What We Do

Our members have been long committed to promoting decent working conditions worldwide but recognise that the eradication of forced labour remains a key challenge. We are, therefore, now working as an industry to drive global collaboration between retailers and manufacturers and thereby addressing forced labour as one of the most pressing social issues of our time. This commitment was confirmed with a Social Resolution on Forced Labour. The resolution is the first industry commitment of its kind and is approved by the CGF’s CEO-led Board of Directors.

Why We Do It

Today, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), almost 25 million people are in forced labour, with 16 million being victims of labour exploitation. Our industry is at risk, because of its complex, disaggregated global supply chains that rely on low-skilled labour. Forced labour can be found in sectors such as food and beverage, agriculture, manufacturing, and many sub-segments of fast moving consumer goods, such as palm oil and seafood. They often involve some of the poorest countries in the world with limited institutional capacity for regulation to protect workers’ rights.

How We’ll Do It

To help ensure implementation across our wider membership, we harness the power of collective action as an industry group to identify and address issues and geographies of shared concern, enhancing the efficiency of any individual company initiatives. We also work closely with other industries, with governments and with civil society. In areas of shared concern, we are jointly developing specific action plans supporting the eradication of forced labour, in alignment with the widely embraced guidance provided by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. To address the core drivers of forced labour, we developed the following three Priority Industry Principles:

**Enabling Collaboration and Improving the Lives of Workers Around the World**

**EVERY WORKER SHOULD HAVE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**

The ability of workers to move freely should not be restricted by their employer through abuse, threats and practices such as retention of passport and valuable possessions.

**NO WORKER SHOULD PAY FOR A JOB**

Fees and costs associated with recruitment and employment should be paid by the employer, not the employee.

**NO WORKER SHOULD BE INDEBTED OR COERCED TO WORK**

Workers should work freely, aware of the terms and conditions of their work in advance, and paid regularly as agreed.

Our members work to uphold these practices in their own operations, and use their collective voice to promote their adoption industry-wide and beyond. Our “Guidance on the Priority Industry Principles” document provides further information and concrete first steps that companies can take to implement the Principles.

See how our members are working towards the implementation of our Resolution on Forced Labour via our case studies booklet available on our website.
Social Resolution on Forced Labour: Full Text

“As the Board of The Consumer Goods Forum, we recognise our role as responsible businesses to respect and promote human rights and decent working conditions worldwide, in alignment with ongoing efforts such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other international frameworks including the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the recently launched United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of our wider efforts to promote human rights and decent working conditions worldwide, we acknowledge the broad societal problem of modern slavery and we strive to eradicate forced labour from our value chains. We will also continue not to tolerate forced labour within our own operations.

To do so, we will harness the power of collective action as an industry group to identify and address issues and geographies of shared concern, enhancing the efficiency of any individual company initiatives in this area.

In areas of shared concern, we will jointly develop specific action plans supporting the eradication of forced labour, in alignment with the widely embraced guidance provided by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

To achieve this ambitious goal, we will work closely with other industries, with governments and with civil society.”

Taking The Collective Approach

Working closely with governments, civil society and on the ground initiatives will be intrinsic to the success of our collective action on forced labour, and on effective steps to prevent, mitigate and remediate human rights. Through individual approaches and initiatives, our members have a long track record of promoting decent working conditions worldwide. Challenges such as forced labour, however, require us to strengthen these existing efforts through focused collective action. Thanks to the CGF’s global influence and convening power, we are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact, by engaging the industry alongside relevant institutions and stakeholders.

We have now started to hold events in key geographical areas with important partners such as the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) on responsible recruitment and employment. In 2018, alongside IHRB, we have issued a call-to-action, calling upon businesses to acknowledge the scale of these global problems and strive to accelerate action to eliminate them.

Join the Fight

Success for our industry can only be achieved if we stand together and act collaboratively on a global scale. Join your peers who are already working to eradicate forced labour from their supply chains.

Members interested in collaborating on the issue are welcome to join our member-led working groups.

“Through the gradual adoption of the Priority Industry Principles by CGF members, in collaboration with governments, NGOs, international labour organisations and civil society, we can go a long way to eradicate this daunting reality.”

Emmanuel Faber
CEO, Danone

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Social and Environmental Sustainability

Enabling collaboration and improving the lives of workers around the world