

Driving action, scale, and sustainability through collaboration.

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# Message from the Chair

Dear network community,

Since 2016 forced labour has increased from 24.9 to 27.6 million people worldwide. This increase is almost entirely due to an increase of forced labour in the private economy. The imperative to fight forced labour is stronger than ever, and our network and its activities have never been more relevant.

We made limited resources count in 2022. I am particularly proud of our new research '<u>Eradicating forced labour</u>: What works in practice'. This research is both innovative and practical. The corresponding online, interactive toolbox provides businesses with an overview of what initiatives have been gaining ground to prevent forced labour.

As the COVID-19 pandemic eased in many countries, opportunities for face-to-face awareness raising, training, and advocacy increased. This allowed us to represent the network at the European Parliament and work with employers attending the Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, and much, much more.

We also continued our online momentum. Among other things, we produced our first podcast in Spanish, and a new training package for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in podcast format.

Member action on forced labour during 2022 was truly commendable. We have chosen a few highlights and shared these with you throughout this report. We did not run a member feedback survey this year but will instead focus in 2023 on how the network can add further value for its members.

I would like to thank the ILO GBNFL Steering Committee. Its dedicated members have helped the network to continue to grow and thrive in 2022.

Our progress would not have been possible without donor support from the European Union, the French Ministry of Labour, and the United States Department of Labour through ILO projects, namely From Protocol to Practice: A Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labour, Global Action to Improve the Recruitment Framework of Labour Migration, Entr'Alliance, and Measurement, Awareness-raising and Policy Engagement to Accelerate Action Against Child Labour and Forced Labour. We are sincerely grateful.

And finally, as always, a heartfelt thanks to our members for their commitment and efforts throughout 2022.

Yours faithfully,

Douglas Opio

ILO GBNFL Steering Committee Chair for 2022

Executive Director, Federation of Uganda Employers

## About the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) Global Business Network on Forced Labour (GBNFL) brings together the ILO with businesses of all sizes and sectors, and their networks, from around the globe to eradicate forced labour.

Operating across all sectors and geographies, ILO GBNFL members work to engage smaller enterprises, develop actionable resources and tools, and devise local solutions that help shape national frameworks to create lasting change.

ILO GBNFL is a global business network coordinated by the ILO. This UN agency brings together governments, employers, and workers to set international labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work. The network opened for membership in 2018.

ILO GBNFL reaches across sectors and geographies to advance the business case for an end to forced labour. The network is aligned with, and contributes to, other relevant international initiatives, in particular <u>Alliance 8.7</u>, the global partnership working to deliver on SDG Target 8.7 and eradicate all forced labour by 2030.

## Key focus areas:



#### Connect

Break silos by linking up business actors from across sectors and geographies to eradicate forced labour.



#### Convene

Support businesses to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including government bodies, to find sustainable solutions to the structural drivers of forced labour.



### Innovate

Create spaces where members identify gaps, develop new ways of tackling forced labour, and devise methods to scale up solutions.



## Support

Share user-friendly and actionoriented data, information, and resources to help busy businesses take steps to tackle forced labour.

## Our members

ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour members are businesses of all sizes and sectors, employer and business membership organizations, industry trade groups and sectoral associations. Other business-led initiatives with complementary mandates and expertise join as partners.

In 2022 we warmly welcomed new members amfori and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines to our network. A total of 20 companies, business networks, and partners comprised our membership base in 2022.

Company members

Apple Inc









**Business networks** 































Recognized partners



## Governance

The ILO GBNFL is governed by a Steering Committee that is responsible for the overall strategic direction and activities of the network. The Steering Committee has representatives from large enterprises, business networks, and SMEs. It strives to ensure good regional representation and gender balance and to be as reflective of the ILO GBNFL membership as possible. The overall governance of the network is guided by a set of operating principles. In 2022, the Steering Committee met four times.

## **▶** Steering Committee members by membership segment

Large Enterprises	Company	Business networks	Organization
Laura Chapman Rubbo	The Walt Disney Company	Angela Bozzon	Brazil Association of Textile Retail (ABVTEX)
Vidhi Aggarwal	Apple Inc	Didier Bergeret	Consumer Goods Forum (CGF)
EBMOs/SMEs	Company/organization	Linda Kromjong	amfori
Abigail Roxas	Employers Confederation of the Philippines	Matthias Thorns	International Organization of Employers (IOE)
Douglas Opio	Federation of Uganda Employers (2022 Chair)	Thomas Mackall	United States Council for International Business (USCIB)
Marlene Mazariegos	Camara del Agro - Guatemala	Thomas Thomas	ASEAN CSR Network (ACN)

# ► Highlights in 2022

There were many highlights throughout the year. With the easing of pandemic related restrictions, the network was able to restore some of its initial momentum from 2019 and to begin building on previous work. We have selected a few achievements below.



## Connect

- We directly reached more than 2,000 business stakeholders, raising their awareness and providing training.
- Our LinkedIn followers more than doubled to over 4,500.
- Our website had nearly 13,500 visitors.
- Presentation of the Global Award for SME Action on Forced Labour



## Convene

- We discussed the EU trade ban on forced labour with the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament.
- The Durban Call to Action resulting from the high-profile Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour prominently mentions forced labour.
- We produced our first podcast in Spanish on forced labour and child labour in Mexico. It was the most popular ILO podcast for several weeks after its release.



#### Innovate

- We developed a new toolbox to help businesses better prevent and tackle forced labour by addressing the 11 ILO indicators of forced labour. The toolbox was based on our research paper *Eradicating forced labour:* What works in practice. The web page hosting the toolbox was our second most popular web page in 2022.
- We produced a new training podcast series for SMEs in November, already listened to nearly 500 times by the end of the year.



## Support

- New global estimates show that forced labour has increased. We helped businesses understand the implications of the new figures by producing and promoting a short fact sheet and hosting four regional briefings.
- We gave our members an early look at the ILO's Forced Labour Observatory to help them be ready to maximize its use when it was released.

## Key results by focus area



## Promoting SME action

In 2021 we launched the world's first <u>Global Award for SME Action on Forced Labour</u> together with our member the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). The award is part of our campaign aiming to unleash the potential of SMEs in the fight against forced labour.

We received three submissions of incredibly high quality. In March 2023 we formally recognised these efforts at a successful <u>online conference</u> attended by nearly 300 people, co-hosted with the IOE. The SMEs highlighted the need to take a broad approach focusing on community impact and responsible business conduct. We brought together the advice of the SMEs for SMEs in a short, practical document, which was well-received on social media, with more than 200 people viewing the event on YouTube.

## Linking businesses with support

The <u>www.modernslaverymap.org</u> is a unified resource of information on organizations working with the private sector to eliminate human trafficking, forced labour and the worst forms of child labour. The map currently features 228 initiatives, compared to 92 in 2019, that work with the private sector. It also had 4,238 visitors over the course of the year. The network continued to promote the map and encourage relevant organizations to submit their details for inclusion. We would like to thank our collaborating partners for their work on the map, namely the Global Business Coalition Against Human Trafficking and the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

CGF shares new guidance on fair recruitment & launches social media campaign.

New <u>guidance</u> by our member the Consumer Goods Forum helps businesses to prevent situations of forced labour through fair recruitment. It focuses specifically on how to tackle worker-paid recruitment fees, which can make workers vulnerable to debt bondage.

The CGF has also launched a social media campaign around the hashtag #CloserThanYouThink in the wake of the worrying increase in forced labour in the private sector. It is a call to action to businesses worldwide to prioritise forced labour in their human rights due diligence.

## Spreading the word

The secretariat and members presented at various events and workshops, often working together. We directly reached more than 2,000 business stakeholders. We raised their awareness of forced labour and equipped businesses and their networks with the tools needed to tackle it. A few highlights of our work are below.

- In March approximately 160 employees from Malaysian businesses attended a two-day online workshop where the ILO GBNFL provided training on the ILO's 11 indicators of forced labour. The workshop was hosted by the **Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (MARGMA)** and the ILO project 'Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better'.
- Dur member PSCI held its spring meeting in May. We introduced 9 PSCI members, all pharmaceutical companies, to forced labour and what they can do to help end it.
- In May, the secretariat spoke at the **Palm Oil Plantation Workshop on Good Practices for Developing Company Action Plans**, helping approximately 50 attendees from businesses to include practical steps to end forced labour in their plans.
- In July network member Apple contributed to the ITC-ILO **Access to Justice Roundtable**, part of the Fair Recruitment Knowledge Hub event series. The event focused on how migrant workers can access justice in cases where their labour and human rights have been violated during recruitment. The participants were from around the globe and panellists shared insights from research and practical applications in Hong Kong (China) and Malaysia.
- In July and November, we hosted country briefing for members on China. In the November briefing an expert from the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) joined us to share insights from their report. Approximately 60 people attended across the two meetings. These briefings will be expanded to other countries in 2023.
- To give members early insight into a forthcoming ILO tool, we presented the Forced Labour Observatory to members in September ahead of its official launch. Thirty four people attended (see below for more details).
- ▶ Between September and October, we hosted regional briefings on the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery together with employer organizations in each region. More than 260 people attended. More on this below.
- LIO GBNFL helped to introduce forced labour and fair recruitment challenges to members of **Ipieca**, the global oil and gas association, in October.
- Network member the **Consumer Goods Forum** (CGF) hosted its annual Sustainable Retail Summit in October for CEOs and senior managers of retail companies. The ILO GBNFL presented the new global figures on forced labour, drawing out implications. Our session was the second most highly rated of the three-day summit, attended by approximately 20 CGF members.
- At The Economist's **Global Anti-Illicit Trade Summit on Central and Eastern Europe** (November) the secretariat and ILO GBNFL member TRACIT joined forces to raise awareness of how the production, distribution, and sale of illicit goods spurs demand for forced labour. The event was attended by 120 delegates.

In December, the secretariat spoke at an event organized by APSCA, the association of social compliance auditors. The event was an opportunity for auditors from around the world to learn more about detecting forced labour and where challenges are most present. The secretariat shared the key insights from the <a href="Global Estimates of Modern Slavery">Global Estimates of Modern Slavery</a> as well as experiences from ILO work. The event was attended and viewed by more than 1,040 people.

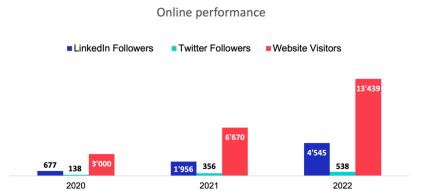
Online reach

We continued to grow our online profile, connecting with existing and new stakeholders. In 2022:

- Our <u>LinkedIn</u> followers more than doubled to over 4,500 people and organizations
- Our LinkedIn account achieved nearly double the number of impressions compared to 2021, totalling more than 90,000 impressions
- Our <u>Twitter</u> followers increased by 51 per cent to nearly 540 people and organizations
- Our combined podcasts were listened to 1,400 times, with total listens across all years reaching nearly 3,200 since we produced our very first episode in 2020
- Our website had more than twice as many visitors (nearly 13,500) as in 2021
- We added more than 50 additional resources to our online library, many produced by ILO GBNFL, its members, and the ILO
- Our newsletter audience grew by 41 per cent, the newsletter now reaching 240 people.

Our profile also increased in the ILO's core communications channels. The ILO posted several original social media posts on our behalf, reaching audiences of nearly 210,000 followers on Twitter and almost 330,000 followers on LinkedIn. This has helped to raise the profile of forced labour, our network, and several key 2022 products, such as our podcasts.

Breaking with a general upwards trend, our Twitter impressions went down by around 50 per cent in 2022, still totalling nearly 50,000 impressions. This could partially be because in 2022, compared to 2021, we promoted more technical content which may be less relevant to Twitter's more general audience. Also, as just mentioned, some content was promoted through ILO rather than ILO GBNFL channels and we have used only ILO GBNFL data to assess performance. Because of this, our online performance figures are likely to be underestimates.





### Convene

## Advocacy

During the first half of 2022 the network focused much of its global advocacy efforts on ending forced labour of children, particularly in the light of the high-profile fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour held in May in Durban, South Africa. Forced labour of children is one of the worst forms of child labour, and one of the least well-known forms due to limited research.

Aiming to plug this gap, and based on our earlier policy brief <u>An introduction to forced labour of children for businesses</u>, we developed a short, three-page brief <u>How business can help end forced labour of children</u>. We shared and promoted it widely. For instance:

- Our member the IOE shared the brief with its members attending the conference
- The secretariat briefed approximately 20 employer delegates at the conference on forced labour of children, using the brief as inspiration
- Member CGF published an <u>online blog post</u> on forced labour of children.

Our efforts helped to ensure that the Durban Call to Action adopted by conference delegates prominently features multiple mentions of forced labour and the need for action.

#### DURBAN CALL TO ACTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR

'We commit to scale up action to (III) Strengthen the prevention and elimination of child labour, including its worst forms, forced labour, modern slavery and trafficking in persons, and the protection of survivors through data- driven and survivor-informed policy and programmatic responses. '

Further evidence that our influence is growing came later in the year. In October our Chair Douglas Opio was invited to represent the network at the public hearing of the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament on the proposed European-wide products ban. The ban aims to keep the

European Union (EU) market free from products made, extracted, or harvested with forced labour, whether they are made in the EU or elsewhere. The public hearing was a first step in the legislative process and serves as an input to the debate and negotiation among EU institutions, which will in turn lead to the adoption of the ban. Douglas <u>welcomed</u> the EU's efforts to eradicate forced labour while asking for assurance that SMEs will be brought on board and that root causes will be tackled.

Finally, existing advocacy work continued to be popular. For example, our policy brief Why and how businesses want to eradicate forced labour (February 2021) was our third most popular web page in 2022, attracting more than 1,000 visitors.

## Country action

ILO GBNFL advocacy efforts target one or two Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder Countries at a time to maximize impact. In 2022, the network continued to work with the Malaysian business community, while also extending efforts to Mexico.

#### Malaysia

Malaysia is a major destination country for migrant workers. We know from the <u>Global Estimates of Modern Slavery</u> that migrant workers are five times more at risk of forced labour.

During 2022 the network built on its in efforts in Malaysia in 2020 and 2021, mostly focused on training Malaysian businesses. This year we supported ILO projects by training rubber glove and palm oil producers on how to identify forced labour at the aforementioned workshops hosted by by the Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (MARGMA) as well as the ILO. We have also adapted our <u>fair recruitment toolkit for SMEs</u> to the Malaysian context. It will be launched in 2023.

# ABVTEX launches new certification scheme and raises awareness of forced labour of children in Brazil

ILO GBNFL member ABVTEX - Associação Brasileira do Varejo Têxtil, or the Brazilian Textile Retail Association - has launched ModaComVerso, a new certification scheme which ensures that clothing and footwear is produced without forced labour and child labour, and that working conditions meet international standards.

The certification process includes regular supply chain audits. ModaComVerso also raises awareness among businesses and consumers of workers' rights and conditions. Already 13 retail companies sport the ModaComVerso logo.

ABVTEX also used a cartoon by Abdelgawad Shosha, submitted to the 2021 forced labour cartoon competition we helped to judge. ABVTEX used the cartoon as part of a communication piece on child labour and forced labour of children. It was shared with ABVTEX members and their supply chains - around 3,900 enterprises - in September 2022.

#### Mexico

In 2022 our national focus shifted to Mexico for the first time. Forced labour in Mexico often occurs in the agricultural sector, with both migrant and indigenous workers becoming trapped in situations of forced labour. Our work in Mexico focused on forced labour, child labour, and fair recruitment.

To mark the fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, we produced a special edition podcast on forced labour and child labour in Mexico. The podcast takes an in-depth look at the causes of forced labour and child labour specific to Mexico, what is being done to tackle these abuses, what more needs to be done, and how.



Our first episode in Spanish considers successful actions by employers' organizations, sectoral associations, small, medium-sized, and micro-enterprises, and the government (including local government). The podcast covers, among other things, responsible business conduct, social protection, certification, trade agreements, and fair recruitment. It was the most popular ILO podcast for several weeks after its release. By the end of 2022, the podcast had been listened to nearly 450 times.

To lay the groundwork for future training sessions on fair recruitment, we also undertook research to better understand the challenges in Mexico. The resulting briefs will be used in 2023 to support engagement of employers.

#### **Network of Networks**

In 2020 the ILO GBNFL created a neutral platform to bring together 24 organizations fighting forced labour. The aim of the Forum for Business Initiatives, also known as the Network of Networks, is to maximize coordination and minimize duplication. Forum discussions focus on country level action, the development of tools and resources, changes in policy, and upcoming events.

In 2022 the Network of Networks met five times. ILO GBNFL members CGF and GBCAT, as well as responsible sourcing experts AIM-Progress and labour rights NGO Verité, shared new toolkits and resources. ILO GBNFL conducted a survey, the results of which have helped to make the most out of the meetings and promote coordination and collaboration.



## **Innovate**

## What really works to end forced labour?

Our research on what works to eradicate forced labour in different contexts began in 2021. To find the answers, we interviewed more than 40 stakeholders, including governments, companies, employer and business membership organizations, worker representative organizations, and civil society.



In 2022 we launched not only the research report - <u>Eradicating forced labour: What works in practice</u> - but also our easy-to-use interactive, online <u>toolbox</u> for businesses based on the research results. The interactive toolbox allows the user to navigate by forced labour indicator to examples of initiatives that identify, prevent, and remediate it. The toolbox also shows the impact each initiative has had, and is available in English, French and Spanish.

We shared the research results and the toolkit with businesses around the globe during four regional briefings (attended by 264 business representatives in total), which also covered the new global estimates of forced labour (more on this further down). The briefings covered the increase of forced labour globally and the implications for the private sector, and then presented solutions through the research and the interactive tool.

Both the research and the tool have been extremely well received by the business community and beyond. Despite only having been uploaded to our website mid-September, the web page featuring the research and the interactive tool is our second most popular web page, accounting for 7 per cent of total visitors in 2022.

### **Podcasts**

In addition to the above-mentioned special episode on forced labour and child labour in Mexico, we developed a new series, but with an innovative angle. Our third podcast series is a short training package on forced labour specifically designed for SMEs. Entitled 'How to fight forced labour: A podcast training package for SMEs', it introduces forced labour and how to spot it, shares interviews with inspiring SMEs already leading the way, and more.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, podcasts have proliferated, including podcasts on forced labour and related topics. However, we believe that the new series is the first time a podcast format has been used to deliver training.

The first two episodes were published in November and had been listened to nearly 500 times by the end of 2022. The third episode, on tools and resources, will be published at the beginning of 2023.

Our existing podcast series – '<u>Trapped in silos? Why forced labour eradication requires an integrated approach'</u> and '<u>SMEs could be catalysts in the fight against forced labour</u>' – also continued to be listened to.





## Accessing the latest data

Forced labour has increased from 24.9 to 27.6 million people worldwide, as shown by the new <u>Global Estimates of Modern Slavery</u> published by the ILO, IOM and Walk Free in September. This equates to 3.5 people for every thousand in the world. A total of 3.3 million victims are thought to be children. The increase since 2016 is entirely due to an increase of forced labour in the private economy.

To help businesses keep their finger on the pulse, the network hosted <u>four regional briefings</u> to discuss the implications of the new figures with and for the private sector. More than 260 people joined the online events. Each briefing was co-organized with one or two relevant employer or business membership organizations. We shared our latest two-page <u>factsheet</u> that summarizes key figures from the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery for businesses. The new interactive tool for businesses and corresponding research (see above) were also introduced to help businesses move forward on forced labour eradication.

September also saw the much-anticipated launch of the <u>ILO's Forced Labour Observatory</u> (FLO). The tool was developed under the ILO Bridge Project, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. ILO GBNFL members contributed to the platform in the design phase in 2019. The FLO is a repository of global and country level information on forced labour for all 187 ILO member states. It provides comprehensive information on forced labour, including information on international and national legal and institutional frameworks, enforcement, prevention (including fair recruitment and due diligence), protection, access to justice, remedies, and more. The ILO GBNFL hosted a private preview briefing for members in September to present the final product and jointly explore it. Thirty-four people attended the briefing.

## Improving inclusion

We continued to make concerted efforts to reach additional audiences, in particular SMEs and policy makers at national level.

- We produced our first <u>podcast</u> in Spanish on forced labour and child labour in Mexico, accompanied by our first web page entirely in Spanish.
- Our due diligence toolkit for fair recruitment helps businesses, especially SMEs, to set out a due diligence process when hiring workers from abroad. It has now been translated into French and Spanish.
- We have published our new forced labour factsheet in English, French and Spanish. The <u>factsheets</u> are handy two-page summaries for businesses of the new <u>Global Estimates of Modern Slavery</u>, released in September.

- We published the summaries of our research report '<u>Fradicating forced labour</u>: <u>What works in practice</u>', as well as the corresponding interactive online tool for businesses, in English, French and Spanish. The summary is also available in Portuguese.
- On social media, we continue to post and share regularly in English, French and Spanish. For the new global figures on modern slavery, we designed original social media cards in all three languages.
- Our quarterly newsletter continued to be published in both French and English throughout 2022.

## GBCAT helps businesses to employ forced labour survivors.

Safe and sustainable employment is one of the most effective ways to prevent the re-exploitation of survivors of forced labour. This <u>guide</u> by our member GBCAT describes actions businesses can take to empower and employ survivors and explains the types of organizations that companies can look to for partnership support, including real-world examples.

## Looking ahead

In 2023, the network will reprioritize its work to focus on country level action including training and government engagement to eradicate forced labour. Building on our learnings from the <u>Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage</u> and our research <u>Eradicating Forced Labour: What Works in Practice</u>, the network is well-positioned to support companies, particularly SMEs to address the 11 indicators of forced labour and prevent forced labour through fair recruitment practices. This section provides an overview of how we will take forward this objective.

## Country action: Malaysia and Mexico

As with previous years, the network continues to focus on Alliance 8.7 pathfinder countries where private sector action can provide support and impetus to the wider implementation of national strategies and actions to eradicate forced labour and thereby support sustainable change.

In 2023, the network will seek to expand its work in Malaysia and Mexico. In Malaysia we will focus on furthering our training on forced labour. We will also increase the uptake of our fair recruitment due diligence training.

In both countries, we will create opportunities to convene. Firstly, we will bring together business initiatives engaging with the private sector on forced labour. Secondly, we will bring together the network and its members with governments.

In Mexico we will continue to identify opportunities to align with the pathfinder process and create longer-term engagement. However, initially we will focus on supporting network members with additional information on the country context as well as rolling out training together with employer and business membership organizations focusing on the 11 indicators of forced labour and fair recruitment.

## Continuing to convene

A key ILO GBNFL success thus far has been convening business networks acting on forced labour to support coordination and collaboration - the Network of Networks mentioned already. In 2023 we will replicate this model at country-level, starting in Malaysia. We will also support a collective, concrete activity that the Network of Networks group can deliver jointly.

## Updating global guidance

As more and more regulations with global implications are adopted, the ILO GBNFL will work to update existing ILO guidance on preventing forced labour to provide companies, their representative organizations, and governments with a global reference point aligned to ILO standards as they seek to upgrade their prevention practices. Similarly, the ILO GBNFL will focus on raising awareness of the 11 ILO indicators on forced labour and how these can help businesses to prevent and tackle forced labour.

Thank you to all our members for their ongoing support and we look forward to continued engagement in 2022.

The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour would like to thank the European Union, French Ministry of Labour, and the United States Department of Labour for their financial support during the annual reporting period, complementing the financial and technical resources provided by ILO.

•	The ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour (GBNFL) brings together businesses of all sizes and sectors, and their networks, from around the globe to eradicate forced labour.

To join us, and for further information

<u>fl-businessnetwork@ilo.org</u> or visit <u>flbusiness.network</u>