

Press release: UK aid to stop modern slavery in Nigeria

- UK aid will help tackle the root causes of dangerous migration and modern slavery in Edo state, the epicentre of Nigeria's human trafficking business.
- World-class British expertise will reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking through targeted public information campaigns and engagement with young people at schools and universities
- UK support to back use of former slavery victims as myth-busters, to help counter false promises that tempt people to place their lives in the hands of traffickers.

UK aid will protect thousands of vulnerable men, women and children in Nigeria from modern slavery and unsafe migration through innovative prevention work such as public information campaigns, awareness raising at schools and universities, and new research.

Nigeria's Edo State is a focal point of the human trafficking business, and is also a key source location for trafficking into the UK.

This UK aid package will help stamp out the root causes of dangerous migration through enhanced prevention work.

British expertise will:

- help reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking and unsafe migration through targeted public information campaigns in Edo State. UK government communication specialists will design and lead this in partnership with the Nigerian anti-trafficking police.
- boost engagement with young people at schools and universities to change the aspirations of potential victims
- commission innovative research on what works to prevent dangerous migration attempts
- support NGOs who use former slavery victims to counter false myths that tempt people towards the traffickers.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

It is a necessity that we step up and stamp out modern slavery for good. I am appalled that this shameful stain on our global conscience still exists in the 21st century.

I am proud UK support is driving the charge in tackling the root causes of dangerous migration to prevent vulnerable men, women and children from becoming targeted by traffickers or attempting treacherous journeys again. The benefits of this will be far reaching- preventing regional instability and helping us tackle slavery here in the UK.

Working in partnership with Edo State, a critical trafficking hotspot, this UK aid will shape scalable, cost-effective interventions that tackle the key drivers of modern slavery and unsafe migration attempts. Changing the aspirations of potential victims and migrants in a targeted and tailored way will be essential to achieving this. This is why UK government communication specialists will design and lead a new public information campaign to do just that, in partnership with the Nigerian anti-trafficking police.

By making it worthwhile for people to stay in their home states and supporting NGOs who use former slavery victims to counter false myths that tempt people towards the traffickers, this work will help eradicate these crimes for good.

The UK is at the forefront of the global fight against modern slavery, leading the global Call to Action to end this crime at the UN General Assembly last year, which over 60 countries have now signed.

In 2016 there were over 40 million estimated slavery victims and the UK is committed to eradicating this global scourge, which adds significant costs to the UK economy. Behind these numbers are real people subjected to brutal exploitation every single day.

Notes to editors

- The UK is investing a further £6 million in the 'Stamping Out Slavery' in Nigeria (SOSIN) programme, taking its total value to £10 million.
- The programme will support NGOs and Nigerian government agencies to strengthen their slavery prevention work. Working in partnership with Edo State, UK aid will enhance slavery prevention schemes through targeted public information campaigns, education programmes and innovative research. This will shape scalable, cost-effective interventions by NGOs and the government to tackle the root cause of modern slavery.
- This announcement forms part of the doubling of UK development spending (Official Development Assistance) on anti-slavery activities to £150m, announced by the Prime Minister at the UN General Assembly last year.
- The UK is increasing total migration and modern slavery funding in Nigeria to £40.5 million. This prevention programme will complement other Home Office and Foreign Office programmes focused on law enforcement cooperation and tackling the serious organised crime behind people trafficking.
- Modern day slavery costs the UK £4.3 billion a year, in terms of policing at home and abroad, and victim care and rehabilitation. Nigeria is estimated to have over 1.3 million slaves and in 2017 Nigerian nationals were the fifth largest group of victims referred to the UK's national referral mechanism.

The SOSIN project will work by:

- supporting government prevention schemes such as targeted public information, social development and education programmes, and developing new research and data to inform better responses.

- looking at existing anti-slavery outreach in schools and universities and recommend changes in curriculum, messaging or approach, and fund pilots to test and find what works.
- a new public information campaign, designed and led by UK government communication specialists to test new approaches to changing the aspirations of potential victims and migrants, in partnership with the Nigerian anti-trafficking police.
- piloting new prevention interventions, such as using networks of returned victims to counteract false information from traffickers among vulnerable groups, through NGOs that are working in this area.
- doing high-quality research and evidence gathering to share lessons globally on what works.