



Fair Trade and Anti-Trafficking 101

Use these facts to educate yourself and others about how Fair Trade helps address child labor and human trafficking

The United Nations defines human trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by improper means (such as force, abduction, fraud or coercion) for an improper purpose including forced labor or sexual exploitation.

Fast Facts

- The ILO estimates that there are over **40 million** victims of human trafficking globally. About **10 million** are children.
- According to the U.S. State Department, **600,000 – 800,000** people are trafficked across international borders every year. **80 percent** are female, and **50 percent** are children.
- Human trafficking and forced labor generate an estimated **\$150 billion** in annual profits.
- **Over half** of global incidences of human trafficking and forced labor are found in the Asia-Pacific region. Human trafficking has also been reported in all **50** U.S. states.

The Need for Fair Trade

- More than two-thirds of all children involved in child labor work as contributing family laborers.
- 71 percent of child labor takes place in the agricultural sector. An estimated 2 million children work on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which produce nearly 70 percent of the world's cocoa.
- Children and their families are often lured by traffickers through the promise of education and employment, and desperate families often see no economic alternatives.
- Victims of trafficking are often forced to work in hazardous conditions, sold into domestic labor, marriage or prostitution, or forcibly recruited as child soldiers.
- Close to 50 percent of child labor victims do hazardous work that endangers their health and safety. In factories, children are exposed to hazardous chemicals and use heavy machinery, among other things.

Fair Trade and Anti-Trafficking

- Fair Trade standards prohibit forced and child labor. Young workers and children helping on family farms have tasks and work schedules that protect their mental and physical health and development.
- Fair Trade Premium funds invested in education help keep children out of fields and factories. Education also provides access to more economic opportunities, decreasing the likelihood of becoming a victim of human trafficking.
- In industries like coffee and cocoa, the Fair Trade minimum price protects farmers from market price fluctuations, providing economic stability and helping break cycles of poverty that can lead to exploitation.
- Fair Trade standards require collective bargaining rights and freedom of association, supporting higher wages, discrimination prevention, and more fruitful long-term relationships between workers and employers.

Additional Resources

- Free the Slaves | freetheslaves.net
- International Labor Organization | ilo.org
- Polaris | polarisproject.org
- U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons | state.gov
- UNICEF USA | unicefusa.org
- UN Office on Drugs and Crime | unodc.org

