



Welcome to the fourth 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 news, 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 60 national and local civil society organisations, that share a common vision to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking.

Our members work on diverse issues that include anti-trafficking initiatives, survivor advocacy, first assistance, provision of vocational training and other support to survivors, the protection of children, women's rights, migrant workers' rights, the rights of indigenous peoples, and supply chain impact assessment.

The 8.7 Network was founded by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and is named after UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7 which encourages states to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery. The 8.7 Network serves as a knowledge-sharing platform that works collaboratively to raise awareness, build capacity, and advocate for changes to laws and policies.

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

Join us today and let's work together to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking! www.commonwealth-87.org/become-a-member

Message from the Management Committee

Dear 8.7 Network Members and Friends, Happy New Year. As we all step cautiously into the unknown of 2022, now is a great time to be thinking about how we can work together to keep vulnerable workers front of mind in our communities, countries and governments.



This ongoing pandemic we all face daily is impacting the numbers of people in modern slavery and servitude, due to increasing poverty and isolation.

In this newsletter, we highlight the vulnerability of Domestic Workers. There is a heightened risk of slavery and servitude in this sector because they work behind closed doors, inside private households, often times lack formal legal protections afforded to service workers. Their physical and social isolation is a breach of human rights and many also experience frequent physical, psychological, and sometimes sexual abuse within their employer's household.

Every region in the world is affected by this breach of human rights, so we hope as part of our Commonwealth 8.7 Network you will engage with this newsletter and join our collective voice by sharing this issue with others.

We thank you all for your commitment to the welfare of those who have no voice and being a part of this network.

Sally Irwin, Management Committee Member The Freedom Hub, Sydney, Australia

Spotlight



The Rights of Domestic Workers and Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Domestic workers are central to our communities and economies, but they often are not afforded the protections they deserve. The COVID-19 pandemic has further demonstrated how vital care work is, while also exacerbating already precarious job security for millions and exposing a lack of access to social protections, putting domestic workers at greater risk of abuse, exploitation and trafficking.

This edition of The 8.7 Quarterly Newsletter highlights the importance of the rights of domestic workers in tackling Contemporary Forms of Slavery. It includes the work of 8.7 Network member, the Shiva Foundation, and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), Secretariat to the network. Meenal Sachdev of the Shiva Foundation emphasises the importance of the hospitality industry in disrupting patterns of domestic servitude, while CHRI calls for the ratification of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention.

How Hotels Can Be Part of the Solution of Ending Domestic Servitude

Shiva Foundation, UK Meenal Sachdev



Domestic servitude is one type of modern slavery recognised in the UK. It usually involves migrant domestic workers working in private households who are abused and exploited. Because the exploitation happens in private households, it is one of the most underreported types of modern slavery in the UK making up 8% of all reports to the National Referral Mechanism (the system under which suspected victims are recorded and supported in the UK).

Working with hospitality organisations, Shiva Foundation saw how this type of exploitation might come out of the shadows. Workers in hotels, in particular, are privy to indicators of exploitation that workers in other industries would never spot. Hotels offer a quasi-private space where sexual exploitation and domestic servitude have been known to take place. And with that in mind, Shiva Foundation worked with Kalayaan, a charity that supports migrant domestic workers, to include information about domestic servitude in training materials for all hotel staff. Indicators listed include passport withholding, the worker appearing malnourished, insufficient sleeping space for the domestic worker, excessive working hours and restricted movements. By spotting and reporting indicators, hotel staff have the chance to help someone who may be being abused and exploited – but for them to do so, they have to know what they are looking for.

- For more information on the Shiva Foundation Stop Slavery Blueprint for hospitality organisations, visit here.
For a list of indicators of all types of exploitation, including domestic servitude, that could be spotted in hotels, visit here.
For real life case studies, visit here.

To learn more about how Kalayaan and other organisations are working to protect domestic worker rights, visit here.



Domestic Work is Work: 10 years after the adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, domestic workers are still fighting for recognition

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, UK Sneh Aurora and Laura Skadhauge Bloom



A decade ago, domestic workers and rights advocates rallied around a simple argument: Domestic Work is Work. They pushed for the same labour and social protections as other workers, and their tireless advocacy led to the adoption of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention (C189) in 2011, which sets global standards to ensure decent work for domestic workers.

To date, however, only 35 countries have ratified the Convention, and only 9 of these are Commonwealth nations. The rights of domestic workers are essential for sustainable development and a gender-responsive recovery from COVID-19.

Domestic workers' rights are linked to the realisation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDGs 5 (gender equality and women's empowerment) and SDG 8 (decent work for all). The exclusion of domestic workers from social and labour protections renders them particularly vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination. To meet global targets by 2030, the standards enumerated in C189 must be implemented by all states.

Domestic workers need support in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated poor working conditions and left millions of domestic workers unemployed. To recover from this pandemic and future crises, we must ensure all workers are covered by existing safety nets. The pandemic also highlighted the importance of domestic work as more households became responsible for home-schooling and child care. As the world rebuilds and prepares for future disasters, this is a unique opportunity to put the rights of domestic workers first.

Immediate action is needed to ensure domestic workers' fair treatment, including increased protections, decent pay, improved working conditions and an acknowledgement of the essential care that domestic workers provide to households and communities.

States must recognise the importance of domestic workers to the global economy by ratifying and implementing C189.

Read the CHRI report Domestic Work is Work here.



8.7 Members' News



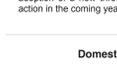
New projects and publications from our members:



Ulula Sustainability Assessment Tool Ulula has developed a comprehensive online tool to help organisations measure their progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Register to be the first to use the tool when it is live.



Defence For Children International - Child Rights Observer - Autumn 2021 Newsletter The latest edition of the Child Rights Observer explores the growing problem of children deprived of liberty that are largely an invisible group of children. Depriving children of their liberty is depriving them of their childhood.

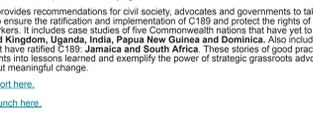


Call for Input on Childhood Domestic Work in Cameroon One of our 8.7 Network members in Cameroon, GLOWA, is seeking support and resources on a new project related to child domestic workers in Cameroon. GLOWA aims to conduct research on the prevalence of childhood domestic servitude and exploitation in order to pressure the government of Cameroon to ratify Domestic Workers Conventions C189 and recognize domestic service as a profession. Organisations interested in collaborating or who have experience in risk mapping and data collection tools for this type of project are encouraged to reach out to jamis@glowacameroun.org.

Network Action

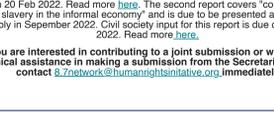


8.7 Network Annual General Meeting



On 26 - 28 October 2021, members from the Commonwealth 8.7 Network gathered for our first Annual General Meeting. Over three days, 60 people from across the Commonwealth attended regional workshops and thematic sessions on child rights, the impact of Covid-19, survivor support, and business and supply chains. Key milestones of this AGM included the adoption of a new three-year strategy for the Commonwealth 8.7 Network and ideas for action in the coming year.

Domestic Works is Work Report Launch and Event



2021 marked the 10th anniversary of the Domestic Workers Convention (C189), which is a landmark international treaty requiring decent work for domestic workers. On 10 December, International Human Rights Day, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), Secretariat to the Commonwealth 8.7 Network, launched a report to inform good practice, inspire action, and raise awareness of the importance of ratifying C189.

This report provides recommendations for civil society, advocates and governments to take action now to ensure the ratification and implementation of C189 and protect the rights of contemporary forms of slavery. It includes case studies of five Commonwealth nations that have yet to ratify C189: United Kingdom, Uganda, India, Papua New Guinea and Dominica. Also included are countries that have ratified C189: Jamaica and South Africa. These stories of good practice provide insights into lessons learned and exemplify the power of strategic grassroots advocacy for bringing about meaningful change.

Read the report here. Watch the launch here.



Raise your voice through collective action!

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery has issued two calls for input. The first is for his report 'contemporary forms of slavery as affecting persons belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minority communities'. The report will be presented to the Human Rights Council in September 2022 and civil society input is due on 20 Feb 2022. Read more here. The second report covers 'contemporary forms of slavery in the informal economy' and is due to be presented at the General Assembly in September 2022. Civil society input for this report is due on 15 March 2022. Read more here.

If you are interested in contributing to a joint submission or would like technical assistance in making a submission from the Secretariat, please contact 8.7network@humanrightsinitiative.org immediately.

Upcoming Events



21 January 2022 Hope for Justice: The Fight to End Modern Slavery Virtual Learning Event The program is in recognition of Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January and focuses on identification, reporting and response. Register here.

25 January 2022 Building on child labour monitoring: what's next for global supply chains? Virtual Learning Event This event will evaluate the use of Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems to prevent and address child labour in smallholder agriculture over the last decade in the cocoa sector in West Africa and take stock of what has been learned so far. Drawing on data from twelve different systems, it also aims to answer key questions for the future. Register here.

10 March 2022 Human Rights in the UK and the Commonwealth Caribbean Virtual Lecture This lecture will examine the judicial protection of human rights in the UK and the Commonwealth Caribbean, and will confront its shortcomings and vulnerabilities. Register here.

Resources and Tools



Out From the Shadows: Transforming support for victims of Modern Slavery and Domestic Abuse with No recourse to Public Funds Centre for Social Justice This report by the Centre for Social Justice explores the shared experiences of the victims of domestic abuse and contemporary forms of slavery to understand and compare the support available and the impact of immigration status and having no recourse to public funds, on recovery and the pursuit of justice. This paper outlines how enabling these victims to access support, housing, and security can stop abusers and slavery gangs in their tracks as well as supporting the pursuit of justice. Read full report here.

Cycles of Exploitation: The Link Between Children's Institutions and Human Trafficking Lumos Lumos' new report 'Cycles of Exploitation: The Links Between Children's Institutions and Human Trafficking' brings together case studies and research from across the world to examine the links between the institutionalisation of children and human trafficking. It exposes the patterns of institution-related trafficking and offers insights into necessary reforms. Read report here.

Conversations of Empowerment Survivor Alliance Survivor Alliance has published a report on stories of empowerment as told by survivors. This publication is a compilation of stories embraced by groups of leaders who have the determination to move further in their dreams and engage in building community. Read the full report here.

Join our Network!



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

Our members have access to an exclusive Slack channel where we share ideas, resources and tools!

The 8.7 Network offers three membership categories based on the mandate of your organisation. Individuals working on these issues can also apply, to learn more about how you can join, visit https://www.commonwealth-87.org/become-a-member



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!



Thank you!



Keep up to date with us via email and our social media platforms.



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.

