Modern slavery in Papua New Guinea
Global Slavery Index 2023
Country Snapshot

Figure 1.
Prevalence of modern slavery across Asia and the Pacific

The scale of modern slavery
According to the 2023 Global Slavery Index, an estimated 10.3 in every thousand people were in modern slavery in Papua New Guinea at any point in 2021. In other words, 93,000 people experienced forced labour or forced marriage in Papua New Guinea in 2021. In terms of prevalence of modern slavery, Papua New Guinea ranks 20th globally and 5th within Asia and the Pacific.

KEY STATS
Population (2021) 8,947,027
GDP per capita, PPP (Current intl $) $4,286

PREVALENCE OF MODERN SLAVERY
per 1,000 people

NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN MODERN SLAVERY
93,000

VULNERABILITY TO MODERN SLAVERY
79/100

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MODERN SLAVERY
31/100

Figure 2.
Estimated number of people in modern slavery across Asia and the Pacific

The scale of modern slavery

India
China
North Korea
Pakistan
Indonesia
Bangladesh
Philippines
Myanmar
Iran
Afghanistan
Thailand
Viet Nam
Malaysia
South Korea
Japan
Nepal
Papua New Guinea
Cambodia
Australia
Taiwan
Lao PDR
Hong Kong
Mongolia
Singapore
New Zealand
Timor Leste

Number of people in modern slavery
0
2m
4m
6m
8m
10m
12m

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Vulnerability to modern slavery
How vulnerable a country’s people are to modern slavery is dependent on a range of factors which reflect the strength of governance, access to basic needs, inequality, disenfranchised groups, and effects of conflict. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest vulnerability to modern slavery, Papua New Guinea is rated as 79 and has above average vulnerability for the region. Vulnerability is highest in terms of inequality.

Figure 3.
Vulnerability of Papua New Guinea to modern slavery by dimension, compared to the regional average

Government response to modern slavery
The government of Papua New Guinea scored 31 out of 100 in their response to modern slavery. This places the government’s response below the average regional response. Of the five areas of response assessed (milestones), the government has taken most action on national and regional coordination of the response to modern slavery and least action on addressing risk in government and business supply chains.

Figure 4.
Government of Papua New Guinea’s responses to modern slavery by milestone, compared with the regional average

Priority Recommendations
for the government of Papua New Guinea

1. Criminalise forced labour in line with international conventions.
2. Increase the legal age of marriage for males and females to 18 years without exceptions.
3. Ensure support services are available for all victims of modern slavery, regardless of gender, age, nationality, or sexuality.