

# Press release: Home Office awards millions to help tackle worldwide slavery

Projects to protect vulnerable girls from trafficking in Ethiopia and improve care standards for victims of modern slavery in Nepal are among those receiving part of a £4 million funding boost from the Home Office.

The Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF), which supports international projects to trial innovative ways of stopping modern slavery, has awarded up to £800,000 each to projects across the world.

The first 6 projects which have been chosen for funding are:

- Anti-Slavery International – to improve the working conditions of migrants working in Mauritius
- United Nations University – to develop an online platform to gather global data to support modern slavery policy development
- Stronger Together – to run workshops to raise awareness of modern slavery in South Africa
- The Freedom Fund – will work in India and Nepal to enhance victim care of frontline workers
- Retrak – provides support and education to vulnerable girls in Ethiopia who have been victims of, or are at risk of, child sexual exploitation or domestic servitude
- Ethical Trading Initiative – will help inform workers in Malaysia about their rights and provide access to remedy where they have suffered abuse

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins said:

Human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation are sadly not evils of the past, but are with us today. The government is leading the way through its work to end the horrors of modern slavery across the globe.

The projects being funded today will help protect some of the most vulnerable people on the planet and encourage more innovative approaches to identifying victims and pursuing those who would exploit them.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Modern slavery is one of the most heinous crimes imaginable. It impacts on some of the most vulnerable people in the world, but also funds organised crime at home in the UK.

UK aid will support the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund to trial new ways to stop this crime. By working across government and with businesses to end trafficking, we will create a safer and more prosperous world for us all.

This is the aid budget working twice as hard – both around the world and helping here at home too.

Lynnette Kay, Country Director for Ethiopia at Retrak, said:

We are pleased to be able to continue our work to support child victims of domestic exploitation in Ethiopia. We support the girls to regain self-esteem, to return to their families and to develop skills to resume education.

We will extend our innovative approach of bringing together employers and domestic workers to ensure domestic work is legal and respects workers' rights. The Modern Slavery Innovation Fund grant focuses attention on a problem that is largely invisible and a cultural blindspot.

Jasmine O'Connor, CEO of Anti-Slavery International, said:

With the UK Home Office Modern Slavery Innovation Fund grant, we aim to build networks of support that will help migrant workers ensure decent working conditions and provide safe mechanisms to raise grievances. Thanks to this work, workers migrating to Mauritius will be better equipped with valuable practical knowledge about their rights and protected against exploitative practices.

We're looking forward to working with retail brands, their Mauritian suppliers, local unions and authorities to fully protect migrant workers from exploitation.

Dr James Cockayne, director of the Centre for Policy Research at United Nations University, said:

United Nations University is honoured to receive the support of the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund.

This funding will support Delta 8.7, the global online knowledge platform on ending modern slavery by 2030 – Target 8.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. With this valuable funding we will use computational science and artificial intelligence to accelerate understanding of what works, and creative data visualisation, new languages and direct outreach to policy actors around the globe to encourage them to act on that

understanding.

Jantine Werdmuller von Elgg, managing director at Stronger Together, said:

Stronger Together are delighted to have been awarded funding by the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund to build on and expand our innovative collaborative programme tackling forced labour in South Africa's agricultural supply chains.

Wine, fruit and other products grown and produced by people in South Africa are consumed by people around the world. Our programme in collaboration with our local partners supports responsible businesses across the global supply chains and key stakeholders in South Africa to play the necessary and critical role in reducing the vulnerability of those working in their businesses and supply chains, by providing them with the straightforward guidance, training, tools and opportunity for dialogue and collaboration they need.

Owain Johnstone, Modern Slavery Adviser at Ethical Trading Initiative, said:

ETI is very grateful for the award which will help vulnerable migrant workers in Malaysia to access support and remedy via a new online platform. These workers are often far from home, do not speak the local language, do not know their rights, and are highly vulnerable to exploitation, including modern slavery.

ETI will also work with global businesses in their supply chains worldwide so that they are able to improve working conditions for migrant workers and provide remedy for workers where they have suffered abuse.

Nick Grono, CEO of the Freedom Fund, said:

Together with our frontline partners, we are providing essential support to victims of child labour, early marriage, forced labour, debt bondage and sex trafficking in high-prevalence areas of India and elsewhere.

This grant will enable us to develop and roll out a highly innovative, victim-centred joint service delivery model that combines the most effective anti-slavery approaches with international social care best practice. It will allow groups of grassroots organisations, as well as government agencies, to co-ordinate more effectively and provide greatly improved personalised care to victims and their families.

The funding marks the second phase of the fund and will run until 2021. The first phase of the fund totalled £6 million and supported 10 projects between Spring 2017 and March 2019.

Schemes supported in phase one included:

- projects to raise awareness of trafficking, which reached more than 21,000 across Nigeria and the Philippines and 16,000 in Vietnam
- a project to support more than 200 girls who experienced or were at risk of exploitation received health and educational support in Ethiopia
- hundreds of businesses in South Africa committed to take steps to tackle forced labour in their supply chains

This builds on the work the government is doing internationally to lead the fight against modern slavery. The government has committed a total of £200 million in UK aid to combat modern slavery, of which the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund is just one part.

Through the £33.5 million Modern Slavery Fund, managed by the Home Office, the government is focusing on high risk countries from where we know victims are regularly trafficked to the UK.

We have committed £5 million to our programme in Nigeria, £3 million in Vietnam, and £2 million in Albania. This money complements work being done within the UK and will help to catch offenders, support victims and stop people falling into slavery in the first place.