

# UNDERSTANDING MODERN SLAVERY



## WHAT IS MODERN SLAVERY?

Modern slavery refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, or abuse of power. It is a hidden crime that affects every country in the world. Modern slavery has been found in many industries, including garment manufacturing, mining, and agriculture, and in many contexts, from private homes to settlements for internally displaced people and refugees. Modern slavery impacts on all of us, from the food we consume to the goods we purchase. It is everybody's responsibility to address and eliminate this crime where it occurs.

Modern slavery is an umbrella term and includes:

- human trafficking
- slavery and slavery-like practices
- forced labour
- debt bondage
- worst forms of child labour
- forced marriage

The International Labour Organization and Walk Free estimated that 40.3 million people were victims of modern slavery in 2016.

24.9 million of these individuals were in forced labour.

One in four victims were children.

Women and girls accounted for 71 per cent of modern slavery victims.

For further information visit,  
[www.walkfree.org](http://www.walkfree.org)



*Photo credit: John Salvino*

# DEFINITIONS OF MODERN SLAVERY

## Human trafficking:

Defined by the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol as involving recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons:

- by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion
- with the intent of exploiting that person for sexual exploitation, forced labour, or slavery, among others forms.

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 threat, use of force or, coercion.

## Slavery and slavery-like practices:

Defined in the 1926 Slavery Convention as the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. In a later treaty, states agreed that there are also certain “slavery-like practices”: debt bondage, forced or servile marriage, sale or exploitation of children (including in armed conflict), and descent-based slavery.

## Forced labour:

All work or service that is conducted under menace of penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily.

## Debt bondage:

Status or condition where one person has pledged their labour or services (or that of someone under their control), in circumstances where the fair value of that labour or service is not reasonably applied to reducing the debt or length of debt, or the length and nature of the service is not limited or defined.

## Worst forms of child labour:

Drawing on the 1999 Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour, it includes situations where children are:

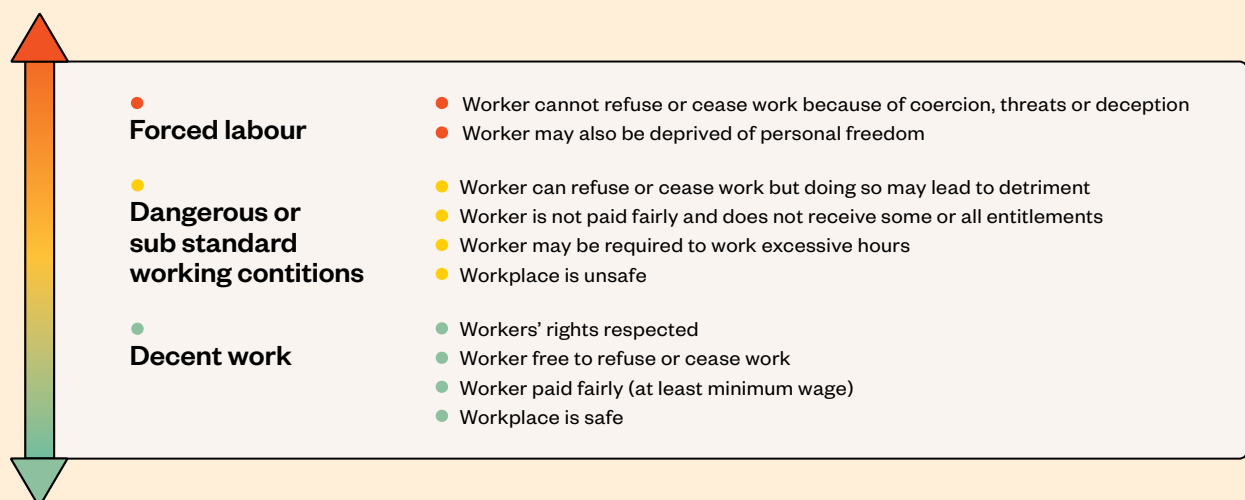
- exploited through slavery or slavery-like practices, including forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict
- used, procured, or offered for prostitution
- used, procured, or offered for illicit activities including production and trafficking of drug
- engaged in hazardous work which may harm their health, safety or morals

## Forced marriage:

Any situation where persons, regardless of age, have been forced to marry without their consent.

## LEARN MORE: WHERE DOES FORCED LABOUR FIT?

Forced labour happens at the most extreme end of a spectrum that ranges from decent work to serious criminal exploitation.



For more detail see:

- Minderoo Foundation, [Global Slavery Index 2018](#)
- International Labour Organisation and Walk Free Foundation 2017, [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery](#).

**[WALKFREE.ORG](https://www.walkfree.org)**