

Press release: UK aid to help over half a million people at risk of slavery

The International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has announced that UK aid will help over 500,000 vulnerable men, women and children around the world who have either survived modern slavery or are at risk of becoming victims.

Ahead of the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (Saturday 2 December) she condemned modern slavery as a “global disgrace” and pledged the UK’s long term commitment to “stamp out this practice abroad” which will in turn support the efforts to end slavery in the UK.

As part of the Prime Minister’s pledge at the United Nations General Assembly to double the UK’s aid commitment to tackling modern slavery, Ms Mordaunt has set out UK aid support which will have a life-changing impact for hundreds of thousands of people at risk of exploitation, as we press for international action to break the business model of the people traffickers.

The UK is stepping up efforts at home and abroad to combat the crimes of human trafficking, forced labour, and abuse, with over 40 million people estimated to be modern day slaves. Behind the numbers are people subjected to horrific exploitation every single day.

The support pledged today will address slavery and trafficking in countries with a high prevalence of these crimes in South Asia, and others such as Nigeria, which are also source countries for trafficking to the UK.

At the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Theresa May announced a global Call To Action, that urged world leaders to show they will not tolerate modern slavery, human trafficking and labour exploitation – with 40 countries now having joined this call to action.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, said:

The continued trade in human beings is a global disgrace – and simply not enough is being done to tackle it.

It is time to eradicate this shameful practice. Slavery, anywhere, must not be tolerated in the 21st century, and our work to stamp out this practice abroad will support our effort to end slavery in the UK. This is a long term challenge and others must follow our lead.

I met with victims of this horrendous crime during my time in Bangladesh who had been exploited and abused who we are now supporting, and it is absolutely right that we protect vulnerable men, women and children from being duped into imprisonment, domestic servitude and forced labour.

Today's £40 million package of UK aid includes:

- £13 million for the second phase of the Work in Freedom programme to prevent trafficking and forced labour among women migrant workers from South Asia, which has the highest prevalence of forced labour globally. This will focus on victims of forced domestic work and garment manufacturing, providing skills training to women before they move to a nearby country for work, supporting women at their destination so they can access help if they are exploited, and working with governments to improve laws and policies to protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of this crime.
- a £20 million contribution to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, which will be used to target sectors with a high risk of slavery, like the garment sector, fisheries and construction, combating this crime by working with law enforcement, prevention and victim services and business.
- further details of the £7 million DFID support in Nigeria which will focus on creating credible alternative livelihoods in hospitality, creative industries, technology and agri-entrepreneurship so people are not forced into a life of trafficking, providing better victim support and counselling, and increasing public awareness of the risks of trafficking. This is in addition to the Home Office's existing £5 million of support which is improving law enforcement and justice systems to crack down on this crime and root out the perpetrators.

PHOTOS/VIDEOS

[See how UK aid is changing lives in South Asia.](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Second Phase of the Work in Freedom programme follows an original £10.5 million programme which started in 2013 and finishes in early 2018. This programme has helped 380,000 women at risk of trafficking and forced labour in South Asia and the Middle East. An independent evaluation found it was innovative, highly relevant and delivering results.

- The second phase will focus on sectors with the highest number of forced labour victims, including domestic work and garment manufacturing. It will help over 350,000 women, including through pre-departure training and skills development for women in the communities who are considering moving to a nearby country for work; supporting women at their destination, for example through local unions and support groups so they can access help if something goes wrong; and working with governments to improve laws and policies to protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of this crime.
- The £7 million of DFID support in Nigeria will include around £3 million to create alternative, aspirational livelihoods that can be considered as viable alternatives by potential victims of trafficking to pursuing irregular and dangerous forms of migration, which often lead to victims falling into sexual slavery, forced or bonded labour. UK aid will focus on creating job opportunities in sectors including hospitality, creative industries, technology and agri-entrepreneurship and could help up to 30,000 women at risk of modern slavery.
- DFID's support to Nigeria will also include around £4 million to strengthen systems that support victims of trafficking through improving safe house support and training for counsellors in at least six safe houses; changing attitudes and social norms through working with schools and universities to increase public information and awareness of the risks of trafficking; and building a stronger coalition of partners, including civil society, working on the Anti-Slavery agenda to boost rehabilitation services to help survivors reintegrate into society, to prevent vulnerable people being re-trafficked and falling back into a cycle of exploitation.
- This funding is in addition to £5 million of the UK's Modern Slavery Fund, which the Prime Minister announced in September 2016, that has been allocated to Nigeria and which will build the capacity of Nigerian law enforcement to crack down on the crime, help investigate prolific traffickers, and provide protection and rehabilitation for victims.
- The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery aims to leverage \$1.5 billion to address the lack of resources in tackling modern slavery, and the UK is partnering with the United States to support this initiative. Our initial investment will be used to target problem sectors, like the garment sector, fisheries and construction, combating slavery by working with law enforcement, prevention and victim services and business.
- Together, UK aid support in Nigeria and for the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery will help 150,000 people.