

Press Release

New partnership provides blueprint for tackling human trafficking

Survivors of human trafficking will be able to build a safe and secure economic future for themselves thanks to a new partnership in India and Vietnam.

The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS) – a public-private partnership that aims to make modern slavery economically unprofitable – is investing \$490,000 [to support survivors of human trafficking](#) through the International Tourism Partnership’s employability programme, the Youth Career Initiative (YCI).

The GFEMS partnership with YCI represents a scalable public / private solution to reduce the incidence of sex trafficking by breaking the link between an individual’s vulnerability to being trafficked (or re-victimised), and their limited economic opportunity.

During the two-year project YCI will partner with hotels and non-profit organisations in Mumbai and Hanoi to help around 130 survivors access skills, training and employment opportunities, whilst also creating safe workplaces capable of supporting vulnerable young people and particularly women and girls.

Announcing the partnership, Helen Taylor at GFEMS said:

“At the core of YCI’s model is partnership with hotels – an approach that represents the way we want to engage the private sector. Our investment will create a blueprint for other companies and industries to combat human trafficking and support sustained freedom for survivors of trafficking.”

Head of YCI Scott Robinson said:

“It is tremendously exciting to be among the first grantees of the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery and to be able to demonstrate the potential of the hotel industry to be part of the solution in supporting survivors of human trafficking. Human trafficking is a horrendous crime, and YCI and its local partners are proud to help survivors gain new skills, find employment, and build a better life.”

Survivors of human trafficking currently face a difficult journey to recovery and stability due to restricted access to suitable job opportunities as a result of limited confidence and a lack of supportive employers who can provide a secure and understanding work environment.

YCI is the flagship employability programme of the International Tourism Partnership (ITP), which convenes the world’s leading hotel groups to act on human and environmental challenges faced by the hotel industry. ITP is part of Business in the Community, HRH The Prince of Wales’ Responsible Business Network, which exists to build healthy communities with successful businesses at their heart.



ITP's membership of supporting hotel groups includes Deutsche Hospitality, Four Seasons, Hilton, Hyatt, IHCL, InterContinental Hotel Group, Marriott International, NH Hotels, Radisson Hotel Group, Scandic, Soneva, Whitbread and Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, accounting for 28,000 hotels, and 15% of the industry worldwide.

Collectively these hotel companies are working to achieve ITP's Goal for 2030 on Human Rights:

ITP commits to driving positive change on respect for human rights and fostering safe and inclusive working environments.

ITP commits to;

- *Continue to raise awareness of human rights risks in the hotel industry and embed human rights requirements into the corporate governance of ITP members*
- *Work to address human rights risks in the labour supply chain, including elimination of fees charged to workers to secure employment*
- *Identify and develop tools to address human rights risks during the development and construction phase of hotels.*

ITP Director Madhu Rajesh said:

"A growing hotel industry offers immense opportunities for job creation and economic inclusion globally. For human trafficking specifically, the industry can help create economic barriers against this form of exploitation by developing opportunities for people at risk as well as survivors of trafficking, tackling the issue holistically both at source and in destination markets. This is an increasing area of focus for ITP members, and ground-breaking partnerships such as this with GFEMS will really help us scale this area of our work through our Youth Career Initiative."

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Notes on YCI and the project

The Youth Career Initiative is a proven, award-winning employability programme with a 20-year history of empowering disadvantaged young people around the world with transferable skills and work opportunities in the hotel sector. By bringing survivors into the programme it can reduce the profitability of trafficking, whilst simultaneously offering sustained freedom for vulnerable youth, women and girls. YCI's long-standing partnership with the hotel sector, and strategic engagement with the industry on human rights issues means its partner hotel companies are willing to support survivors of trafficking to access marketable skills, understand the needs when employing a survivor, and are dedicated to scaling up the shared impact.

Non-profit partners in Mumbai and Hanoi are committed to support the project and aim to guide dozens of survivors each year through the six-month programme. The project builds on a previous pilot supported by the U.S. State Department, in which 101 survivors of trafficking were engaged in YCI. To date, YCI has supported 124 survivors in 25 hotels around the world.

Learning from the programme will be captured and made available to other companies which seek to disrupt the crime of human trafficking and support survivors to build stable and economically secure futures. Impacts from the programme will be measured and reported, but because survivors of trafficking have families and dependents, it's estimated 500 or more people will indirectly benefit from this ground-breaking project.

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