Modern slavery in Nigeria
Global Slavery Index 2023
Country Snapshot

The scale of modern slavery

According to the 2023 Global Slavery Index, an estimated 7.8 in every thousand people were in modern slavery in Nigeria at any point in 2021. In other words, 1,611,000 people experienced forced labour or forced marriage in Nigeria in 2021. In terms of prevalence of modern slavery, Nigeria ranks 38th globally and 5th 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, Nigeria is rated as 76 and has above average vulnerability for the region. Vulnerability is highest in terms of effects of conflict.

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

Government response to modern slavery
The government of Nigeria scored 54 out of 100 in their response to modern slavery. This places the government’s response above the average regional response. Of the five areas of response assessed (milestones), the government has taken most action on identification and support of survivors and the least action on addressing risk in government and business supply chains.

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

Priority Recommendations for the government of Nigeria
1. Criminalise the use of children in armed conflict and ensure that laws are enforced and offenders are given proportionate sentences.
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.

For more information on modern slavery, visit the Global Slavery Index 2023 website.