

# ANTI-SLAVERY POLICIES AND INVESTMENTS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT

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# INTRODUCTION

Slavery is a major human rights violation around the world. There are an estimated 40.3 million slaves globally, and slavery is found in virtually all countries. Recognition of the extent and cost of modern slavery has been growing and, as noted by the United Nations Delta 8.7 group, it is in need of a strategic and comprehensive planning and policy making both nationally and internationally. Given its relatively recent appearance within the global development discourse, the term 'modern slavery' or 'slavery' is sometimes contested. In this report we use the definition of slavery according to the Bellagio-Harvard Guidelines, which is based on the 1926 Slavery Convention.<sup>1</sup>

Slavery is "the control of one person (the slave) by another (the slaveholder or slaveholders). This control transfers agency, freedom of movement, access to the body, and labour and its product and benefits to the slaveholder. The control is supported and exercised through violence and its threat. The aim of this control is

primarily economic exploitation, but may include sexual use or psychological benefit."<sup>2</sup>

There are many root causes to slavery and human trafficking - political instability, conflict, discrimination and prejudice, displacement of people due to war or environmental degradation, poverty, lack of opportunity, and governmental corruption.<sup>3</sup> In addition, isolation from social protections, health care, infrastructure, and being stateless or paperless<sup>4</sup> can be added to this non-exhaustive list.

Norway has a unique opportunity to combat slavery and human trafficking internationally, especially in light of its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. This briefing paper, written by advisor Catharina Drejer (Tankesmien Skaperkraft) and Kevin Bales (Professor of Contemporary Slavery, University of Nottingham) provides recommendations and suggestions on how to do that.

<sup>1</sup> Jean Allain, ed., *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 375-380.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Allain and Kevin Bales, "Slavery and its Definition," *Global Dialogue* 14, 2 (Summer 2012): 6-14, <https://hydra.hull.ac.uk/assets/hull:9986/content>.

<sup>3</sup> Kevin Bales, "What Predicts Human Trafficking," *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* 31, 2 (2007): 269, doi: 10.1080/01924036.2007.9678771.

<sup>4</sup> Siddhartha Kara, *Modern Slavery: a Global Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 31.

# ANTI-SLAVERY POLICIES AND INVESTMENTS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT

MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT – NORWAY

## 1. Why support and carry out antislavery work within the Norwegian Development programme?

Enabling frontline organisations and affected communities to tackle the root causes of slavery is one of the most effective pathways to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among the poorest nations and populations. This includes those SDGs not usually thought of as being linked to human rights – such as reducing poverty, environmental destruction and corruption. There is strong independent evidence for this – for example, Harvard University’s FXB Center for Health and Human Rights was commissioned to carry out an independent review of comprehensive, community-based anti-slavery programmes. These development/human rights interventions are characterised by:

- A range of interventions at the community level, usually including training in human and legal rights, activities to empower women and girls, children’s education, and job training/livelihoods support

- Efforts to organize community members to claim rights and entitlements and challenge discrimination
- Community definition of root causes and priorities
- Adoption of the specific goal of slavery eradication

The Harvard study found that this approach when used in Uttar Pradesh in India had come close to eradicating hereditary forms of bonded labour slavery among the target population of low-caste families. It had also produced ancillary benefits for communities, including wage growth, increased food security, and greater access to governmental support programmes and entitlements such as the rural employment guarantee. The estimated cost of one person liberated and supported as they began stable productive lives through this methodology was USD\$378. A Table from that study gives details of the benefits:

BENEFIT TYPE	OBSERVED CHANGE
Reduced debt	The intervention <b>significantly lowered</b> the odds of a household having any amount of debt.
Increased savings	Household savings were <b>55% higher</b> than comparison group
Higher wage growth	<b>Wages grew 30% faster</b> in the intervention area
Access to medical care	Those receiving the intervention were <b>3 times more likely</b> to report access to free medical care
Increased use of Indian government protective schemes	Intervention households were almost <b>4 times more likely</b> to report having a job card under the rural employment scheme
Food security	The intervention <b>significantly increased</b> the # of meals eaten per day

There is an underlying reason why anti-slavery work leads to a dramatic improvement measured by a number of SDGs – this is the “freedom dividend” that results when slavery comes to an end. Put simply, enslaved individuals and families are denied sufficient food and shelter, education, medical care, political participation – all of the necessary factors needed to grow and develop their lives. Additionally, the enslaved, while they are accustomed to hard work, see no benefit, no reward for their work – all their productive capacity is stolen from them. In freedom they become something they have never been allowed to be: consumers. Ex-slaves increase their productivity in freedom, and use the re-

wards to provide for key needs: adequate food, education for the children, medical care, warm and dry housing, and acquiring tools for more productive work. Communities with a high level of slavery spiral upwards economically when that slavery comes to an end.

A further outcome is a dramatic reduction in gender-based violence after liberation. This is not surprising given that virtually all enslaved women and girls are raped; a key motivator for women taking up grassroots activism against slavery is their desire to protect their daughters against rape. The “freedom dividend” is significant and impactful.

## 2. The importance of survivor participation in liberation and development programmes

Leadership by those people most affected is key to a) getting interventions right, and b) making sure they will be sustained long after the donor has left. Again, there is significant evidence to support this.

It is only within the last five years that the participation of survivors of slavery has become

widespread, but groups like the Survivor Alliance have proven essential to the planning of anti-slavery programmes. It is important to remember that for decades the laws, policies, development plans, and analyses of slavery as a human rights and development issue have all been written by people who have never experienced slavery.

## 3. The importance of building relationships, working with local groups, and concentrating work in areas where systems change and success is possible

Slavery is endemic in situations of armed conflict, in areas of catastrophic disasters, and in areas of extreme corruption – but such contexts make effective anti-slavery interventions very difficult or impossible. Peace, recovery and rebuilding, or systematic anti-corruption programmes are likely necessary before other SDGs can be effectively addressed, including slavery.

For that reason the currently most effective anti-slavery development programmes tend to concentrate in areas which may have serious and systemic challenges, but are not the scene of armed conflict, etc. Such programmes have a concentrated geographical focus and be committed to long-term support and intervention. This is often called the “hotspot” model. The hotspot model allows for:

**a)** Ensuring policy influence and changing systems that lead to slavery in a defined area.

**b)** Accelerated learning and adoption of better practices by participating organisations (including the funder).

**c)** Achieving the funder’s need to see scaling up of impact while also reaching to inaccessible places and tackling seemingly intractable problems.

The “hotspot” model has these main themes – concentrating resources on a tightly defined geographic area, funding a diverse group of mainly grassroots NGOs to provide a range of services to the target population, and employing staff on the ground to monitor partners and encourage the sharing of best practice. The Freedom Fund, the largest of all anti-slavery groups doing on-the-ground development and rights projects also builds these processes into their “hotspot” model:

- Emphasizing system change rather than direct liberation, and therefore devoting more resources toward influencing government, the media and business;
- Adopting a set of global metrics and bringing in academic partners to track progress and draw out lessons that can be shared internationally;
- Increasing investment in building the capacity of the NGOs; and
- Connecting the hotspots to global thematic initiatives.



Here is a Freedom Fund graphic about the nature of the “hotspot” model.

#### 4. The recent professionalization of anti-slavery work.

It is worth noting that the current global anti-slavery movement has only been in existence since the 1990’s and has grown very significantly since 2010. One outcome of that growth is a movement away from emotionally driven NGOs and governmental responses to increasingly professional and monitored/evaluated programmes of intervention leading to liberation and reintegration. One indication of that transformation is the establishment of the MA degree in Slavery and Liberation at the

University of Nottingham in the UK. This is the first and only degree offering professional training in planning and executing anti-slavery development programmes. Over the past five to ten years the economic resources devoted to anti-slavery development projects by governments and international organisations has exceeded the available human resources. For that reason if Norway is intending to enlarge its participation in this area it should plan to include training and staff development.

#### 5. The importance of solid Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Anti-slavery work is fundamentally economic and social development work with a particular human rights approach. It benefits from careful monitoring and evaluation processes built in to all programs both national and international. This is especially necessary given the extreme

vulnerability of enslaved people prior to liberation. We have no doubt that NORAD and other government programmes utilise careful M&E, and simply recommend their continuance when expanding into anti-slavery development.

## 6. A concrete example: The Freedom Fund

The Freedom Fund was established in 2013 by three large charitable foundations: Humanity United, Legatum Foundation, and the Minderoo Foundation. It has since been joined by the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and is also supported by the Stardust Fund, the C&A Foundation, UBS Foundation, and several others. They explain their approach in this way:

“We identify and invest in the most effective frontline efforts to eradicate modern slavery in the countries and sectors where it is most prevalent. Partnering with visionary investors, gov-

ernments, anti-slavery organisations and those at risk of exploitation, we tackle the systems that allow slavery to persist and thrive. Working together, we protect vulnerable populations, liberate and reintegrate those enslaved and prosecute those responsible.”

They are the largest and most successful of existing anti-slavery development programme providers. A review of their work in a Dashboard format is attached to this memo. The summary graphic from that review shows the scale of their work since 2013:



As can be seen from this top-level graphic, anti-slavery development projects have a large number of possible pathways and outcomes.

## 7. International and diplomatic actions and strategies

At the Ministry level within government there will clearly be diplomatic and international co-operation actions and strategies to be considered. We would point to a few possible levels of engagement.

**a.** Supporting the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Modern Slavery – the current and previous Special Rapporteurs have achieved important breakthroughs with governments in the developing world. The office of the Special Rapporteur, however, is chronically underfunded and needed diplomatic goals could be supported.

**b.** Likewise, within the United Nations system, the United Nations University has established a very successful initiative in Delta 8.7 (referring to SDG 8.7 – eradication of slavery). This initiative has achieved a good deal, especially in bringing tech, Artificial Intelligence, and other computational computing companies and organisations together to address modern slavery with coordination and coherence focusing on utilizing digital technology to address the issue.

**c.** Given Norway’s long and exemplary support of peace initiatives, diplomatic emphasis could be given to an area that is currently little recognized in the international community – the extensive practice of slavery within conflicts. For example, for the 1,113 conflict years recorded in the Uppsala data from 1989 to 2016 there were:

- Child Soldiers in **971 conflicts** (87.5%)
- Sexual Exploitation/  
Forced Marriage **381 conflicts** (34.2%)
- Human Trafficking in **194 conflicts** (17.4%)
- Forced Labour in **261 conflicts** (23.4%)
- Domestic Servitude in **123 conflicts** (11.0%)

**d.** Migration due to environmental destruction and climate change is a key driver of high levels of trafficking into slavery. At the same time recent research has clearly demonstrated the relationship between slavery and environmental destruction – to the point of calculating that if slavery were a country, it would be the third largest emitter of CO2 after China and the United States. Reductions of slavery in illegal deforestation and mining would bring real reductions in CO2 emissions<sup>5</sup>. Norway would be in a unique position due to its support for environmental protections in Brazil to support exactly such programmes that combine protecting and restoring ecosystems with liberation and reintegration of slaves. Such a program could be designed to involve several countries and combine reducing vulnerability to slavery with investing in environmental protection, with national or regional governments as key stakeholders.

**e.** It is also worth noting that several leading countries that are taking the lead on this issue have appointed a ‘watchdog’ or oversight position within their national government. The Netherlands has a National Rapporteur and the UK established the post of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. Having a central and resourced position has meant rapid and successful responses to the challenges of human trafficking and slavery. As Norway moves toward further legislation addressed modern slavery, it would do well to examine the role of these existing national rapporteurs.

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Bales, Blood and Earth: Slavery, Ecocide, and the Secret to Saving the World, Spiegel&Grau (Penguin:Random House) 2016

## 8. A new dimension - online slavery<sup>6</sup>

The Internet, mobile broadband and widespread access to information and communication technologies have created a new world: a cyberspace that crosses borders, cultures and languages. As the world has entered this cyberspace through digitalisation, crime and slavery have followed. Most web-based slavery is sexual exploitation of children directed and distributed through online channels. This new cyber-industry is present in many countries, often in poorer communities of relatively poor countries, having sufficient internet connection and access. The cost of engaging as a perpetrator is low, as anyone can become an offender with simple hardware and software allowing for communication and live stream. As a result, combined with a significant demand for abuse imagery, online sexual exploitation has been a rapidly growing phenomenon particularly in Western countries. With consumers predominately living in wealthier western countries, there is a clear poor-rich axis present in the issue of online slavery.

Digitalisation has changed the very nature of slavery. If an enslaved person could only be exploited by one slaveholder at a time in the past, it is now possible for an enslaved person to be exploited by any number of people at the same time through digital consumption. Even after achieving freedom the slavery survivor has to deal with the fact that video of their abuse and exploitation can be found somewhere on the web. This makes it pernicious and damaging form of slavery – and it is truly a modern form of slavery as it is solely possible through digitalisation. Although there has not been much research done in this area, the Philippines is often mentioned as a hotspot for this type of slavery, and the consumption of such images/videos is well documented in Europe.

Today we find many examples of Norwegian perpetrators being on both the supply and demand side of such cases, meaning they are

both orchestrating the abuse and downloading and spreading the imagery and videos (Bergen case<sup>7</sup>, Dark Room, osv). These perpetrators cause harm both locally – affecting Norwegian children such as in the Bergen case – and are destroying the lives of children in poorer and developing communities.

The international dimension of slavery and trafficking forces police in different parts of the world to collaborate. Working together has proven extremely challenging due to language and cultural barriers, differing juridical systems, different interpretations of the protocol ratified and priority.

**“One of the challenges police often face when investigating a case with international law enforcement units is that slavery and human trafficking cases are not always recognised as such – rather, they are investigated as cases of sexual abuse, violence or financial crime. This is largely due to a lack of knowledge on the unique characteristics of slavery and human trafficking and this is a major obstacle to ending slavery.”<sup>8</sup>**

Despite these challenges, Norway has some success cases and best practises that must be shared. For these reasons, we need more knowledge on online slavery and how to effectively fight it. We recommend strengthening Norway’s already good work against online slavery through investing in special police forces and expert groups that can share resources, establishing collaborations overseas, creating collaboration strategies, and educating local law enforcement in these poorer countries. Through this Norway can take a leading role in fighting online slavery and sexual abuse of children. This will benefit poor communities and countries tremendously. Norway could lead the world in addressing this form of exploitation within its development strategy.

<sup>6</sup> The findings for this section, with their sources, are found in Drejer & Bales (2018) *#SlaveTech – a snapshot of slavery in a digital age*. Frekk Forlag.

<sup>7</sup> Den offentlige påtalemyndighet vs. Johannes Vinnes (2016) Bergen Tingrett.

<sup>8</sup> Drejer & Bales (2018) *#SlaveTech – a snapshot of slavery in a digital age*. Frekk Forlag.



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## Kevin Bales

Kevin Bales, CMG, is the Professor of Contemporary Slavery and Research Director of the Rights Lab, at the University of the Nottingham, UK. He edited an Anti-Human Trafficking Toolkit for the United Nations, and published, with the Human Rights Center at Berkeley, a report on forced labor in the USA, and completed a two-year study of human trafficking into the US for the National Institute of Justice. He was a consultant to the United Nations Global Program on Trafficking of Human Beings. Bales has been

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