



ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REPORT

THE
**GLOBAL
SLAVERY
INDEX**
2018



WALK FREE
FOUNDATION

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Further reading

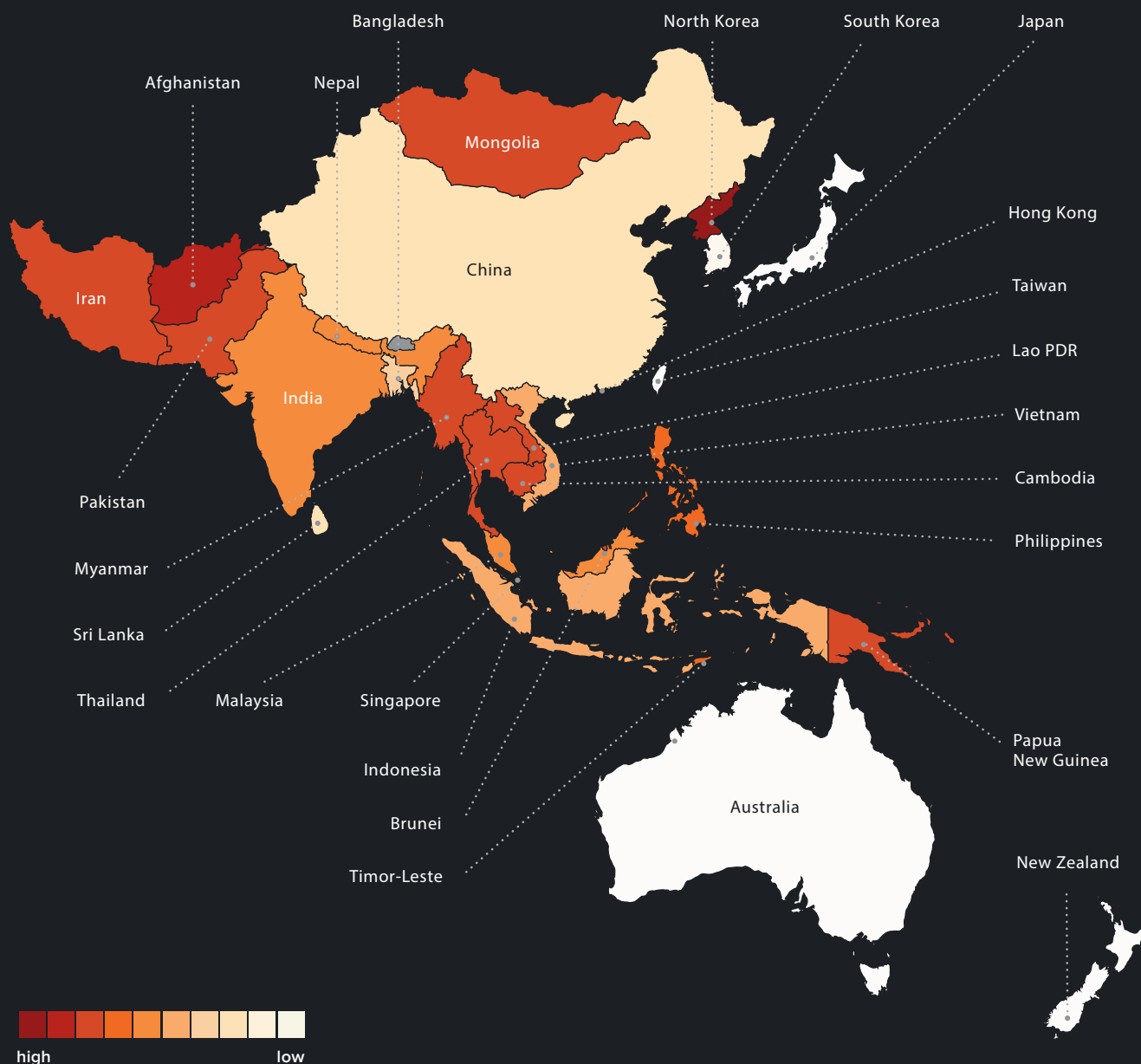
This report is part of a series that builds on the information presented in *The Global Slavery Index 2018* to provide an in-depth look at modern slavery at a regional level. The reports will be available from <https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/resources/downloads/> as they are released. *The Global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

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ASIA & THE PACIFIC

REGION HIGHLIGHTS



Estimated Number of
People in Modern Slavery

24,990,000

Forced labour
percentage

66%



Average Vulnerability Score

46/100



Regional Proportion
of Global Estimate

62%

Forced marriage
percentage

34%



Average Government Response Score

AAA

AA

A

BBB

BB

B

CCC

CC

C

D

SPOTLIGHT ON PROGRESS



Indonesia ranks among the countries, along with Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, that have taken the most steps in responding to modern slavery in the Asia and the Pacific region. Between the 2016 and 2018 Global Slavery Index, Indonesia improved its government response rating from B to BB, largely by making some improvements to victim support services. For example, Indonesia has opened a child-friendly integrated public space in East Jakarta where child and adult victims can now report trafficking crimes to trained counsellors.

Indonesia also demonstrated leadership in regional engagement with the Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi co-chairing the second Bali Process Government and Business Forum, which encouraged collaboration between government and businesses in identifying solutions to combat modern slavery. The Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries has also made efforts to address forced labour and trafficking in Indonesian waters, through the impounding and relicensing of illegal and unlicensed foreign fishing vessels, as well as a transshipment ban in Indonesian waters that prohibits boats transferring their catch at sea to transshipment vessels.¹ Regulation of transshipment practices reduces the risk of forced labour aboard fishing vessels, which tends to co-occur with illegal fishing practices and where there is little oversight (e.g. long distances from shore) and greater opportunity for would-be perpetrators.

In an effort to move towards slavery-free supply chains, in August of 2017, the Australian government announced they will introduce legislation that will require large businesses, an estimated 3,000 organisations, to report annually on their actions taken to address modern slavery.² The government is also considering providing a free, publicly accessible central repository where all modern slavery statements would be hosted. The Australian government introduced the modern slavery bill to Parliament in June 2018 with the aim to pass legislation by end of 2018.³ While the commitment and leadership by the government is to be commended, efforts must be maintained to ensure strong supply chain transparency legislation is passed without delay.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The economic, geographic, and cultural diversity of Asia and the Pacific region is reflected in the varying prevalence and forms of modern slavery found across the region. In Asia and the Pacific, there are instances of debt bondage, including hereditary forms of bonded labour in South Asia, forced labour exists in migrant dominated sectors across the region, forced marriage persists, and state-imposed forced labour, while most commonly known to exist in North Korea, occurs in several countries within the region. The Asia and Pacific region is home to the two most populous countries in the world, India and China, as well as some of the least populous island nations, among them, Tuvalu, Nauru, and Palau.

Widespread inequality exists within the region, with persons of “low” caste, indigenous people, women, and members of other ethnic or cultural minority groups facing discrimination and oppression, leaving them with unequal access to opportunities and services and highly vulnerable to modern slavery. This vulnerability is both facilitated and compounded by displacement and migration caused by environmental disasters, diminishing resources, and civil and cross-border conflict, as well as the effects of globalisation and the rapid increase in migration from the region to the Middle East, North and South America, and Europe. Rapid development of economies within the region, as has been witnessed in Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore among others, has also created new markets for people seeking economic opportunities. This in turn has created a pool of vulnerable migrants as well as opportunities for those who would seek to make money through exploitative practices, including forced labour, debt bondage and forced sexual exploitation.

Estimating modern slavery in Asia and the Pacific

In 2017, the Walk Free Foundation and the International Labour Organization (ILO), together with the International

Organization for Migration (IOM), produced the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, which estimated that 40.3 million people were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2016. Of these, an estimated 24.9 million men, women and children were living in modern slavery in Asia and the Pacific. The region had the second highest prevalence of modern slavery in the world with 6.1 people in modern slavery per 1,000 people in the region. 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 that could also constitute modern slavery cannot be adequately measured at this stage. Additionally, it is typically not possible to survey in countries that are experiencing profound and current conflict, such as Iraq, and parts of Pakistan. Yet it is known that conflict is a significant risk factor – the breakdown of the rule of law, the loss of social supports, and the disruption that occurs with conflict all increase risk of both forced labour and forced marriage. The lack of data from countries and areas of countries where there is conflict means that modern slavery estimates for conflict-affected countries are likely to understate the problem.⁴

Key findings from the Global Slavery Index

Three key trends emerge from an analysis of the regional and national estimates of modern slavery, measures of vulnerability, and assessment of government responses.

First, state-imposed forced labour in the Asia and the Pacific region accounts for 68 percent of those forced to work by state authorities globally.⁵

In this region, state-imposed forced labour is driven almost entirely by the high rate of prevalence in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), where an estimated one in ten were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2016. This is supported by the Walk Free Foundation Vulnerability Model — North Korea has the highest vulnerability with regard to governance issues. Research undertaken with 50 North Korean defectors by the Walk Free Foundation, the Leiden Asia Centre, and the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) identified three key typologies of modern slavery in North Korea. First, repeated mobilisation by the government of children and adults, through mandatory, unpaid “communal labour” in agriculture, road building, and construction. The second typology was forced labour of the general population by the state, where workers were not paid other than through provision of rations (which themselves can be refused or withheld as punishment) or, if they had been theoretically paid, wages were in fact withheld due to official donation drives and other deductions. Finally, the North Korean defectors also described forced labour inside labour training camps, where citizens are sent to undertake hard labour as punishment for unemployment.⁶

Second, modern slavery prevalence in the region can largely be explained by the presence of conflict. Afghanistan and Pakistan have the second and third highest prevalence rates in the region respectively, after North Korea.

In 2016, Afghanistan was the second largest source country in the world in terms of numbers of refugees, with 4.7 million Afghans forcibly displaced and 2.9 million of those seeking refuge in other countries.⁷ Pakistan was both a major source and destination country for refugees in 2016, with 118,000 refugees originating from Pakistan and Pakistan receiving 1.3 million refugees, almost entirely from Afghanistan.⁸ This is reflected in the 2018 Global Slavery Index assessment of vulnerability, with Afghanistan and Pakistan having the highest vulnerability in terms of the effect of conflict. The relationship between conflict and vulnerability to modern slavery is well established due to breakdowns in the rule of law and government functions, an increase in displacement, and a lack of physical security. This is reflected in the high vulnerability rating in terms of governance issues for Afghanistan. Due to the ongoing conflict and extreme disruption to the government, rating of the Afghanistan government's response was not included in the 2018 Global Slavery Index.

Pakistan was assessed as having relatively high vulnerability in terms of inequality and disenfranchised groups, and a poor government response to modern slavery, particularly in terms of its criminal justice response and coordination and accountability mechanisms.

The impact of conflict on modern slavery is also apparent in Iran and Myanmar. In Iran, the effects of neighbouring conflicts are likely to play a significant role in the high prevalence of modern slavery, with Iran ranking high globally among both the refugee hosting (almost one million refugees at the end of 2016 – the vast majority from Afghanistan) and refugee sending countries (in 2015 and 2016 alone, 105,400 Iranians made claims for asylum), compounded by inadequate government action across all milestones. Iran's government response to modern slavery was assessed as being relatively poor, particularly falling short on coordination and accountability mechanisms. Additionally, the Iranian government sat above only North Korea in terms of the level of action taken to identify and support survivors. The presence of conflict in Myanmar, where systemic discrimination and militant violence against

the Muslim Rohingya minority has been ongoing for decades, has contributed to a relatively high prevalence of modern slavery within the region, with Myanmar falling within the 10 countries with highest prevalence in the region. Given the increase in violence against the Rohingya since August 2017, the resulting exodus of some 700,000 mainly Rohingya refugees, and the warning by international organisations of the likelihood of sexual enslavement and human trafficking as a result of the crisis, the present estimate (which uses data collected

prior to 2017) is likely to underestimate the prevalence of modern slavery in Myanmar. Myanmar was assessed as having a high vulnerability in terms of conflict, lack of basic needs, and disenfranchised groups, combined with insufficient actions taken by its government in establishing effective criminal justice mechanisms.

Finally, G20 countries in Asia and the Pacific are yet to implement laws to minimise the risk of modern slavery in public supply chains and to require that businesses practice due diligence.

Looking only at the “top five” at-risk products identified by analysis in the 2018 Global Slavery Index, G20 countries are collectively importing US\$354 billion worth of products at risk of modern slavery annually. Six of the top 20 economies are countries within the Asia and the Pacific region and collectively, they import US\$90.9 billion in at-risk products. These at-risk products are sourced from 15 countries, primarily from China (81 percent of the total value of imports to these six countries) where much of the imports of apparel, fish and laptops, computers and mobile phones are sourced. G20 countries achieved an average score of only 11 percent for their efforts to stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labour. In the Asia and the Pacific region, China achieved the highest score (18.3 percent) whereas all other countries (Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea) scored zero across all indicators of this milestone.

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Recommendations

- › **Governments should ensure that legal loopholes that facilitate state imposed forced labour are closed and that state imposed forced labour is abolished in practice.** The governments of Mongolia, Myanmar, and Vietnam should work closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to eliminate state imposed forced labour among their populations. Governments and businesses should prioritise human rights in decision making when engaging with repressive regimes, such as North Korea. Governments should deliver on financial and trade restrictions imposed by the UN Security Council against North Korea.
- › **Governments must focus greater attention on the impact of conflict.** This includes areas in which the conflict is active, as well as neighbouring countries that are dealing with the flow on effect, such as is the case in Afghanistan and Iran, and Bangladesh and Myanmar. To prevent further exacerbating these risks, governments must improve living conditions for migrants in refugee camps, by seeking funding from donor governments and working with international organisations if required. Governments of countries neighbouring conflict zones should provide targeted anti-trafficking services to vulnerable groups and proactively seek to identify and support victims. Further, governments across the region must act to both arrest and prosecute members of terrorist and militia groups, particularly those engaged in forced recruitment and the recruitment of children.
- › **Governments must enact or strengthen legislation to ensure that all forms of exploitation are criminalised.** Only Australia, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam have criminalised forced marriage in the region. All other countries should follow suit by criminalising forced marriage and raising the age of marriage to 18 for men and women.
- › **Governments must improve working conditions for migrant workers** by strengthening laws to protect labour rights in both the formal and informal economies, including the rights of all migrant workers, regardless of whether their entry was legal. Laws or policies in labour sending countries must ensure that recruitment fees are paid by the employer and not the employee. Only eight countries, including Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and New Zealand have laws or policies ensuring recruitment fees are paid by the employer. Additionally, only the Philippines has ratified the ILO Domestic Workers Convention No.189, 2011 and no countries in the region have ratified the ILO Work in Fishing Convention C188, 2007. Both of these conventions offer protections to migrant workers and must be ratified by all countries in Asia and the Pacific region.
- › **Governments must address pervasive discrimination against migrants, minorities and women** which both creates and exacerbates vulnerability to modern slavery. This must be actualised through the provision of widespread access to education, employment and social services, and policy reform with a focus on fostering improved attitudes toward women, those from ethnic, cultural or religious minorities, and migrant workers. In addition, governments must strengthen safety nets for those vulnerable to bonded and forced labour by establishing cash transfer schemes, public employment programs, affordable healthcare, unemployment protections, disability benefits, and income security in old age.
- › **Governments within the region with the capacity to do more must lead efforts to eradicate modern slavery from the national economy** by implementing laws to minimise risk of modern slavery in public supply chains and to encourage business to practice due diligence. To date, China and Taiwan, and soon to be joined by Australia, are the only countries within the region that have in place mechanisms to stop business sourcing goods or services linked to modern slavery.

Bamiyan Shelter Cares For Battered Afghan Women

Bamiyan, Afghanistan: Sakina sits on her bed with her son Shafiq, 18 months, at a women's shelter and safe house October 7, 2010 in Bamiyan, Afghanistan. Sakina spent 7 months in prison for leaving her first husband, a forced marriage. The problems many battered and abused women are confronting are deeply ingrained in a culture that has mainly been governed by tribal law. Since the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001, a more concrete idea of women's rights has begun to take hold, promoted by the newly created Ministry of Women's Affairs and a small community of women's advocates. Only Australia, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam have criminalised forced marriage in the region. All other countries should follow suit by criminalising forced marriage and raising the age of marriage to 18 for men and women.

Photo credit: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images.

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.⁹ 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 calculated¹⁰ 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.

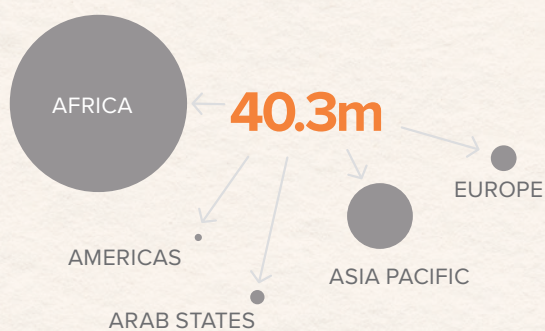
FIGURE 2

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



A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a yellow and black patterned shirt, sitting at a desk in a call center. She is looking at a computer monitor displaying a web application. Other people are visible in the background, also working at computers. The office has white desks and black chairs.

A CRITICAL BRIDGE: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FOR SURVIVORS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Dr. Melinda Gill | Renewsiya Foundation



“I want to be the company’s next CEO.” It is no small statement considering Amanda started life being thrown into a trash can before eventually being trafficked into sex work as a teenager. But she has the drive, capacity, and personality to achieve her aspiration and, thankfully, the opportunity through her work at Regenesys BPO. Regenesys BPO is a social enterprise founded in the Philippines which provides technology-centric work to survivors of trafficking and other forms of abuse and exploitation. One of the computer-based skills that the employees can learn is web research, including their work for Walk Free in helping to document the prevalence of slavery around the world; survivors of slavery using their evolving technical skills in the fight against slavery.

Unfortunately, many survivors don’t access similar opportunities, with the focus of aftercare often on immediate shelter-based care. Whilst survivors may be provided with vocational training whilst in residential care, these programs often offer a narrow set of gendered training options (such as cooking, knitting, or sewing) or do not help survivors access genuine employment opportunities because of lack of linkages to actual businesses. This inadequate focus on decent, sustained employment results in high levels of poverty and re-exploitation following reintegration into the community.

However, employment opportunities alone are unlikely to have a sustained, transforming impact. Juliet was among Regenesys’ first employees who, like most of the company’s recruits, had minimal computer literacy prior to commencing training.

Whilst she was able to acquire technical skills quickly, her experience of childhood neglect and abuse together with ongoing family dysfunction and financial pressure meant she lacked the core skills to meet other workplace expectations, such as punctuality and attendance. Despite her intelligence and aptitude, Juliet would have failed in a normal workplace. Juliet is now a team leader and virtual assistant, leading a team of ten junior employees.

However, even after four years in the company, she needs additional support from senior management and a workplace counsellor during periods of family crisis. Many slavery survivors come from similar backgrounds where they have experienced the effects of poverty, physical or sexual abuse, and unhealthy family environments in addition to the significant trauma which can occur through slavery and exploitation.

These layers of vulnerability can impede the healthy development of core skills, which are required for success in both the workplace and home, including parenting, financial management, and managing healthcare.

Our research demonstrates that trauma symptoms, measures of personal empowerment and decision making, and financial literacy improve significantly in our employees over time. However, they are changes that don't necessarily occur quickly or in a predictable manner. Hence workplaces must be tailored to the specific needs of survivors, providing a safe, supportive environment together with intentional strategies to enhance the development of holistic core skills. Because there is a lack of research regarding both technical and core skills development within aftercare literature, Regenesys BPO and our program partners are innovating new approaches as well as adapting existing resources to enhance core skills development among its employees.

Simultaneously, the company is engaging with research institutions to demonstrate and continuously enhance its social impact. This research will help address these significant knowledge gaps in employment-based aftercare, resulting in workplaces which are better able to support the sustained recovery and reintegration of survivors.

Regenesys BPO operates under a full, for-profit business model, focusing on market-driven and financially sustainable BPO services including back-office support, customer service, accounting services, web-based services, and digital photo and video editing. In order to grow and increase our impact, we need long-term business partners who benefit from quality, competitive services and, in doing so, participate in the restoration of survivors. Similarly, our research and program partners need donors committed to supporting their ground-breaking work which has the potential to transform survivor aftercare around the globe.

Regenesys BPO, an outsourcing company based in the Philippines, provides computer-based employment to trafficking survivors to enable the last step of their re-integration. Survivors gain skills to become professionals in data entry, bookkeeping, accounting, research, post-production photo and video editing.

Photo credit: Regenesys BPO.



BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: EXPLOITATION OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN HONG KONG

Jade Anderson | Head of Research, Justice Centre Hong Kong



Hong Kong is a vibrant and densely packed city with over seven million residents and a significant population of migrants working across the city. Amongst them are over 350,000 domestic workers who are, by and large, women from the Philippines and Indonesia. This is one of the highest densities of migrant domestic workers (MDWs) in the world. They make up over four percent of the total population and 10 percent of the working population in the city. One in three households with children rely on MDWs to provide childcare. Hong Kong is also regarded as one of the best places in the region to work as a MDW. Unlike many other places, Hong Kong has a formal labour migration scheme for MDWs and there are a number of laws controlling and ostensibly protecting their recruitment and employment conditions. Unfortunately these regulations are not translating into decent work.

Justice Centre is a non-profit human rights organisation working to protect the rights of Hong Kong's most vulnerable refugees, survivors of torture, and victims of human trafficking and forced labour. In 2016, Justice Centre released a ground-breaking report, *Coming Clean*, which examined the existence and prevalence of forced labour and trafficking for the purpose of forced labour amongst the city's MDWs.¹¹ The study found that 17 percent of MDWs in the city were working in forced labour. Of these, 14 percent had been trafficked into the situation. An additional 66 percent of the women surveyed were experiencing strong exploitation but didn't meet the threshold for forced labour. In total only 5 percent of domestic workers did not show any signs of forced labour or human trafficking.

This is not just a case of wage-manipulation or excessive working hours. This is wage manipulation and excessive working hours on top of being locked in the house or given less food for making mistakes, confiscated mobile phones, confiscated passports, or excessive recruitment debts.

Justice Centre's research shows that exploitation is not a rare occurrence in Hong Kong. But how is it possible to have systemic exploitation when there are so many regulations protecting MDWs? The answers lie in the immigration policies, which often negate the impact of labour protections, making them effectively un-claimable. For example, one of the immigration conditions imposed on MDWs is that they must 'live in' with their employers.

This means that MDWs are uniquely exposed to the whims of their employers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Although 95 percent of MDWs in “Coming Clean” reported being given a weekly day off, 37 percent said they had to work before and after they left the house, some working into the night to complete tasks even though they were on a “rest” day. Living with their employers, MDWs reported that they “consented” to excessive working hours for fear of displeasing their employers and suffering the consequences.

The “live in” policy also transforms the employer’s home into both home and workplace for the migrant. But it is never treated as either “home” or “workplace” for the MDW. There is no protection for the MDW in terms of emergency accommodation or wage protection if they report abuse experienced in the “home” and are consequently fired. Likewise, the employment contract between MDWs and employers must be submitted to the Immigration Department for approval, but there are no inspections to ascertain if the contract is being upheld unless either party registers a problem. Even though domestic work happens in homes there is no effort to monitor these homes as if they were workplaces in the way a construction site or a factory floor might be. These are just some of the consequences of immigration policies which negate labour rights.

Regrettably, the Hong Kong government consistently denies that there is human trafficking or forced labour in the city, even in the face of such research and legally, Hong Kong still only defines trafficking as the bringing into, or taking out, of individuals for the purpose of prostitution. But in March 2018, after sustained pressure from civil society (including Justice Centre), the government released

an Action Plan to Tackle Trafficking in Persons, which is a cross-departmental initiative.¹² While the government again maintains that “there is no sign that Hong Kong is being actively used by transnational syndicates as a destination or transit point for trafficking in persons, or that trafficking in persons is a widespread or prevalent problem in Hong Kong” the Action Plan is nonetheless a welcome development. The Action Plan specifically incorporates the international definition of trafficking and recognises that it can be for the purpose of labour exploitation or forced labour. This signals a positive shift in how trafficking and the exploitation of MDWs in particular will be tackled.

There is a real risk, however, that the Action Plan will be ineffective in practice. In the absence of a comprehensive definition of “human trafficking” in domestic legislation, law enforcement agencies are still restricted to enforcing laws against the constituent elements of trafficking rather than the overarching result. The Action Plan also does not include definitions of “exploitation” or “forced labour” or outline plans to introduce such legislation. It is unclear, therefore, what threshold will be employed in determining at what point exploitation or forced labour (and so trafficking) occur. Nor does the Action Plan detail how or when the government will consider granting immunity from prosecution to victims. This is likely to deter MDWs and other victims of trafficking from reporting abuses. These are serious gaps, which risk negating the efforts outlined in the Action Plan. If the Hong Kong government is serious in its commitment to respond effectively to human trafficking and forced labour and protecting victims, it must address these gaps.

An Indonesian domestic worker in Hong Kong reads a newspaper which has a cover story about the abuse of Indonesian domestic worker Erwiana Sulistyaningsih while working in Hong Kong. Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to forced labour exploitation as they work in private homes and depend on their employers for basic needs such as food and shelter.

Photo credit: Jessica Hromas/Getty Images.

A young girl with long dark hair, wearing a pink shirt with a cartoon pattern, stands outdoors. She is holding a large rainbow flag behind her back with both arms. In front of her, she holds a pink sign with the words 'GIRLS CAN BE' written in white, hand-painted letters. The background shows a green metal fence and some trees.

WE CAN'T ERADICATE MODERN SLAVERY WITHOUT ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION

Elise Gordon | Research Analyst, Walk Free Foundation



Discrimination, particularly when reinforced by laws and policies, leaves individuals and communities with unequal access to education, employment, healthcare, justice and social supports because of race, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, political views, sexual orientation, or some other identity-based characteristic. The lack of opportunity that stems from this unequal access underpins poverty, a well-established determinant of modern slavery. Poverty and lack of opportunity to break the cycle of poverty, among other things, drives people to accept exploitative employment conditions in order to earn a living income. Discrimination also drives people to migrate in search of opportunity or safety and can push already vulnerable people into the path of those who wish to exploit them for profit.

Violence borne out of discrimination is not uncommon in the Asia Pacific region, nor is the complicity of governments who allow, encourage, or perpetrate it. In Myanmar, decades of systemic discrimination against Rohingya Muslims has seen the ethnic minority refused citizenship, and in northern Rakhine where a considerable population of Rohingya Muslims reside, drastic restriction of their access to education, healthcare, marketplaces, land, and employment.¹³ Such discrimination has created an environment where state-imposed forced labour, sexual violence, arbitrary detention, torture, destruction of homes, and brutal killings has been able to occur. In 2017, escalations in violence by the military against the Rohingya community forced some 700,000 Rohingya refugees to flee to camps in bordering Bangladesh where there have been reports of Rohingya refugees falling prey to human traffickers who lure them with promises of work or marriage. In September

2018, the United Nations Human Rights Council released the Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar. The report documents crimes that occurred in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan States since 2011, and describes the systematic use of men, women and children by the military for forced labour, including portering (“carrying of heavy packs, weapons and supplies”), digging trenches, or as guides or cooks. The report also describes the use of sexual violence and sexual slavery of women and girls in the context of forced labour. It cites routine abduction and use of torture by soldiers to coerce men, women, and children into forced labour lasted from a few hours to days, weeks or months. Some of those taken were forced to fight for the military with reports that the military also forcibly recruited children. There are also credible reports of forced marriage in Shan, Kachin, and Rakhine States by the military.¹⁴

Gender discrimination is based on stereotypical views of women's roles and sexuality which are often reflected in a country's laws and which drive high rates of child and forced marriage.¹⁵ In the Asia and the Pacific region, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan have the highest rates of gender discrimination enshrined in law.¹⁶ In Iran, women face discrimination in all facets of their lives, including marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody, with women unable to pass on their citizenship to their children, and requiring permission from their husbands to travel or obtain a passport.

The civil code allows a man to prevent his wife from working in certain occupations if he considers them against family values.¹⁷ The civil code also allows girls as young as 13 to marry, with girls younger than 13 permitted to marry with the consent of their father or the permission of a court judge.¹⁸

The effects of systemic discrimination are long-lasting. In India, for instance, while discrimination based on caste has been outlawed since India's independence over 70 years ago, inequality persists. "Lower castes" experience caste-related violence and, in many parts of the country, are still

obliged to perform undesirable work, often experience debt bondage, and work in sectors with known risks of modern slavery, including brick kilns and stone quarries. Tribal castes too remain at risk of displacement as large infrastructure projects push communities from their traditional lands into largely informal employment in urban areas, heightening their vulnerability to modern slavery.

Despite rhetoric by most governments in the Asia and the Pacific region about commitment to freeing people from modern slavery, systemic and entrenched discrimination of communities based on ethnicity, religion, gender, culture, sexual orientation and political views perseveres in countries within the Asia-Pacific region. Discrimination against communities, on any basis, undermines any efforts being made to address modern slavery. Governments must act to reduce existing inequalities and address deep-rooted discrimination. This requires ensuring that laws and policies do not disadvantage one community over another, ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to tackle existing discrimination, and ensuring education measures are in place to address social exclusion.

Participant at the Women's March Jakarta, Indonesia on March 3, 2018. Hundreds of participants demanded the fulfillment of the rights of women and other marginal groups such as indigenous peoples, migrant workers, industrial workers, domestic workers, people living with HIV / AIDS, gender and sexual minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Photo credit: Anton Raharjo / NurPhoto / Getty Images.

MODERN SLAVERY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



Across the Asia and the Pacific region, modern slavery is most often found in domestic work, and in the agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and entertainment sectors.¹⁹ This is unsurprising given that a substantial portion of the employed population within Asia and the Pacific continue to work in agriculture and other low-skilled and informal industries that are often poorly paid.²⁰ The informal sector accounts for 60 percent of the workforce in the region.²¹

In 2017, there were 62.1 million international migrants in the region (originating from countries both within and outside the region) and more than 101 million migrants around the globe were from countries within the Asia and the Pacific region.²² Most migrants within the region are so-called “south-south migrants” who have migrated between developing countries, often within the same sub-region and particularly to neighbouring countries. The majority of migrants to and from Asia-Pacific countries move from countries with lower per capita GDP to higher per capita GDP in search of better economic opportunities.²³ Migration from Southeast Asia, South Asia and Southwest Asia is motivated by the demand for workers in the Middle East, with 95 percent of migrant workers from India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, and around two-thirds of migrant workers from Bangladesh and the Philippines living and working in the Arab States region.²⁴ South and Southwest Asia are the destinations for 58 percent of migrating Nepalese and almost half of those migrating from Indonesia. Migration in this region is also driven by conflict and instability, with countries in Asia and the Pacific region hosting almost 40 percent of the world’s refugees. The main source countries for refugees are Afghanistan, followed by Myanmar, Vietnam, China, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan.

Migrant flows in the region are influenced by private recruitment agencies who charge exorbitant fees to employers and migrants.²⁵ Recruitment is a lucrative business in the Asia and Pacific region, and the financial incentives motivate recruitment agents to persuade workers to migrate abroad, sometimes through exploitative means. Migrant workers are therefore especially vulnerable to debt bondage resulting from the high fees charged by

unscrupulous recruitment brokers. Such situations have been identified, for example, among migrant fishers in the Taiwanese fishing industry, Indonesian and Filipino domestic workers in Singapore and Hong Kong, and workers from Papua New Guinea in the Australian agricultural sector.²⁶

Low-skilled migrant workers in informal sectors are particularly vulnerable to labour exploitation and forced labour. These individuals are more likely to have limited knowledge of international labour laws and standards, lack access to social services, and have fewer social support networks in the country in which they are working. In Southeast Asia, research suggests that, regardless of the type of work they are employed in, labour rights abuses against migrant workers are commonplace.²⁷ A 2017 ILO study of the experiences of migrant workers from Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam found that overall, workers in fisheries and construction were most prone to mistreatment.

However, a large proportion of Laotian and Vietnamese workers experience abuse in the agricultural and hospitality industries respectively.²⁸ Recent scrutiny of labour practices aboard fishing vessels has highlighted that African and Asian men are exploited on Chinese fishing vessels, working under conditions of forced labour.²⁹ Wealthier countries are not exempt from forced labour exploitation. In Japan, the government-run Technical Intern Training Program³⁰ has faced international criticism. Rather than providing professional development opportunities for around 228,000 interns (2016 figures), mostly from Vietnam and China, interns have reportedly been exploited, with some instances amounting to forced labour.³¹

Risk of modern slavery in the fishing industry

The labour abuses seen in the fishing industry take place in a broader context that includes economic, social, and environmental factors. First, the increasing global demand for fish and the rapid growth of industrial fishing fleets, along with over-exploitation of many fish stocks, has resulted in a declining catch per effort and falling profitability.³² This has occurred alongside the destruction of small-scale, artisanal fisheries that previously provided fishing families and their villages with food and income.³³ From a regulatory perspective, these results are inadvertently encouraged by government subsidies that seek to keep fishing industries operating where they would otherwise be unprofitable. All of this occurs within inadequate and inconsistent legal frameworks regulating fishing industries, and poor enforcement where such laws do exist.

A 2018 study conducted by the Walk Free Foundation, together with researchers from the Sea Around Us, at the University of Western Australia and the University of British Columbia, sought to determine a set of risk factors that are associated with modern slavery in fisheries at a global level.

Bringing together data on fisheries and fishing management,³⁴ with data on prevalence of modern slavery,³⁵

the analysis³⁶ indicated that the occurrence of modern slavery in major fish producing countries is associated with a set of risk factors. These risk factors reflect two major sets of drivers; national fisheries policy, reflecting a country's decision to build and, typically, subsidise distant water fishing fleets; and wealth and institutional capacity, reflecting a country's economic capacity to maintain decent working conditions and report on fishing activity. Based on the six risk factors, the analysis considered the top 20 fishing countries, which combined provide over 80 percent of the world's fish catch.³⁷ The analysis identified China, Japan, Russia, Spain, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand as being at high risk of modern slavery in their respective fishing industries. These "high-risk" fishing activities are characterised by a high proportion of catch taken outside their own waters at a greater distance from home waters than average, by poor governance (high levels of unreported catch), and by higher than average levels of harmful fishing subsidies. Except for Spain, instances of serious labour abuses have been documented in the fishing industries of those countries identified or are strongly suspected as high-risk.³⁸ Combined, these seven countries generate 39 percent of the world's catch.

In Australia, forced labour of migrant workers from the Pacific islands has been identified in the agricultural industry.³⁹ Cases of forced labour in Australia have also been found in construction,⁴⁰ domestic work,⁴¹ meat processing,⁴² cleaning, hospitality, and food services.⁴³

Throughout the region, domestic workers, many of whom are also migrant workers, are particularly vulnerable to forced labour exploitation as they work in private homes and depend on their employers for basic needs such as food and shelter.⁴⁴ The Asia and the Pacific region hosts almost a quarter of the world's female migrant domestic workers.⁴⁵ In India, forced labour of domestic workers has been brought to light after the 2017 case of a Bangladeshi domestic worker who was held hostage and physically abused by a family in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh after requesting her withheld salary.⁴⁶ In Brunei, women and men who migrate for domestic work from Indonesia, Bangladesh, China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia have reportedly experienced debt bondage, withholding of wages and/or identification documents, physical abuse, and physical confinement.⁴⁷ A 2016 study by the Hong Kong Justice Centre found that 1 in 6 migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong reported indicators of forced labour and, of those, 14 percent had been trafficked into domestic work in Hong Kong.⁴⁸ A 2017 study which analysed interviews with more than 700 Indonesian and Filipino female domestic workers in Singapore found that 23% were victims of forced labour and 10 percent had been trafficked into their present

employment. The authors estimated that 55,000 female domestic workers experienced forced labour in domestic work in Singapore.⁴⁹

Debt bondage is widespread in South Asia, specifically in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, where it has been reported in the brick kiln industry, agriculture, the fishing industry, stone quarries, mining, carpet weaving, textile embroidering, tanning, construction, domestic work, and cattle rearing, among others.⁵⁰ In some cases, an entire family must work to pay off the debt taken by one of its members. Debts can be passed down through generations leaving children working to pay off a loan their parents had taken decades ago. Debt bondage in South Asia is driven largely by discrimination and inequality, which is culturally ingrained and reinforced by societal structures.⁵¹ For instance, in India, those in debt bondage are commonly Dalits (also known as *Untouchables*), while in Pakistan those in debt bondage in brick

kilns are usually those belonging to poor classes and ethnic minority groups.⁵² In Nepal, those in *kamaiya*, a traditional form of agricultural debt bondage, are predominantly from the ethnic Tharu community.⁵³

A 2017 study analysed interviews with more than 4,000 labourers undertaken in three districts in the Indian state of Karnataka in 2015, and estimated that some 558,000 people were in debt bondage in these three districts of Karnataka, and that those in debt bondage were more likely to be from another state in India.⁵⁴

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In certain Indian brick kilns, accepting a wage advance from a contractor is seen as a compulsory step to accepting a job, with one study reporting 94 percent of participants had taken an advance.⁵⁵ A United Nations assessment carried out in 2011 suggested that 547,000 individuals in Nepal were in forced labour and debt bondage.⁵⁶

Several countries in Southeast Asia (Thailand, the Philippines, and to a lesser extent Cambodia and Vietnam), have long been recognised as destinations for commercial sexual exploitation of children by both domestic and international offenders.⁵⁷ While the common perception is that international tourists are the main offenders, male nationals make up the majority of perpetrators.⁵⁸ Growing technological advancement has fostered an increase in online sexual exploitation, which makes the identification of perpetrators and efforts of law enforcement more complex.⁵⁹ The current trend of voluntourism and orphanage tourism in Southeast Asia further heightens the risk of commercial exploitation of children.⁶⁰

Among the Pacific Island nations, cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children are associated with travel and tourism and have been linked with migrant and transient workers, particularly in mining, logging, and fishing.⁶¹ Parents and family members have been implicated in the selling of young female family members to foreign and local workers for sex or marriage in Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, and the Solomon Islands.⁶²

Between 2012 and 2014, more than 60 percent of some 7,800 victims of trafficking identified in East Asia and the Pacific were trafficked for sexual exploitation.⁶³ In Eastern Asia there is evidence that Japan and South Korea are destination countries for Filipino women trafficked for sexual exploitation, sometimes through marriage schemes. Women are reportedly recruited under false promises of high-paying jobs but are forced into sex work.⁶⁴ Japan, Mongolia, and China are also recognised destinations for commercial sexual exploitation of children by both domestic and international offenders.⁶⁵ As throughout the rest of the region, technological advancements in Eastern Asia have enabled new platforms for child commercial sexual exploitation. In South Korea, for instance, an estimated 95 percent of commercial sexual exploitation of children is arranged over the Internet.⁶⁶ The practice of compensated dating is growing throughout the region and is seen largely in Japan as well as in China, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan. The practice involves female high school students aged between 15 and 18 years old spending time with and sometimes providing sexual services to adult men in exchange for money or gifts.⁶⁷ While in many cases girls themselves initiate compensated dating, reports indicate exploitation by pimps occurs.⁶⁸ In Japan, the practice is termed “JK” business (*joshi kosei*, meaning “high school girls” in Japanese), where businesses offer dating services as well as “hidden options” with high school girls aged between 15 and 18 years old.⁶⁹ Although a 2015 news report places the number of girls in the JK business at approximately 5,000,⁷⁰ it should be noted

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that it is extremely difficult to estimate the real number.⁷¹ In Iran, women, boys, and girls are reportedly trafficked for sex by organised groups both within the country and internationally to Afghanistan, the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, Pakistan, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Europe.⁷²

The prevalence of forced, early, and child marriage in Asia and the Pacific varies greatly between and within sub-regions and countries.⁷³ Gender inequality, poverty, and conflict-based insecurity (whereby families are motivated to marry off their daughters in the name of safety and protection, for instance, to protect the honour of their daughters or families in the case of rape) are among the key drivers of child, early, and forced marriage.⁷⁴ In South Asia, 46 percent of women aged 20 to 24 were married or in a union before they reached the age of 18.⁷⁵ In Afghanistan and Pakistan, where Sharia law has greater influence than constitutional law, girls can legally marry at age 15 and 16, respectively. In Sri Lanka, where a dual legal system exists, the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act allows Muslim community leaders to decide on the marriage age for girls.⁷⁶ Marriage traditions such as temporary marriage, practiced in Iran, and bride price (also known as dowry),

practiced in several countries, fuel the practice of marriage in young girls, which is often undertaken as a means out of debt or poverty.⁷⁷ In Afghanistan, the custom of *baad* involves the forced marriage of women and young girls to settle disputes, and is reportedly still practiced throughout the country.⁷⁸ In Pakistan, women and girls from the Hindu minority and other religious minorities also face the risk of abduction for forced religious conversion and forced

marriage.⁷⁹ In 2016, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reported that in Iran, the forced marriage of girls as young as 10 to much older men was becoming increasingly common.⁸⁰

Conflict also leads to modern slavery in Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. In Iran, which is home to many Afghan migrants and refugees fleeing conflict, migrant children and especially Afghan refugee children, are reportedly kidnapped by organised criminal gangs and forced to beg and work as vendors in Iranian cities. Reports indicate that physical and sexual abuse and drug addiction are used to coerce children as young as three into forced labour.⁸¹ Afghan migrants in Iran are also reportedly forced to work in construction and agriculture. Reports indicate that Afghan males, including children, have been forcefully recruited by military groups to fight in its *Fatemiyoun* division in Syria, under threat of deportation to Afghanistan.⁸²

In 2018, the Global Slavery Index included state-imposed forced labour in the estimates of modern slavery. In the Asia and the Pacific region, state-imposed forced labour occurs in its highest numbers in North Korea.⁸³ While the nature of the situation in North Korea means little quantitative research is possible within the country, we estimate that one in 10 people in North Korea are in modern slavery. UN officials estimate that between 80,000 and 120,000 political prisoners are imprisoned in forced labour camps alone.⁸⁴



A migrant Indian labourer at a brick factory in Lalitpur, Nepal on Tuesday, January 23, 2018. Debt bondage is widespread in South Asia, specifically in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, where it has been reported in the brick kiln industry, among other sectors with high levels of informal work.

Photo credit: Narayan Maharjan / NurPhoto / Getty Images.

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.

An estimated 70 percent of all defectors fleeing North Korea are women, with some studies suggesting that between 70 to 90 percent of these women will end up as victims of trafficking and forced marriage.⁸⁵

Recent reports also indicate state-imposed forced labour occurs under the guise of drug rehabilitation centres or so-called “custody and education centres” in China.⁸⁶ Members of the ethnic Uighur population are forced to work by local authorities, including unmarried women forced to work in factories in cities in eastern China. Children as young as nine years of age are recruited through their school and forced to work during the autumn harvest with little to no pay after deductions for food and transport and payments to the school.⁸⁷

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In Vietnam, the law of drug prevention (NO. 94/2009/ND-CP) requires that persons in drug rehabilitation centres, who are sent to these administrative centres as a result of their drug addiction rather than as a consequence of a conviction

in a court of law, must actively participate in labour and complete assigned target volume and quality of work.⁸⁸ In Mongolia state-imposed forced labour takes the form of non-military work performed by military conscripts in the context of development projects.⁸⁹ In Myanmar, state-imposed forced labour persists, with reports indicating that in January 2016, Myanmar Army soldiers used the threat of death to force ethnic-Rakhine civilians to dig graves and carry supplies during fighting with the Arakan Army in Rakhine State.⁹⁰

Young-soon, 80, former prisoner and forced labourer in North Korea. “I knew Song Hye-rim from school. One day, she told me she was moving into the ‘great leader’ Kim Jong-il’s residence. A few months later, my family and I were sent to Yodok, a prison camp. My parents and my eight-year-old son died of malnutrition there, and the rest of my family were either shot or drowned. Nine years later, after my release, I was told we’d been imprisoned because I knew about Kim Jong-il’s relationship with Song. Song Hye-rim and Kim Jong-il’s illegitimate son, Kim Jong-nam, was assassinated earlier this year”.

Photo credit: James Whitlow Delano.



SPOTLIGHT Understanding Modern Slavery in North Korea

It has long been known, though difficult to verify, that citizens of North Korea are forced to work by the State on a far greater scale than seen elsewhere in the world. In 2017, the Walk Free Foundation partnered with researchers at the Leiden Asia Centre and the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB) in an effort to learn more about the hidden reality regarding forced labour and other forms of modern slavery inside North Korea. As it is not possible to directly survey or otherwise collect data within North Korea, the research involved undertaking interviews with 50 defectors from North Korea who are living in South Korea.

Of the 50 people interviewed, all but one⁹¹ described situations they had been subjected to while living in North Korea that meet the international legal definition of “forced labour.” In this sample, three key typologies of modern slavery emerged.

First, repeated mobilisation by the government of children, and adults, through mandatory, unpaid “communal labour” in agriculture, road building, and construction. Respondents described that for children, the forced mobilisation started at an early age, might involve daily work in agriculture or a month of work at harvest time, and ranged from light agricultural duties to longer periods of hard labour, all of which was without pay. One male respondent described his experience of forced mobilisation during childhood:

“ After the fourth year of middle school we were subjected to regular farm work mobilisation. In the spring, we stayed for about a month at a farm field, we slept and ate there. This was the spring mobilisation. In the summer, we did weeding for a few days, in the autumn we did hop mobilisation. Hop is a plant that grows up on a rope, its flowers have yellow powder. This powder is used to make beer, so we picked the hops (the hop flowers). Before September for about a month we gathered hops. They say it is imported by foreign countries.

(Respondent No. 2, male, adult)

Another male respondent explained that children being mobilised for forced labour was universal among North Koreans:

“ From the age of 13, every student is mobilised for farm work without exception. It lasts 40 days for the spring mobilisation and 30 days for the autumn one.

(Respondent No. 10, male, adult)

The schools, and not the children, received payment for the work. If children did not participate, they would later be punished and criticised within the school itself. Participation could be avoided through paying bribes. For adults, communal labour involved being mobilised for “battles” in which workers are sent to work for 70 or 100 days in a row. The penalty for refusal is a cut in food rations or the assessment of taxes. One adult male respondent described his experience with mobilisation as follows:

“ You cannot refuse. If the work unit leader orders you to go to work, you have to do it. If you don’t, then your food rations are cut off.

(Respondent No. 1, male, adult)

The second typology was forced labour of the general population by the state. Almost all respondents in this sample indicated they had either not been paid for their work other than through provision of rations (which themselves can be refused or withheld as punishment) or, if they had been theoretically paid, wages were in fact withheld due to official donation drives and other deductions. As some workplaces exist but have no actual production, workers reported having to procure on their own the goods their workplaces are supposed to be producing so that the employer could show some output. Others paid fees to be registered as employees (to avoid being classified as unemployed and thereby risk being sent to a labour camp) but actually worked elsewhere (the so-called “8/3 workers”⁹²). To survive and cover the cost of holding their jobs, they would trade or otherwise sell their labour on the black market. All but one respondent noted that it was impossible to refuse or leave a job without permission, and any attempt to do this would result initially in loss of rations and then internment in a labour camp.

“ There usually isn’t any work to do in the workplaces so most people work as 8/3 workers. The workplaces are run on the money that 8/3 workers pay to the workplace every month. As a result, labourers cannot quit. If you want to quit, you first have to find a new place to work and receive a stamp of approval. You have to receive about 40 stamps. It takes about a month to get all the stamps and costs 300-400 yuan. [...] The Export Material Production Office of DPRK Railways exports mainly to China. [...] There were five labourers that were registered in 2013 and 15 in 2016. All of them were 8/3 workers and they paid 60,000 won a month and didn’t have to come to work.

(Respondent No. 13, male, adult)

Asked whether he had ever experienced debt bondage, one male respondent replied:

“ Yes. I was an 8/3 worker so I paid a fixed amount every month because I didn’t have a job, I think that is similar to being in debt.

(Respondent No. 17, male, adult)

In other cases, it may be that there is not enough work and workers are allowed to work elsewhere, in which case they then have to surrender most of their earnings to the company.

“ I did not receive payment once in the 13 years I worked (1996-2008).

(Respondent No. 7 female, adult)

Social class determines the nature of the employment you receive, and some professions are transferred from one generation to the next, most particularly those in the “dirty, dangerous, and demeaning” (3D) jobs:

“ In North Korea, the 3D jobs were coal mining, farming, and forestry. People in these fields weren’t able to change their jobs and their children were required to carry on the work.

(Respondent No.27, male, adult)

Another female respondent described how she could not improve her job prospects because of her social status:

“ I was assigned by the Ministry of Labour there. I didn’t do anything for a year after graduation, but I was summoned by the Ministry of Labour. There they told me they had assigned me to a breeding factory. There are better workplaces but my social status is not good, so I could not be assigned a better job.

(Respondent No. 6, female, adult)

Finally, respondents also described forced labour inside labour camps. Labour training camps are prisons where inmates have to perform hard labour, reportedly for a minimum of six months.⁹³ Typically, workers are sent for being unemployed – not officially registered at a workplace and thereby labelled as “jobless” – or for not following work instructions or arguing with a superior. Absence from work for a period of 15 days can also land someone in a labour training camp without trial or means of appeal. Once the verdict is reached, it is executed by the DPRK’s federation of trade unions and the Ministry of Labour. Being sent to a labour training camp can sometimes be avoided by bribing an official.

The sample for this research included two defectors who had worked both inside North Korea and for the North Korean government overseas. Both explained that their wages were withheld, and, at most, some portion was paid to them. While being physically located overseas, they described their workplaces as exported North Korean environments in which the hierarchical structures and ideological sessions travelled with them.

“ Payment is withheld most of the time. Most of the time I didn’t receive my wages because they would say that money had been given to a superior office in North Korea. Or there were times that the hiring company would say that some work had not been done well and maintenance was needed. (Respondent No. 15, male, adult)

As noted in interviews, key features that impact on degrees of freedom in working life inside North Korea include the following:

- › All officially recognised work is centrally organised.
- › Social class determines the nature of the employment you receive (along with your housing, access to education, and other benefits). There are three main classes: the core class (the elite, party cadres, and their families), the wavering class (average North Koreans), and the hostile class (including descendants of landlords or capitalists). Status can be and frequently is inherited.
- › The punishment for being unemployed or failing to attend work is internment in a labour camp.
- › Workers are provided with rations for food and other necessities of life, which can also be withheld as punishment.
- › While in theory all work involves a salary, most wages remain unpaid. Respondents noted many cases where they had to in fact pay both to keep their job (to avoid being formally unemployed and then sent to a labour camp) and to cover the costs of production (when quotas or were not met or the workplace actually had no materials or production). To maintain their “employment” and to survive, they reported working on the black market, trading or selling whatever they could.
- › Obtaining a job, keeping it, or switching jobs normally involves payment of bribes to officials.

The picture that emerges is as disturbing as it is unique. While not a representative sample, the respondents in this group described first-hand experiences of state-imposed forced labour. They also described a broader system of modern slavery operating around them, one that is perpetrated by the state and upon which it depends for its very survival.

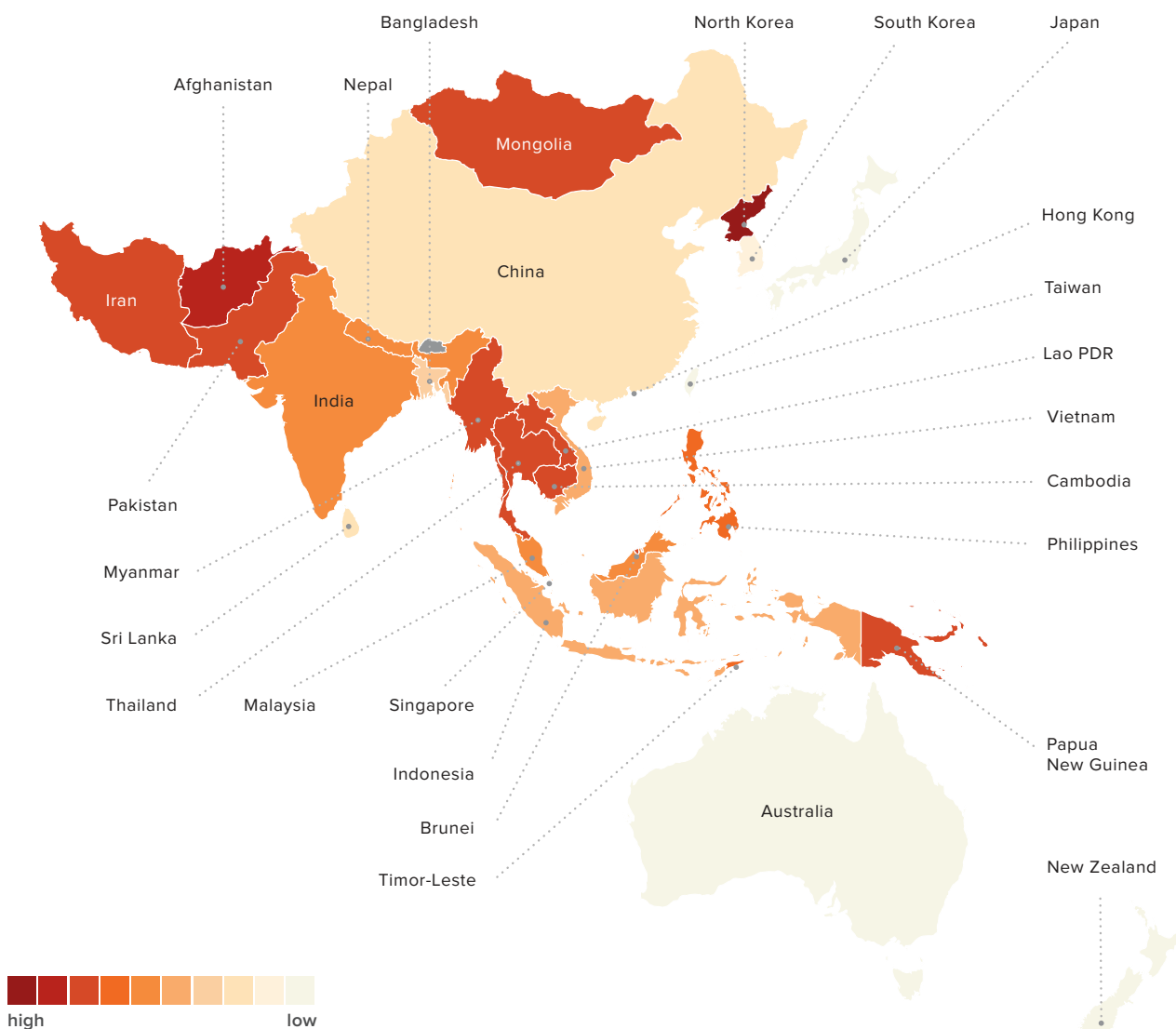
This spotlight summarises a longer set of findings that can be found in the report *Pervasive, Punitive, and Predetermined: Understanding Modern Slavery in North Korea*, available for download from www.globalslaveryindex.org



Disguising his identity, a 20 year old refugee from North Korea now living in Northern China agreed to be photographed on the condition that his face and location were not recognisable. He reports that he left his mother and sister behind in North Korea. He used to be a road worker but was constantly hungry (North Korea uses selective food allocation as a tool of control). In China he works as a farm labourer and construction worker. If he is lucky, he makes about 40 Euros per month. However, he says his boss often does not pay him. Also, locals, who know about his illegal status and that he cannot seek help, beat him. Photo credit: Katharina Hesse

PREVALENCE

FIGURE 5
Prevalence rating by country



In 2017, the 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 these, an estimated 24.9 million men, women and children were living in modern slavery in Asia and the Pacific. The region had the second highest prevalence of modern slavery in the world with 6.1 per 1,000 people.**

When considering forms of modern slavery, the Asia and the Pacific region had the high prevalence of forced labour (4.0 per 1,000 people) compared to other regions. The rate of forced marriage was two victims per 1,000 people. Over half of all victims of forced labour exploitation (55 percent) were held in debt bondage and this affected male victims more than female victims; almost 70 percent of those in debt bondage were male. The Asia and the Pacific region has the highest number of victims across all forms of modern

slavery, accounting for 73 percent of all victims of forced sexual exploitation, 68 percent of those forced to work by state authorities, 64 percent of those in forced labour exploitation, and 42 percent of all those in forced marriages.

Within the region, North Korea, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are the countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery per 1,000 people in the population. The largest number of India, China, and Pakistan have the highest absolute number of people living in modern slavery. Together, they account for 60 percent of the victims and 70 percent of the population in the region (Table 1).

These regional figures, while important, should be interpreted cautiously given the gaps and limitations of data in key sub-regions. 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, it is not possible to survey in areas of countries that are experiencing profound and current conflict such as in Pakistan.

The lack of data from areas where there is conflict means that modern slavery estimates for conflict-affected countries are likely to understate the problem.⁹⁴ Data gaps leading to conservative estimates at a sub-regional level must also be noted. With the exception of Mongolia, surveys were not fielded in the East Asia sub-region and none of the countries were identified as sites of exploitation by respondents in the countries surveyed.

TABLE 1
Estimates of prevalence of modern slavery by country

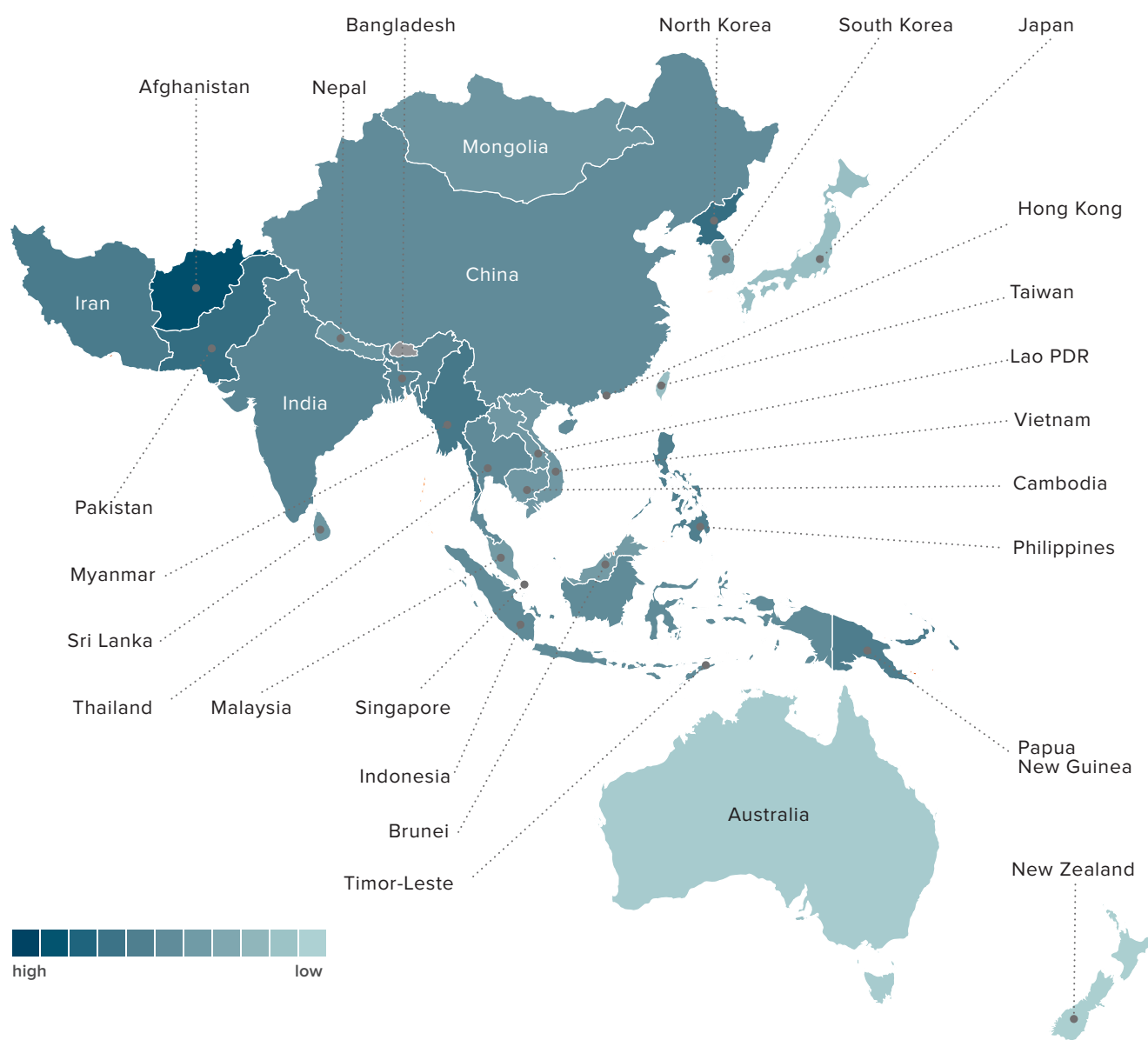
Regional rank	Country	Estimated prevalence (victims per 1,000 population)	Estimated absolute number of victims	Population
1	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea)*	104.6	2,640,000	25,244,000
2	Afghanistan	22.2	749,000	33,736,000
3	Pakistan	16.8	3,186,000	189,381,000
4	Cambodia	16.8	261,000	15,518,000
5	Iran, Islamic Republic of	16.2	1,289,000	79,360,000
6	Mongolia	12.3	37,000	2,977,000
7	Myanmar	11.0	575,000	52,404,000
8	Brunei Darussalam	10.9	5,000	418,000
9	Papua New Guinea	10.3	81,000	7,920,000
10	Lao People's Democratic Republic	9.4	62,000	6,664,000
11	Thailand	8.9	610,000	68,658,000
12	Philippines	7.7	784,000	101,716,000
13	Timor-Leste	7.7	10,000	1,241,000
14	Malaysia	6.9	212,000	30,723,000
15	India	6.1	7,989,000	1,309,054,000
16	Nepal	6.0	171,000	28,656,000
17	Indonesia	4.7	1,220,000	258,162,000
18	Viet Nam	4.5	421,000	93,572,000
19	Bangladesh	3.7	592,000	161,201,000
20	Singapore*	3.4	19,000	5,535,000
21	China*	2.8	3,864,000	1,397,029,000
22	Sri Lanka	2.1	44,000	20,714,000
23	Korea, Republic of (South Korea)*	1.9	99,000	50,594,000
24	Hong Kong*	1.4	10,000	7,246,000
25	Australia	0.6	15,000	23,800,000
26	New Zealand	0.6	3,000	4,615,000
27	Taiwan*	0.5	12,000	23,486,000
28	Japan*	0.3	37,000	127,975,000

* Substantial gaps in data exist for the East Asia subregion where, with the exception of Mongolia, surveys cannot be conducted for reasons such as (i) survey is only delivered face-to-face, (ii) survey is delivered only in the main language which many migrant workers do not speak, or (iii) national authorities would not, or were unlikely to, consent to the module on modern slavery. Unlike several countries in Western Europe where no surveys were conducted, none of the countries in these subregions were identified as sites of exploitation by respondents in the 48 countries where surveys were implemented.

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. An analysis of vulnerability suggests that the Asia-Pacific region performed relatively well on the governance, basic needs, and inequality. Although the region also performed relatively well on the conflict dimension of the vulnerability model, countries with the highest prevalence in the region (Afghanistan and

Pakistan) are impacted by protracted and ongoing conflict (see Figure 7). The region scored relatively poorly on the disenfranchised group dimension, perhaps reflecting the discrimination of individuals on the basis of migration status, race, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, North Korea, and Myanmar, and Cambodia had the highest overall vulnerability scores in the region. These countries experienced multiple vulnerability factors that led to their populations having

a heightened risk of exploitation. Our vulnerability assessments highlighted high levels of conflict, displacement, inequality, and discrimination against disenfranchised groups as contributing to vulnerability within these countries.

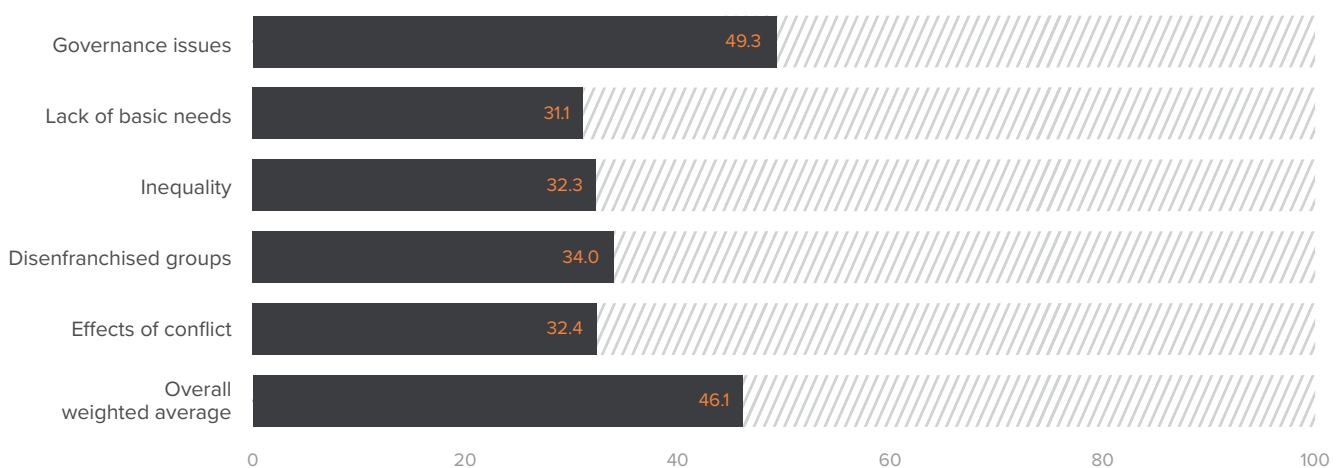
New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and Japan had the lowest overall vulnerability scores in the region. These countries generally exhibit high levels of development and rank relatively high on indices of peace. They also have sufficient resources and political will to develop a strong government response to modern slavery, all of which provide important protections for citizens from vulnerability to exploitation. However, as destination countries for migrants and refugees from neighbouring regions, particularly Southeast Asian countries and Pacific Island nations, these countries face associated risks of trafficking and labour exploitation among these populations. For example, in Australia, migrant workers in the government-run *Seasonal Worker Programme* are vulnerable to exploitation due to their dependence on their employers, who sponsor their visas.⁹⁵ Similarly, in Singapore, limited respect for migrant workers' rights add to their vulnerability in a range of industries including construction and domestic work. The employer-sponsored work permit system for migrant workers ties them to an employer who has control over granting them a transfer to another job. This contributes to their vulnerability by diminishing their ability to leave an exploitative situation or seek alternative work opportunities.⁹⁶ Furthermore, the exclusion of foreign domestic workers from the Employment Act and other protections in Singapore intensifies the vulnerability of domestic workers.⁹⁷

Some countries in the region continue to exhibit political instability and limitations to women's physical security. **North Korea, Afghanistan, and Iran 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. As the North Korean government continues its aggressive and unstable behaviour through military and cyber provocations (including alleged cyber-attacks targeting infrastructure in the US and South Korea⁹⁸), the vulnerability of its population increases. Efforts to consolidate power have resulted in between 80,000 and 120,000 political prisoners being reportedly detained in North Korea.⁹⁹ The North Korean government's efforts to exert control over citizens has contributed to the institutionalisation of forced labour and modern slavery.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, political instability in Afghanistan and Iran continues to add to the vulnerability of individuals in these countries to modern slavery. Political leadership within certain countries also exacerbates existing vulnerabilities. According to the Global Peace Index, the Philippines continues to rank as one of the least peaceful countries in Asia since President Rodrigo Duterte took office in 2016. His aggressive and abusive war on drugs and crime is reflected in a deterioration of societal safety and security indicators as well as declining respect for political rights as seen with the detention of his opponent, Senator Leila de Lima, in 2017 on politically motivated drug charges.¹⁰¹ The extrajudicial killings of alleged criminals have worsened political stability, a characteristic which is likely to drive people to migrate, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse through trafficking and forced labour.¹⁰²

FIGURE 7

Regional average vulnerability scores by dimension, Asia and the Pacific



Despite strong economic growth in certain countries, serious economic challenges including poverty and income inequality persist within the region. According to our vulnerability assessment, Papua New Guinea, North Korea, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste demonstrate the highest vulnerability in terms of lack of basic needs. In Papua New Guinea, almost 40 percent of the country's population lives in poverty¹⁰³ and the rate of malnutrition remains high with almost half of children aged six months to five years stunted due to malnutrition.¹⁰⁴ The health care system also continues to struggle to provide access to services, with nearly two-fifths of health centres and rural health posts having no electricity or essential medical equipment.¹⁰⁵ Such factors exacerbate vulnerability and contribute to the difficulties these rural populations face to break out of the cycle of poverty.

Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, and the Philippines have the highest vulnerability in terms of inequality. This includes violent crime, income inequality, confidence in judicial systems, and the ability to produce emergency funds. In Papua New Guinea, violence against women is a major contributor to the vulnerability of women and girls. Family and domestic violence continue to endanger women and girls at striking rates, yet cases are rarely investigated and there is a lack of financial support and accommodation or counselling services for victims.¹⁰⁶ Evidence suggests sorcery-related violence has increased in recent years with reports pointing to attacks, torture, and murder of women accused of witchcraft.¹⁰⁷ Violent crime and sorcery accusations are often a form of family violence, with abusive husbands using such accusations to silence and control women.¹⁰⁸

TABLE 2


Estimated vulnerability to modern slavery by country, Asia and the Pacific

Country Name	Governance issues	Lack of basic needs	Inequality	Dis-enfranchised groups	Effects of conflict	Overall weighted average
Afghanistan	81.0	41.3	64.7	46.0	92.6	93.9
Pakistan	56.8	36.2	45.9	55.3	92.8	74.1
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea)	87.6	52.0	30.3	32.4	12.3	73.3
Myanmar	58.1	43.8	26.1	46.0	70.2	65.9
Cambodia	66.3	38.5	41.6	56.7	14.8	63.5
Iran, Islamic Republic of	74.6	25.5	35.8	37.3	39.5	63.3
Papua New Guinea	64.8	63.3	46.2	9.5	13.3	61.9
Philippines	50.5	35.3	45.7	36.4	69.3	60.2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	70.7	35.1	26.4	41.2	13.9	57.5
India	46.2	29.8	32.4	41.1	80.0	55.5
Timor-Leste	58.4	41.9	37.2	41.2	3.9	52.8
Thailand	50.9	21.8	35.3	45.1	51.9	51.1
China	61.4	20.5	26.9	32.4	44.2	50.6
Indonesia	43.7	38.0	35.8	53.3	32.2	50.5
Bangladesh	54.1	38.4	25.7	20.9	45.3	50.0
Brunei Darussalam	53.5	30.9	31.7	41.2	18.2	47.2
Nepal	52.0	35.6	32.2	8.7	34.7	44.1
Mongolia	40.9	36.8	35.1	47.1	18.1	43.5
Sri Lanka	44.1	27.0	33.5	34.9	35.9	42.5
Vietnam	53.6	23.2	28.1	32.5	18.5	41.5
Malaysia	36.2	28.4	39.6	41.2	27.8	39.2
Korea, Republic of (South Korea)	33.9	29.4	25.7	33.8	13.4	29.8
Hong Kong, China	39.3	9.6	24.7	28.4	15.0	24.7
Taiwan, China	24.5	24.7	40.6	21.1	1.4	20.3
Japan	21.5	13.1	15.5	31.9	17.8	13.8
Singapore	30.8	16.3	5.0	18.7	9.0	13.4
Australia	11.9	15.7	20.7	12.0	13.0	4.3
New Zealand	12.2	18.4	16.2	7.0	7.0	1.9

Such violence endangers women's physical security and amplifies their vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking. While Papua New Guinea is suggested to have the highest level of income inequality across the entire Asia and the Pacific region,¹⁰⁹ the Philippines also continues to face high levels of income inequality.¹¹⁰ This inequality also intensifies vulnerability as those with comparatively low income tend to migrate in search of better economic opportunities, often in low-skilled sectors.

In terms of disenfranchised groups, including immigrants and minorities, populations in Cambodia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Myanmar have the highest vulnerability. In Myanmar, religious clashes, a progressive denial of rights, and a campaign of violent persecution by Myanmar's military have driven more than one million Rohingya Muslims out of the country.¹¹¹ The majority have taken refuge in Bangladesh and other countries in Asia and the Middle East. Desperation to meet basic needs and the lack of community or family networks in these new environments contribute to their vulnerability to modern slavery and increase the risk of exploitation.

Our vulnerability data highlight Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand as having the highest vulnerability to modern slavery due to high levels of conflict, terrorism, and displacement. Islamist militancy and conflicts between the government and various terrorist and insurgency groups in Pakistan continues to pose a serious threat to the country, adding to instability within the region and contributing to vulnerability.¹¹² In the Philippines, conflict between government forces and Islamist rebels in the city of Marawi, Mindanao left more than 400,000 people displaced and at least 1,100 people dead in 2017.¹¹³ Such displacement intensifies vulnerability. Additionally, in Thailand's southern border provinces, conflict with *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* insurgents has led to ongoing violence, contributing to existing vulnerabilities within that region.¹¹⁴ Breakdown of the rule of law, loss of social and familial support networks, and the disruption of basic service provision that occurs when there is conflict all increase risk of both forced labour and forced marriage. In contrast, Taiwan, Timor-Leste, and New Zealand demonstrate low vulnerability ratings for this factor.



Nur Begum, a Rohingya girl who doesn't know her age but thinks she is between 14 and 16 years old, has her hair done on the day of her wedding, in a Bangladesh refugee camp on November 30, 2017 in Cox's Bazar. Nur Begum said that her parents arranged the marriage for her and she had no choice in the matter. UN officials warned that Rohingya children, especially those who were unaccompanied, are at great risk of being trafficked or forced into marriages. An investigation by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) recently uncovered documented accounts of Rohingya girls as young as 11 getting married and families at refugee camps in Cox's Bazar are forcing their girls to marry early to reduce the number of mouths to feed and secure more food for themselves.

Photo credit: Allison Joyce/Getty Images.

IMPORTING RISK:

Import of products at-risk of modern slavery into G20 countries in the Asia and the Pacific region



As the analysis in the Global Slavery Index confirms, citizens in G20 countries enjoy relatively low levels of vulnerability to the crime of modern slavery within their borders and many aspects of their government responses to preventing it 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.¹¹⁵

There are six G20 countries in the Asia and the Pacific region: Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea. Collectively, these countries import a substantial amount of at-risk products, ranging from Japan importing goods worth US\$47 billion to Indonesia importing US\$3 billion. While the list is not exhaustive, the top products at risk of modern slavery (according to US\$ value) imported by G20 countries in the Asia and the Pacific region are presented in Table 3.

These products are sourced from 15 countries, mainly in Asia, and are valued at US\$90.9 billion. These imports are primarily from China (81 percent of the total value) where much of the imports of apparel, fish and laptops, computers and mobile phones are sourced.

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. In the Asia and the Pacific region, China achieved the highest score (18.3 percent) based on remedial action taken by the government where labour exploitation was discovered in public supply chains and on the introduction of penalties for the violation of labour protections by private actors, including publicising lists of offenders. All other countries in the region (Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea) scored zero across all indicators of this milestone. G20 countries in the Asia and the Pacific countries are yet to implement laws to minimise the risk of modern slavery in public supply chains and to encourage business to practice due diligence.

TABLE 3

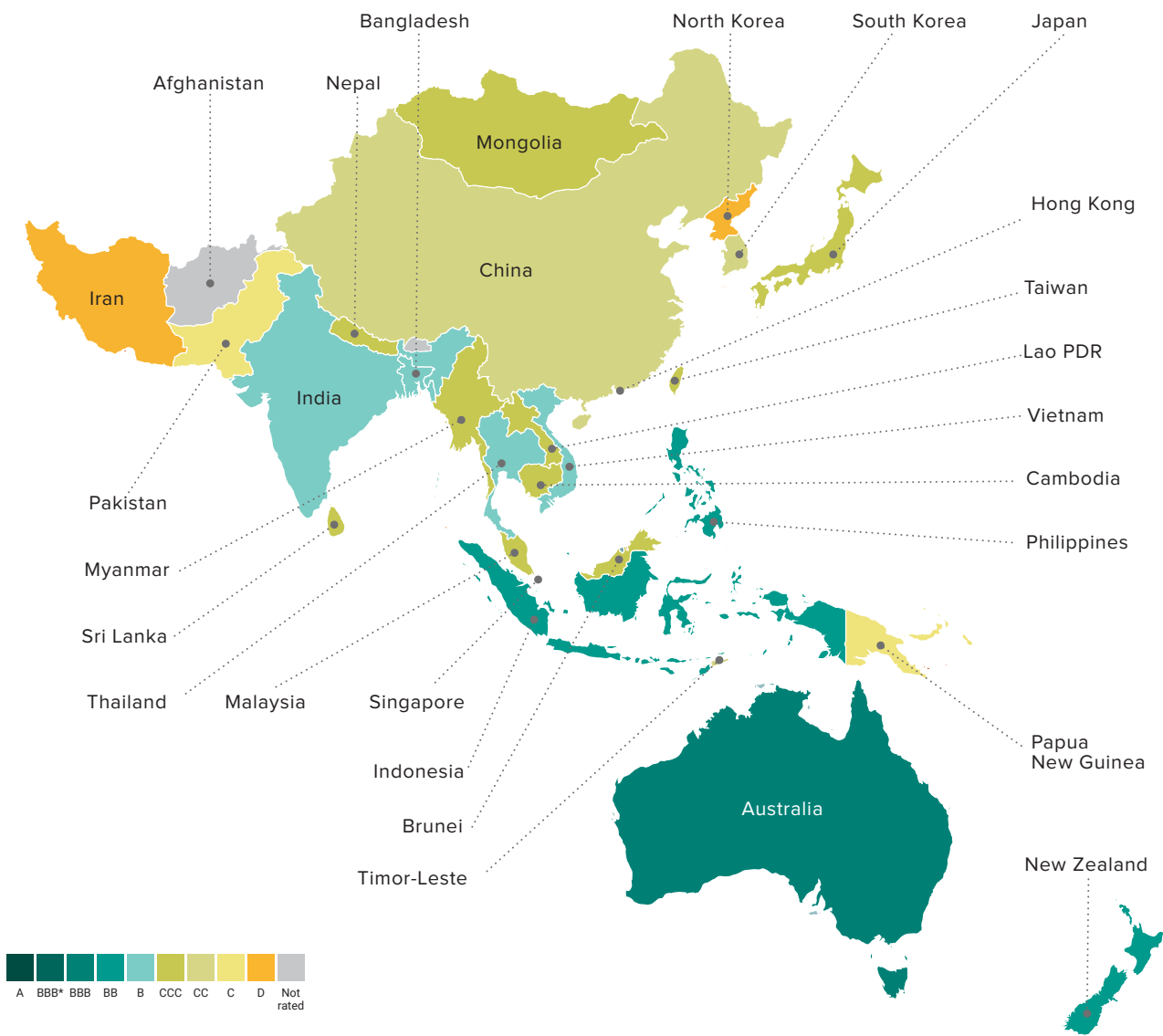
Top five products at risk of modern slavery (according to US\$ value) imported into G20 countries in the Asia and the Pacific region

G20 country	Import product at risk of modern slavery
Australia	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Apparel 3/ Fish 4/ Rice 5/ Cocoa
China	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Fish 3/ Coal 4/ Apparel 5/ Sugarcane
India	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Sugarcane 3/ Gold 4/ Apparel 5/ Diamonds
Indonesia	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Apparel 3/ Fish 4/ Sugarcane 5/ Cocoa
Japan	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Apparel 3/ Fish 4/ Cocoa 5/ Timber
South Korea	1/ Laptops, computers & mobile phones 2/ Apparel 3/ Fish 4/ Cocoa 5/ Timber

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

FIGURE 8

Government response rating to modern slavery by country



Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Indonesia have taken the most steps in responding to modern slavery in the region. These countries have reasonably strong victim support services, National Action Plans, and laws, policies, and programs that address vulnerability factors. Australia's government response rating (BBB) demonstrates that the government has implemented all key components of a holistic response to modern slavery, including victim support services, a strong criminal justice response, coordination and collaboration efforts, and

protections for vulnerable groups. Australia has also begun to take efforts to eliminate modern slavery from business supply chains by committing to introduce legislation by end of 2018 that will require large businesses to report annually on their actions taken to address modern slavery. In the Philippines, President Duterte inherited a strong response to human trafficking, including laws protecting Filipino migrant workers overseas, which is why the Philippines has retained its relatively high rating despite ongoing political instability.

While most countries maintained their rating in the 2018 Global Slavery Index, ratings for countries such as **Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore improved since 2016**. For example, Indonesia improved their rating from B to BB, reflecting in part the opening of a child-friendly integrated public space in East Jakarta where child and adult victims can report trafficking crimes to trained counsellors.¹¹⁶ Singapore improved its rating from CC to CCC and Hong Kong improved its rating from C to CC. There has been increased political will to act in Hong Kong, as shown by the recent cross – departmental initiative to release an Action Plan to Tackle Trafficking in Persons.¹¹⁷ The government also provided training to front line police, immigration, and justice officials on victim identification and conducting human trafficking investigations.¹¹⁸

Despite these improvements, when correlated against GDP (PPP) per capita, **Singapore, Hong Kong, and Brunei stand out as taking limited action despite the resources at their disposal** and the size of the problem. Brunei, for example, received a zero rating for its national coordination mechanisms and scored relatively low in terms of actions taken to identify and support victims. Hong Kong fell significantly short in terms of establishing effective criminal justice mechanisms and has still not criminalised any forms of modern slavery. Singapore also made insufficient efforts with regard to responding to modern slavery. Given these countries do not face the same economic barriers to tackling modern slavery as other countries falling short in the region, we encourage these governments to make concerted efforts to strengthen their actions.

North Korea and Iran still have the poorest response to modern slavery in the Asia and the Pacific region, both maintaining their D rating. Both governments still rate in the bottom five countries globally in terms of their response. This reflects the North Korean government's determination to use slavery as an instrument to control its citizenry, and in Iran a lack of resources and political will to act against modern slavery.

TABLE 4

Change in Asian and Pacific government response ratings 2016 to 2018

Country	2016 Rating	Change in rating	2018 Rating
Australia	BBB	◀▶	BBB
New Zealand	BB	◀▶	BB
Philippines	BB	◀▶	BB
Indonesia	B	▲	BB
Thailand	B	◀▶	B
Vietnam	B	◀▶	B
India	B	◀▶	B
Bangladesh	B	◀▶	B
Nepal	B	▼	CCC
Malaysia	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Taiwan	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Cambodia	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Sri Lanka	B	▼	CCC
Japan	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Lao People's Democratic Republic	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Singapore	CC	▲	CCC
Myanmar	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Mongolia	CCC	◀▶	CCC
Timor-Leste	CC	◀▶	CC
Korea, Republic of (South Korea)	CC	◀▶	CC
China	CCC	▼	CC
Hong Kong	C	▲	CC
Brunei Darussalam	C	▲	CC
Papua New Guinea	C	◀▶	C
Pakistan	CCC	▼	C
Iran, Islamic Republic of	D	◀▶	D
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea)	D	◀▶	D
Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu*			

* Included for the first time in 2018, therefore a rating is not provided. All data are available via the Global Slavery Index website.

Note: Due to the ongoing conflict and extreme disruption to the government, rating of the Afghanistan government's response was not included in the 2018 Global Slavery Index.

Assessments of government response decreased since 2016 for Pakistan, China, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Ratings for Pakistan and China dropped from CCC to C and CCC to CC respectively, and from B to CCC for Nepal and Sri Lanka. Access to more data has affected the changes in ratings for some countries, while in others the drop was due to more restrictive policies or poorer responses to modern slavery. In China, while a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) was introduced in 2009, there is no available evidence that this has been operational since 2010. In Nepal, there is evidence of a more restrictive asylum seeker policy whereby asylum seekers and refugees who are officially recognised as such by UNHCR are denied recognition by the government. The government requires these groups to pay prohibitive fines of up to US\$5 for every day they overstay their visa and a discretionary penalty of up to US\$500 to obtain an exit permit. This policy has been directed at refugees and asylum seekers from Pakistan, Burma, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Somalia, Iran, Iraq, and Democratic Republic of Congo. The government also failed to provide refugees with legal access to public education and the right to work.¹¹⁹ Our data also highlighted evidence of state-imposed labour in Vietnam¹²⁰ and China¹²¹ at drug rehabilitation centres and forced labour of children and the general population in labour and prison camps in North Korea.¹²²

Victim support services are available in almost all countries in the Asia and the Pacific region (24 out of 27 countries reported in the Global Slavery Index), however there are gaps in services that prevent all victims from accessing assistance, with less than two thirds of governments providing full support services for men, women, and migrant workers. In Cambodia, the government operates the Poipet Transit Centre at its border with Thailand, where it provides assistance to trafficking victims who have been deported from Thailand.¹²³ In Bangladesh, a crisis support centre provides assistance to women and girls who have suffered abuse, including victims of trafficking.¹²⁴ The Bangladeshi government has also recently finalised and launched a National Action Plan (NAP) that includes funding for shelters, drop-in centres, and safe homes.¹²⁵ In Singapore, the government provides funding and oversight to 22 shelters serving vulnerable children and six shelters for adults, including one specifically for adult male trafficking victims.¹²⁶ Only Cambodia, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste and Vietnam had NRMs that had been active since 2016. In terms of legal support and protection for victims, only 11 governments provided child friendly services, and fewer (eight countries) provided free legal services for victims. South Korea, Sri Lanka and Taiwan are the only countries with mechanisms in place for the protection of victims and witnesses both within the court and outside the court. Seventeen governments provided training on modern slavery for consular staff during the reference period. Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Iran, Lao, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Timor-Leste do not have laws which allow

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*Only six countries have
 criminalised forced
 marriage; these include
 Australia, China, Nepal,
 Pakistan, Singapore,
 and Vietnam.*

victims to receive compensation or restitution for damages incurred as a result of exploitation. Data show that most governments (24 out of 27) do contribute funds or in-kind contributions to the operational costs of victim support services, although most of these services across the Asia and the Pacific region are provided by NGOs.

Advancements have been made in terms of strengthening legislation, but gaps in enforcement still exist. Of the 27 countries, 18 have fully criminalised human trafficking in line with international definitions, but less than half (13 countries) have criminalised forced labour as a distinct offence. Even fewer (six countries) have criminalised forced marriage; these include Australia, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam. Almost half the number of countries assessed (13 countries) have disproportionate penalties attached to these crimes, whereby a modern slavery offence can be penalised by a fine or capital punishment. A further nine countries have handed out disproportionate punishments on sentencing. Only Bangladesh, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines have stated within legislation that victims are not to be treated as criminals for conduct

that occurred while under control of criminals. However, in reality, this provision is not always implemented. For example, in Papua New Guinea there have been reports that people found engaging in prostitution are arrested without assessing if they are possible victims of trafficking.¹²⁷ In 14 of the 27 countries assessed in the region, there were reports that officials were complicit in modern slavery cases and that these allegations of complicity were not investigated.

More than half of the Asia and Pacific states in the Global Slavery Index (15 out of 27) have a National Action Plan (NAP) in place to tackle modern slavery, or a component such as trafficking. Fifteen countries also have a national coordination body to implement the responses. Far fewer (only Cambodia,¹²⁸ Malaysia,¹²⁹ Thailand,¹³⁰ and Timor-Leste¹³¹) have a fully funded budget allocated to activities within their NAPs. Importantly, no country within this region has established an independent entity to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of response, and only Australia, Bangladesh, Japan, and Vietnam regularly report progress against their NAPs.

Despite the informal sector accounting for 60 percent of the workforce in Asia and the Pacific¹³² and the high prevalence of migrant workers within the informal sector, government responses that provide protections and safety nets for informal migrant workers are limited. Only a third of countries within this region (nine out of 27) conduct labour inspections in the informal sector to specifically identify cases of modern slavery.

Only 10 countries extend their labour laws to everyone and provide legislative protections to migrant workers, domestic workers, and those in the fishing and construction sectors. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable with evidence indicating that 14 countries deported or detained foreign



Ngwe Kyi, 47, cries while describing how he was trafficked at his home on November 8, 2016 in Pho Shwe Law, Myanmar. According to Kyi, when a palm oil company failed to pay him while clearing land for a plantation far from his home village, he felt compelled to take a job offer across the border in Thailand from a stranger. The job never existed, and Kyi was trafficked to the coast and sold to the captain of a fishing boat.

Photo credit: Taylor Weidman/LightRocket via Getty Images.

victims for immigration violations between February 2016 and June 2017, including Australia,¹³³ Malaysia,¹³⁴ and Hong Kong.¹³⁵ New Zealand alone provided visas for victims to remain in the country, which were not tied to participation in the court process; a similar visa for victims of forced marriage was recently announced in Australia.¹³⁶ Eight countries have included in legislation the requirement that private recruitment fees are to be paid by the employer and not the employee, which places migrant workers at risk of debt bondage. In terms of inter-governmental cooperation, it is commendable that 19 governments collaborated on modern slavery issues, however fewer (13 countries) have agreements with other countries on labour migration that provide protection for labour migrants. Governments are also falling short in protection of asylum seekers, another group with heightened vulnerability to modern slavery. Policies guiding the support and protection for asylum seekers are available in less than half the countries assessed (12 of the 27 countries). In terms of government actions which address vulnerabilities, 17 of the 27 countries assessed have made education available for all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious background or geographic region, however investment in research into the prevalence of modern slavery was only evident in South Korea and Thailand.

There is a poor response across the region in public procurement measures as no country has provided guidelines or training on slavery for public procurement officials. Additionally, no country has established policies, systems, or reports to minimise the risk of governments and businesses purchasing products tainted by forced labour. In 2017, the Australian government announced plans to introduce legislation that will require large businesses to report annually on their actions taken to address modern slavery.¹³⁷ Legislation is expected to be passed by the end of 2018. Similar legislation is planned in Hong Kong, and a draft members' bill is due to be discussed at the time of writing.¹³⁸

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This year, for the first time, the Global Slavery Index included smaller Commonwealth countries and other island states in the assessment of government responses. Within the Asia and the Pacific region, this included: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Samoa, and Vanuatu. Palau was also included for the first time.¹³⁹ Given this is the first year that data has been collected for these countries, and thus, we cannot suitably compare progress with that of other countries in the region, we have not reported their milestone or overall ratings here. However, within these countries, positive action has been taken to respond to modern slavery, including the provision of victim support services, enactment of trafficking legislation, and establishment of national coordination mechanisms. For

example, in the Solomon Islands, the Anti-Human Trafficking Advisory Committee, involving both government and NGOs, is implementing the 2015-2020 National Action Plan, which has clear indicators and an allocation of responsibilities.¹⁴⁰ Fiji's Criminal Procedure Code supports restitution or compensation for victims of modern slavery. There is also evidence of physical health services being provided to victims¹⁴¹ and the availability of a children's hotline allowing callers to speak to counsellors in English, Fijian, Hindi, and

Rotuman, taking into consideration the diverse range of ethnicities and language groups residing on the island.¹⁴² There are also gaps; for example, in Fiji, while specialised law enforcement units exist, they do not have the resources to operate effectively.¹⁴³ All data for Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Samoa, and Vanuatu can be found on the Global Slavery Index website.

REGIONAL RESPONSE



Efforts continue to be made at a regional level to combat modern slavery. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a major regional player, extending its approach to target civil society, the private sector, and international organisations over the past few years. ASEAN has also taken an important role in developing training programs and resources to strengthen criminal justice systems among its members. In 2015, ASEAN members adopted the *ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons*, reaffirming its commitment to a stronger and more effective regional response.¹⁴⁵ As of February 2018, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam have ratified this convention, which is now in force.¹⁴⁶

The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (known as the Bali Process) continues to raise regional awareness on key issues through policy dialogue and practical cooperation. At its 2016 Sixth Ministerial Conference, ministers adopted a *Bali Declaration on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime*, which supports measures that would contribute to long term strategies to address these issues, including engagement with the private sector¹⁴⁷. The Bali Process was expanded in 2017 to include the private sector through the launch of the *Bali Process Government and Business Forum*.

Business leaders from 29 countries attended together with governments representing 38 member-states and three UN organisations. It is the first regional partnership of its kind bringing together business and government leaders from across the Indo-Pacific to address modern slavery in the region. The Forum complements global efforts to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour under Sustainable Development Goal target 8.7. At the inaugural meeting, the business co-chairs presented a non-binding work plan under which private sector participants will develop proposals for practical steps governments and businesses can take to eliminate these crimes.

Governments and businesses working together to end modern slavery in the region

The Bali Process Government and Business Forum provides a strategic platform for collaboration. It brings together influential business leaders and senior ministers from 45 countries and three UN organisations (IOM, UNHCR & UNODC) to develop regional strategies to combat the crimes of modern slavery, in the form of human trafficking, forced labour and worst forms of child labour within the Indo-Pacific region.

The inaugural Forum was launched in August 2017 in Perth, Western Australia, as a government and business track of the wider Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (established in 2002). Mr Andrew Forrest (Chairman, Fortescue Metals Group) and Mr Eddy Sariaatmadja (Chairman, Emtex Group) were appointed as Business Co-Chairs, alongside H.E. Ms Retno L.P. Marsudi (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia) and Hon Julie Bishop MP (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia) as Government Co-Chairs.

At the Perth Forum, key discussion themes included the need for greater education and business support for strengthened regulation in the region, and how to incentivise greater business and government action and develop innovative strategies to address the complex crimes of modern slavery.

In close consultation with business and leading civil society experts, the Business Co-Chairs delivered a draft Work Plan which outlines key initiatives and a forward program of work. This Work Plan guided the development of the AAA recommendations, practical and innovative recommendations which were presented at the second Bali Process Government and Business Forum held in August 2018 in Nusa Dua, Indonesia.

Ongoing regional working groups are convened regularly for business and government by the Secretariat, the Walk Free Foundation. Consultations have focused on how to implement the Work Plan to address the top issues in the region including the ethical recruitment of migrant workers, transparency in supply chains, and ensuring there are effective safeguards and grievance mechanisms for workers.

The Work Plan, together with further resources and updates about the Bali Process Government and Business Forum can be found at: www.baliprocessbusiness.org. More information on the wider Bali Process can be found at: <http://www.baliprocess.net/>.

Sub-regional responses against modern slavery have also been developing in recent years. The East Asian Summit (EAS) operates as a regional leaders' forum for strategic dialogue and cooperation on key challenges facing the East Asian region including irregular migration and human trafficking. It comprises 10 ASEAN members and dialogue partners such as the United States and Russia. EAS leaders have adopted an *EAS Statement on Migrants in Crisis and Trafficking in Persons, proposed by the United States and co-sponsored by Myanmar and the Philippines*.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, the Pacific Islands Forum is a regional grouping of 18 members including Pacific Island States, Australia, and New Zealand, the activities of which centre around the improvement of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration to achieve sustainable development in the Pacific region.¹⁴⁹ At the 47th Pacific Islands Forum in 2016, leaders called for action to end illegal, unregulated fishing and associated activities, including human trafficking.¹⁵⁰

The Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT)¹⁵¹ is an inter-governmental agreement between six countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region including Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. COMMIT has set up a sub-regional plan of action that covers eight activities including, training and capacity building, developing national plans of action, establishing multi-sectoral and bilateral partnerships, strengthening victim identification and protection, and implementing prevention measures.

COMMIT has set up task forces to ensure that national activities and annual action plans are continuously developed to keep member states accountable and progress happening.¹⁵²

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), consisting of eight member-states including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Nepal, continues its efforts to combat trafficking as a regional issue.¹⁵³ All member states have agreed to adopt measures including regional sharing of information and programming on ICT initiatives to trace missing children. They also agreed in 2016 to establish a uniform toll-free helpline in each country for missing children.¹⁵⁴

Building the Asia and the Pacific region's response to irregular migration remains a critical issue. At the Sixth Bali Process Ministerial Conference, ministers established a Consultation Mechanism to review the regional response to the Andaman Sea refugee crisis in 2015 and to enable discussions on contingency planning and emergency responses. A Task Force on Planning and Preparedness (TFPP) was created based on recommendations from this review and two meetings of the TFPP were held in January and May 2017.¹⁵⁵ At the latest meeting, delegates of the task force agreed to run workshops supporting the development of National Action Plans to assist member states to improve responses to large influxes of migrants and refugees and to encourage predictable and functional responses in times of crisis.¹⁵⁶

REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments should:

Strengthen legislation

- › Ratify or accede to the UN Trafficking Protocol of 2000, ILO P029 Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, and the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189, 2011). None of the 27 countries assessed in this region have ratified or acceded the ILO P029 Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention and only the Philippines has ratified the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189, 2011). These conventions should be ratified to provide protections for migrant workers.
- › Enact legislation, or strengthen existing legislation, to ensure that all forms of exploitation are criminalised and penalties for crimes associated with human trafficking, child exploitation, forced labour, and modern slavery are appropriate for the severity of the crime. Hong Kong in particular should enact modern slavery legislation, and disproportionate penalties should be strengthened in 13 of the 27 countries assessed in the region.
- › Enact legislation criminalising forced marriage and raising the age of marriage to 18 for men and women. Only six countries assessed in the region have criminalised forced marriage, including Australia, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam. It is important that countries in Asia and the Pacific scale up their efforts to respond to forced marriage, starting with criminalising this form of modern slavery, all the way through to investing in education and community programs to empower women and girls.
- › Investigate all allegations of government complicity in modern slavery crimes. There were reports that official complicity in modern slavery cases were not investigated in 14 of the 27 countries assessed in the region.
- › Enact legislation to protect labour rights of all workers in both the formal and informal economies, including the rights of migrants regardless of whether their entry was legal. Only 10 countries have labour laws that cover all workers, while eight of the 27 countries assessed require employers to pay private recruitment fees. Labour laws should be expanded in all countries in the region to ensure that all migrant workers are protected and ensure that laws or policies state that private recruitment fees are paid by the employer, not the employee.
- › Implement existing legislation effectively by establishing training programs on modern slavery legislation, conducting modern slavery investigations, and on victim-centred approaches, drawing on existing model curricula and standard operating procedures, for police, prosecutors, judges, and defence attorneys.

Improve victim support

- › Build the capacity of embassies in receiving countries to support domestic workers who have escaped exploitative workplaces. Only 17 governments provided training for its consular staff on modern slavery. All countries should ensure embassy staff are trained and able to provide counselling and legal support, and that decent and safe living arrangements are available for these victims while their cases are resolved.
- › Ensure through legislation and policy that compensation and restitution mechanisms exist so that victims can access redress, including back-payment of wages. Currently, Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Iran, Lao, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Timor-Leste do not have laws which allow victims to receive compensation or restitution for damages incurred as a result of exploitation.
- › Expand the availability of visas available for trafficked persons by removing any requirements that they participate in a criminal investigations or prosecutions. Only New Zealand currently provides visas for victims of modern slavery to remain in the country that are not tied to participation in the court process.
- › Bolster victim access to justice mechanisms by ensuring their inclusion in existing laws. Only 11 of the 27 countries assessed provide child friendly services during the criminal justice process, and only eight countries provide free legal services for victims. South Korea, Sri Lanka and Taiwan are the only countries with mechanisms for the protection of victims and witnesses in and outside the court are in place. Mechanisms such as free legal aid, translation services, child specific services and witness protection schemes should be extended to cover all modern slavery victims.
- › Ensure policies and procedures in place so that asylum seekers are able to access basic support and protection within a country's borders. Policies guiding the support and protection for asylum seekers are currently only available in 12 of the 27 countries assessed and should be extended to all countries in the region.
- › Establish a National Referral Mechanism for victims of modern slavery and ensure that the mechanism is actively being used to direct victims to support services. Only Cambodia, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste and Vietnam had National Referral Mechanisms that were active during the reporting period.
- › Improve victim assistance programming by hosting meetings and capacity building workshops for civil society organisations, especially those that work with victims, and government representatives to share good practices and learnings, with an additional focus on the efficacy of longer-term reintegration programs aimed at breaking the cycle of exploitation.

Strengthen coordination and transparency

- › Governments of labour sending countries should cooperate with one another to advocate common standards for the protection of migrant workers, in part so that a destination country cannot simply shift its recruitment to other sources if it is banned from receiving migrant workers by a particular sending country.
- › The governments of sending and receiving countries should cooperate in establishing effective mechanisms to monitor the recruitment and employment of migrant workers.
- › Governments should develop their own National Action Plans or strategies, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, that are based on research and data on the nature and trends of human trafficking and child exploitation.
- › Governments should establish monitoring mechanisms, such as an independent rapporteur or commissioner, to ensure effective implementation of these plans and strategies and the incorporation of lessons learned. While 15 countries have National Action Plans in place to address modern slavery, only Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand and Timor-Leste have funding allocated to activities within the NAP and none of the 27 countries assessed have an independent entity to monitor the implementation of the NAP.
- › Countries should work together to improve migration governance by developing standard form migration agreements, including those that holistically protect migrant workers and that ensure repatriation is voluntary. Only 13 of the 27 countries assessed in the region have agreements with other countries on labour migration that provide protection for labour migrants, which given the prevalence of exploitation of migrant workers, should be extended to cover the remaining countries.

Address risk factors

- › Educate workers on their employment and residency rights, as well as provide current information on how to access help and seek redress for exploitation.
- › Monitor local recruitment agencies for deceptive recruitment practices, such as substituting contracts and charging excessive recruitment fees, and enforce national laws to ensure compliance. Support global initiatives, such as International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS), to monitor these agencies.
- › Fund labour inspections which are conducted with specific intent of finding modern slavery victims in the informal sector, including in sex work, agriculture, fishing, domestic work and brick kilns. Only nine countries of the 27 countries in the region currently fund labour inspections in the informal sector. Support the training and capacity building of labour inspectors to be able to find instances of modern slavery.
- › Conduct regional research and provide technical support and resources to improve national level research and data collection in order to develop evidence-based policy. Only South Korea and Thailand funded or facilitated modern slavery prevalence research in the reference period.
- › Strengthen data sharing between countries within the region to inform policy responses and learn from the experience of others across the region and beyond.
- › 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. Seventeen of the 27 countries assessed have made education available for all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious background or geographic region. Primary education should be extended to all children to reduce their vulnerability to modern slavery.
- › Extend programs that engage with communities through human rights-based education and other community empowerment models. Share lessons learned from community empowerment programming in addressing social issues related to modern slavery, such as early marriage.
- › Support the strengthening of social protection floors by establishing cash transfer schemes, public employment programs, health, maternity, and unemployment protections, disability benefits, and income security in old age.

Eradicate modern slavery from the economy

- › Enact mandatory reporting for all large businesses with regard to the presence of modern slavery in their supply chains.
- › Enact legislation requiring all government contractors and suppliers to take steps to detect and eliminate modern slavery from publicly funded supply chains.
- › Facilitate opportunities for business and government partnerships that strengthen ethical recruitment, promote supply chain transparency, develop incentives, and ensure that safeguards and redress exist for vulnerable workers. For instance, by using collaborative platforms such as the Bali Process Government and Business Forum.

A Filipino woman undergoes an intensive course on housekeeping in 2013 in Manila, Philippines. Due to the rise of domestic worker applicants going to different countries in Asia and the Middle East, the Philippines Government required that all workers undergo courses with accredited centres to be able to meet standards abroad. All countries in the region must enact legislation to protect labour rights of all workers in both the formal and informal economies, including the rights of migrants regardless of whether their entry was legal.

Photo credit: Veejay Villafranca / Getty Images.



APPENDIX:

Endnotes



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- ¹⁴³ Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons 2017, *Trafficking in Persons Report: Fiji Country Narrative*, United States Department of State. Available from: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/271342.pdf>. [08 January 2018].
- ¹⁴⁴ Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu were included in our assessment of government responses in 2018, however as this was the first year we collected data for this country we did not include its rating in the Global Slavery Index. Data collected can be found in the database at www.global-slavery-index.org.
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- ¹⁴⁶ ASEAN n.d., *ASEAN Legal Instruments*, ASEAN. Available from: <http://agreement.asean.org/agreement/detail/330.html>. [08 February 2018].
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- ¹⁵⁰ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat 2016, *Forty-Seventh Pacific Island Forum Communique*. Available from: http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/embeds/file/2016_Forum_Communique_11sept.pdf. [7 February 2018].
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A Cambodian woman and her daughter sit on the floor of the sewing room of the Cambodian Women's Crisis Center shelter on July 2, 2018 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The shelter houses women who were victims of gender based violence. As the world talks about women's rights and the #MeToo movement, Cambodia continues to be a patriarchal society, like many other developing countries, women are often limited from securing proper education and income opportunities. While Cambodia struggles with high rates of gender violence, activists and organisations aim to provide sexual health training for young women, empowering them through education and factory jobs for those who are at risk of sex trafficking. Villagers at Svay Pak district, an ethnically Vietnamese district infamous for child prostitution at the outskirts of Phnom Penh, have seen a significant drop in sex trafficking ever since the organisations started providing education for those who are at risk of turning to prostitution for money.

Photo credit: Lauren DeCicca / Getty Images.

