

## Buy Responsibly

Eliminating the demand for trafficked and exploited labour to provide the cheap goods and huge profits desired by consumers and businesses the world over is critical if global efforts to end human trafficking are to be successful, says the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Through the Buy Responsibly campaign, IOM is urging consumers in particular to play a greater role in ending human trafficking.

Encouraging the public to question 'What Lies Behind the Things We Buy?', the campaign, designed by Saatchi & Saatchi in Geneva, hopes to kick-start a change in consumer behavior.

"For too long the belief has been that poverty and gender discrimination are root causes of human trafficking, which can only be tackled at source. This is short-sighted," says IOM Director General William Lacy Swing. "Quite simply, human trafficking is driven by the demand for unreasonably cheap labour and goods from around the world."

### Featured Video

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As well as a television spot for broadcasters to air, the "Buy Responsibly" campaign will include an enactment of the spot involving an inverted giant shopping trolley imprisoning models representing trafficked migrant workers.

Consumers are encouraged to visit [www.buyresponsibly.org](http://www.buyresponsibly.org) to find out more about human trafficking for labour exploitation and what they could do to end it.

Ageing populations, falling birth rates and labour force participation in industrialized countries coupled with an over-supply of labour in developing countries without sufficient channels for legal migration, have paved the way for human traffickers to profit from the demand for cheap foreign labour and services.

Some estimates put the number of people in forced or bonded labour and sexual servitude in the world at any given time at 12.3 million.

Although focus has largely been on the issue of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, greater incidences are emerging of trafficking for labour exploitation involving all ages and both sexes.

Figures from IOM's Global Counter Trafficking Database, which tracks and details assistance provided by the Organization to victims, show that over the past 11 years, IOM has assisted an increasing number of people trafficked for labour exploitation with the largest increases in the last five years. This has largely involved men and boys trafficked to work in the agricultural, construction, fishing and domestic service sectors.

Up until now, global counter trafficking efforts have mainly focused on prevention and post-rescue assistance in source countries with little work done to tackle the equally critical demand side.

"Some sectors of an economy, such as construction and agriculture, depend on irregular cheap labour for growth and profits. But economic growth shouldn't depend on exploitation," the IOM Director General states.

Despite best efforts by all those involved in countering human trafficking, indications are that it is at least widespread today as it was ten years ago.

"Clearly this is not acceptable. A change in mindset and practices among consumers and businesses alike needs to occur," Swing adds.

Several concrete and far-reaching steps can be taken to achieve this. They include regulating the informal sector in destination countries to ensure workers are brought under the protection of labour laws; making business and employers legally responsible for human trafficking and migrant exploitation in their supply chain; encouraging the creation of ethical employer associations adhering to codes of conduct guaranteeing the rights of migrants and workers and providing more legal channels for migration. Equally essential is raising awareness among consumers of products and services provided by trafficked and exploited labour.

"Consumers who are increasingly demanding fair trade have the power to end labour exploitation by buying responsibly and getting business to rethink how it operates. It's also in the interest of business to ensure its supply chain is not using trafficked or exploited labour. This can make a huge difference in countering human trafficking. There is no time to waste," says Swing.

To find out what you can do to help end labour exploitation and human trafficking, please go to: [www.buyresponsibly.org](http://www.buyresponsibly.org)

Broadcasters please note the TV spot is downloadable in English and French in both 4/3 and 16/9 formats and in broadcast quality from the following link: [http://www.quicklink.tv/IOM/download.asp?Clip\\_ID=1248](http://www.quicklink.tv/IOM/download.asp?Clip_ID=1248)

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