

A person in silhouette is shown from the side, holding a hammer high in the air with both hands. The background is a bright, hazy orange, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The person appears to be standing on a pile of rubble or debris. In the upper right corner, there is a white circular logo containing the text 'GLOBAL FREEDOM NETWORK' in orange, with a heart symbol replacing the letter 'O' in 'FREEDOM'.

**GLOBAL
FREEDOM
NETWORK**

Identifying and Responding to Modern Slavery

A Toolkit for Faith Leaders

Who we are



Walk Free

Walk Free is an international human rights group working to accelerate the end of all forms of modern slavery. Walk Free is the creator of the Global Slavery Index, the world's most comprehensive data set on modern slavery. We use this data to mobilise powerful forces for change against these human rights abuses. We work with governments and regulators, businesses and investors, and faith and community leaders to drive systems change and we partner directly with frontline organisations to impact the lives of those vulnerable to modern slavery. We work with survivors to build the movement to end modern slavery, recognising that lived experience is expertise and they are central to identifying lasting solutions.



Global Freedom Network

Global Freedom Network is the faith-based arm of Walk Free. We recognise that faith can play a vital role in fighting modern slavery because faith leaders are in a unique position to see into the hearts of their communities. With a philosophy built on interfaith collaboration, Global Freedom Network is grateful to the faith leaders who have come together to tackle modern slavery — an issue which strikes at the heart of human dignity. Global Freedom Network was founded in 2014, with the signing of the Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery at the Vatican, a world-first event which brought together leaders of many of the world's biggest faiths in a common cause. Since then, Global Freedom Network has expanded around the globe, working with faith leaders who are building bridges between people with lived experience of modern slavery and law enforcement, cooperative connections with governments, social workers, and support groups, especially in countries of deep faith and high levels of modern slavery.

Cover: A young boy crushes stones to sell as construction materials and help support his family living in a tent camp for internally displaced people, in Idlib, Syria, on December 05, 2020. Thousands of civilians fled from attacks by the Assad regime to the camps and are struggling to survive in the harsh conditions as winter approaches. Photo credit: Muhammed Said/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images.

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About this toolkit

Guidance

This toolkit is published by Minderoo Foundation Limited's modern slavery initiative, Walk Free, as part of its Global Freedom Network. This toolkit is primarily designed for use by faith leaders, to equip them to identify and respond to instances of modern slavery. This toolkit also provides basic tools for faith leaders and faith workers on how to respond if survivors or concerned people reach out to them to discuss modern slavery.

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Above: The Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery ceremony in Nairobi, Kenya March 2022. Photo credit: Global Freedom Network.



Labourers unload coal from a cargo ship in Gabtoli on the outskirts of Dhaka, Bangladesh, on January 09, 2021. After unloading 30 baskets of coal they earn around \$1 USD. Photo credit: Kazi Salahuddin Razu/NurPhoto via Getty Images.

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help you to engage with your community on the issue of modern slavery.

This toolkit provides information on modern slavery, resources to deepen your understanding of the issue, the risks, and the ways it presents itself. This toolkit will help you engage with people in your community who might be at risk of, or have lived experience of, modern slavery. These tools and tips are designed to provide you with additional information to support members of your community by directing them in a safe manner to resources that will help them.

This is not a replacement for survivor-focused or trauma-based training. It is an additional resource to talk about modern slavery and what to do in case a member of your community comes to you with questions or concerns.

A note on language

Throughout this document, we refer to “survivors” or “people with lived experience” when discussing people who have experienced modern slavery. “Victim” is only used in the context of the criminal justice system. Those you speak with may have different preferences for how to describe themselves.

What is modern slavery?

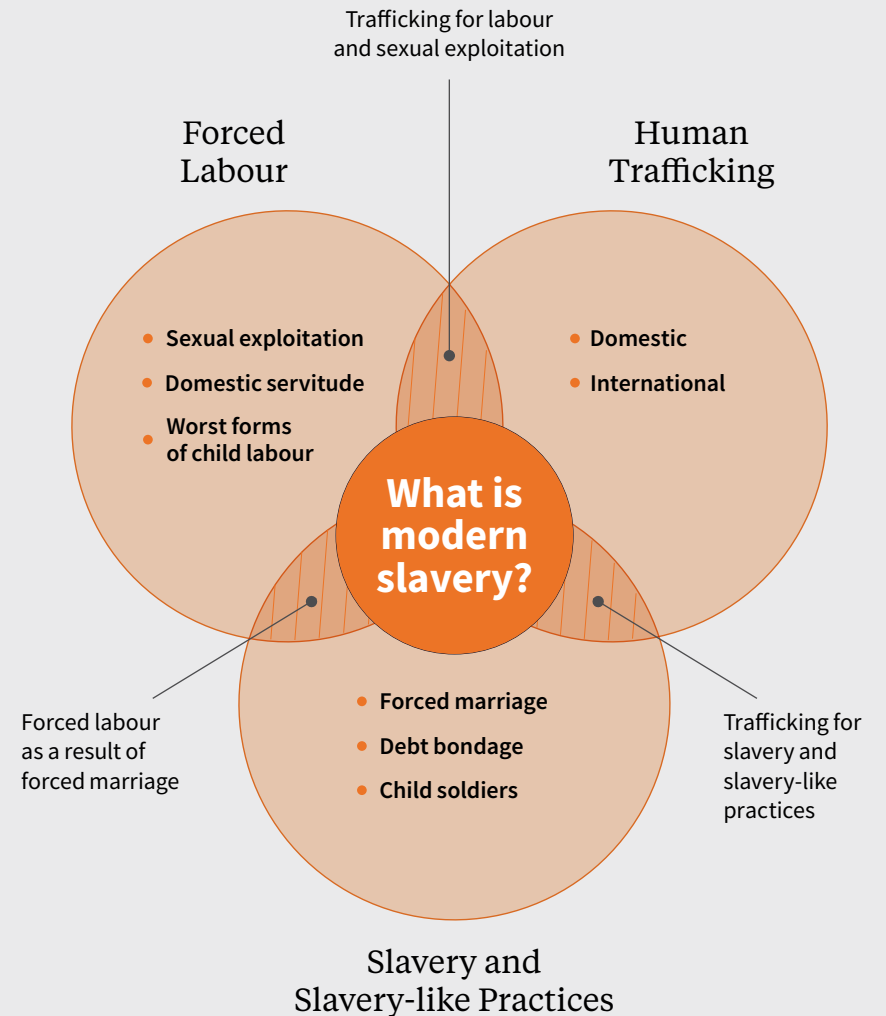
Modern slavery is hidden in plain sight and is deeply intertwined with life in every corner of the world. Each day, people are tricked, coerced, or forced into exploitative situations that they cannot refuse or leave. Each day, we buy the products or use the services they have been forced to make or offer without realising the hidden human cost.

Modern slavery takes many forms and is known by many names — forced labour, forced or servile marriage, debt bondage, human trafficking, slavery-like practices, and the sale and exploitation of children.

In all its forms, it is the systematic removal of a person’s freedom — their freedom to accept or refuse a job, their freedom to leave one employer for another, or their freedom to decide if, when, and whom to marry — in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.



A worker sorts jeans at the grading area of the factory floor in Kandla, India, on September 10, 2022. Canam has two sorting and grading facilities in Kandla that can jointly process 120 million pounds a year of used textiles, enough to fill two and a half Boeing 767 cargo jets a day. Photo credit: Prashanth Vishwanathan/ Bloomberg via Getty Images.



Men work on a farmland in Pyongyang, North Korea, on January 17, 2020, during the year's first "Friday Labour" program, under which white-collar workers are made to undertake physical labour every Friday. Photo credit: Kyodo News via Getty Images.



Who is impacted by modern slavery?

An estimated 50 million people were living in situations of modern slavery on any given day in 2021, according to the latest Global Estimates of Modern Slavery. Of these people, approximately 28 million were in forced labour and 22 million were in forced marriages.¹

The 10 countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery are North Korea, Eritrea, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Tajikistan, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, Afghanistan, and Kuwait.

These countries share some political, social, and economic characteristics, including limited protections for civil liberties and human rights. Many are in volatile regions, which have experienced political instability, conflict, and/or authoritarianism. Several of these countries have governments that force their citizens to work in different sectors, in private prisons, or through forced conscription. Others are home to large numbers of vulnerable people, such as refugees or migrant workers, who are often not afforded the same legal protections as citizens and are highly vulnerable to exploitation.

It is important to note that modern slavery occurs in every country, regardless of wealth. More than half (52 per cent) of all forced labour and a quarter of all forced marriages can be found in upper-middle income or high-income countries.

Most of the countries with lowest prevalence of modern slavery — Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Ireland, Japan, and Finland — are also members of the G20.

Yet, even in these countries, thousands of people continue to be forced to work or marry, despite their high levels of economic development, gender equality, social welfare, and political stability, as well as strong criminal justice systems.

Modern slavery is a growing global problem which is occurring against a backdrop of increasing and more complex armed conflicts, widespread environmental degradation, assaults on democracy in many countries, a global rollback of women's rights, and the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These factors have caused significant disruption to employment and education, leading to increases in extreme poverty and forced and unsafe migration, which together heighten the risk of all forms of modern slavery.

It is often the people who are already vulnerable in our communities — women, children, migrants, refugees, and people who belong to marginalised groups — who are most at-risk of all forms of modern slavery. More than 12 million of all people in modern slavery are children, and women and girls account for over half of them (54 per cent). Migrant workers are three times more likely to be in forced labour than non-migrant workers.²

How does modern slavery differ by region?

Globally, nearly one in every 150 people are in modern slavery. Modern slavery affects every region in the world. The following pages provide a brief summary of the extent and drivers of modern slavery in each of the five major world regions.

Africa

On any given day in 2021, an estimated 7 million men, women, and children were living in modern slavery in Africa, a prevalence of 5.2 people in modern slavery for every thousand people. Africa had the fourth highest prevalence of modern slavery among the five regions of the world.

Modern slavery in Africa is driven by ongoing political instability, poverty, displacement of people due to conflict and climate change, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Modern slavery manifests differently throughout Africa; it occurs in every country in the region, while those with higher prevalence typically experience compounding vulnerability factors.

More than 3.1 million Africans are in forced marriage, the drivers of which depend on factors in their location, such as the presence of conflict, poverty, or persistence of certain traditional practices. There are more than 3.8 million people in forced labour across Africa. At particularly high risk are adults and children who travel from rural and remote areas to urban centres seeking work. Higher rates of descent-based slavery and forced begging continue to occur in parts of the Sahel.³

Right: A man walks in a sandstorm on April 14, 2022, in Somalia, East Africa. After three failed rainy seasons, Somalia is experiencing the worst drought in decades, exposing about 6 million people to extreme food insecurity which has been heightened after the war in Ukraine blocked wheat exports. Food insecurity and social instability are key drivers of risk of modern slavery. Photo credit: Sally Hayden/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images.



The Americas

The Americas region is home to 13 per cent of the world's population, with varying levels of wealth, mobility, and security across and within countries in the region.

Modern slavery in the region is driven by inequality, increasing poverty, discrimination against migrants and minority groups, political instability, and conflict. The situation has been exacerbated by economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and responses to it, as well as the impacts of climate-related displacement.

An estimated 3.5 per thousand people in the region are in forced labour and 1.5 per thousand are in forced marriage.

Mass migration fuels forced labour, particularly in the world's largest migration corridor from Mexico to the United States (US).

Migrants flee countries such as Venezuela and others and congregate on the border between the US and Mexico. Forced marriage is linked to increased poverty and lower educational attainment, and is driven by longstanding patriarchal norms and fundamentalist religious beliefs within the region; for example, in North America forced marriage is reported in conservative religious sects.⁴

Below: Socially-distanced migrant farm labourers rest in their dormitory on April 28, 2020, in King City, California. Restrictions on movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with rising unemployment rates, poverty, and inequality across the United States, exposed vulnerable workers to greater risks of exploitation. Photo credit: Brent Stirton via Getty Images.



A former domestic worker from Sierra Leone uses her mobile phone while waiting to be repatriated later that evening. Lebanon's economic collapse, as well as COVID-19 and the August 4 blast at the Port of Beirut in 2020, have left a significant number of migrant workers in a humanitarian crisis. Many are forced to live on the streets, desperate to leave but cannot afford a plane ticket home, and receiving limited assistance from diplomatic representatives. Photo credit: Aline Deschamps via Getty Images.



Arab States

An estimated 1.7 million men, women, and children were living in modern slavery in the Arab States region on any given day in 2021. Despite having the lowest number of people living in modern slavery across all regions, once population was considered, the Arab States had the highest prevalence of modern slavery. An estimated 10.1 people per thousand people were living in modern slavery in the region, which breaks down to 5.3 in forced labour and 4.8 in forced marriage. Forced labour was the most common form of exploitation, accounting for just over half of people living in modern slavery (52 per cent). As in all other regions, the prevalence of forced marriage was higher among females (5.5 per thousand) compared to males (4.3 per thousand).

More than 20 million refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons originate from the Arab States, and the region continues to host nearly 14.5 million of those who were forcibly displaced. The region is also home to nearly 37 million migrants, originating from within the region, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa. Populations are vulnerable to sexual slavery and forced labour imposed by armed groups, forced labour as a result of displacement from their homes, and forced and child marriage to ease financial strain on households. In Jordan, Lebanon, and wealthier Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates — migrant workers are vulnerable to modern slavery under the exploitative kafala (sponsorship) system. Forced labour is reported in sectors such as domestic work, construction, hospitality, and security.⁵

Asia and the Pacific

The region hosts the largest number of people in modern slavery, with an estimated 15 million people in forced labour. This includes debt bondage among migrants exploited within the region, hereditary forms of bonded labour in South Asia, and state-imposed forced labour in China, North Korea, and other countries. The prevalence of forced marriage in Asia and the Pacific is second highest in the world, after the Arab States, impacting an estimated 4.5 females and 2.1 males per every thousand people.

Although the region is highly diverse in terms of geography, ethnicity, culture, religion, and wealth, modern slavery occurs in every country.

Discrimination on the basis of gender, race, caste, and ethnicity drives vulnerability to modern slavery. This vulnerability is compounded by conflict, as seen with the mass displacement of the Rohingya population in Myanmar, political instability, as shown by the seizure of power by the Taliban in Afghanistan, and economic insecurity, as illustrated by the economic crisis and humanitarian emergency in Sri Lanka. To varying extents, the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated vulnerability across the region — driving increased unemployment, poverty, and gender inequality.⁶



A migrant carries a child with smugglers behind him as he runs to board a smuggler's boat on the beach of Gravelines, northern France on October 12, 2022, in an attempt to cross the English Channel. Since the beginning of the year, more than 33,500 people have already made the perilous crossing of the English Channel, one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, where more than 400 commercial ships pass each day. Photo credit: Sameer Al-Doumy/AFP via Getty Images.

Thousands of garment workers who produce items for top Western fast fashion brands took to Bangladesh's streets on April 15, 2020, to protest against unpaid wages, saying they were more afraid of starving than contracting the coronavirus. Photo credit: Munir Uz Zaman/AFP via Getty Images.



Europe and Central Asia

Europe and Central Asia is home to 12 per cent of the world's population. Although the region is highly diverse in terms of geography, ethnicity, culture, religion, and wealth, modern slavery occurs in every country. Europe and Central Asia has the second highest prevalence of modern slavery of the five global regions. Various factors contribute to the prevalence of forced labour and forced marriage, including poverty, discrimination, migration, and a lack of economic opportunities. Conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change further compound these vulnerabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and created new ones, with increased economic insecurity

across the region and unequal access to vaccines and healthcare.

To varying extents, countries across the region are impacted by climate change, with effects on agriculture and other primary industries driving poverty and food insecurity. Climate-related displacement continues to drive the risk of exploitation, particularly in forced labour, across the region. In recent years, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has increased the risk of modern slavery, with mass displacement and forced migration both in-country and across the region.⁷

For more information about modern slavery around the world, please see the Global Slavery Index: globalslaveryindex.org

What role can faith leaders play in addressing this issue?

Faith leaders can play a vital role in fighting modern slavery because they are in a unique position to see into the hearts of their communities.

Religion is at the heart of many people's values and identity. Religious leaders and faith organisations have more access to family and community spheres, reaching the hearts and minds of millions of people in ways that humanitarian groups cannot. You are uniquely positioned in your communities and have a direct role in influencing beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, practices, and actions.

Religious beliefs are handed down through traditions, scriptures, speeches, and other forms of communication, often expressed by religious and traditional leaders, and spread through peer influence in faith communities.

Some religious ideas can justify harmful practices, such as corporal punishment, child or early marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, and vaccine hesitancy, among others. However, in many cases this stems from extremist, outdated, or misguided understanding of theological teachings.

You are in a position to open dialogue on these complex issues and steer these conversations in a way that reaches your faith communities.

Also working in the area of faith, faith-based organisations have been engaged in a wide range of services – as broad in scale as those delivered by their non-religious counterparts. They range from education and health to financial assistance and in-kind support to the poor, as well as humanitarian relief in crises and other services such as legal aid.

Signs that someone is in trouble

People in situations of modern slavery may show a few, or all of these signs. They can be indicative of situations of exploitation, coercion, and threats that people have experienced.

There may be other reasons why some of these signs exist, so it is important not to conclude that there must be some form of modern slavery based solely on a few of these signs being present.

Appearance

- Show signs of physical or emotional abuse, including untreated injuries
- Appear malnourished or unkempt, withdrawn or neglected
- Seem under the influence or control of others
- Wear the same clothes every day
- Have a lack of personal belongings or official identification documents

Work

- Identification documents are withheld by their employer or a third party
- Lack of earnings, wages withheld, or underpayment
- Working to pay off a significant debt
- Abusive/substandard working and living conditions
- Work excessive overtime or given no time off
- Wear no safety equipment when their work requires it

Accommodation

- Live in dirty, cramped, or overcrowded accommodation
- Live and work at the same address
- Unfamiliar with the neighbourhood where they live or work

Travel

- Rarely allowed to travel on their own
- Irregular hours of collection and drop off, in crowded transport with other workers
- No control of identification documents required for travel

Seeking help

- Frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of police, don't know who to trust or where to get help
- Afraid of deportation, and of the risk of violence to themselves or their family⁸

What to be aware of when offering support

People who have lived experience of modern slavery have likely been physically or emotionally harmed. They may have also been threatened with violence or being reported to the police. As a result, they might display the following behaviours, feelings, or reactions when speaking with you.

- Feelings of distress, hostility, fear, sadness, anger, or distrust
- Reluctance to cooperate or to answer questions
- Feelings of guilt and shame
- Being easily startled
- Problems with their memory, including dates and timeframes

These behaviours may make it harder to build a relationship with the person so approaching them with gentle, patient care for them will go a long way towards building trust. It is important to remember that a person who has been exploited may struggle to share their experience in full. The best thing you can do is to take them seriously, even if some parts don't make sense to you.

Below: A worshipper of Adundo Messiah church gestures before the Sunday church service on October 29, 2017, in Kisumu, Kenya. Photo credit: Yasuyoshi Chiba/AFP via Getty Images.



Basic principles of survivor engagement

For many survivors, having a strong and welcoming faith community is an invaluable source of social, emotional, and spiritual support and might encourage them to reach out for help. Faith communities should be sensitive to the trauma that survivors may have experienced.

Here are some tips that may help you get started. Further information on these points is included in this toolkit.

Create a safe, non-judgemental place

- Offer a safe space to discuss this issue, without judgement, so that people can share their experiences.
- Ask neutral, open-ended questions to build trust and help you find out more about how to help them. Some examples are “I’m pleased to see you – how are things going?”, “Can you tell me what has been happening for you lately?”, “Can you tell me a bit about your family / relationship?”

Offer support and referral services

- Offer emotional, spiritual, and material support as well as information on local resources.
- Keep your discussions confidential.
- Sharing information about the person or their situation, even with those in your faith community, can put them at greater risk of harm.
- The Faith For Freedom app contains referral pathways for 16 countries. You can download it for free at faithforfreedom.org.

Get connected

- If you have permission, consider contacting the police or an organisation helping survivors to report suspected instances of modern slavery and for information on local and national resources.
- If faith leaders are mandated reporters in your country, you have a legal requirement to report certain crimes.

Keep your language simple and specific

- “Modern slavery”, “human trafficking”, and “forced labour” can mean different things to different people. You should not assume that everyone in your congregation is familiar with these terms and the human rights violations and crimes they describe. You could instead talk about “feeling trapped”, “feeling unsafe”, “feeling exploited”, or “being taken advantage of.”

Other tips

- The nature of modern slavery means that those who have lived experience are often hidden in plain sight. Similarly, the culprits are not always obvious – they are not always sinister middlemen, and can often be friends and family, and part of the community.
- It’s worth emphasising that in some countries, certain forms of modern slavery (such as human trafficking) are dealt with by specific branches of government.
- Help congregants to learn how to spot the signs of human trafficking, but don’t encourage them to rush to the “rescue”. Guard against encouraging paranoia and in any way encouraging vigilantism. This is always a risk with crimes that often affect the most vulnerable.

Confidentiality

Keeping your discussions confidential is a very important part of providing support and maintaining trust with survivors of modern slavery.

This means making it clear that you will keep your conversations confidential. Never share information about the person you are supporting with the person who is controlling them, even if they are also in your faith community – this can increase the risk of harm.

In some countries, faith leaders are mandated reporters and have a legal requirement to report certain crimes, in particular if the suspected victim is a child. You should check the local laws in your country to see if this applies to you.



Creating a safe environment

If you think the person you are dealing with may have been trafficked or forced into marriage or work, try to establish trust with them and gently find out more.

You can establish trust by using a calm and friendly voice and starting a very basic conversation, even if you have the feeling the person does not speak your language. Your reassuring tone of voice will help to express your intentions.

Make it clear that you are there to help, but never make promises that you do not know if you can keep. Ask whether the person you are speaking with needs immediate or practical help, if they are injured, hungry or thirsty, too cold or too hot.

When speaking with them further, keep the following in mind:

- Have the conversation take place away from other congregants, to ensure confidentiality.
- Let the person choose where to sit. If you can, set up the room so that you're not facing one another across a desk. Instead, use similar chairs at the same level.
- Do not ask direct questions, such as "Have you been trafficked?" The person may not understand the question or may have been told by the perpetrators to answer it with "No" or may not perceive themselves as a victim of trafficking or exploitation.
- Avoid asking the person why they haven't left the situation, as it may make them feel judged or misunderstood. There may be many reasons why they haven't been able to leave.
- Ask questions that will help you understand whether the person is able to move freely. If they seem to have little choice or control around their movements, it's more likely that they are being exploited.
- Try to use the same language that they do, especially when talking about someone who may be exploiting them. For example, if the person refers to this person as their "cousin", try to use the same term instead of "trafficker" or "abuser".
- Answer the person's questions as clearly as you can, but don't make any promises.

Left: Men participate in morning prayers during the Eid Al-Fitr celebration on April 22, 2023 in Accra, Ghana. Photo credit: Ernest Ankomah via Getty Images.



Next steps for people in situations of modern slavery

If you get the sense that the person you're speaking with is in a situation of modern slavery, you can ask some follow-up questions to find out more.

While you're doing this, keep in mind that people with lived experience of modern slavery may blame themselves for the situation. Remind them it is not their fault. Acknowledging their courage in speaking with you is also an important way to encourage them and help them feel valued. Here are some ways that you can continue the conversation:

“Thank you for sharing this with me, it takes a lot of courage to talk about this. You seem to be experiencing a difficult work situation / family life. Would you like to tell me more about it?”

“Has anyone made you feel afraid or unsafe?”

“Have they controlled you, hurt you or threatened to hurt you?”

“Are you worried about anyone else in your family?”

If the person gives you information that makes you think they have been exploited, ask them if they are comfortable for you to seek further advice or refer them to one of the support services in the Faith For Freedom app. Please note that it may be a legal requirement for you to report a suspected crime, depending where you live.

If they are not ready to seek help from law enforcement or other organisations, and you are not mandated to report their situation as a suspected crime, let them know that they can always approach you if they ever need help or simply want to talk. Make the effort to speak with them regularly. It can take some time to build enough trust that the person feels comfortable talking about the support they need. They will also know that you can be trusted and may encourage others to come and talk to you if they are in trouble.

Left: A woman walks past a mural calling for women and children's rights in Afghanistan. The collapse of the economy and the freezing of Afghan and donor funds after the Taliban takeover of the country in August 2021 created a humanitarian crisis. Most art, culture and pastimes have been banned. The female population have also had to quit jobs and young girls after the age of 12 can no longer go to school or complete further education. Photo credit: Nava Jamshidi via Getty Images.

Preparing referrals

Survivors of modern slavery often require specialised support services to help them leave a dangerous situation, seek legal advice, or heal from their experiences. Referring people who come to you for support to these services is an essential form of assistance that faith leaders can provide.

Create a directory of important contact points or use the Faith For Freedom mobile app to look for contact points in your region or country. You can also refer to the support and referrals services on page 30.

Contact specialised entities, especially non-governmental organisations and other providers of services, as early as possible once you have the person's permission. It is extremely important that survivors receive adequate care, as this helps to increase the likelihood that they receive the support they need and avoids inadvertently causing further harm.

Faith For Freedom

The Faith for Freedom app is a practical information tool for faith leaders, clergy and their staff to help identify modern slavery and human trafficking and safeguard their communities. Produced by the Global Freedom Network, this free app provides clear, concise information about modern slavery. It explains what modern slavery is, how to detect it, how to respond to people affected by it, and how and where to find help to address it.

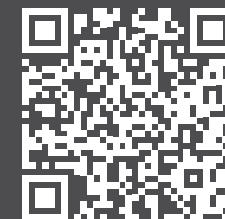
The Faith For Freedom app has country-specific information as well as an international profile.



Faith For Freedom 

Scan the QR code to download the app and learn more about modern slavery, how to respond to situations of modern slavery, and the important role of faith in addressing the issue.

faithforfreedom.org





Ideas for faith communities

- Talk and pray about modern slavery in your place of worship.
- Add this topic to your youth group and small faith-based group studies.
- Ask a guest speaker to talk about modern slavery at your place of worship.
- Create a safe space where concerned people and survivors feel comfortable reaching out to discuss this issue.
- Read stories of those who have survived modern slavery.
- Learn the indicators of modern slavery, and who to report suspected cases to.
- Investigate whether there is modern slavery in the supply chains of your place of worship.

Download the Faith For Freedom app to learn more about modern slavery, how to support survivors and the important role of faith in addressing the issue.

Left: A group of Muslim women pray at a rooftop in Nima during the Eid al-Fitr celebrations in Accra, Ghana, on May 24, 2020. Photo credit: Nipah Dennis via Getty Images.

Frequently asked questions

What is modern slavery?

Modern slavery covers a number of concepts including forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, slavery and slavery-like practices, and human trafficking. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, abuse of power, or deception.

Who is affected by forced marriage?

Anyone can be affected by forced marriage, but it mainly impacts women and girls. People are at a higher risk of forced marriage if they live in conflict zones or if they or their families are facing financial difficulty.⁹

What is the difference between forced marriage and arranged marriage?

An arranged marriage is when both people can choose to accept or reject the marriage arrangement without fear of negative consequences. A forced marriage is when one or both people are pressured to go ahead with the marriage even if they don't want to.¹⁰

Do any major religions support or encourage modern slavery?

No. It is true some religious ideas can justify harmful practices, but these often come from extremist, outdated, or misguided understanding of theological teachings. All major faiths prohibit slavery. We all have a responsibility to identify and discourage modern slavery, including forced marriage and forced labour.



Right: Detail of a roasted cocoa bean during husk removing process at Moments Chocolate workplace in Accra, on June 18, 2019. Moments is one of the 50 small chocolate producers in Ghana. Ruth Amoah started the chocolate company in 2015. In a week they produce around 4000 chocolate bars. Photo credit: Cristina Aldehuela/AFP via Getty Images.

Support and referrals

Support services for survivors of modern slavery vary between countries. Some have dedicated government services, such as anti-trafficking hotlines.

The Faith For Freedom app provides contact details for support services across 16 countries. It can be downloaded for free at faithforfreedom.org.

Support services are also listed on the following sites:

A21: <https://www.a21.org/>

Global Modern Slavery Directory: <https://globalmodernslavery.org/>

Endnotes

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