

Key Dynamics

FORCED LABOR & HUMAN
TRAFFICKING PORTFOLIO

SECURITY

1

Global instability resulting from uneven development, violent conflict, economic inequality, and environmental degradation leads to mass displacement and migration. Migration policies founded upon principles of citizenship and detention, and optimized for the global economy, fail to properly address these flows of human capital, and instead either introduce or exploit vulnerabilities.

MARGINALIZATION

2

Existing and historical disparities, exacerbated by intersecting forms of marginalization experienced differently depending on a person's identity (e.g., racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc.), restrict local- and community-level opportunity and access to decent work, diminishing the capabilities of individuals to act with free will and compelling them to consent to or endure treatment that is degrading to meet basic needs.

ACCOUNTABILITY

3

Labor and universal rights protections are limited (or are being actively attacked) across the world and, even where they may exist, many governments do not enforce these limited protections due to apathy, corruption, weak rule of law, demand for labor, or outright

discrimination. This lack of accountability enables corporations, investors, suppliers, and labor intermediaries to persist in unlawful behaviors regarding workers' rights, and informal economies dependent on exploitative practices to flourish.

POWER

4

Disabling environments for labor and community organizing limit (or completely deny) the space for collective action and assembly, entrenching asymmetric power dynamics between corporations, workers, and the public. The simultaneous lack of capacity, tools, and resources necessary to build change leadership undermines individual and collective power and leads to interventions which often fail to achieve the true participation of impacted communities in setting and owning the agenda.

OPACITY

5

The capture of capitalism toward the singular end of short-term profits for shareholders generates a race to the bottom in which goods and services are produced through increasingly complex, distributed, and opaque supply chains. Reduced transparency and visibility throughout the system both obscure direct liability while also increasing the challenge of innovating solutions that work at scale.

ACTION

6

Corporate awareness of the risks of business models reliant on exploitation is growing, but most corporate efforts to address forced labor in supply chains remain voluntary, ineffective, and contingent on proving a “business case” for amending unlawful behavior.

Despite the advancement of transparency efforts and mandatory due diligence legislation, many companies continue to deny abuses, shift responsibility to their suppliers, and resist disclosing altogether what they find in their supply chains. Their commitments are oftentimes superficial and are made without any accountability for follow-through or assessment.

..... **KNOWLEDGE**

7

Thanks in part to global press coverage and government engagement, knowledge of forced labor and human trafficking is increasing, but the attention of key influencers (e.g., corporate leaders, investors, unions, governments, consumers) often relies on imperfect narratives of the problem. Though stakeholders are increasingly vocal in seeking to address the root causes of vulnerability, limited understanding and evidence of what works restricts resources and prevents even those whom are aware from taking meaningful action.