

# First annual meeting

## Event report

### Background

The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour was opened for membership in June 2018. Recognizing the eradication of forced labour is a collective and collaborative endeavor, the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour brings a coalition of actors companies and business networks under one umbrella.

The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour's first Annual Meeting took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and brought together 35 participants among members and interested stakeholders to discuss the network's achievements and next steps. Two key focus areas of the meeting were: (1) coordination and collaboration, and (2) reaching smaller enterprises. The meeting was held in Berlin, Germany in the margins of the Consumer Goods Forum Sustainability Committee Meeting and Sustainable Retail Summit.

The meeting was run under the Chatham House Rule to promote candid and open exchange.

### Acknowledgements

Thank you all our panelists and facilitators who contributed to supporting an excellent discussion. The event would not have been possible without the support of the Consumer Goods Forum Social Sustainability team. The European Union, through the ILO's Global Action to Improve the Recruitment Framework of Labour Migration (REFRAME) project, provided the funding for the event.

### Opening session

Beate Andrees, Chief of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch of the ILO, welcomed all to the first annual meeting and highlighted the opportunity for companies and employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs) to work together with the ILO towards the eradication of forced labour globally under ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour. Beate Andrees thanked the Steering Committee and network members for their collective guidance over the past year.

Brent Wilton, Global Head of Workplace Rights, The Coca-Cola Company, and Interim Steering Committee chairperson, stressed the need to bridge local and global conversations and to align to national priorities in order to support national action and conversations on the eradication of forced labour. He indicated that progress has been made in the network's first year of operation and that it was pleasing to see a variety of actors joining the endeavor

### Session 1

WHAT DOES COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION TO ERADICATE FORCED LABOUR LOOK LIKE?

The Panel and group discussion acknowledged that there are currently many initiatives in place focusing on forced labour, though these are often top-down and with little local engagement, leading to well-intentioned

but fragmented efforts. Greater coordination with a greater variety of stakeholders is necessary to move beyond global level conversations.

To overcome these challenges, the Panel stressed the need for a shift from external pressures to local ownership. Aligning incentives for collaboration will bring a greater variety of business to the table including family-owned, government-linked, and small and medium-sized enterprises. While motivations vary, creating positive incentives that link to local actors and support national priorities provides a means to progress towards real change. In order to achieve this, companies and business networks need to align under a common advocacy strategy to ensure their messages are amplified and continue to resonate among local actors including in support of the ILO’s wider work and company goals to create an environment that is conducive to responsible business conduct.

Embracing the principle of open-source tools, resources and materials is also key to working together and ensuring that addressing forced labour remains a pre-competitive issue.

The ILO is often able to facilitate national level action in some contexts given its national presence. ILO needs to play a stronger role on one hand in helping businesses and their representatives prioritize policies that need reform, and on the other supporting governments’ policy reform and enforcement. Creating linkages between the companies, global and local, and governments is an important way forward.



### Moving the agenda forward on coordination and collaboration

- Scale - use what others have done, ensure knowledge and tools open source to build and grow over time
- Convene a wider set of actors: engage local players, employer and business membership organizations, SMEs, and governments
- Build local ownership to ensure scale and sustainability
- Leverage different efforts and create linkages between initiatives
- Coordination on advocacy and through the network of networks role can lead to amplification of messaging
- Acknowledge the diversity of national contexts - solutions must work at the local level
- Create positive incentives for action as opposed to external pressure. Alliance 8.7 pathfinder countries present a good opportunity to capitalize on existing momentum and locally owned commitment.
- Ensuring consistency of effort maintaining focus on the issue and focusing on long-term change

### Session 2

#### ENGAGING SMALLER ENTERPRISES: ACHIEVING SCALE WITH INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND APPROACHES ADDRESSING FORCED LABOUR RISKS

Session two focused on the challenges and opportunities experienced by smaller enterprises and the need to ensure they are an integral part of the conversation on responsible business conduct. SMEs represent the majority of businesses worldwide and they often face many struggles linked to the wider operating environment including a prevailing informal sector. These constraints can lead to an unregulated labour market, where unscrupulous recruitment practices and forced labour thrive.



The Panel and group discussion recognized the need to shift the mindset and create better business opportunities for SMEs in order for sustainable solutions to emerge. One avenue is to improve the two-way relationship between brands and suppliers by deepening the dialogue and engagement and provide positive incentives to reward and promote best practices. Beyond supply chains, EBMOs support is paramount to make easy-to-use information available to their members and maintain a narrow focus on key issues such as unacceptable laws and practices.

Governments have also a role in regulation and compliance for businesses of all sizes. The ILO is a key partner in building bridges between actors and make the link with national monitoring, law enforcement and legal reforms.

### Putting SMEs first

- The local context is key. We need recognize the different issues and contexts in different countries and sectors
- SME voice is important in the process in order to deepen engagement and promote changes that are meaningful to SMEs.
- SMEs should be at the centre. Approaches should not assume that a trickle down approach will work
- SMEs often do not have capacity to follow the issues therefore EBMOs have a key role to play in tracking the issues and making information and resources available to their members
- Ensure information is presented in a user-friendly manner for SMEs and ensure the business opportunity message is communicated clearly
- Develop positive incentives, for example recognition awards

### Conclusions and next steps

During 2020, the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour will work to take the key messages from the meeting forward. To summarize the next steps will include:

#### PROMOTING COLLECTIVE EFFORT: GREATER ALIGNMENT IS PARAMOUNT

- ▲ Forced labour is rooted in certain segments of the business world and not just an individual company issue.
- ▲ Many good initiatives exist with their own merits. We need to identify the gaps and leverage the various efforts. Greater coordination among initiatives is key.
- ▲ The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour, given its platform and position within the ILO, is able to promote the objectives with a much wider set of actors, governments, SMEs and other stakeholders.
- ▲ The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour can offer a non-competitive space support greater alignment and collaboration

#### SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT ON POLICY REFORM: SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IS POSSIBLE THROUGH POLICY REFORM

- ▲ Speaking with one voice on policy reform and linking this to national priorities and conversations to ensure the voice of SMEs is reflected is of common interest
- ▲ Plan for a common advocacy strategy focusing on key policy issues that amplifies the message and outreach and provides a source of information for businesses and their representative organizations within and outside the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour.
- ▲ Alliance 8.7 pathfinder countries provide a platform where political will and commitment are established. Building on these positive incentives to mobilize the business community to work towards the commonly established priorities is key.

*Thank you to all for your active participation. We look forward to seeing you back next year.*

## ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour

### FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

21<sup>st</sup> of October 2019

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch in the Belletage restaurant followed by registration
13:00 – 13:30	Registration in Ballroom B
13:30 – 13:45	<p>WELCOME</p> <p>Beate Andrees, Chief, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO</p> <p>Brent Wilton, Global Head of Workplace Rights, The Coca-Cola Company (Interim Steering Committee chairperson)</p>
13:45 – 14:10	<p>UPDATES FROM THE ILO GLOBAL BUSINESS NETWORK ON FORCED LABOUR</p> <p>Laura Greene, Programme Technical Officer, ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour</p>
14:10 – 15:30	<p>SESSION 1: WHAT DOES COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION TO ERADICATE FORCED LABOUR LOOK LIKE?</p> <p><b>Panel discussion</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Laura Chapman Rubbo, Director, Responsible Governance and Supply Chain, The Walt Disney Company</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p>Didier Bergeret, Director, Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative, Consumer Goods Forum (CGF)</p> <p>Thomas Thomas, Director, ASEAN CSR Network</p> <p>Brent Wilton, Global Head of Workplace Rights, The Coca-Cola Company</p> <p>Group discussion with participants</p>
15:30 – 15:50	Coffee break
15:50 – 17:15	<p>SESSION 2: ENGAGING SMALLER ENTERPRISES: ACHIEVING SCALE WITH INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND APPROACHES ADDRESSING FORCED LABOUR RISKS</p> <p><b>Panel discussion</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Peter Hall, Adviser, International Organisation of Employers (IOE)</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p>Vidhi Aggarwal, Manager Labour and Human Rights, Apple</p> <p>Angela Bozzon, Manager, Brazil Association of Textile Retail (ABVTEX)</p> <p>Marika McCauley Sine, Vice President, Global Sustainability, Mars, Incorporated</p> <p>Saraswathi Ravindran, Senior Consultant Industrial Relations, Malaysian Employers Federation</p> <p><b>Group discussion with participants</b></p>
17:15 – 17:30	<p>CLOSING</p> <p>Adam Greene, Senior Adviser, Bureau for Employers' Activities, ILO</p>

**Participants list**

**FIRST ANNUAL MEETING**  
21<sup>st</sup> of October 2019

Last name	First name	Title			Organizations
Aggarwal	Vidhi	Manager, Labor & Human Rights			Apple Inc.
Andrees	Beate	Chief			ILO Geneva
Barbato	Candida	Senior Advisor	Social	Sustainability	SocialStance LTD (attending on behalf of Driscoll's)
Barsan	Carmen	Senior Adviser			BDA
Bergeret	Didier	Director, Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative			Consumer Goods Forum
Billah	Mustain	Coordinator: Support	Market	Access	Export Competitiveness for Jobs (EC4J) Project
Bozzon	Angela	Manager			Brazil Association of Textile Retail
Christisabrina	Sairindri	SSCI Coordinator			Consumer Goods Forum
Cranfield	Stuart	Head of Conditions	Supplier	Working	C&J Clark International
Desroches	Frederique	Head of Responsible Sourcing & Human Rights			Danone
Greene	Adam	Senior Relations Specialist			ILO Geneva
Greene	Laura	Programme Technical Officer			ILO Geneva
Hall	Peter	Adviser			IOE
Manubens	Marcela	Global Vice President	Social	Sustainability	Unilever
Martins	Rita	Corporate Manager	Social	Responsibility	Jerónimo Martins
Mahin	Virginie	Global Social Sustainability and Human Rights			Mondelez International
Moller	Henrik	Senior Specialist			ILO Geneva
Molnar	Anges	Intern			ILO Berlin
Pedersen	Bjart	Manager Sustainable Sourcing			NorgesGruppen ASA
Pountcheva	Veronika	Global Director CR			METRO AG
Ravindran	Saraswathi	Senior Relations	Consultant	Industrial	Malaysian Employers Federation

Rigg Herzog	Gabriella	Vice President for Corporate Responsibility and Labor Affairs	U.S. Council for International Business
Rubbo	Laura	Director, Responsible Governance and Supply Chain	The Walt Disney Company
Scarlette	Elizee	Sustainability Outreach	Carrefour
Schrage-Oliva	Britta	Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs	KiK Textilien und Non-Food GmbH
Sine	Marika McCauley	Vice President, Global Sustainability	Mars, Incorporated
Tack	Stephanie	Global Sustainability Manager	McCain Foods Ltd.
Thomas	Thomas	Director	ASEAN CSR Network
Vallat	Julie	VP Ethics Human Rights	L'OREAL
van Haaren	Thomas	SSCI Senior Manager	Consumer Goods Forum
White	Brian	Director, Global Compliance, Trade & Responsible Sourcing	The J.M. Smucker Company
Wilton	Brent	Global Head of Workplace Rights	The Coca-Cola Company
Zanoni	Massimo	Global Brand Standards Senior Manager - EMEA & SEA	NBCUniversal