

Stopping forced labour and slavery-like practices

The ILO strategy

According to ILO's most recent global estimate, there are at least 20.9 million victims of forced labour, trafficking and slavery in the world today. About 90 per cent of today's forced labour is exacted in the private economy, primarily in labour intensive industries such as manufacturing, agriculture and food processing, fishing, domestic work and construction. While global interest in combating forced labour has grown exponentially in recent years, responses still fall far short of addressing the full scale and scope of the problem.

Our vision is that no person, of any age, race, origin or religion, anywhere, spends a day of his or her life working under duress and suffering degrading or inhuman treatment.

Forced labour affects the most vulnerable and least protected people, perpetuating a vicious cycle of poverty and dependency. Women, low-skilled migrant workers, children, indigenous peoples and other groups suffering discrimination on different grounds are disproportionately affected. ILO's strategy seeks to address root causes of forced labour both by empowering vulnerable people to resist coercion at work and by addressing the

factors that allow unscrupulous employers to profit from their exploitation. Eliminating forced labour is therefore an important contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The overall goal of ILO's strategy is a global reduction in forced labour and related practices of at least 30 per cent by 2015, equivalent to some 6 million fewer people trapped in work against their free will. In order to successfully achieve these goals, the ILO would require an annual allocation of 15 million US\$.

Our priorities (2012-2015)



Research and knowledge management

- To set up a global slavery observatory with the most up-to-date statistical information
- To publish innovative research on forced labour, with a focus on economics



Elimination of forced labour from global value chains

- To support global dialogue and advocacy
- To develop industry specific initiatives in partnership with the private sector



Implementation of country-based interventions

- To strengthen national capacities to empower potential victims, prevent and prosecute forced labour in line with ILO and other standards
- To document lessons learned and measure impact

Research and knowledge management

- 🌐 Global Slavery Observatory (GSO): The objectives are to create a “clearing house” for data on forced labour, slavery and trafficking, to facilitate collaboration among researchers and to generate reliable statistics on the prevalence of forced labour. This will also include documentation on laws and policies. Since 2005, ILO has pioneered survey techniques to measure forced labour; it is therefore uniquely placed to lead this effort with other key partners. Ultimately, the GSO can be used to inform investment decisions and to measure the impact of action against forced labour by monitoring the change in prevalence across countries and regions. Most importantly, it will enable evidence-based policy making at country level.
- 🌐 Research on forced labour: ILO was the first organization to publish global figures on the profits and “opportunity costs” of forced labour in 2005 and 2009 respectively. Based on the new global estimate, a new report will be published in 2013 to highlight economic determinants of forced labour, profits and economic incentives. This research will form the basis for future action under the second strategic priority related to global value chains.

Elimination of forced labour from global value chains

- 🌐 Global dialogue and advocacy: ILO’s expertise on economic dynamics in industries that are particularly vulnerable to forced labour will be leveraged to develop effective strategies against forced labour in global value chains, with priority given to agriculture and food processing, fishing, manufacturing (textiles and garments, electronics), natural resource extraction (palm oil, mining), and domestic work in international care chains. Current priorities are to promote ratification of the new ILO Convention 189 to protect domestic workers and to facilitate global dialogue to eliminate forced labour in the fishing industry.
- 🌐 Sector initiatives: ILO was among the first organisations to highlight the important role of labour brokers in global value chains where forced labour is most prevalent. It has developed a successful intervention model to eliminate often informal and exploitative labour recruitment practices in partnership with the private sector and other stakeholders. Partnerships have also been established with companies in the garment, food processing and other sectors with the aim of facilitating policy change at company and industry level, providing training and monitoring results. National employers’ and workers’ organisations are important partners in this process.

Implementation of country-based interventions

- 🌐 Country-based programmes: Since early 2000, ILO has successfully implemented more than 60 field based projects against forced labour, targeting single countries or an entire region. A specific feature of ILO programmes is the combination of preventive and law enforcement measures. Through these projects, ILO has addressed bonded labour in South Asia, debt bondage in Latin America, vestiges of slavery in West Africa, and human trafficking in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Country priorities for this biennium (2012-13) are listed below. The focus of most programmes is the prevention of forced labour in the informal economy.
- 🌐 Impact assessment: ILO is further strengthening methodologies to monitor and evaluate the impact of anti-forced labour interventions. Lessons learned (including those from failures) will be documented and made widely accessible.

What constitutes progress against forced labour at country level?

- 🌐 Convention No. 29 or 105 is ratified or the ILO supervisory bodies have noted with satisfaction or interest progress in the application of the relevant Conventions.
- 🌐 A new or modified national law, policy, or plan of action to eliminate forced labour is adopted, or forced labour elimination is included as priority of national development policy, or an institutional structure is established to lead or coordinate action against forced labour.
- 🌐 There is a documented increase in the number of prosecutions and convictions of persons exacting forced labour.
- 🌐 Systems are established or strengthened to allow former victims of forced labour, including of human trafficking, to access assistance appropriate to their needs.
- 🌐 Systems are established or strengthened to provide up-to-date sex-disaggregated data and information on forced labour and responses to it.

Our target countries (2012-2013)

The broad parameters of ILO's cooperation with its member States are laid out in Decent Work Country Programmes which are agreed between the ILO, Government (Ministry of Labour), workers' and employers' organisations. Most Decent Work Country Programmes refer to the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work, including the elimination of forced labour, while some have specific forced labour or trafficking objectives. The following "target" countries for the elimination of forced labour have been identified for the current biennium (2012-2013). "Pipeline" countries are those where results are expected in future biennia.

Asia: China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Viet Nam (Afghanistan in pipeline)

Africa: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Zambia (Mauritania and Niger in pipeline)

Latin America: Bolivia, Brazil, Peru (Guatemala and Paraguay in pipeline)

Middle East: Jordan, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Lebanon in pipeline)

The ILO also supports its constituents in EU member States, the Commonwealth of Independent States and a number of other countries not specifically highlighted above.

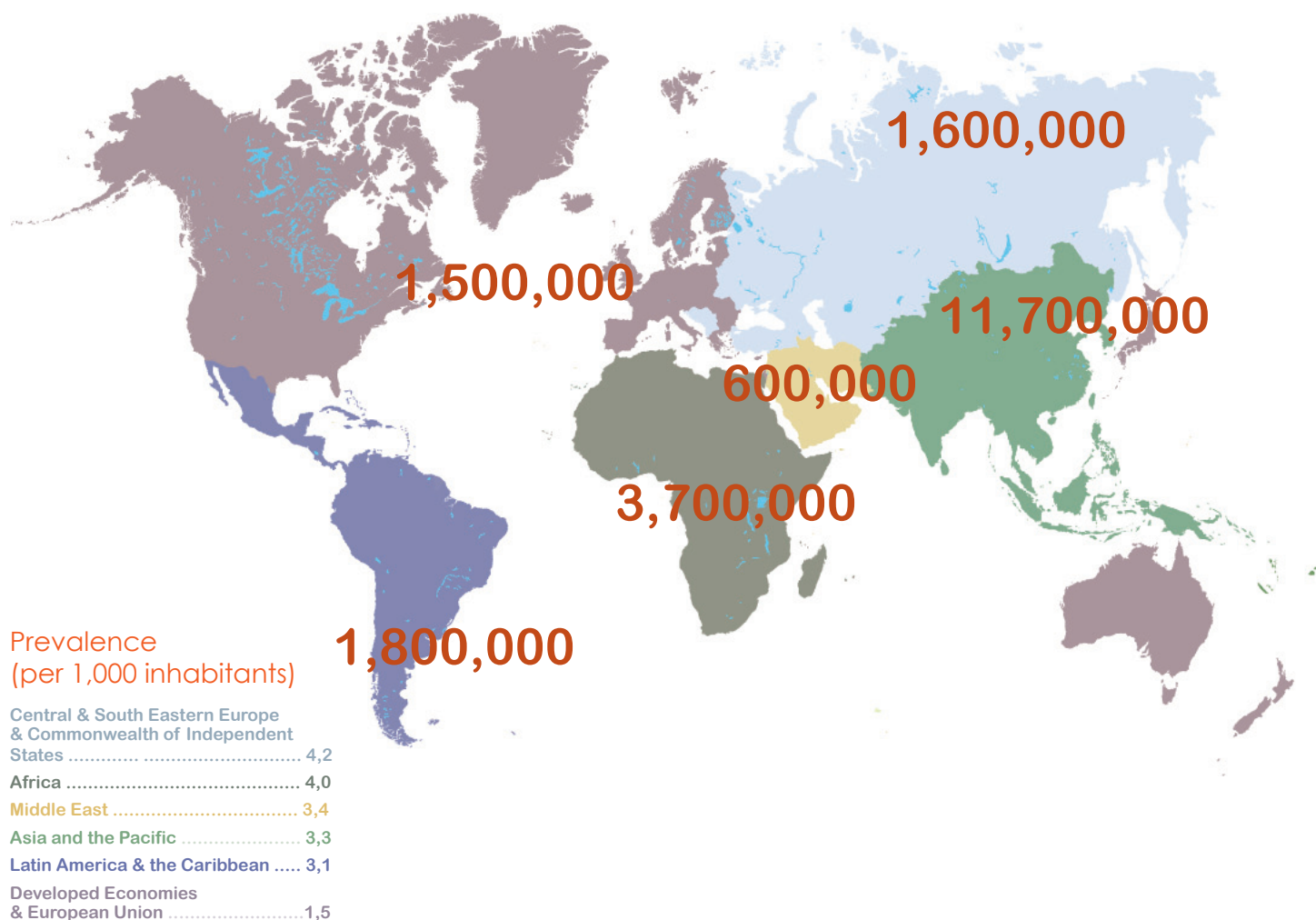
ILO's competitive advantage

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the UN specialized agency which promotes decent work, social justice and labour rights. Its tripartite constituency brings the added value of dialogue between representatives of employers, workers and governments on key labour and employment issues. In 2001, ILO's Governing Body established the Special Action Program to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL) with the mandate to spearhead activities against forced labour and human trafficking, contribute to the global knowledge base, and reinforce the capacity of ILO constituents and others to eliminate forced labour. Since then, SAP-FL has provided technical support through more than 60 field projects, thereby developing effective ways to prevent and prosecute forced labour and human trafficking, and assist victims, in partnership with national stakeholders. It has developed a range of practical products, including handbooks and training tools for business, legislators, judges and labour inspectors; and e-learning modules for law enforcement on the identification and investigation of forced labour cases. In 2005 and 2012, SAP-FL produced global estimates of forced labour and trafficking and through this process, developed and implemented a methodology using indicators to measure forced labour at national level.

Partnerships

In 2005, the ILO launched a 'Global Alliance against Forced Labour' that focuses on strengthening partnerships and increasing the role of labour market institutions to effectively address forced labour. For this purpose, strategic partnerships were established with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE). These leverage the power, influence and strategic vision of a global network of 151 national employers' organizations and of national trade unions representing 175 million workers in 151 countries and territories. ILO is an active member of the UN Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking (ICAT), which was set up by the UN General Assembly in 2006, and the UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking (UN.GIFT). Through these coordination mechanisms, ILO provides expert input to global policy debates and participates in joint programmes.

ILO 2012 Global estimate of forced labour



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