



Collaborating with Ghanaian faith leaders to combat modern slavery



In 2022 and 2023, the Global Freedom Network together with the Ghanaian Federation of Faith Leaders launched two poster campaigns across faith communities in Ghana to raise awareness of trafficking across borders, forced marriage and forced labour risks.

The campaigns were coordinated with a group of local faith leaders who contextualised and amplified the campaign messages throughout their communities.

The Problem

Walk Free's 2023 Global Slavery Index estimated that 91,000 people are living in modern slavery in Ghana. This equates to nearly three people in every 1,000 in the country being forced to work or marry. Those at higher risk of modern slavery in Ghana are often people who experience discrimination due to their migration status, race, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation. Compounding crises, like climate-induced droughts, the COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing and complex conflicts have heightened the risk of modern slavery across Africa.

Ghanaian survivors of modern slavery have been identified domestically as well as in other African countries and outside the continent. In Ghana, people in modern slavery are exploited in several industries, including fishing, gold mining, cocoa farming, the commercial sex industry, domestic work, and street begging. While forced marriage impacts everyone, women and girls are at particular risk. One out of every 300 females in Africa is living in a forced marriage, while for men and boys the numbers are far lower, with estimates showing that one out of every thousand males are forced to marry in the region.

In collaboration with the Ghana Police Service, Global Freedom Network identified several trafficking hotspots throughout Ghana. Global Freedom Network leveraged its network of faith leaders and faith stakeholders to design and run two campaigns to raise awareness about modern slavery signs and ways to report potential cases or receive assistance in these areas.

The Response

Campaign one

Cross-border poster campaign, June 2022

With the trafficking hotspots identified, Global Freedom Network designed posters, flyers, and social media posts to raise awareness of the issue in Ghana and bring it to the attention of government agencies, other authorities, and those who may be at risk of trafficking. **1000 posters were printed and distributed in buses and public transport stations.**

The campaign was launched at an event attended by representatives from the Ghana Police Service, faith leaders and the media. It was promoted by the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit and local faith leaders, who have a powerful voice in their communities.

Campaign two

Poster campaign in places of worship, July 2023

Global Freedom Network designed posters, flyers, and social media posts to raise awareness of the issue in Ghana and through local faith partners, brought those messages to the attention of community members. **More than 5000 posters were printed and distributed around Ghana.**

Faith leaders raised awareness of this issue in their communities, through their sermons and informal community engagement. Through this, faith leaders raised awareness that modern slavery is a moral issue that the faith community must combat, and also opened the door for community members to confidentially approach leaders with any concerns or questions.

Global Freedom Network also trained faith and community leaders to be better equipped to identify and respond to instances of modern slavery in their communities through interactive webinars. Faith leaders were supplied with comprehensive toolkits about modern slavery in Ghana, the role of faith leaders in addressing the issue, how to identify if someone might be in trouble, and how to offer support.

The Impact

The faith leaders reported an increase in phone calls and discussions in their communities, and those of their peers, following the project. Community members of all ages, genders and education levels were reached as part of the awareness raising campaign. The campaign also had unexpected success in identifying new trends in the region, including an increase in work scams in the region.

Ghana faces an ongoing economic crisis which has led to higher vulnerability among jobseekers and those in poorly paid or insecure work. Work scams, while not necessarily a form of modern slavery, can lead to people experiencing labour exploitation. In response to these findings, Global Freedom Network is now working with faith leaders to prepare information on work scams to include in the Faith For Freedom app.

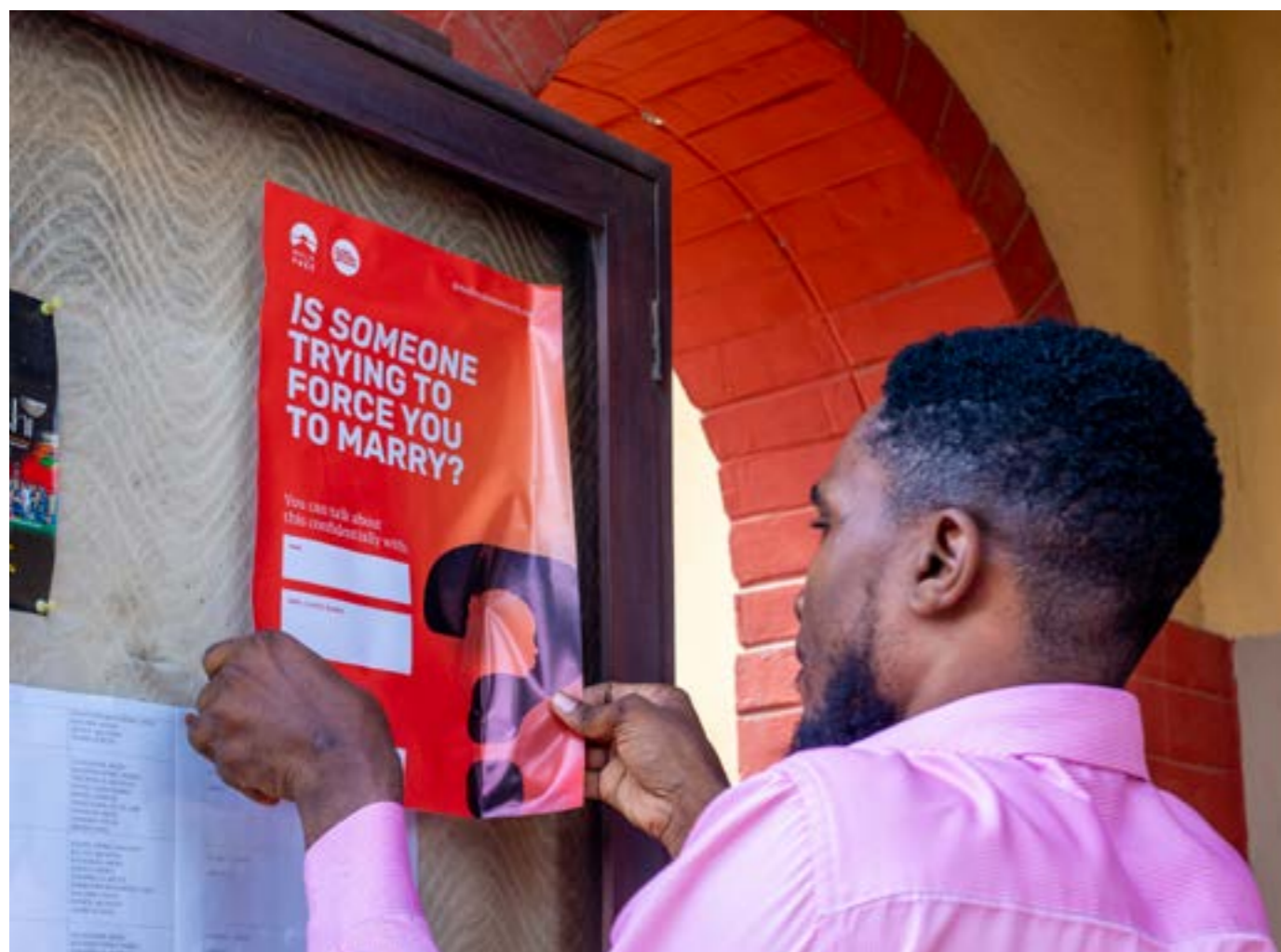


Cover: The Most Rev. Dr Paul Bofo, Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in Ghana, with a poster raising awareness of human trafficking. Photo credit: Global Freedom Network.

Left: A poster raising awareness of forced marriage is displayed outside an Orthodox church in Accra, Ghana. Photo credit: Steven Adusei.

Above: Sheikh Armiyawo Shaibu, spokesperson for the National Chief Imam in Ghana, and Elizabeth Poku from Global Freedom Network with a poster raising awareness of forced marriage. Photo credit: Steven Adusei.

Father Ellis, the representative of the Anglican Archbishop in Ghana, reads a toolkit about modern slavery for faith leaders. Photo credit: Steven Adusei.



Faith For Freedom

To download the Faith For Freedom app and learn more about modern slavery, how to respond, and the important role of faith in addressing the issue, scan the QR code or visit: faithforfreedom.org.



Global Slavery Index

For more information on modern slavery in the Africa region, please see Walk Free's latest Global Slavery Index by scanning the QR code or visiting: globalslaveryindex.org.

