Commonwealth 8.7 Network
We support the Sustainable Development Goals

The 8.7 Quarterly

Spring 2024

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of the Commonwealth 8.7 Network Newsletter!

Here you will find news about the 8.7 Network, the impact of our work across all regions, useful resources and tools, as well as our latest updates and activities.

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About the Commonwealth 8.7 Network

The Commonwealth 8.7 Network is an international, member-driven network of over 100 national and local civil society organisations and individuals united by a common vision to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking.

Our members work on diverse issues including survivor advocacy, direct assistance and vocational training for survivors, child protection, women's rights, migrants' rights, indigenous peoples' rights, and human rights due diligence for businesses.

Founded by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, the Commonwealth 8.7 Network is named after the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7. The Network serves as a knowledge-sharing platform working collaboratively to raise awareness, build capacity, and advocate for legal and policy change.

In 2019, the Commonwealth 8.7 Network received the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Award for Innovation for Sustainable Development.

Join us today and let's work together to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking!

https://www.commonwealth-87.org/become-a-member

Meet Syed Saiful Haque, Member of the Commonwealth 8.7 Network

Dear 8.7 Network Members and Valued Supporters,

From the WARBE Development Foundation in Bangladesh, it is an honour for me to present the spring edition of The 8.7 Quarterly Newsletter, which focuses on Migration and Modern Slavery.

Migration, a pivotal aspect of human history, is driven by factors like economics, conflict, and the pursuit of better opportunities. Yet, amidst myriad tales of hope lies a grim reality: modern slavery. This pervasive issue, encompassing various forms of exploitation such as debt bondage, trafficking, and forced labour, lurks along migration routes, exploiting the most vulnerable.

The relationship between migration and modern slavery is intricate and pronounced. Economic disparities, lack of protections, and systemic flaws create fertile ground for trafficking. Migrants, lacking influence and recourse, are easy prey for criminals. Exploitation, especially in sectors like construction and textiles, is prevalent, with vulnerable groups like women and children often targeted by traffickers promising better prospects elsewhere. Addressing this requires a holistic approach involving governments, civil society, and businesses.

Through advocacy, research, and direct interventions, WARBE Development Foundation strives to empower migrants, raise awareness, and hold perpetrators accountable. The focus of our work is on the intersection of migration and modern slavery, striving for a society where freedom and dignity are universal rights, not privileges. In the maze of 21st-century migration, we aim to turn statistics into human stories. Our relentless efforts are geared towards making migration a choice, not a sentence, ensuring a future free from exploitation for all.

Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman, WARBE Development Foundation

Spotlight

On Migration and Modern Slavery

Migration and Modern Slavery: Route to a better life?

By Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

Migration has typically been associated with positive life changes, such as better economic opportunities, adventures in bustling cities and interactions with people from all walks of life. But migration in Pakistan has a darker underbelly that is often overlooked and impacts large numbers of people. Irregular migration pathways such as human smuggling and trafficking in persons are also tied to various forms of modern slavery including bonded labour, child labour, prostitution and forced marriages.

Read the full 8.7 blog here

Highlighting Members' Contributions in Combatting Migration and Modern Slavery

WARBE Development Foundation, Bangladesh

WARBE Development Foundation is currently implementing multiple projects across Bangladesh, focusing on reintegration support for returnee migrants and trafficking survivors, promoting fair migration, and raising awareness about migration issues. One such project is Ashshash Phase II, funded by the Embassy of Switzerland and implemented in collaboration with Winrock International.

This project operates in Dhaka and Narsingdi District, and aims to protect human trafficking survivors by offering social and economic support services. It also works to prevent trafficking through community awareness initiatives. Under this project, WARBE provides psychosocial counselling, healthcare, and legal assistance to survivors and their families. Additionally, it offers vocational training and facilitates employment opportunities for survivors.

Ashshash fosters partnerships with governmental and private stakeholders to enhance service delivery and increase accountability. The project aims to assist 6,000 survivors, predominantly women, with social and economic services, while also reaching out to 6,000,000 individuals from at-risk communities through awareness programs on human trafficking. The ultimate goal is to improve the well-being of trafficking survivors and enhance the effectiveness of institutions in providing support services.

Centre For Youths Integrated Development (CYID), Nigeria

In 2018, the Centre For Youths Integrated Development (CYID) established the Mixed Migration Support Working Group, initially targeting migration-focused organisations in West Africa. However, the working group evolved into a national network and eventually transformed into the Platform for Cooperation on Mixed Migration (PCMM). With approximately 70 members across Nigeria, the PCMM aims to address longstanding gaps in migration management and governance.

Originally conceived under CYID, the network's growth necessitated independence and a broader collaboration platform, leading to its official registration as PCMM. This shift enables engagement with diverse stakeholders and signifies a commitment to fostering cooperation, sharing best practices, and developing effective strategies to support vulnerable individuals in migration.

PCMM's overarching goal aligns with promoting sustainable migration policies, enhancing collaboration, and empowering civil society organisations and local stakeholders to manage mixed migratory flows effectively. Decentralisation of migration governance aims to equip local communities with necessary tools and knowledge for effective migration management.

8.7 Members' News

New projects and publications from our members

[Ulula partners with Decathlon for worker wellbeing in supply chains](#)
Ulula, Canada

Ulula has entered into a global partnership with Decathlon. Decathlon will leverage Ulula's accessible mobile surveys technology to directly collect regular insights into workers wellbeing in supply chains.

[ICI supports Ghana's Minerals Commission to combat child labour and forced labour](#)
International Cocoa Initiative, Ghana

The International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) organised a 3-day training workshop for Minerals Commission of Ghana staff as part of the "Tackling Child and Forced Labour in Ghanaian Cocoa and Gold Mining" project. The training aimed to deepen understanding of relevant issues and enhance capacity in addressing child labour and forced labour, focusing on practical concepts and relevant laws.

[Devatop distributes start-up kits to survivors of human trafficking and vulnerable persons](#)
Devatop Centre For Africa Development, Nigeria

Devatop, as part of the TALKAM Against Trafficking in Persons (TATIP) Project, distributed business start-up kits to survivors of trafficking and vulnerable individuals in Delta State and Enugu State. This assistance followed the successful completion of 4-6 months of vocational training in fashion design, barbering, and hairdressing. The beneficiaries participated in this training to equip them with skills for sustainable livelihoods and effective reintegration into society.

[MeCAHT organised a series of survivor hangouts](#)
Media Coalition & Awareness to Halt Trafficking, Nigeria

MeCAHT believes in supporting victims of human trafficking through socialisation as they reintegrate into communities. The organisation arranged a series of survivor hangouts where girls from four area safehouses had the opportunity to relax, have fun, and make new friends. Their first event featured members from Greater Love Lighthouse, Daughters of Abraham Foundation, The Sarina Project, and WOTCLEF.

[Empowering communities: NACTAL joins forces to combat human trafficking in Nigerian schools](#)
Network Against Child Trafficking, Abuses And Labour (NACTAL), Nigeria

NACTAL-Nigeria participated in the launch of an event/workshop for the implementation of the Schools Anti-Trafficking Education and Advocacy Project (STEAP) in Abuja. This initiative aims to combat human trafficking in Edo, Delta, Ogun, Enugu, and Benue states. The project focuses on raising awareness about human trafficking in schools, facilitating the reintegration of trafficked victims into the education system, providing psychosocial support for victims, and promoting school clubs and community outreach.

[Engage Now Africa leads regional collaboration against Human Trafficking in Volta region](#)
Engage Now Africa, Ghana

Engage Now Africa and Ensign Global College hosted a regional stakeholders' meeting in Ghana's Volta Region to collaborate with state institutions combating human trafficking and other exploitative activities. Over 35 dignitaries, including representatives from government bodies like the Commission on Human Rights, Ghana Health Service, Immigration Service, and Police Service, attended. Presentations highlighted causes and implications of trafficking, proposing strategies for combating it.

Empower People inaugurates a 'Women Enterprise"
Empower People, India

Empower People observed World Social Justice Day by inaugurating a 'Women Enterprise' as part of Project SEAL. The launch event served as a tribute to the resilience and potential of women entrepreneurs, representing a significant stride towards women's economic empowerment and the reclamation of their agency. The initiative encompassed the training of 200 women, along with the provision of a manufacturing unit equipped with 10 slipper-making machine set and requisite raw materials. These resources were handed over to a Community-Based Organisation (CBO) led by survivors of bride trafficking, facilitating the economic empowerment of women.

Sanjog surveys government efforts to support mental health and reducing stigma for human trafficking survivors
Sanjog, India

A woman must have been “at some fault” if she was trafficked and forced into prostitution, believes a panchayat member. When a trafficking survivor seeks help, a block-level official sends her to an NGO. He thinks his role ends there. These were among the findings of a recent survey, conducted by Sanjog, that explored the government’s role in addressing the mental health of, and stigma faced by, survivors of human trafficking. The study has thrown up several disturbing findings about the role and attitude of officials when it comes to helping trafficking survivors.

The Clewer Initiative and the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOIC) collaborate to empower individuals to identify and address modern slavery in the care sector
The Clewer Initiative, United Kingdom

The Clewer Initiative and the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOIC) joined forces to create a new tool aimed to help individuals recognise and respond to modern slavery within the care sector. The newly developed resource delves into the root causes and ramifications of modern slavery within the care sector, offering guidance on how to identify warning signs and what steps to take if concerns arise. It has been written for church safeguarding officers, chaplaincies and church members who visit care homes.

Causeway joins forces with 50 organisations to combat modern slavery in the UK by calling on mayoral candidates to pledge their commitment
Causeway, United Kingdom

Causeway, along with 50 other organisations in the anti-human trafficking and exploitation sector, is urging mayoral candidates across the UK to prioritise the fight against modern slavery. They are calling on candidates to sign a pledge outlining commitments to tackle various forms of exploitation and abuse, enhance support for survivors, and promote collaboration among stakeholders. The initiative aims to raise awareness of the pervasive issue of modern slavery and advocate for stronger action at the local level.

Hope for Justice gives evidence in Parliament as part of an inquiry into the impact of the UK’s Modern Slavery Act 2015
Hope for Justice, United Kingdom

Hope for Justice has recently presented evidence to UK Parliament as part of an inquiry into the impact of the UK’s Modern Slavery Act 2015. Euan Fraser, the Senior Policy and Research Advisor, provided testimony to the House of Lords select committee. The submission highlighted the effects of recent UK legislation, including the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and the Illegal Migration Act 2023, on survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking. Fraser emphasised how these laws have created barriers for survivors seeking support, echoing sentiments shared by those affected.

Top human trafficking prosecutors unite in bid to boost global conviction rates
Justice and Care, United Kingdom

Top prosecutors fighting human trafficking globally convened in Nairobi to address the alarming issue of low conviction rates for exploiters. Formed in 2021 by Justice and Care and the McCain Institute, the Global Consortium on Prosecuting Human Trafficking aims to improve the situation. During their recent in-person meeting, prosecutors discussed survivor justice and engagement, legal frameworks, investigative techniques, and network dismantling. Nicole Munns of Justice and Care emphasised the significance of this collaboration in combating the world's fastest-growing crime.

Sophie Hayes Foundation comments on the government's response to UK Home Affairs Committee Human Trafficking report
Sophie Hayes Foundation, United Kingdom

The Sophie Hayes Foundation responded to the Government's reaction to the Home Affairs Select Committee's report on Human Trafficking. CEO Emily Death expressed concern about the collapse of the support system, rampant exploitation in sectors like caregiving due to visa changes, and a criminal justice system that prosecutes survivors. She criticised the Government's treatment of slavery and trafficking as migration issues and emphasised the need for better support systems.

It's A Penalty Super Bowl campaign to raise awareness about human trafficking and exploitation.
It's A Penalty, United Kingdom

It's a Penalty campaigns around major sporting events, harnessing the power of sport to prevent abuse, exploitation and trafficking worldwide. Their seventh Super Bowl campaign in Las Vegas raised awareness about human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse, highlighted penalties for offenders, signs to look out for, reporting procedures, and support for survivors. With support from partners and local NGOs, the campaign aimed to engage millions in preventing modern slavery and supporting survivors.

The Freedom Hub receives recognition from New South Wales Business Awards
Freedom Hub, Australia

The Freedom Hub was a finalist in the NSW Business Awards, recognising its dedication to ending modern slavery. As a nonprofit organisation, it equips businesses with tools to identify and respond to slavery, promoting ethical practices. Their mission emphasises collaboration for a world free from exploitation.

Collective Action

Catch up: Transformative Journeys: Women's Empowerment through Skills Development and Vocational Training

On 6 March 2024, the Commonwealth 8.7 Network held its webinar on 'Transformative Journeys: Women's Empowerment through Skills Development and Vocational Training', where network members from Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, along with a survivor advocate shared examples of good practices of skills development and vocational training programmes.

- Mercy Otieno, HAART Kenya from Nairobi, underscored the importance of providing diverse options for survivors, advocating for curated programs and tailored career training to align with individual strengths, and encouraging women to venture into non-traditional skills further enhances empowerment.
- Sally Irwin, Freedom Hub from Australia, showcased their 'Survivor School' initiative, highlighting program curation for women's support, sharing its successes and accompanying challenges. Tailored support is pivotal for the holistic recovery and empowerment of survivors.

- Smarita Sengupta, Destiny Reflection from India, highlighted the transformative journeys of two survivors they've assisted, underscoring their organisational commitment to long-term support. Their approach focuses on empowering survivors to reclaim their power, fostering resilience and growth.
- Survivor advocate Mercy Njeru from Kenya, stressed the importance of economic empowerment for survivors. She also provided valuable recommendations for both organisations and survivors alike.

Find the recording of the webinar here.

Joint submission to the OHCHR to inform its forthcoming report on the impact of climate change on the realisation of the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl.

CHRI, along with Commonwealth 8.7 Network members It's a Penalty (UK) and Homes of Hope (Fiji) responded to the call for inputs from the OHCHR to inform its forthcoming report on the impact of climate change on the realisation of the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl. This submission focuses on the need to understand, acknowledge and respond to the particular interlinkages between climate change, modern slavery, and the enjoyment of the right to education by girls. The impact of climate change intensifies vulnerabilities for girls, contributing to increased risks of modern slavery, child marriage, and gender-based violence. These forms of exploitation in turn lead to disrupted education, and necessitate urgent, intersectional interventions by State parties. You can read the submission here.

Upcoming Events

Ongoing

Human Trafficking Foundation

Human Trafficking Foundation Knowledge Sharing Sessions
Human Trafficking Foundation

The Human Trafficking Foundation is hosting a series of Knowledge Sharing sessions for the anti-slavery sector.

Identification Insights for First Responders
23 May, 12pm-1pm BST

Data in action: Creating data-led campaigns to prevent exploitation
30 May, 12-1pm BST

Cognitive Impairment and Modern Slavery
13 June, 12pm-1pm BST

Overseas Domestic Workers
1 August, 12pm-1pm BST

Homelessness and Modern Slavery
18 September 12pm-1pm BST

Resources and Tools

University of Nottingham Rights Lab

Prevention and Identification of children and young adults experiencing, or at risk of, modern slavery in the UK
University of Nottingham Rights Lab

This research provides a comprehensive analysis of initiatives to improve the prevention and early identification of children who are victims, or at risk of, modern slavery in the United Kingdom from 2015 to 2023.

Read the full report here

University of Nottingham Rights Lab

Integrating policies addressing modern slavery and climate change
University of Nottingham Rights Lab

The report explores the intersection between climate change and modern slavery and provides recommendations on integrating these intersections into policies. It covers four themes: governance, knowledge-to-action, capacity building and finance, and support, lived experience, and inclusion.

Read the full report here

Government Commercial Function

Tackling modern slavery in government supply chains - A guide for commercial and procurement professionals
Crown Commercial Services

This guide targets procurement and commercial practitioners within government but can be beneficial for any organisation in the public sector. While it focuses on procurement, it also applies to grants and may be useful for organisations in the private, voluntary, or charitable sectors.

Read the full guide here

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking - A guide to the UK immigration and asylum system
Right to Remain

This toolkit outlines the distinct immigration route for survivors of modern slavery or human trafficking in the UK, managed through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Read full guide here

Tackling Modern Slavery in Government Supply Chains - Guidance
UK Cabinet Office

This guide targets procurement and commercial practitioners in government but is relevant for any public sector organisation. While focused on procurement, it also applies to grants and may benefit the voluntary, charitable, and private sectors.

Read full guidance here

Modern slavery and social protection in Northern Ghana: A decolonised perspective
John Oti Amoah and Justice Mensah, ScienceDirect

The paper offers a deeper understanding of modern slavery, moving beyond sensationalism. It emphasises women's agency in creating self-help social protection structures, and challenging traditional rescue and rehabilitation approaches. Furthermore, it advocates for a decolonised approach to rights and humanitarianism, urging a shift away from colonial frameworks towards more inclusive and equitable practices.

Read full article here

From Slavery to Modern Slavery, Trafficking in Human Beings (Challenges and Solutions) At the Regional and International Level
Dr. Amr Ezzat Mahmoud Elhaw and Imad Rabee, Migration Letters

The paper emphasises the challenges posed by both traditional and modern forms of trafficking and highlights the need for enhanced international cooperation to effectively confront these crimes and mitigate their negative impacts on global society.

Read the full article here

Overcoming cultural barriers to prevention of modern slavery and protection of survivors
Modern Slavery & Human Rights - Policy & Evidence Centre

This report is on cultural influences and cultural competency in the prevention and protection of survivors of modern slavery: insights from the UK and Albania.

Read the full report here

Prevention and identification of children experiencing modern slavery
Modern Slavery & Human Rights - Policy & Evidence Centre

Research report on prevention and identification of children and young adults experiencing, or at risk of, modern slavery in the UK.

Read the full report here

Survivors and organisations working together against human trafficking: Insights from East and Central Africa
Awareness against Human Trafficking (HAART), Free the Slaves

To explore survivor engagement in anti-trafficking organisations, HAART Kenya and Free The Slaves have released their latest research on how organisations can inclusively work with survivors through participatory approaches. The research highlights the need for survivor inclusion while identifying the kind of support that is beneficial to individuals with lived experiences. It also gives key guidelines and recommendations on how organisations can work together with survivors to eradicate human trafficking.

Find the report here

Join our Network!

Join us today and let's work to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking! Together, we can raise awareness, strengthen skills, share good practices and advocate for changes to laws and policies.

The Commonwealth 8.7 Network offers three membership categories for organisations and individuals who share our vision. To learn more about how you can join, visit: https://www.commonwealth-87.org/become-a-member

Join the 8.7 Network

Send us your Stories!

If you are a member of the Commonwealth 8.7 Network and would like to be featured in the next issue of our newsletter, we invite you to get in touch. And share your stories and photos!

Email the Secretariat

Thank you!

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We are grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition of The 8.7 Quarterly newsletter and invite you to share it with your networks.

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