

Our organisation

Tearfund is an international Christian relief and development agency committed to eradicating poverty. Tearfund is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales, and a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales and with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Tearfund is not required to prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement as we do not meet the threshold requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. However, we recognise the inherent dignity and worth of all people and take seriously our obligation to seek to prevent slavery and human trafficking.

Slavery and trafficking is a global problem which is estimated to affect 50 million people worldwide, marking an increase of 10 million people since the 2018 Global Slavery Index was published.¹ Tearfund exists to support those in greatest need, therefore the Board welcomes the Modern Slavery Act and is pleased to set out in this statement the steps we have taken to prevent modern slavery in our organisation and supply chain in the 2023/24 financial year.

Our approach to modern slavery and human trafficking

We value each individual we work with as made in the image of God. We expect the highest standards of personal and collective behaviour across all of our work. In upholding our core values we stand against all forms of exploitation, abuse, fraud, bribery and any other conduct which is incompatible with them.

We strive to transfer power to the people we serve; to transform our own, our partners' and communities' attitudes and behaviours on inclusion, participation, accountability, gender and learning.

Moving beyond our own supply chain, we have the opportunity to proactively seek to prevent and respond to issues of modern slavery through our Partners. This is through our work with communities in some of the highest risk countries in the world for slavery and trafficking, for example by assisting them to combat sexual and gender based violence.

We have in place a robust set of policies and procedures aimed at preventing abuse and harm and to ensure that the partners we choose to work with understand our approach to safeguarding. We work with partners to share learning and knowledge in these areas and to implement effective processes to ensure the communities we work with are protected against exploitation.

In 2023/24 we:

- Continued to roll out the procurement system (Coupa) introduced in 2020/21, providing much greater visibility and tracking our suppliers. The rollout has been completed in the key countries where there is a high level of logistics activity - namely the UK, Nigeria, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, DRC, CAR, Ethiopia and Bangladesh. Further rollouts in more overseas locations will be dependent on a number of factors including for example the success of bids for logistics-heavy projects and the ability to integrate with other IT systems.

¹ [THE GLOBAL SLAVERY INDEX 2023](#)

- Supported country programmes and partners to ensure they are using procurement tendering and contract templates which include clauses that require suppliers to adhere to high ethical standards, and termination if they breach this.
- Embedded the rollout of the Ethical Procurement Assessment, which minimises use of suppliers who don't meet our ethical standards
- Continued to train and share learning and knowledge with our partners to develop, implement and respond appropriately to these issues.
- Reviewed our Safeguarding (Protecting Children and Adults at Risk) Policy.
- Continued to require all staff and Board members to complete e-learning on child and adult safeguarding.
- Continued to build and train our network of country, cluster and directorate 'safeguarding focal points'.
- Through our Country Safeguarding Focal points, continued to deliver training to partners working with communities.
- Continued to promote and improve upon the reporting of incidents through the launch of our new Tearfund Incident Management System (TIMS).

Our supply chain

Whilst seeking to prevent and work alongside those who are victims of slavery and human trafficking we are also committed to ensuring that it is not taking place in our own supply chains or in our organisation. Tearfund works in over 50 countries, primarily through local churches or Christian partners. We use suppliers across all of our work to enable us to carry out our charitable activities. We are not involved in manufacturing, agriculture or retail activities which are typically at the highest risk of modern slavery occurring. However, we do recognise that our supply chain is complex and that we work in some of the highest risk countries for slavery in the world.

Tearfund's supply chain comprises:

1. UK-sourced goods and services for use in the UK (including utilities to professional advisors).
2. UK-sourced humanitarian supplies for use overseas (including equipment and vehicles).
3. Overseas procurement and gifts of goods and services managed from the countries where we work (including food and fuel). This includes sourcing items for our emergency response work.
4. Funding overseas partners to allow them to procure goods and services directly with local suppliers and professional advisors.

Our Global Logistics team have focussed on the higher risk activities outside of the UK associated with international development and relief.

In all our procurement, we work to ensure that any suppliers are aligned to our ethical standards. We are fully aware that the nature of international development and relief work makes it difficult to guarantee that any products or services come from totally ethical sources.

One way in which we aim to address this is through the Partner Capacity Enhancement in Logistics (PARCEL) project. Tearfund participated in the consortium which developed the PARCEL Standards, which are measurable, minimum requirements that logistics processes and procedures must meet. These standards reflect best practice within the sector.

Tearfund follows documented procurement procedures to ensure that all goods, services and construction works are sourced (either directly or goods in kind) in compliance with donor policies and all applicable laws. We also carry out due diligence checks prior to signing any contract, which include site visits where appropriate.

As a member of the Inter-Agency Procurement Group (IAPG), we aim to purchase goods and services in the supply chain that prioritise Corporate Social Responsibility elements.

Our standard contractual terms follow the IAPG code of conduct, covering the following:

- Goods and services purchased are produced and developed under conditions that do not involve the abuse or exploitation of any persons.
- Goods produced and delivered by organisations subscribe to no exploitation of children.
- Goods produced and manufactured have the least impact on the environment.

We ask suppliers to agree to meet standards which confirm that goods and services are produced and delivered under conditions where:

- Employment is freely chosen.
- The rights of staff to freedom of association and collective bargaining are respected.
- Living wages are paid.
- There is no exploitation of children.
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic.
- Working hours are not excessive.
- No discrimination is practised.
- Regular employment is provided.
- No harsh or inhumane treatment of staff is allowed.

Additionally, our contracts can be terminated immediately should the above have been breached. Where the conduct of suppliers demonstrably violates anyone's basic human rights, and there is no willingness to address the situation within a reasonable timeframe we will seek alternative sources. Where companies in the supply chain are involved in the manufacture of arms or the sale of arms to governments systematically violating the human rights of their citizens, we will seek different options.

Where speed of deployment is essential in saving lives, we will purchase necessary goods and services from the most appropriate available source.

Policies

In the 2023/24 financial year we conducted our annual review and update of our Safeguarding (Protecting Children and Adults at Risk) Policy, to continue to reflect evolving best practice.

Our Personal Conduct Policy provides our staff and representatives guidance on how to identify human trafficking and associated exploitation. The policy makes clear that:

- Tearfund staff and representatives should take proactive steps to ensure that partners and others we work with are not involved in any way in human trafficking
- Suspicions about human trafficking should be raised according to our Safeguarding or Whistleblowing Policy
- It is gross misconduct for any staff member or representative to participate in or facilitate human trafficking (including if a staff member knows, or should know, that as a result of their actions a person is likely to be trafficked)

Our Funding Sources Policy sets out that any funding or donations of more than £10,000 per annum will go through an ethical due diligence screening process to check whether the organisation or individual:

- Has a record of exploitative working practices or safeguarding issues
- Could compromise our ability to speak out on issues that exacerbate global poverty or limit our strategic effectiveness in reaching people living in poverty

We have also introduced an ethical due diligence screening process for our procurement, to minimise use of any suppliers who do not meet our ethical standards.

Tearfund is an accredited London Living Wage employer and ensures that anyone working for us in the UK, whether directly employed or engaged through a contract for cleaning or security services, is paid at this level or above.

Any allegations of breaches of the above policies or whistleblowing reports raised are taken very seriously by Tearfund. Such incidents are notified to our Safeguarding Committee and/or Audit, Risk and Finance Board Committee and, where appropriate, to the Board of Tearfund and the Charity Commission.

Training

Tearfund is clear that any exploitation or abuse by staff or anyone connected with our staff (partners, suppliers, or people benefiting from our work) is unacceptable. We are committed to ensuring that our values and quality standards are not just words on paper but are known, understood and part of the way that Tearfund staff and partners work globally.

Vision and values form a core part of our Global Induction, which includes explaining our zero tolerance for all forms of exploitation and abuse, and any other conduct which is incompatible with our values.

E-learning training on Tearfund's core policies (whistleblowing, safeguarding, fraud awareness, anti bribery and corruption, data protection and conflicts of interest) is mandatory for all staff, and long-term volunteers and consultants. Tearfund's core policies are applicable to staff, consultants, volunteers and others who represent Tearfund. In addition, partners are also required to adopt policies in these core areas.

Looking Ahead

In the 2024/25 financial year, Tearfund is committed to the following activities to continue to strengthen and develop its governance to ensure that modern slavery is not taking place in our own supply chains or in our organisation:

- Further roll out of our new procurement system in our overseas offices, which will provide much greater visibility and tracking of our suppliers
- We will continue to support country programmes and partners to ensure they are using tender and contract templates which include clauses that require suppliers to adhere to the code of conduct and termination if they breach this.
- We will continue to train and build capacity among our partners to develop, implement and respond appropriately to these issues.
- We will review our Safeguarding (Protecting Children and Adults at Risk) Policy.
- We will review our mandatory annual Safeguarding Training
- We will continue to develop the information we provide to our safeguarding focal points to allow them to identify and respond to these issues.

Approval

This statement has been approved by the Board of Tearfund, and is signed on behalf of the Directors by



Anna Laszlo, Chair

Date: 17 July 2024