

MODERN SLAVERY

What is Modern Slavery?

Modern Slavery does not just involve low pay, poor working conditions or exploitation. It involves an individual being;

- Forced to work, through mental or physical threat
- Controlled by an 'employer', under the threat of some form of punishment
- Being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'
- Physically forced or compelled or has restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.

Types of Modern Slavery

- Forced labour - any work or services which people are forced to do against their will under the threat of some form punishment.
- Debt bondage - when people borrow some money and are required to work to pay off the debt, then losing control over the conditions of both their employment and the debt.
- Human trafficking - involves people being transported into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion. Purpose of exploitation can range from forced prostitution and forced labour to forced marriage and forced organ removal.
- Descent-based slavery – where people are born into slavery due to belonging to a 'slave class', caste or a group. A child of a mother in slavery is automatically enslaved too.
- Child slavery – defined as the delivery of a child by its parents or a guardian to someone else for the purpose of exploitation. Child slavery can include child trafficking, child soldiers, child marriage and child domestic slavery.
- Forced marriage – when someone is married against their will. Most child marriages can be considered slavery.
- The exploitation of migrant workers in conditions amounting to slavery

Signs of Modern Slavery

- Physical appearance
- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid.
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behaviour.
- Appear withdrawn.
- Avoids eye contact.
- Reluctant to seek help.
- Lacks health care/dental care.
- Appears malnourished.
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture.
- Isolation

- Not allowed to travel on their own.
- Rarely interacts with others.
- Unfamiliar with the area where they live or where they work.
- Seem under the control of others.
- Lack of control
- Has few or no personal possessions.
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account.
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport).
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating).
- May wear the same clothes day in day out or clothes be inappropriate for the work being done.
- Poor living conditions
- Dirty cramped environment.
- Over-crowded accommodation.
- Living and working at the same place.
- Unusual travel times
- Maybe dropped off and collected for work on a regular basis either very early or late at night.
- Signs specific to child victims:
- Absent parent or legal guardian
- A child is being cared for by an adult that is not their parent or legal guardian.
- The quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carer is poor and a reason for concern.
- May not be attending school or have access to medical services
- Multiple children
- A number of unrelated children found at one address.
- Frequent movement of children from a premises.
- Grooming
- Children may not always demonstrate outward signs of distress and may have a 'bond' with those exploiting them and have been groomed to not disclose their abuse – however, they are likely to be very scared and traumatised.
- Identity documents
- Missing, altered or false documentation is common.
- Missing children
- Children who come into contact with authorities often disappear and are re-trafficked within the country or overseas

How does this apply to Islamic Relief?

Islamic Relief Worldwide is a registered charity and company registered in the United Kingdom. In 2015 the Modern Slavery Act required business over a certain size (£36 million annual turnover) to disclose each year what action they have taken to ensure there is no modern slavery in their business or supply chains. If an organisation does not prepare a statement, the Secretary of State can apply for an injunction to force compliance. If an organisation still refuses to comply they will be deemed to be in contempt of a court order, which is punishable by an unlimited fine.

In the course of conducting our day to day business and the delivery of our projects and relief efforts globally, we procure many products and services from many different sources or suppliers (known as a supply chain)

How can slavery occur in the supply chain?

There can be evidence of slavery in different stages of a supply chain, from the production of raw materials, to the manufacturing of goods and even at the final stage, when a product reaches the market.

How does a supply chain work?

Typically a final product purchased has passed through a long chain of producers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers who have all participated in its production, delivery and sale. It can therefore be very difficult to track a component of an end product back to a particular producer, for example cotton in a T-shirt back to a particular cotton farm. For this reason it is not always possible to certify that a product has or has not been produced using slavery. However, the way in which companies operate can affect the likelihood of slavery being a part of the final product. If a brand gives its supplier a large order with a short turnaround time beyond the suppliers' capacity, this could increase the risk of slavery as the supplier may subcontract work to factories or workers that are not regulated by the same standards as the supplier. Company buyers may negotiate such low prices that suppliers are forced to push down the price it pays for the materials it needs, which can have a knock-on effect on those involved in the production of raw materials, increasing the likelihood of the use of forced labour.

Islamic Relief Worldwide need to ensure that in our own operations and across our whole supply chain, we are not inadvertently supporting slavery. This can prove very challenging in the global context, as the Governments in the countries in which we work, have different labour laws and standards and may not conduct checks on working conditions.

To find out more about the steps Islamic Relief Worldwide are taking please see our Modern Slavery Statement.

If you have any concerns relating to someone who may be affected by Modern Slavery in the course of carrying out your role within the organisation, please contact whistleblowing@irworldwide.org