

19 April 2023

H.E. António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, NY, 10017
USA

Walk Free Communication on Engagement: April 2021 to April 2023.

Dear Secretary-General,

I am pleased to confirm that Walk Free reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe actions that Walk Free has taken in support of the Ten Principles.

We continue to work alongside United Nations agencies in our mission to eradicate modern-day slavery in all its forms. Last year, Walk Free partnered with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to release the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery (GEMS) to shine a light on a human rights abuse that affects more than 50 million people world-wide. This year we are preparing for the launch of the Global Slavery Index, the largest and most comprehensive data set on global modern slavery at a country level.

We are proud to submit this to the United Nations Global Compact and remain committed to continuing to support the Global Compact and its principles.

Please let us know if you need any further information. Thank you for your time.

In solidarity,



Grace Forrest
Co-Founder
Walk Free

PART II. Description of Actions

2022 Annual Report [here](#).

2021 Annual Report [here](#).

WALK FREE

Walk Free is an international human rights group working to accelerate the end of all forms of modern slavery. This is our mountaintop, and our team is resolute that we must not rest until we have ushered in a shift in public demand that those in power must decisively act to prevent the conditions that enable modern slavery to exist. Walk Free produces the Global Slavery Index and other world-leading research which provide an evidence base for our advocacy and engagement with business, investors, governments, and faith to drive better practices.



Walk Free's mountaintop — to eradicate modern slavery in all its forms — requires systemic change to entrenched practices and business supply chains, as well as global legislative reform. A strategic, targeted agenda of action has been developed to drive Walk Free, and its partners, towards this ambitious goal.

SHIFTING POWER TO SURVIVORS

Shifting power to survivors of modern slavery is a critical part of the Walk Free strategy. We're proud to collaborate with Survivor Alliance to expand our Lived Experience Expert Groups to conduct advocacy based on the findings of the Global Slavery Index. Survivor Alliance, with Walk Free support, will also leverage the momentum from the recent World Congress — the largest global convening of survivors — to develop an action plan for survivors to become leaders of the movement in the next decade.



*We harness the global power of business, governments, and faith leaders
in our work.*

BUSINESS

With the Stock Exchange of Thailand, Walk Free developed guidance, and an online tool for Thai businesses to assess their progress in tackling modern slavery in their operations and those of their suppliers. Walk Free also worked with investment groups, including Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking Asia Pacific, who are increasingly demanding that businesses demonstrate ethical business practices.

Elsewhere, Walk Free partnered with WikiRate to assess the compliance of Australian and UK fashion businesses with modern slavery legislation in their countries. The results showed many failed to comply with the legislation and those who did often treated it as a box-ticking exercise. Given the fashion industry's reputation for exploiting workers, the report — part of Walk Free's Beyond Compliance series — proves legislation must be strengthened to include due diligence, remediation, and penalties for non-compliance.

GOVERNMENT

At the last Australian federal election, Walk Free successfully lobbied the incoming government to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act. Those laws, for which Walk Free advocated in 2018, are up for a three-year review, and founding director Grace Forrest met new Foreign Minister, Penny Wong, to push for changes to the legislation, as well as government policy to fight slavery in Australia — and globally — via international diplomatic efforts.

In New Zealand, modern slavery laws are on the legislative agenda thanks to an advocacy partnership between Walk Free, Trade Aid, World Vision, and more than 100 businesses. Walk Free is also a member of the leadership advisory group to the New Zealand government and looks forward to the legislation being passed by parliament.

FAITH

Walk Free's faith-based program, the Global Freedom Network (GFN), launched the Faith for Freedom App, a world-first smartphone app designed to help faith leaders tackle modern slavery. The app was developed in collaboration with faith leaders and has been launched in six countries in Africa (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa) with plans to expand globally.



GFN also held a series of seminars at a two-day event at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, where religious leaders and frontline workers came together in person and online to discuss faith's role in tackling modern slavery. The event was part of GFN's work bringing faith leaders together in a coalition against modern slavery and providing a platform to discuss how to tackle modern slavery in their communities and congregations.

Walk Free's key projects and collaborations include:

GLOBAL ESTIMATES OF MODERN SLAVERY (GEMS)

Walk Free proudly worked alongside the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration to create the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery (GEMS), the world's most trusted measurement of this human rights abuse. The 2022 GEMS report highlights the impact of climate change, COVID-19 and conflict on vulnerability to modern slavery. The



data also underpins Walk Free's flagship report, the Global Slavery Index, which assesses prevalence, vulnerability and government responses at a national level. The next edition of the Global Slavery Index will be released in May 2023.

GEMS explainer video [here](#).

Global Estimates of Modern Slavery - [here](#).

FREEDOM FUND

Walk Free continues to scale its investment for frontline interventions, informed by its research identifying high-risk locations and understanding of what works. Walk Free confirmed an additional US\$13 million to Freedom Fund over the next five years. With this funding, Freedom Fund will expand its hotspot model to Bangladesh, Brazil and West Africa, shift power to survivors, women, and other under-represented groups, and equip the Freedom Fund and its partners for deep systems change, long-term growth, and exponential impact. To date, the Freedom Fund has impacted over 30,767 lives, invested over US\$67.9 million, and supported nearly 12,414 community groups.

OTHER ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING

Our Founding Director Grace Forrest used a series of keynote speeches, media interviews and industry events to highlight the prevalence of modern slavery in fashion supply chains and call for action by both the industry and consumers to identify, eradicate and demand the end of forced labour by garment workers.

Walk Free appeared at a Federal parliamentary inquiry into the Government's strategy on and response to forced marriage in Australia, our region, and overseas. Among the recommendations in their detailed submission, Ms Forrest and Walk Free's then head of government advocacy Lisa Singh called on Australia to build human rights clauses into trade agreements.

Despite the cancellation of CHOGM because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Walk Free convened ambassadors, consulate, and foreign affairs officials from dozens of Commonwealth nations to drive cooperation and collaboration against modern slavery.



The meetings, held in London and Canberra, coincided with the launch of Eradicating Modern Slavery, a report assessing Commonwealth nations' progress on achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 8.7.

PART III. Measurement of Outcomes

Expertise provided by Walk Free has furthered the aims of the Global Compact Local Network in Australia and around the world. This includes:

- Collaborating with the Australian Government to promote understanding of the Australian Modern Slavery Act, its purpose, and key requirements.
- Continued engagement with the private sector to drive stronger business engagement with modern slavery through a range of measures, including the promotion and implementation of humane, non-abusive labour practices throughout their supply chains.
- Improving understanding of the scale, forms, risks of, and responses to modern slavery through dissemination of findings from quality research to a wide variety of audiences.
- Several partnerships with UN organisations, civil society, business, and faith networks have been entered into, or extended, with the mutual goal of advancing the UN Global Compact principles – this includes Walk Free/Minderoo Foundation recently being granted UN Department of Global Communications Association.

The broader achievements under the various pillars of Walk Free include:

Academic/Research

- Publication of the 2022 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery in partnership with the leading UN organisations in the space – the ILO and IOM, through Alliance 8.7.
- A suite of high-quality publications that have allowed us to drive forward engagement with an expanded network of civil society, business and governments.
- Active participation in conferences, working groups, seminars, and at various other fora across the world in order to raise-awareness and push the field towards stronger measures, deepened understanding and stronger responses.

A snapshot of some of these events is listed below (Note: asterisk denotes events hosted or co-hosted by Walk Free):

Date held	Location	Specific Event	Details
Mar 2023	Online	*Release of the No Escape report	Release of the No Escape report, alongside the International Organization for Migration and the International Labour Organization, assessing the relationship between modern slavery and internal displacement in Nigeria, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Jan 2023	Online	*Submission to inform Australia's New International Development Policy	A submission detailing policy and program recommendations to incorporate modern slavery in the New International Development Policy.
Nov 2022	Online	Monitoring and Evaluation of Trafficking in Persons Webinar	A webinar exploring the key findings and methodology of the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery alongside the International Labour Organization.
Dec 2022	Online	Anti-Slavery Webinar: The Corporate Responses to Modern Slavery and How BS 27500 Guidance Can Help	A webinar discussing the corporate response to modern slavery
Sept 2022	Geneva NYC	*Launch of the 2022 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery	A global launch of the 2022 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, alongside the ILO and IOM – including inclusion in the UN Secretary-General's Noon Briefing
July 2022	Online	*Release of the Modern Slavery Response & Remedy Framework	Release of report developed in collaboration with the Human Rights Resources and Energy Collaborative, to

			help businesses respond to modern slavery.
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Business & Investor Engagement

The Bali Process Government and Business Forum (GABF) Network has grown to over 400 participants from 47 countries (including observers). The GABF brings together business and government leaders from the Asia Pacific to make commitments to stamp out forced labour from their supply chains.

Walk Free serves as the Secretariat for the Bali Process Government and Business Forum.

The Eighth Ministerial Conference was the first held outside Bali and took place in Adelaide, Australia. It was the first in-person high level meeting of the Bali Process for more than four years due to the COVID-10 pandemic. It was acknowledged that the compounding crises of preceding years, including the pandemic, conflict and humanitarian disasters, have all exacerbated the risks of modern slavery in the Indo-Pacific. The Co-Chairs urged further engagement between the public and private sectors to combat these human rights abuses.

- Numerous Business Bulletins were distributed to the GABF Network
- The GABF website was updated to drive further private sector engagement
- Walk Free developed a Toolkit for Business and Investors

A snapshot of events is listed below (Note: asterisk denotes events hosted or co-hosted by Walk Free):

Date held	Location	Specific Event	Details
Feb 2023	Adelaide, Australia	*Bali Process Government and Business Forum	Forum to bring together government and business leaders from Asia Pacific.
Jan 2023	Online	*Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking Asia Pacific submission to Australian Modern Slavery Act	IAST APAC initiative made a submission to review the Australian Modern Slavery Act.
Sept 2022	Online	Webinar: The new Global Estimates of Modern Slavery – Fair supply	An online panel to discuss the implications of the Global Estimates for all businesses.
July 2022	Online	*Release of the Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking Asia Pacific Annual Report	Report detailing the investor-led initiative's engagement with companies in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Other Engagement

(Note: asterisk denotes events hosted or co-hosted by Walk Free):

Date held	Location	Specific Event	Details
Mar 2023	Glasgow, Scotland	Scottish AI Summit	Panel presentation focused on the role of humans and AI together in fighting modern slavery.
Mar 2023	Perth, Australia	UN Women: International Women's Day	Keynote presentation on the importance of a gendered approach to solving crises.
Jan 2023	Online	Ministerial Meeting of the National Roundtable for Human Trafficking and Slavery	Presentation to government and civil society members of the National Roundtable.
Jan 2023	Online	The Tablet Panel Discussion	Panel discussion on the intersection between faith and modern slavery, exploring how faith leader can help end modern slavery.
Dec 2022	Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, United Kingdom	*Series of Government Workshops	Series of workshops focusing on the launch of the Faith for Freedom App and its Federation of Faith Leaders.
Nov 2022	Lebanon (and online)	5 th Annual Bread&Net platform	Webinar to explore Walk Free's emerging research on how modern slavery is present on social media and how platforms may combat it.
Nov 2022	London, United Kingdom	Volunteer Workshop	Workshop to learn how to be involved in Beyond Compliance with WikiRate.
Jun 2022	Kigali, Rwanda	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	Attending to discuss necessary action from Commonwealth leaders to effectively combat modern slavery.
Aug 2022	Online	Modern Slavery in Australia: The Agricultural Visa	Panel exploring workplace practices employed within Australia's agricultural sector.
Mar 2022	Online	*Addressing Gendered Forms of Modern Slavery: Survivor Perspectives	Panel with survivor leaders discussing how to create lasting solutions at the NGO CSW66 Forum.
Mar 2022	Kenya	Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery	Joint signing which brought together more than 90 global faith leaders.