

FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY

FORUM

OCTOBER 28-29, 2016

Executive Summary

The Freedom from Slavery Forum was designed to provide a place for leaders of the global anti-human trafficking and anti-slavery movement to come together, share and discuss best practices and lessons learned, identify gaps in the field, brainstorm new ideas, and build relationships with one another. Additionally, the Forum is meant to educate the public about this issue.

Accordingly, the 2016 Forum was a two day event comprised of private meetings among anti-slavery experts, followed by a public panel discussion on the ways the electronics and fishing industries deal with issues of slavery and trafficking in their supply chains.

The Forum, an annual event in its fourth year, was designed with input from participants of the 2015 Forum along with the guidance of an Advisory Committee representing participating organizations. Four primary themes were prioritized for the 2016 Forum in order to make the agenda manageable; each theme had an associated working group of Forum participants who met throughout the spring, summer, and fall to design their topic's session and prepare presentations on their group's findings.

Forty-six leaders representing forty-five different organizations attended the Forum to discuss the state of the anti-trafficking field as well as four major, thematic priorities:

- The State of the Field: This group provided Forum attendees with an overview of major accomplishments, challenges, opportunities, innovations, research, and policy changes over the past year (see Appendix C). The group asked Forum attendees to share information about their organizations from the past year, and twenty-eight organizations participated in the survey, including NGOs based in Romania, Brazil, Nepal, Canada, India, Cambodia, the US, Ghana, Syria, the UK, the Philippines, Haiti, and the DRC. After presenting an overview of the survey results, the group led breakout sessions on the following topics: slavery and trafficking research and data; the global public policy landscape and corporate supply chains; compensation for

trafficking victims; grassroots activities to address forced labor; and survivor restoration and leadership.

- Professional Standards and Norms: In the months leading up to the Forum, members of this group conducted surveys with 11 different organizations offering community-based care services in the US, Ghana, and Cambodia. This work built off of the research done by the 2015 Professional Standards and Norms Working Group, which used similar methods to examine shelter-based aftercare models. The group presented their survey results at the Forum, and stressed the need for further analysis in order to develop proper standards for community-based care. Hoping to gather more information over the coming year, the group provided each participant with a copy of the survey that they may complete and send back to the group in the coming months (see Appendix D).
- Evidence and Measurement: This group provided an overview of the state of data collection and sharing in the anti-slavery movement by allowing each of their group members to briefly discuss their organization's use monitoring and evaluation practices. The group's presentations focused on the ways in which risk and protective factors affect data collection, identifying a wide range of factors including age, intergenerational trauma, drug addiction, lack of education, lack of knowledge of rights, and lack of community support, to name a few.
- Global Professional Society: The final group presented on the idea of creating a professional society for the anti-slavery field. The group proposed the society be a member-driven, knowledge organization with the mission of furthering the field, the interests and values of its members, and the public interest. The group presented their initial thoughts on how such a society would be formed before inviting feedback from all participants on the following topics: needs and gaps, organizational mission, membership and finances, and next steps for launching. Ultimately, in the open discussion, the Forum's participants agreed next steps should include identifying the true purpose of the society and a value proposition for members. It was proposed that a Global Professional Society Working Group be established for the next Forum in order to move progress forward during 2017.

The Forum concluded with a public presentation that sought to open dialogue between civil society leaders and business leaders also concerned about the issues of slavery, particularly in supply chains. Annukka Dickens of HP's Global Supply Chain Responsibility team and John Connelly of the National Fisheries Institute spoke on a panel moderated by Good Weave's Nina Smith for the public portion of the Forum. The discussion focused on the ways in which the electronic and fishing industries deal with issues of slavery and trafficking in supply chains. It provided the audience with an opportunity to learn about how NGOs, governments, and multilateral bodies can effectively and constructively work with the private sector to reach the shared goal of slavery eradication.

Participants' evaluations of the Forum gave it a 4.5 out of 5 overall, including content, logistics, and venue. There was a clear acknowledgement that no other convening of this size or geographic representation exists in the movement. There was a marked interest in continuing to hold the Forum in 2017 and beyond, with consideration given to how to make more inclusive and representative while still maintaining its productivity.

The 2016 Freedom from Slavery Forum was sponsored by the Elkes Foundation, with additional assistance from The Freedom Fund. Their generosity is gratefully acknowledged.