



# THE MODERN SLAVERY GLOSSARY

A LEARNING INITIATIVE BY FREE THE SLAVES



# INTRODUCTION



This glossary serves as a foundational resource for understanding the critical terms and concepts used in addressing modern slavery and human trafficking. It is designed to provide precise, concise, and accurate definitions that reflect the legal, social, and policy frameworks shaping the global response to exploitation.

The terminology presented here is essential for comprehensively navigating discussions on forced labor, child exploitation, trafficking, and survivor engagement. Each entry is grounded in international conventions, treaties, and research, making this glossary relevant for policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and advocates working to develop informed and effective solutions.

As modern slavery remains a complex, multifaceted issue, this glossary highlights the systemic nature of exploitation, the structural factors that drive vulnerability, and the key interventions aimed at prevention and survivor support. By standardizing the language we use, this document contributes to a shared understanding critical for coordinated global action.

Readers are encouraged to utilize this resource as a guide in research, policy development, and fieldwork to ensure accurate and context-specific applications of key terms in combating modern slavery and promoting human dignity.



# A



**Abolitionism** – Movement emerged in Western Europe and North America and active throughout 1783–1888 that was responsible for creating the emotional climate necessary for ending the transatlantic slave trade.

The intensification of a transnational system of slavery was driven by the European colonies in North America, South America, and the West Indies, where the plantation economy generated an immense demand for low-cost labour. Between the 16th and 19th centuries an estimated total of 12 million slaves from Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas.

The brutality of slavery, made increasingly visible by the scale of its practice, sparked a reaction that insisted on the abolition of the practice.

# B



**Bonded labor** – Also known as debt bondage or debt slavery, occurs when a person is forced to work to pay off a debt associated with their recruitment, accommodation, or food. Most or all of the money they earn goes to pay off their 'loan', whose interest rates are controlled and manipulated by the money lender at will.

Many people in debt bondage have their passports and other identification documents seized by their employers, leaving the workers unable to leave. Some victims of debt bondage face threats, intimidation and violence from the people that exploit them.

In some societies, debt is shared by whole families who have to work to pay off debts taken on by a relative. Oftentimes, they even pass their debt down to their own children and grandchildren, thus creating an inter-generational cycle of indebtedment and slavery.

Today, bonded labour is most widespread in South Asian countries including India and Pakistan, where it flourishes in agriculture, brick kilns, mills, mines, and factories.

Learn more: [Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery \(Slavery Convention\), 1956](#)

# C

**Child domestic work** – Refers to work performed by children in the home of a third party or employer. This includes activities such as preparing, cooking, buying, or serving food; washing or ironing clothes; cleaning the house or compound; caring for a child, sick, or elderly person; picking up or accompanying children from school; and others.

Child domestic work is not always exploitative or harmful to the child. Indeed, some light domestic work that allows a child to help her/his family financially or to earn pocket money outside school hours can contribute to a young person's positive and healthy development.

**Child exploitation** – The act of taking advantage of a child, including through: economic exploitation and any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development; exploitation for illicit drug production and trafficking; sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, specifically the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity, the use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices and the use of children in pornographic performances and materials; and the abduction of, sale of, or traffic in children.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#)

**Child labor** – Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:

1. is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
2. interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

In its most extreme forms, child labor involves children being enslaved.

Learn more: [Convention No.138 on Minimum Age](#); [Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour](#); [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#); [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\), 1966](#)

**Child marriage** – Any formal marriage or informal union where one or both parties are under 18 years of age. It affects mostly girls, but boys can also be victims of child marriage.

When a girl gets married, she is often expected to drop out of school to look after the home, children, and extended family. Girls who marry before the age of 18 are also more likely to have early pregnancies, experience dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, contract HIV, and experience domestic violence.

When they marry as children, girls miss out on developing the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to make informed decisions, negotiate, access paid employment and live independent lives. With little access to education and economic opportunities, girls and their families are more likely to live in poverty.

More than 650 million women alive today already suffer the direct consequences of child marriage. Moreover, 12 million girls are married each year before turning 18.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#); [Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery \(Slavery Convention\), 1956](#); [Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1964](#); [UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\), 1979](#);

**Child soldier** – Any person below the age of 18 who is recruited to participate in armed conflicts.

Some children are forcibly abducted from their homes, schools, or communities, forcefully separated from their families, and placed under the control of armed actors. Other children join an armed group (or a state armed forces) because of their families' poverty, because of lack of alternative, because of a perception that recruitment is the only way to protect their communities, or because of the armed actors' appeal.

Throughout their time with armed actors, children may be required to participate in military activities – with great risk of death, injury, and disability. They may also be used as porters, cooks, spies, first aid providers, and other functions. In many instances, warring parties also force child soldiers to abuse substances, both to create dependence in the children and to make them fearless in combat.

As child soldiers, girls have vulnerabilities unique to their gender and place in society and suffer specific consequences including, but not limited to, rape and sexual violence, pregnancy, and pregnancy-related complications, as well as child and forced marriage.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#); [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict](#)

**Child trafficking** – Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or reception of children for the purpose of exploitation.

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation is considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means identified in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, such as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power.

Learn more: [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, 2000](#)



**Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)** – Refers to the sexual abuse of persons under 18 years of age. The child is treated as a sexual object and as a commercial object. CSEC includes:

1. the use of children in sexual activities remunerated in cash or in kind in the streets or in places such as brothels, discotheques, massage parlours, bars, hotels, restaurants, etc.;
2. the trafficking of children for the sex trade;
3. child sex tourism;
4. the production, promotion, and distribution of pornographic materials involving children;
5. the use of children in sex shows.

It includes forms of transactional sex where the sexual abuse of children is not stopped or reported by household members, due to benefits derived by the household from the perpetrator.

# D

**Decent work** – Productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. Work is considered decent if it pays fair compensation, provides job security, maintains safe and healthy working conditions, grants the potential for personal development, guarantees social protection, ensures equal opportunity and treatment for all, and allows workers freedom to organize and express concerns.

Learn more: [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\), 1966](#)

**Descent-based slavery** – Describes a situation where people are born into slavery. This is usually because their ancestors were captured into slavery, and their families have ‘belonged’ to the slave-owning families ever since.

This form of slavery can still be found across the Sahel belt of Africa, including in Mauritania, Niger, Mali, Chad and Sudan. Many other African societies also have a traditional hierarchy where people are known to be the descendants of slaves or slave-owners. Families trapped in debt bondage situation across South Asia are also affected by descent-based slavery.



**Domestic work** – Domestic workers are those who perform work in or for a private household or households. They provide direct and indirect care services, and as such are key members of the care economy.

Their work may include tasks such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing, and ironing clothes, taking care of children, or elderly or sick members of a family, gardening, guarding the house, driving for the family, and even taking care of household pets.

A domestic worker may work on full-time or part-time basis; may be employed by a single household or through or by a service provider; may be residing in the household of the employer (live-in worker) or may be living in his or her own residence (live-out).

Domestic workers are often particularly vulnerable to exploitation and domestic slavery because of the unique circumstances in which they work – inside a private household – and a general lack of legal protection.

Of the 75.6 million domestic workers worldwide, 76.2% are women.

Learn more: [Convention No.189 on Domestic Workers, 2011](#)

# E

**Exploitation** – The act of taking advantage of something or someone, in particular the act of taking unjust advantage of another for one’s own benefit. Benefit may refer to material as well as non-material advantages.

A non-exhaustive list of forms of exploitation includes prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs and other forms of exploitation defined in national law.

Learn more: [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, 2000](#)

# F

**Female genital mutilation** – Comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

The practice has no health benefits for girls and women and causes severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and increased risk of new-born deaths.

It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against girls and women. It is nearly always carried out by traditional practitioners on minors.

**Forced begging** – People in forced begging are being forced to beg for money from strangers. They have to hand over all or most of their earnings to the person who is forcing them to beg. People can be beaten, threatened with violence, or psychologically pressured into begging.

Children can be forced to beg by their parents, siblings, guardians, or by a third party, including criminal gangs, distant relatives, neighbors, or family friends. There are reports of children being kidnapped by gangs and forced to beg. Sometimes children are also forced to take drugs to the point that they develop an addiction, which results in a dependency on the gangs.

Children who are forced to beg are often very young. Younger children gain more sympathy from passersby. Children in forced begging are also deliberately kept unclean and poorly dressed by their traffickers, in order to arouse more compassion from passersby. Children are known to be forced to play instruments and/or perform tricks to entertain or evoke sympathy from passersby. Victims of forced begging may also be given crutches or other props to attract more attention.

**Forced labor** – All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), indicators of forced labor include abuse of vulnerability, deception, restriction of movement, isolation, physical and sexual violence, intimidation and threats, retention of identity documents, withholding of wages, debt bondage, abusive working and living conditions, and excessive overtime.

Learn more: [Convention No.29 on Forced Labor](#); [ILO Indicators of Forced Labor](#); [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\), 1966](#); [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\), 1966](#)

**Forced labor of children** – Work performed by a child falling under one of the following categories:

1. work performed for a third party, under threat or menace of any penalty applied by a third party (other than the child's own parents) either on the child directly or the child's parents; or
2. work performed with or for the child's parents, under threat or menace of any penalty applied by a third party (other than the child's parents) either on the child directly or the child's parents; or
3. work performed with or for the child's parents where one or both parents are themselves in a situation of forced labor; or
4. work performed in any of the worst forms of child labor.

**Forced marriage** – Observed when one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be physical (threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional/psychological (making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family). Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

Sometimes called servile marriage, forced marriage also occurs when a wife is forcibly transferred to another husband in exchange for some type of payment or when a widow is given no choice and inherited by one of her husband's male relatives.

Learn more: [Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly Resolution 217 A \(III\), 1948](#); [Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery \(Slavery Convention\), 1956](#); [Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1964](#); [UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\), 1979](#); [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\), 1966](#); [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\), 1966](#)

# G



**Gender-based violence** – Refers to any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person based on gender discrimination. Gender-based violence is often used in the same context as violence against women and girls, however it should be noted that gender-based violence can affect anybody.

It can include sexual, physical, mental, and economic harm inflicted in public or in private. It also includes threats of violence, coercion, and manipulation. This can take many forms such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour crimes'.

Gender-based violence is a phenomenon deeply rooted in gender inequality, and continues to be one of the most notable human rights violations within all societies. Although anyone – women, girls, men and boys – can fall victim to violence simply because of their sex or gender, women and girls are especially at risk.

It is estimated that one in three women will experience sexual or physical violence in their lifetime.

# H

**Hazardous child labor** – Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children and that, as such, should be prohibited. Guidance by the International Labor Organization (ILO) for governments on some hazardous activities include:

1. work which exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse;
2. work underground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces;
3. work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
4. work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
5. work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#); [Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour](#);



**Human trafficking** – Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation is irrelevant where any of the means set forth above have been used.

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means described above.

Learn more: [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, 2000](#)



**Informal employment** – Working arrangements that are in practice or by law not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, or entitlement to social protection or other employment guarantees.

# L



**Labor exploitation** – Abuse of people in the workplace for profit. The abuse can be direct and brutal or much less obvious. But its impact is devastating for victims; psychologically, physically, emotionally, and financially.

People are exploited in many ways:

1. Having wages being deducted at source
2. Having wages and paperwork being controlled by another person
3. Being kept in isolation and/or being fed misinformation
4. Being subjected to psychological and physical abuse
5. Being subjected to threats of physical violence or other forms of bullying
6. Being forced to work long hours without breaks
7. Being subjected to poor workplace health and safety, working conditions and an absence of legally required personal protective equipment
8. Being made to use poorly maintained or faulty equipment
9. Where accommodation is provided, being overcharged for cramped and unsanitary living quarters

Learn more: [ILO Indicators on Labor Exploitation](#)

**Labor migration** – Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment. It covers both migrants moving within the country and migrants moving across international borders.

**Labor trafficking** – The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtainment, or solicitude of an individual through the means of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of labor exploitation or forced labor. When a minor is harbored, transported, provided, obtained, or solicited for the purpose of labor exploitation or forced labor, the use of the means described above is not necessary for a situation to be described as “labor trafficking”.

**Lived experience** – In the anti-trafficking movement, lived experience refers to the direct, first-hand experience of human trafficking. It implies a unique and profound knowledge of human trafficking that comes from the direct exposure to this severe violation of human rights.



# M

**Migrant smuggling** – The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident. Illegal entry refers to the fact that the act of crossing borders occurs without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State.

This may be facilitated by the use of fraudulent travel or identity document, meant as any travel or identity document:

1. that has been falsely made or altered in some material way by anyone other than a person or agency lawfully authorized to make or issue the travel or identity document on behalf of a State;
2. that has been improperly issued or obtained through misrepresentation, corruption or duress or in any other unlawful manner; that is being used by a person other than the rightful holder.

Learn more: [Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000](#); [United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000](#)



**Migrant worker** – A person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national.

Migrant workers and their family members are entitled to protection not only when they are actually working in the country of destination, but during the entire migration process, which comprises preparation for migration, departure, transit and the entire period of stay and remunerated activity in the State of employment as well as return to the State of origin or the State of habitual residence.

Migrant workers include:

1. Persons sent or employed by international organizations and agencies or persons sent or employed by a State outside its territory to perform official functions
2. Persons sent or employed by a State or on its behalf outside its territory who participate in development programmes and other cooperation programmes,
3. Persons taking up residence in a State different from their State M of origin
4. Refugees and stateless persons
5. Students and trainees
6. Seafarers and workers on an offshore installation

# O

**Online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC)** – Refers to the use of technology or the internet to facilitate the sexual abuse of a child, including the production and sharing of child sexual abuse material online. It includes a wide range of behaviours and situations. Most commonly this includes grooming, live streaming, producing and sharing child sexual abuse material online, and coercing and blackmailing children for sexual purposes.

Online child sexual exploitation is often thought of as adults abusing children, however more and more child exploitation material is being produced and is being shared via social media by children themselves, who may be or feel pressured, forced, or coerced into taking and sharing these explicit images with their peers or friends.

Online child sexual exploitation is a constantly evolving phenomenon and is shaped by developments in technology. Mobile connectivity, growing internet coverage in developing countries and the development of pay-as-you-go streaming solutions, which provide a high degree of anonymity to the viewer, are furthering the trend in the commercial live-streaming of child sexual abuse.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989](#), and the [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography](#) of 2000.

**Organ trafficking** – Form of trafficking in which individuals are exploited for organs. Although victims often appear to have consented to the removal of their organs, their consent is invalid when deception, fraud or abuse of a position of vulnerability is involved. In such cases, they are considered victims of human trafficking. The traffickers, who are usually part of sophisticated criminal networks, profit by selling these organs to recipients who are unable or unwilling to wait for legal transplants.

In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 5–10 per cent of all transplants worldwide used organs from the black market. However, given the clandestine nature of this criminal phenomenon, actual numbers could be significantly higher.

Traffickers typically operate within complex networks, involving medical specialists, brokers who coordinate logistics, hospital administrators, customs officers, and local recruiters. They connect with their victims using local advertisements, social media, or via direct approaches by recruiters. Victims are typically from poor, uneducated, and vulnerable backgrounds. Many are coerced, deceived, or encouraged to see organ selling as a last resort to improve their dire situations. Although some victims receive limited financial compensation, many receive no money at all and sometimes no post-operative care. Most of the victims are men.



**Organized crime** – Refers to largescale and complex criminal activities carried out by organized criminal groups and aimed at the establishment, supply and exploitation of illegal markets at the expense of society.

# P

**People with lived experience** – People who have direct experience of modern slavery. As such, they bring a unique knowledge and understanding of this issue, including its root causes and its manifestations. They are also uniquely placed to assess the limitations of support services as well as to develop programs aimed at rehabilitating, reintegrating, and empowering people who have experienced modern slavery. While every person shall remain free to determine whether and to what extent they wish to be engaged in the anti-slavery sector, anti-trafficking agencies and organizations are encouraged to seek the expertise of people with lived experience.

**Prison labor (or penal labor)** – Work that is performed by incarcerated and detained people. Not all prison labor is forced labor, but the prison environment poses unique risks of modern slavery because of the inherent power imbalance between prison managers and prisoners and because prisoners have few avenues to demand investigation and redress of abuses committed in prison. Work that is performed voluntarily by prisoners under legitimate conditions can be a valuable activity, but it becomes exploitative when there are elements of coercion, force, and threat of punishment involved.

The line between free prison labor and forced prison labor is difficult to define. The International Labour Organization (ILO) lists several indicators of free prison labor which, if absent, could point to conditions of modern slavery. These include written consent forms on part of the prisoner-laborer, wages and working hours comparable to those of free workers, and standard health and safety measures.

Learn more: [Convention No.29 on Forced Labor](#)

# R

**Reintegration** – A process which enables individuals who have been victims of human trafficking or modern slavery to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and inclusion in civic life.

Social reintegration implies access to public services and infrastructures, including access to health, education, housing, justice, and social protection schemes. Psychosocial reintegration is the reinsertion into personal support networks (friends, relatives, neighbours) and civil society structures (associations, self-help groups and other organizations). Economic reintegration is the process by which a person re-enters economic life and is able sustain a livelihood.

**Reparation** – Set of measures arising from judicial or administrative decisions, designed, and implemented to redress the violation of a right. It can include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

Learn more: [United Nations General Assembly, Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law](#)

**Resilience** – the ability of individuals, households, communities, cities, institutions, systems, and societies to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently, and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning and without compromising longterm prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and wellbeing for all.

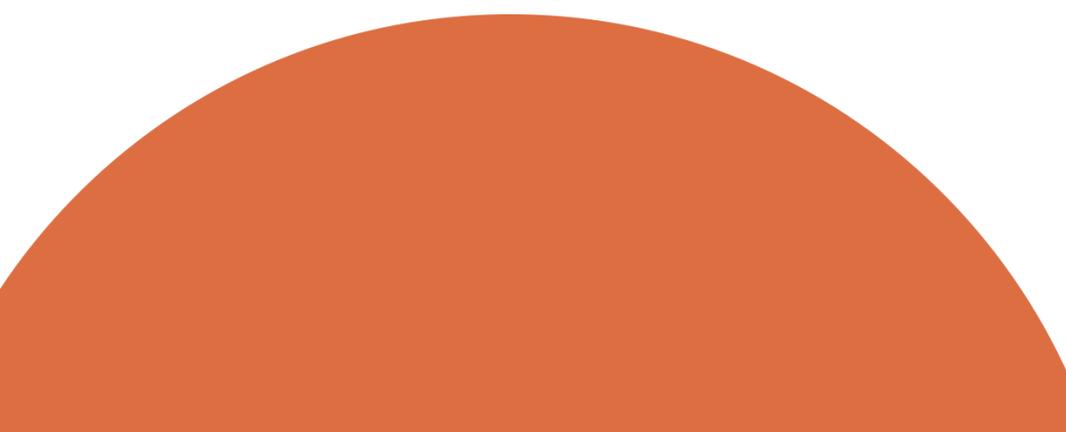
# S



**Seasonal employment** – Form of employment that, by its character, is dependent on seasonal conditions and is performed only during part of the year (for example, fruit pickers in the agricultural sector cleaners in the tourist industry). Although the situation differs from country to country, seasonal workers are often treated less favourably than permanent workers in terms of:

- 1.legal entitlements (for example, dismissal protection)
- 2.benefits offered by the employers (for example, pension entitlements)
- 3.other employment conditions (for example, health and safety, and training)

As such, seasonal workers are more exposed to the risk of exploitation.



**Sex trafficking** – The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtainment, or solicitude of an individual through the means of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of commercial sex. When a minor is harbored, transported, provided, obtained, or solicited for the purpose of commercial sex, the use of the means described above is not necessary for a situation to be described as “sex trafficking”.

**Sexual exploitation** – Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Learn more: [United Nations Secretariat, Secretary-General’s Bulletin Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse \(2003\)](#); [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, 2000](#)

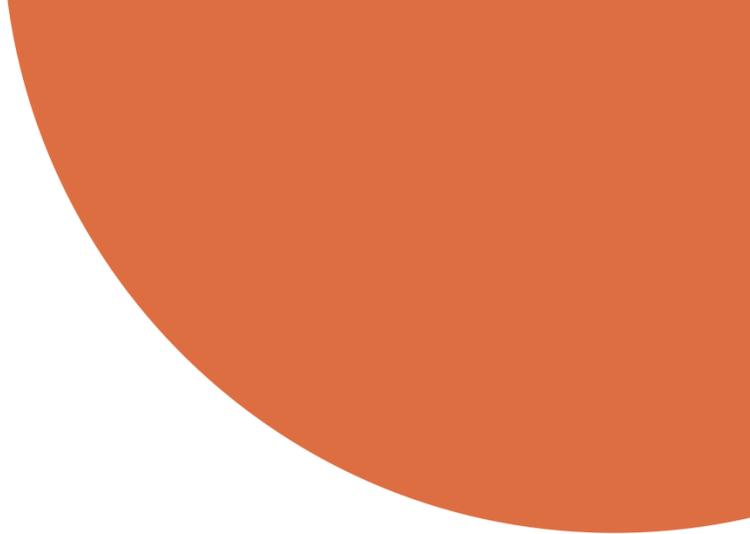


**Slavery** – The status or condition of a person over whom any or all the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. It refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power.

It covers a set of specific legal concepts including forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, slavery and slavery-like practices, and human trafficking. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power.

According to the latest estimates, 50 million people were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2021, an increase of 10 million people since 2016.

Learn more: [Slavery Convention, 1926](#); [Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery \(Slavery Convention\), 1956](#); [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\), 1966](#); [Modern Slavery Index](#)



**Survivor** – A person who has experienced modern slavery or human trafficking and has regained freedom.

Survivor is a term often used interchangeably with victim, however there are some important differences. “Victim” is a term often used in the legal and medical sectors to emphasize that a person has suffered a human rights violation. “Survivor” is the term generally preferred in the psychological and social support sectors to emphasize resiliency and agency.

Importantly, not every survivor of modern slavery or human trafficking wants to identify himself/herself as such. The choice of which term to use to describe their situation belongs exclusively to the individuals affected.

**Survivor advocate** – A person who has survived human trafficking, is actively supporting the anti-trafficking cause, is channeling the voices of survivors, and is working to advance the interests of survivors.

**Survivor leader** – A person who has survived human trafficking, is making an empowered choice to engage in anti-trafficking or other related fields, and is acknowledged – and respected – as a source of knowledge.



**Survivor engagement** – Act of collaborating with survivors in all aspects and stages of anti-trafficking efforts such as:

1. Developing human trafficking training materials or updating existing training content
2. Identifying gaps in existing legal or social support systems and implementing recommendations to better support the identification and protection of victims, prevention of human trafficking, and prosecution of traffickers
3. Serving as expert advisors to develop or update anti-trafficking legislation or policies and practices

In the face of new and evolving challenges, survivor leaders are the most equipped to advise on adapting efforts and ensuring appropriate, effective, and uninterrupted services for victims and survivors. Learning from survivor leaders and integrating their expertise into program and policy development not only improves anti-trafficking efforts but also can help address emerging challenges and longstanding systemic issues that drive vulnerabilities and perpetuate trauma.



T



**Trauma-informed care** – An approach to care that recognizes and responds to the impact of trauma on an individual's mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Trauma-informed care involves creating safe, supportive environments, avoiding re-traumatization, and empowering survivors in their healing process.

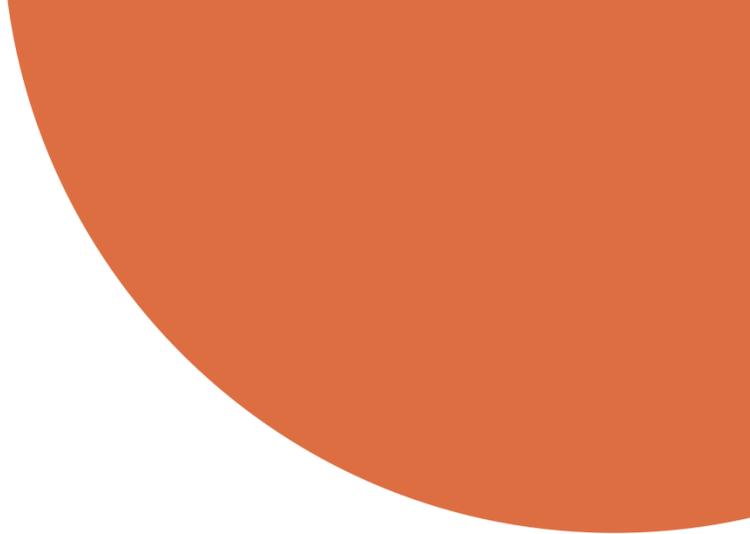
# U

**Unpaid work** – Work that produces goods and services, but which carries no direct remuneration or other form of payment like housework and care work. Unpaid work is unevenly distributed among women and men, with women having a higher participation rate in this unremunerated work.

# V

**Violence against women** – Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

Learn more: [Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women \(1993\)](#)



**Vulnerability** – Limited capacity to avoid, resist, cope with, or recover from harm. This limited capacity is the result of the unique interaction of individual, household, community, and structural characteristics and conditions. More specific factors that are commonly cited as relevant to individual vulnerability to trafficking include gender, membership of a minority group, lack of legal status, lack of registration at birth, and unaccompanied movement.

Learn more: [UNODC, “Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other ‘means’ within the definition of trafficking in persons”, Issue Paper \(2013\)](#)

**Vulnerable group** – Depending on the context, any group or sector of society (such as children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, ethnic or religious minorities, migrants, particularly those who are in an irregular situation, or persons of diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identity that is at higher risk of being subjected to discriminatory practices, violence, social disadvantage, or economic hardship than other groups.

# W



**Worst forms of child labor** – The worst forms of child labor comprise:

- 1.all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- 2.the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- 3.the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- 4.work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Learn more: [Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989](#); [Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour](#)



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**JOIN US IN THE FIGHT AGAINST  
MODERN SLAVERY.**

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