Modern slavery in Mali
Global Slavery Index 2023
Country Snapshot

The scale of modern slavery

According to the 2023 Global Slavery Index, an estimated 5.2 in every thousand people were in modern slavery in Mali at any point in 2021. In other words, 106,000 people experienced forced labour or forced marriage in Mali in 2021. In terms of prevalence of modern slavery, Mali ranks 85th globally and 18th within Africa.
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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, Mali is rated as 73 and has above average vulnerability for the region. Vulnerability is highest in terms of effects of conflict.

Figure 3.
Vulnerability of Mali to modern slavery by dimension, compared to the regional average

Government response to modern slavery
The government of Mali 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 effective criminal justice mechanisms and the least action on addressing risk in government and business supply chains.

Priority Recommendations for the government of Mali

1. Immediately end state-imposed forced labour by ensuring any work conducted by the National Youth Service is of a purely military character and not for economic development. Amend or repeal Article L6(2) of the Labour Code, which states that “work required in the public interest by legislative provisions relating to participation in development” is not regarded as forced or compulsory labour.

2. Eradicate hereditary slavery by ensuring it is a distinct criminal offense in the 2012 Anti-Trafficking law or Penal Code and that penalties are proportionate to the crime.

3. Amend the Loi Portant Code des Personnes et de la Famille 2011, to ensure that the minimum age of marriage is 18 with no exception.