

UNICEF UK MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT, 2023

Introduction From Jon Sparkes, CEO of UNICEF UK

This is the sixth statement of the United Kingdom Committee for Unicef (UNICEF UK) published in accordance with Clause 54 in the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the 'Act') as part of our commitment to uphold the highest levels of transparency and accountability. The Act requires organisations to set out the actions they have taken during a financial year to ensure Modern Slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in their operations and supply chains. This statement covers the activities of UNICEF UK for the financial year ending 31 December 2022. Human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour ('Modern Slavery') continue to be prevalent across the world, including in the UK. In 2022, 116,938 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office, representing a 33% increase compared to the preceding year.

Advocating For Change

In line with our global mandate to uphold the Convention on the Rights of the Child and promote the rights and well-being of all children, UNICEF UK remains strongly committed to playing our part to eradicate Modern Slavery and specifically, any form of child exploitation and abuse.

In 2022, UNICEF UK played an active role in monitoring and contributing to efforts to ensure full and proper implementation of the child protection provisions within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We continued to be an active member of the Multi-Agency Assessment Panels (MAAPs) – an independent body that reviews all decisions taken by the Home Office refusing to grant a status of victim of trafficking to children - until its closure in mid-2022. We also submitted a report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on how the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are being implemented in the UK in relation to children who may or have been victims of modern slavery.

UNICEF UK remains a member of the project management group and an evaluation panel for a Home Office pilot project to test a new NRM procedure embedded within the existing child protection system at a Local Authority level. UNICEF UK also worked together with the Home Office to develop the Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG) system. ICTGs are a vital mechanism of support for trafficked children ensuring all their rights are protected.

UNICEF UK also advocates for the UK to have an enabling legal and policy environment that ensures business respect children's rights and the environment. In the early part of 2022 UNICEF UK together with other civil society organisations and businesses called on the UK Government to introduce a legal requirement for businesses to conduct human rights and environmental due diligence and ensure access to justice for victims of abuses. This included endorsement of a set of legal principles that should form the basis for this legislation.

Update On Progress

At UNICEF UK, we remain committed to being open and honest in how we have continued to understand and tackle some of the major risks in Modern Slavery in our own operations and work, whether this is with regards to our own due diligence in our supply chains or through our organisational frameworks, policies, and procedures. In our last statement, we provided a summary of our progress and considered the steps we have made against the commitments we made in our last report. This statement provides a summary of the further progress we have made. Additionally, we have laid out a number of actions we seek to pursue in the following year in order to strengthen our approach to the potential risks of Modern Slavery and human trafficking in UNICEF UK.



Jon Sparkes, UNICEF UK Chief Executive

Governance

UNICEF UK recognises Modern Slavery as a potential organisational risk and is monitored within UNICEF UK's Risk Register. This Register tracks the causes and effects of the most significant risks to our organisation and is monitored each quarter by the Risk Management Group, co-chaired by UNICEF UK's Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance. The risk register is regularly reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee and included within the Board of Trustees board meeting packs as a standing item for review. If a significant issue arises, such as a mitigation control failure, this will be escalated to the Audit and Risk Committee. Our Chief Executive and Board of Trustees have oversight of our governance systems and a process for escalation to the Board is in place.

Training and capacity building

We recognise that the responsibility to tackle Modern Slavery is a shared one across all departments within our organisation. In 2021 we designed and put in place an "Introduction to Modern Slavery" eLearning module which remains essential induction learning for all new colleagues to the organisation. The short course provides an overview of how fast-moving global markets play a huge influence on consumer behaviours and in turn both supply chain dynamics and labour patterns which often link to causes of Modern Slavery. In conjunction with this global economic overview, learners are informed of international frameworks including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBPs) and national law such as the Act. This eLearning module will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Reviewing our Ethical Framework

The UNICEF UK Ethics Framework provides the foundation for our organisation and staff behaviours in our day-to-day operations and encapsulates our values of 'Our Shared Commitment'. The framework was approved again by the UNICEF UK Board in December 2022. We remain committed to strengthening our procurement standards and building on our existing manufacturing requirements. The Ethics framework runs alongside the UNICEF UK Speak Up Policy. This is in place to provide an open, safe and transparent environment and enable every colleague, irrespective of their role or level to speak up in the interest of the public against suspected wrongdoing at work.

Raw material sourcing

UNICEF UK does not purchase many goods as it is broadly a services-based organisation. However, it will continue to ensure all products and services are responsibly and ethically sourced.

Independent workers and homeworking

In 2022, UNICEF UK retailed products through an online marketplace platform. Some of the products available on this site were sourced and made by homeworkers which brings many benefits to individuals and families. However, UNICEF UK also recognises some associated risks to children which can occur in these environments. Our marketplace provider has taken a number of steps to manage this risk including the development of a homeworking policy, signed commitments from producers to uphold the relevant ILO standards and workplace inspections. UNICEF UK will continue to work closely with our online marketplace supplier to ensure continual review and amends are made as and when necessary.

Engagement with New Suppliers and Partners

UNICEF UK aims to work with organisations and individuals who represent a commitment to our organisational values and mandate to uphold children's rights. In doing so, before we go into any significant partnership, we carry out due diligence to ensure suppliers and partners have relevant policies, procedures and working practices in place to support this. In addition, for applicable companies, we record whether or not they have a Modern Slavery Statement on their website.

Moving forward

At UNICEF UK we recognise the importance of continued improvement, strengthening our practices to address potential risks of Modern Slavery and human trafficking taking place in our organisation and supply chains. We are committed to collaborating with stakeholders across civil society, policy and corporate sectors who are equally dedicated to tackling Modern Slavery and improving wider labour practices in such a way which reduces peoples' vulnerability to exploitation. We have therefore committed to the following activities:

- Continue to review our procurement practices, to improve efficiencies and consolidate ethical practices;
- Aim to work with suppliers that adhere to internationally recognized social and environmental sustainability standards;
- Continue capacity-building training for colleagues involved in procurement across UNICEF UK