



MILKEN INSTITUTE

The Power of Ideas

2017

Insights for Building
Meaningful Lives

Jean Baderschneider

Chief Executive Officer
Global Fund to End Modern Slavery



“Mobilizing \$70+ trillion of purchasing power globally could level the playing field and be key to taking this fight right to the traffickers.”

Modern Day Slavery: A Crime of Opportunity

Modern slavery is a violent crime of economic opportunity. It impacts millions of victims worldwide, erodes economies and communities, and permeates global supply chains.

While data and methodologies are still developing to understand the scale, scope, and nature of modern day slavery, current estimates range from 21 to 46 million people enslaved globally. While these numbers are dramatic, they undoubtedly underestimate the extent of this hidden crime. They also fail to describe the true nature of slavery, extending across forced labor, trafficking, bonded labor, and sexual exploitation.

What we do know, however, is that slavery exists in virtually every country in the world despite the fact that legislation prohibiting slavery exists in those same countries. Slavery also permeates local, regional, and global supply chains. In local markets, we find horrific examples of slavery (e.g., brick kilns). At the regional

level, we see egregious sector-wide slavery (e.g., fishing). And, at the global level we find slavery buried in deep and opaque supply chains of multi-national corporations.

It is also increasingly clear that modern slavery is at the intersection of organized crime, illegal migration, national security, and economic disparity. And, if we tackle this crime head on we will have a reverberating impact: When supply chains are slavery-free it equalizes the market. When children are not forced to work, they remain in school, increasing community capacity and contributing to the formal economy. When people are not exploited as commodities without rights, organized crime is weakened and security is strengthened. There is a clear case for action on both humanitarian and economic grounds.

And make no mistake. The victims are real. It's easy to be overwhelmed by the blur of statistics and move on with our day-to-day lives. But few of us could look into

Jean Baderschneider

the eyes of a five-year-old boy sold into forced labor in a factory in Bangladesh, a 13-year-old girl sold into sexual slavery in Oklahoma, a fisherman trapped at sea for years without hope of seeing his family again, and not be compelled to act. So what's stopping us? There are no easy answers and the hurdles are significant.

Limited resources seriously constrain efforts to end slavery. It has not been a fair fight, not even close. Consider that trafficking generates an estimated \$150 billion in exploiter profits compared to approximately \$125 million in overseas aid spent by governments to combat it. Lack of global coordination makes it easier for traffickers to pivot to new vulnerable populations whenever we address slavery in a specific location, resulting in displacement.

Poor data and limited data sharing exacerbate the problem of collaborating across borders and sectors. It also hinders the ability to assess impact through robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

Limited use of technology, digital tools, and analytics has made it difficult to stay ahead of traffickers. Systems mapping, big data analytics, geospatial mapping, and online search tools are examples of tools that may allow us to better understand, interdict, and crush slavery.

Limited private-sector leadership misses opportunities to sustainably eliminate forced labor from supply chains. There is a need to create market-based solutions, risk assessment tools, and mitigation processes in partnership with businesses. Mobilizing \$70+ trillion of purchasing power globally could level the playing field and be key to taking this fight right to the traffickers.

Despite the challenges, this problem is not hopeless! We can forge a path forward through a bold public-private partnership (P3) that secures unprecedented contributions from governments, individuals, and corporations; fosters collaboration by knitting together partners and initiatives across borders and regions; ensures clear accountabilities and action through development of country co-funded and co-owned Anti-Slavery National Plans; and robustly determines what programs are effective, scaling those with the highest ROIs.

Key to success will be a systematic, transformational approach that tackles the

issue from all sides:

- Effective Law Enforcement: ending impunity through effective criminalization;
- Business Engagement: eliminating modern day slavery from supply chains; and
- Sustaining Freedom: ensuring survivor reintegration and economic opportunity.

Pulling all these efforts together into a coherent global strategy will be the differentiator.

Modern slavery exploits and degrades—it robs children, teenagers, mothers, and fathers—of dreams and hope, joy and laughter, and the basics of everyday survival. Modern slavery diminishes humanity. It steals lives. We must end modern slavery, not because we need a life of purpose and this cause gives us a noble objective. Rather, we must end modern slavery because everyone should have the opportunity to experience a life of meaning.