebanon	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Saudi Arabia	CC	◀▶	CC
Kuwait	CC	◀▶	CC

5,000 workers are believed to have availed themselves of the amnesty, with numbers continuing to rise.⁷⁰

Recent moves in Oman to require companies of a certain size to meet a 10 percent Omani hiring quota, in order to boost employment of nationals, have raised concerns for migrant workers. Companies that do not comply are barred from renewing work permits and, at the time of writing, the government had not addressed the impact on workers who would become undocumented as a result of sanctions placed on their companies.⁷¹

Despite regional and international pressure for all states to ban the *kafala* system, Saudi Arabia has declared it will not be abolishing the system under its ambitious "Vision 2030" plan to reform the economy.⁷² While migrant labour law reforms are a positive step, there is significant room for improvement to ensure the new systems are implemented.

Identification of victims remains worryingly low across the region. Only two countries have adopted and use clear guidelines for screening and identifying potential victims and only three countries have a national referral mechanism in place. Victim support services were provided or supported by the government in all countries. In Saudi Arabia, shelters are available for child beggars who are trafficking victims as well as welfare centres for female domestic workers, some who were potentially trafficked.⁷³ In Kuwait, victims were provided with legal, medical, and other support services in a shelter where staff communicate with employers to retrieve withheld travel documents and obtain payment for return tickets.⁷⁴ However, in five countries, services were unavailable to some victims of human trafficking, especially men, domestic workers, and forced labour victims. There have been reports that women are detained in shelters, and that many prefer to seek shelter in their embassies rather than in facilities funded by the host government. For workers from countries that have no embassy in the destination country, the situation is even more precarious.⁷⁵

Over half the countries in the region ran campaigns on how to report and identify victims of modern slavery. However, there is no evidence that these campaigns have led to an increase in members of the public reporting cases of modern slavery. While all countries have a reporting mechanism such as a hotline, this was not freely available in Lebanon and did not operate 24/7 in Bahrain or Qatar.

Overall, criminal justice responses remain weak throughout the region. Only Qatar has criminalised forced labour and no states have criminalised child prostitution or forced marriage. All countries have criminalised human trafficking, while Bahrain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE have not criminalised slavery. All countries except Lebanon provide training for prosecutors and the judiciary. However, even if training is provided, it generally lacks regularity, being systematic only in Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates.

Gaps in enforcement can be found in a lack of coordination and accountability mechanisms. Only two countries, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have a National Action Plan to combat some form of slavery, but neither of these countries has an independent body monitoring the plan's implementation or provides adequate funding for its National Action Plan.

All countries have undertaken a basic human trafficking awareness campaign once in the past five years to educate the public about the risks of modern slavery. This ranged from awareness campaigns through the Ministry of Education in Jordan to raise awareness of trafficking in public universities and high schools⁷⁶ to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) in Oman conducting awareness campaigns through the media and distributing pamphlets to migrant workers on their rights.⁷⁷

Despite the importance of migration in this region, only Jordan and Lebanon have conducted labour inspections in the informal sector to identify cases of modern slavery. Also, given the high number of asylum seekers within the region, only Lebanon and Oman have systems in place to allow asylum seekers to seek protection. While Lebanon has not ratified the Refugee Convention, nor does it have specific legislation, the country is proactively engaged in refugee issues and refugees are generally able to receive protection within its borders.

Little information is available on whether Arab states are making efforts to stop sourcing goods or services linked to modern slavery. No evidence exists of Arab states adopting public procurement policies to minimise the risk of governments purchasing products linked to forced labour.

TABLE 4
Government response rating, milestone percentage, and total score by country

Rating	Country	Support survivors	Criminal justice	Coordination	Address risk	Supply chains	TOTAL
B	United Arab Emirates	63.0	41.1	56.3	42.9	0.0	47.8
CCC	Jordan	48.1	42.8	31.3	38.1	0.0	38.6
CCC	Qatar	53.0	31.7	31.3	42.9	0.0	35.4
CCC	Bahrain	55.2	37.2	18.8	31.0	0.0	32.6
CCC	Oman	32.4	22.8	12.5	59.5	0.0	32.0
CCC	Lebanon	33.9	30.0	31.3	38.1	0.0	31.3
CC	Saudi Arabia	32.4	42.8	37.5	26.2	0.0	27.9
CC	Kuwait	28.7	33.9	25.0	45.2	0.0	27.8

Ahmedabad, India, 17 March 2017.

Wahidaben Nasirkhan Pathan holds a photo of her sister Hafjabanu Rajabhusen, who has been reported missing in Saudi Arabia following a dispute with her employer and employment agent. Gujarat state minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasama said Indian domestic worker Hafjabanu was trying to return to India after 'being exploited and tortured' by a Saudi family in Riyadh, where she was working through a Mumbai-based employment agency. Relatives say they have not been in contact with Hafjabanu since she missed a March 16 flight back to India.

Photo credit: Sam Panthaky/AFP/Getty Images.



REGIONAL RESPONSE



All countries within the Arab States region are involved in some form of regional response. Various regional bodies exist to promote collaboration between the countries on key issues affecting the region, including migration and human trafficking, however there is little evidence of action under the auspices of these bodies, suggesting that these are not priority issues for governments in this region.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a regional political organisation comprised of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. In 2016, GCC members and the United Kingdom launched a GCC-UK Strategic Partnership to foster closer relations and develop collective responses to regional issues. This included pledging to work together to support refugees and fight human trafficking through victim support and accountability measures for perpetrators.⁷⁸ Importantly, GCC member states agreed to ensure compliance with international conventions on forced labour and discuss initiatives to combat human trafficking as well as improve identification of traffickers and victims.⁷⁹

Similarly, in 2016, at an event organised by the Omani National Commission for Human Trafficking in collaboration with United Nations office on Drugs and Crime for the GCC states, Arab experts met to discuss human trafficking and its links to ongoing conflicts. This was part of an Arab initiative to build capacity to combat human trafficking in accordance with relevant UN conventions and standards.⁸⁰

Mounting tensions among GCC member states have raised questions about the council's future. In December 2017, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE did not send heads of state to participate in the 38th GCC summit meeting due to growing hostilities between Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain. The summit had to be cut from a two-day meeting to a one-day session and the separate announcement of a new cooperation committee consisting of only the UAE and Saudi Arabia added to tensions and ongoing concerns about the council's ability to promote cooperation and collaboration amongst all member states.⁸¹

The League of Arab States (LAS), or Arab League, is another regional organisation bringing together Arab countries with the purpose of strengthening cooperation among members.⁸² In collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, the LAS launched the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration (ARCP) in 2015 as a state-driven, informal forum to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between LAS member states on migration issues. Although the ARCP endorsed a 2016-2017 work plan, little information is available on what the plan entails.⁸³

In collaboration with UNODC, the LAS has set up a regional program for 2016-2021 to help guide UNODC's efforts in the Middle East and North Africa and further strengthen national and regional efforts to combat transnational organised crime, drugs, and terrorism.⁸⁴ In 2016, the United Nations Security Council met with members of the LAS in the first "consultative meeting" between these two bodies.⁸⁵ During this meeting, representatives from LAS noted the overwhelming impact the refugee crisis has had on host countries, as well as the lack of financial resources needed to provide protection to vulnerable groups.

The LAS has established a regional technical task force, in coordination with its member states and UN agencies, to discuss the Arab region's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, to set priorities, and to develop a mechanism for reporting every five years at the regional and national levels.⁸⁶ The LAS also runs capacity building programs to improve the migration management capacity of Arab governments, along with a program on crime prevention and human trafficking, through which it has conducted studies and organised conferences, seminars, and field visits.⁸⁷ It is unclear if these programs or activities have been evaluated or what they have achieved.

REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS



In a joint report with IOM published in 2015, we detailed vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers in the Arab States region and set out a range of measures to increase protection. While acknowledging that governments in the region were faced with competing priorities such as security, terrorism, and humanitarian assistance for refugees and internally displaced people, the recommendations set out in that report were intended to address the following overarching issues:

- › Pervasive discrimination against migrants.
- › Lack of protection in labour law for particularly high-risk groups such as domestic workers, and the role of the *kafala* system in preventing workers from leaving abusive employers without permission.
- › Lack of rights awareness among migrant workers.
- › Laws, policies, and attitudes that discriminate against women.
- › The need to improve victim identification, including among refugee populations.
- › The need to ensure victims of trafficking are not being routinely arrested and detained.
- › The need to strengthen victim support services.
- › Ensure all migrant workers are physically present when work permits are issued and renewed to ensure that the workers are willing to work and/or remain in their current employment and their employers do not fraudulently retain the workers without their consent.
- › Ensure that migrant workers are able to freely leave or transfer jobs and to exit the country without employer consent and abolish provisions in the law that might criminalise victims' flight from exploitative situations.
- › Provide a period of amnesty for migrant workers without proper residency or exit clearances, and when doing so, ensure that such processes do not circumvent worker's rights by forcing them to leave without receiving the pay owed.

Despite some positive steps in countries throughout the region, these issues and the related recommendations are still relevant today.

Strengthen legislation

- › Governments should ratify and implement ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers and translate it into national legislation to ensure protection for migrant workers.
- › Ensure all workers are granted equal protection under national labour laws. Where necessary, reform labour laws should ensure this.
- › Build the capacity of prosecutors, lawyers, and the judiciary for a deeper understanding of when the labour law or counter-trafficking law should be applied. Where there is a complex or significant case load, develop the capacity of the judiciary by assigning a specialised judge to handle cases of trafficking.
- › Investigate ways to minimise the duration of litigation procedures for migrant workers; for example, establish private courts with specialist judges. Migrant workers should be able to have expedited processes so they are not compelled to choose between legal recourse and leaving the country.

Improve victim support

- › Ensure national referral mechanisms are in place to improve coordination and cooperation between government agencies, and between government and non-government actors, and ensure responses are victim-centred.
- › Ensure improvements in, and increased access to, psychosocial support, legal aid, medical care and rehabilitative services from trained specialists for victims. These efforts will be facilitated by ensuring victims are given sufficient time to recover when at shelters and that appropriate visas – decoupled from participation in legal proceedings – are available for victims.
- › Ensure legal aid is available as a standard part of victim support. This is crucial, to include not just access to legal assistance through the assignment of pro bono lawyers for litigation, but also for lawyers to provide victims with necessary information regarding rights and options and empower them to make decisions for the future, including on the investigation and litigation process.
- › Provide temporary protection visas for workers who wish to remain in the country to pursue legal proceedings (both civil and criminal), with provisions to allow them to work or financial aid to support themselves for the duration of proceedings.
- › Ensure that victims are shielded from any abusers (employers, recruiters, and others) throughout the recovery period and legal proceedings.
- › Ensure systems are in place to enable trained officials to waive overstay fines for migrant workers who have suffered exploitation and abuse and permit them to leave the country. Ensure this process is fast-tracked so migrant workers do not languish in holding facilities awaiting processing of their fine waiver.
- › Focus greater attention on conflict areas where vulnerability to slavery is extremely high in order to prevent further exacerbating these risks. GCC countries should allocate and increase direct funding to organisations (CSOs, INGOs, UN) providing targeted anti-trafficking services to vulnerable groups and identified victims.

Strengthen coordination and transparency

- › Government leaders and ministers can show leadership by making clear statements on the importance of preventing all forms of modern slavery, directing government departments to take action, and then holding officials to account for their action or inaction.
- › Ensure that efforts to address modern slavery include measurement of the extent and nature of the issue, as well as risk factors so the impact of progress can be effectively monitored.
- › Where not already in existence, governments should establish a national coordinating committee at a senior level, including representatives from civil society, to develop and ensure implementation of national policies on this issue. Such committees must:
 - Act as an interface with other parts of government working on related issues, such as the response to the refugee crisis and discrimination against women;
 - Streamline the work of ministries to avoid duplication and ensure each ministry's responsibilities are clear to ensure accountability across government; and
 - Enhance cooperation between government and NGOs, civil society, and embassies to better streamline service delivery to victims and improve cooperation and partnership regionally and internationally.
- › Ensure training is provided on identifying and responding to victims for regulatory and non-regulatory first responders, as well as those in law enforcement and staff/officials involved in refugee intake and support services.
- › Create a specialised operational team – drawing from key agencies such as social services, law enforcement, refugee and labour relations, and including victim support services – with specific training in identification of cases of human trafficking and responding to their cases. In addition to responding to specific cases, this team can advise non-specialist regulatory and non-regulatory first responder officers on victim identification and handling and can undertake regular liaison with embassy officials from relevant sending countries.
- › Establish an interregional cooperation to build and extend knowledge exchange between countries in the Arab States and countries of origin of migrant workers.

Address risk factors

- › Conduct widespread, systematic education campaigns to counter stereotypical attitudes of migrant workers and promote diversity. Involve schools, universities, and religious leaders, and publicise widely on radio, television, and print media.
- › Make a concerted effort to cause attitudinal change through targeted awareness programmes on the value of domestic workers to society.
- › Undertake targeted national campaigns to combat passport withholding by making it both socially unacceptable and high risk. Ensure cases of employers or agents who are prosecuted for passport withholding, or other crimes related to abusing or trafficking migrant workers, are highly publicised.
- › Scale up support for displaced persons, and particularly women and girls, in conflict zones in order to prevent trafficking and exploitation.
- › Countries affected by conflict should, as a priority, focus on protection of women and girls to mitigate the effects of gender-based violence, including forced sexual exploitation and forced marriage. Further, governments across the region should repeatedly and forcefully condemn the practices of terrorist and militia groups, particularly those engaged in the enslavement and sale of women and girls.
- › Recognise the importance of gender to any modern slavery response by mainstreaming understanding of women's rights into national strategies.
- › Support the empowerment of women and girls by ensuring access to education for all.

Eradicate modern slavery from the economy

- › Ensure regulation of recruitment agencies according to the principles and standards of ethical recruitment set out in the IOM International Recruitment Integrity System Code of Conduct.
- › Investigate, prosecute, and, in severe cases, withdraw practicing licenses of recruitment agencies that deceive workers, ignore reports of exploitation, or forcibly return workers to abusive employers. Obligate agencies to notify authorities immediately when cases of abuse are found – fine companies who fail to report.
- › Investigate and prosecute employers who commit criminal violence against migrant workers and who confiscate workers' passports, restrict movement, and withhold wages.
- › Blacklist employers, recruiters, or companies that have proven records of abuse of migrant workers. Prevent known offenders from employing domestic workers in their private homes.
- › Introduce legislation that all government procurement providers take steps to detect and eliminate modern slavery from publicly funded supply chains.
- › Support the training and capacity building for labour inspectors to identify cases of modern slavery in both the formal and informal sectors.
- › Ensure labour inspections are conducted in sectors known to be high risk for modern slavery to identify victims of modern slavery.

APPENDIX:

Endnotes

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