



Australian Border Force
Department of Home Affairs

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**Submission to the consultation on National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery
2020-24**

Harmony Alliance is one of six National Women's Alliances funded by the Australian Government to promote the views of all Australian women, to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes. Harmony Alliance's purpose is to provide a national inclusive and informed voice on the multiplicity of issues impacting on experiences and outcomes of migrant and refugee women, and to enable opportunities for women from migrant and refugee backgrounds to directly engage in driving positive change. The Harmony Alliance membership comprises over 120 organisations and individuals representing and working for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women.

We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the consultation on National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2024. Trafficking, forced marriage, and modern slavery—practices identified by the consultation paper—often intersect with migration, and since women are overrepresented amongst victims of these practices, the national action plan to combat these practices must be considerate and inclusive of the perspectives and experiences of migrant and refugee women.

Migrant and refugee women are disproportionately vulnerable to these harmful practices due to linguistic and cultural barriers, dependency on their partners or families, precarious migration situations, and unfamiliarity with the supports and services available. The national plan to combat these practices should take a multi-pronged approach by providing culturally responsive and in-language support and services to victims/survivors onshore, promoting awareness, and disseminating necessary preventive information in-language to all women who come to Australia—particularly those on temporary visas.

Below, we provide responses to the specific consultation questions:

- 1. Do the 12 goals capture key areas of focus for Australia over the next five years?
and**
- 2. Should there be additional goals to address other areas of focus, emerging issues
or trends? If so, what should they be?**

Goal number 10 should include in-language, culturally responsive, and trauma informed "support, protections and remedies to empower victims of modern slavery". An additional goal of prevention through dissemination of information to women coming to Australia, particularly



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on temporary visas, at early touchpoints—such as biometric data collection—should be included.

- 3. The Government is committed to ensuring victims of modern slavery are supported, protected and empowered. Are there ways in which the Government can better reflect the voices of victims and their lived experiences in the 2020-24 Plan and Australia's response to modern slavery?**

With the increasingly temporary nature of Australia's migration program, it is critical that the Plan adequately considers and addresses the experiences of women in temporary residence situations, especially those dependent on their sponsors for their migration status and income. Women in these situations are highly vulnerable to manipulative behaviour, abuse, threats, and being forced to live in conditions of modern slavery.

- 4. The Government is committed to ensuring that we can measure the impacts of the 2020-24 Plan. Are there evaluation methods, data sources or metrics the Government should consider in developing an evaluation framework?**

The Government should employ a participatory approach to developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery. The framework should engage victims/survivors, vulnerable persons and groups, specialist and community organisations, organisations and experts with strong gender expertise, and other stakeholders in the evaluation of the impacts of the 2020-24 plan. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate Harmony Alliance's capacity and commitment to support and inform the development of the Plan and its implementation going forward.

Contact Information:

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