Seventy-eighth session
Item 73 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights:
implementation of human rights instruments

United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery
Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/122, provides an overview of the work of the United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery, in particular the recommendations for grants to beneficiary organizations that were adopted by the Board of Trustees of the fund at its twenty-seventh session, held in Geneva from 28 November to 2 December 2022. It also provides information on other recommendations adopted by the Board and activities related to the fund.

* A/78/150.
I. Introduction

A. Submission of the report

1. The present report was prepared in accordance with the arrangements approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/122, by which it established the United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery. It provides the recommendations adopted by the Board of Trustees of the fund at its twenty-seventh session, held in Geneva from 28 November to 2 December 2022. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights approved those recommendations on behalf of the Secretary-General on 3 February 2023.

B. Mandate of the fund

2. In line with resolution 46/122, the fund was established with the purpose of extending humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery. The fund receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations, private or public entities, and individuals.

C. Administration of the fund and Board of Trustees

3. The Secretary-General administers the fund through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with the advice of a board of trustees and in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

4. The Board of Trustees is composed of five members with relevant experience in the field of human rights and in particular issues of contemporary forms of slavery. They serve in their personal capacity and are appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard to equitable geographical distribution. The Board is composed of Hina Jilani (Pakistan), Danwood Mzikenge Chirwa (Malawi), Suamhirs Piraino-Guzman (Chair, Honduras), Ecaterina Schilling (Republic of Moldova) and Georgina Vaz Cabral (France).

II. Management of grants

A. Admissibility criteria

5. In accordance with the mandate of the fund, as set out in resolution 46/122, the beneficiaries of assistance from the fund are individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery. Project admissibility criteria are outlined in the fund’s guidelines.¹ Project proposals are aimed at delivering services to beneficiaries who are victims of contemporary forms of slavery and, when applicable, members of their families. Contemporary forms of slavery that qualify to benefit from project grants include traditional and descent-based slavery, servdom, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage, the worst forms of child labour, forced and child marriage, the sale of wives and inherited widows, trafficking in persons and human organs, sexual slavery, sale of children, commercial sexual exploitation of children and the use of children in armed conflict.

6. Grants are allocated to projects implemented by civil society organizations that are aimed at providing rehabilitation, reparation, empowerment and integration services to survivors of contemporary forms of slavery through direct assistance. This may include medical, psychological, social, legal, humanitarian and educational assistance, such as vocational or skills training, or other assistance in support of an independent livelihood. Detailed information on the types of assistance provided to survivors through the projects financed by the fund, as well as their impact on the lives of the beneficiaries, is available on the OHCHR website.²

B. Monitoring and evaluation

7. The fund’s secretariat conducts a thorough evaluation of all grant applications through a desk review. As part of the evaluation process, on-site visits to applicant organizations are normally conducted. During its twenty-seventh session, the Board reviewed criteria to select projects requiring a visit. They recommended that, as an oversight measure and to the extent possible, all projects should be visited before a grant is awarded and at least once during the five years of consecutive funding permitted under the guidelines of the fund for the use of grantees and applicants.

8. Following a two-year suspension of on-site visits due to coronavirus disease (COVID-19) travel restrictions in 2020 and 2021, on-site visits were resumed in 2022. In total, the fund’s secretariat, Board member Mr. Chirwa and OHCHR field presences visited 35 project applicants in 25 countries in 2022. The visits were conducted in Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Honduras, India, Italy, Lesotho, Liberia, Montenegro, Nigeria, Peru, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, Uganda and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

III. Financial situation of the fund

9. In 2022, the fund received contributions, pledges and public donations from 10 donors for a total of $878,892. The table below shows the contributions and pledges received in 2022.

**Contributions and pledges received in 2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date of receipt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andorra</td>
<td>10,288</td>
<td>11 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>141,034</td>
<td>14 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>100,300</td>
<td>15 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>310,237</td>
<td>2 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>15,756</td>
<td>20 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>10,660</td>
<td>15 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>1 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>14 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>20,682</td>
<td>14 December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date of receipt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>60 000</td>
<td>1 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</td>
<td>104 931</td>
<td>9 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>878 892</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Variance is due to rounding.

10. In 2021, the fund reached the milestone of $1 million for the first time in its 30-year history, with an income of $1,477,190. In 2022, however, contributions fell to previous levels. Underfunding and instability of income remain a chronic challenge for the fund. Since 2002, the fund has received a total of $14.7 million in contributions from Member States, which represents an average yearly income of $738,944. At the same time, the demand for funding has significantly exceeded the capacity of the fund to support projects, as admissible project applications that were received in 2023 amounted to a total of $3,747,883, nearly four times the current funding levels.

11. As at 30 June 2023, the fund had received $189,262 in contributions and pledges from two Member States (Australia and Qatar) for the year.

IV. Twenty-seventh session of the Board of Trustees and intersessional activities

12. The twenty-seventh session of the Board was held in Geneva from 28 November to 2 December 2022. In line with its programme of work, the Board considered four main issues: (a) grant-making and policy-related recommendations; (b) dialogue with the fund’s grantees; (c) coordination and strategic partnerships; and (d) the thirtieth anniversary of the fund and the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

13. On 13 September 2022, the Board held an intersessional meeting dedicated to the special call for the Sahel region. This intersessional meeting was a continuation of a prior intersessional Board meeting held on 23 May 2022 to discuss the adoption of an intersessional grant mechanism and approving the launch of a special call for assistance to survivors of traditional and descent-based slavery in the Sahel region (see paras. 22–25).

A. Grant-making and policy-related recommendations

14. During its annual call for 2023 applications, open from 15 January to 1 March 2022, the secretariat of the fund received 132 grant applications from civil society organizations for projects to be implemented between 1 January and 31 December 2023. After the applications were screened by the secretariat of the fund, 97 project applications were found admissible, amounting to $3,583,779 in requests for direct assistance to survivors of contemporary forms of slavery. Following evaluation by the secretariat, project applications were examined by the Board at its twenty-seventh session.

15. Previously, at its twenty-sixth session, the Board had decided that the fund would not include thematic priorities in its annual call for applications for 2023 in order to keep the fund open and accessible to all applicants assisting victims and survivors of contemporary forms of slavery. The Board, the fund’s secretariat and OHCHR field presences conducted outreach to organizations working with populations in situations of vulnerability, notably Indigenous Peoples, minorities, people on the move, persons with disabilities, older persons, those living in
homelessness, including street children, and those affected by climate change. Outreach was also conducted in regions underrepresented in the grants portfolio of the fund, notably Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Northern and Southern Africa, in 2022.

16. At its twenty-seventh session, the Board reviewed admissible project proposals recommended for funding by the secretariat following thorough evaluations. The grant-making process involved weighing the needs and merits of each application against available income. The Board also continued to apply the grant-making criteria adopted during the twenty-sixth session, notably prioritizing local organizations with limited access to additional resources. Based on a competitive review process, the Board recommended the approval of 38 annual grants for 2023 amounting to $881,500. The High Commissioner, on behalf of the Secretary-General, approved these recommendations on 3 February 2023.

17. Through those 38 grants, the fund is assisting more than 7,700 slavery survivors in 32 countries in 2023 to facilitate reintegration and empowerment. For example, in Kenya, with a grant of $20,000 to the Kenya Workers Rights and Harmonization Programme, 500 survivors of forced labour and debt bondage, including 96 children, are receiving medical, psychological, social and legal support. In Brazil, with a grant of $30,000 to the Centro de Defesa da Vida e dos Direitos Humanos Carmen Bascarán, 750 survivors of forced labour in the agriculture sector in the State of Maranhão, including to a number of refugees from Indigenous groups, are receiving social, legal and humanitarian support. In Kyrgyzstan, Aryyjan-Karakol is providing shelter and holistic support to 50 survivors of early and forced marriage and bride kidnapping with a grant of $15,000. In Serbia, with a grant of $15,000 to ASTRA Anti-Trafficking Action, 60 survivors of human trafficking are receiving medical, psychological and legal support, as well as vocational skills training and counselling.

18. Figures I and II show the 38 approved grants for 2023 by region and by type of contemporary form of slavery.

Figure I

Grants awarded for 2023, by region

- Africa: 26%
- Asia and the Pacific: 16%
- Eastern Europe: 16%
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 18%
- Western Europe and other States: 24%
19. In order to encourage sustainability and to give new organizations an opportunity to receive a grant, the Board recommended extending the ineligibility period from one year to two years following five consecutive years of funding. Finally, the Board agreed not to activate the dormant capacity-building funding stream, while deciding to maintain the possibility of awarding emergency grants should additional funding be available.

20. During its annual call for applications for 2024, open from 15 January to 1 March 2023, the secretariat of the fund received 138 grant applications from civil society organizations for projects to be implemented between 1 January and 31 December 2024. Project applications were screened for admissibility by the secretariat of the fund in March and April 2023. A total of 90 project applications were found admissible, amounting to $3,747,883 in requests for direct assistance to victims and survivors of contemporary forms of slavery. The Board is expected to make annual grant recommendations regarding those applications at its twenty-eighth session, scheduled to be held from 27 November to 1 December 2023 in Geneva.

21. Following the Board recommendation in 2022 to conduct a comprehensive revision of the fund’s guidelines in 2023, a timeline and main policy orientations were established. The Board also provided guidance on budget issues, including amounts for grants (set at $15,000–$35,000), income-generating activities to prevent exploitation of project beneficiaries, legal and court awards, and financial sustainability.

**Special call for the Sahel region**

22. In 2022, under the intersessional grant mechanism, the fund launched a special call for the Sahel region in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to build the capacity of survivor associations and grass-roots organizations addressing the often-overlooked needs of survivors of traditional and decent-based slavery in the Sahel region.

23. On 1 June 2022, the fund’s secretariat sent a targeted call for proposals to 19 civil society organizations that assist survivors of traditional and descent-based slavery in the region that had been identified by OHCHR and ILO field presences. Of those, 17 submitted project applications to the fund for $568,128 in requested funds in order to assist 5,729 survivors of traditional and decent-based slavery in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. The deadline for submitting applications for projects to be implemented in 2023 was 1 July 2022. The secretariat of the fund screened all project applications submitted, finding 14 of them admissible. The secretariat then conducted evaluations of all admissible applications. Following this desk review, the OHCHR and ILO field presences in Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the
Niger, as well as the International Organization for Migration field presence in Kayes, Mali, conducted on-site visits to the shortlisted organizations in order to further assess their capacity to implement the projects.

24. The Board examined the project applications and secretariat evaluations and made recommendations on grants during an intersessional call held remotely on 13 September 2022. The Board recommended nine grants for a total of $270,000 to assist approximately 5,000 slavery survivors of traditional and descent-based slavery with psychological, social, legal, humanitarian and vocational services in Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger.

25. On 13 September 2022, during the intersessional meeting, the Board had a dialogue with the Chief of the Africa Section, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch, of ILO to discuss traditional and descent-based slavery and learn about ILO work in the Sahel region. They discussed in particular obstacles that the anti-slavery movement continues to face when seeking to address descent-based slavery, and how the fund’s practical partnership with ILO could be leveraged to overcome them while building on the momentum of recent achievements. Technical assistance to grass-roots organizations was identified as a key means of achieving meaningful and sustainable change, notably in remote locations.

Umoja grantor management module and United Nations Partner Portal

26. The disbursement of annual grants for 2022 was conducted for the first time through the Umoja grantor management module, a requirement for all United Nations Secretariat entities. As a result, organizations receiving grants are now required to register on the United Nations Partner Portal. The Board raised concerns about payment delays resulting from the transition process, as well as any potential limitations of access to grantees. These risks are being managed and mitigated by OHCHR.

B. Dialogue with the fund’s grantees

27. In order to learn more about the achievements and challenges faced by the fund’s grantees, on 28 November 2022, the Board held an informal online dialogue with representatives from the following entities from each geographical region: Centro de Defesa da Vida e dos Direitos Humanos Carmen Bascarán (Brazil); Saint Andrew’s Refugee Services (Egypt); Aryyjan-Karakol (Kyrgyzstan); Caritas Ukraine (Ukraine); and Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (United Kingdom).

28. During the online dialogue, representatives of the fund’s grantees informed the Board about the challenges they faced when working on women’s rights issues in rural areas, particularly regarding survivors of bride kidnapping and sexual violence. They also described attempts to change legislation in relation to violence against women but stressed that there was an implementation gap between law and practice. Representatives also briefed the Board about challenges in assisting survivors of trafficking during active conflict, including identifying and screening beneficiaries, and the various forms of contemporary slavery that emerge or increase in such contexts. Lastly, they underlined the necessity of awareness-raising campaigns for children at risk of cyberexploitation and the importance of psychosocial support, including peer support mechanisms.

C. Coordination and strategic partnerships

29. The Board continued to pursue closer coordination with other actors involved in the field of contemporary forms of slavery, in particular United Nations human
rights mechanisms to discuss complementary roles, priorities and possible synergies in order to develop a common agenda to combat contemporary forms of slavery. Public activities were part of the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the fund (see paras. 38–44).

Special procedures of the Human Rights Council

30. On 1 December 2022, the Board met with the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Siobhán Mullally, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Tomoya Obokata, and OHCHR staff supporting the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. During the meeting, the Board requested that mandate holders continue to highlight the needs of survivors of contemporary forms of slavery for holistic services, and the role of the fund, including during interactions with Member States, to encourage contributions. They also agreed to continue to operationalize their complementary role by liaising before and after Special Rapporteur country visits in order to enable the survivors interviewed and the organizations supporting them to obtain access to the fund. The Board also expressed interest in engaging with the special rapporteurs on the issues of homeless children at risk of trafficking and exploitation, as well as digital slavery and the intersection of technology and contemporary slavery, among other topics of mutual concern.

31. On 16 September 2022, during the fifty-first session of the Human Rights Council, the fund co-organized a side event with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery entitled “Minorities subjected to contemporary forms of slavery: addressing a global concern”. This event took place in conjunction with the introduction of the Special Rapporteur’s thematic report on contemporary forms of slavery affecting persons belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minority communities (A/HRC/51/26) and addressed how those groups are disproportionately subjected to contemporary forms of slavery.

32. On 29 July 2022, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, the Board released a joint statement with the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and other mandate holders entitled “The international community must strengthen prevention and accountability for trafficking in persons in conflict situations”. They raised serious concerns about the risks of trafficking for those displaced by conflict, including increased risks of child trafficking. The text also included a call for donations to the fund.

33. On 28 November 2022, Board member Ms. Jilani addressed the opening plenary of the Forum on Business and Human Rights, reminding hundreds of business leaders, human rights defenders and other stakeholders of the risks of contemporary slavery in the context of business operations.

Human rights treaty bodies

34. On 2 December 2022, the Board held an online meeting with the then Chair of the Human Rights Committee, Photini Pazartzis, with the objective of exploring areas of collaboration. The Board raised the need to give greater visibility to the issue of contemporary forms of slavery on the human rights agenda, suggesting that the Committee could play a decisive role, including in providing guidance on the interpretation of article 8 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Board agreed to encourage grantees of the fund to engage with the Committee, including by submitting information for the review of State party reports.

African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

35. The secretariat of the fund and the OHCHR East Africa Regional Office organized a series of events on the prohibition of slavery in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights within the framework of the seventy-third ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in Banjul. These activities were also aimed at increasing the visibility of the fund and its role in assisting survivors and strengthening civil society, thereby fostering mutual collaboration with anti-slavery movements and actors in Africa. On 28 October 2022, as part of the thirtieth anniversary celebrations, the fund, with the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, co-organized a side event of the seventy-third ordinary session of the African Commission entitled “Aiding survivors of torture and contemporary forms of slavery in Africa” (see para. 43).

36. The High Commissioner, during his opening speech to the seventy-third ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, highlighted the role that the fund had played in providing vital assistance to victims of grave human rights violations in the past three decades, including through emergency assistance and the launch of a special call for the Sahel region (see paras. 22–25). He also stated that the funds’ operational approach complements the work of other United Nations mechanisms.

37. To further strengthen this partnership, on 3 March 2023, the secretariat provided an online briefing to the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights during its seventy-fourth ordinary session. The meeting covered the United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery, as well as the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. Commissioners expressed interest in the funds, noting cross-cutting issues of common concern, such as migration, deprivation of liberty and violence against women.

United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children

38. The Board met online with the secretariat of the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, served by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to discuss complementary roles and possible synergies between the funds. It also sought to learn more about the voluntary trust fund’s working methods, including calls for proposals, its planned impact assessment, as well as other planned activities and priorities. The Board considers this regular exchange useful and recommends continued working-level contact among secretariats, as well as convening a meeting between the respective Boards of Trustees of each fund.

D. Thirtieth anniversary of the fund

39. The fund’s thirtieth anniversary commemoration spanned more than one year, with highlights marking the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery on 2 December 2021 and 2022. The celebrations involved hosting and convening a series of events. The fund also produced various communications products, all highlighting the resilience of survivors of slavery on their road to recovery, including 30 profiles of survivors and practitioners, videos and a social media package for donors and partners.

---


5 See https://trello.com/b/6evAeeQU/un-slavery-fund.
40. The thirtieth anniversary celebrations were launched in a webinar entitled “Road to recovery: improving the response to contemporary forms of slavery for vulnerable groups, including displaced persons”. The event was held on 21 September 2021 in conjunction with the introduction of the report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery to the forty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council, entitled “Nexus between displacement and contemporary forms of slavery” (A/HRC/48/52).

41. Following this event, a social media campaign aimed at raising awareness of the continuing needs of victims and survivors of contemporary forms of slavery and of the fund’s role in addressing them was organized. To highlight the fund’s transformative impact on the lives of beneficiaries, 30 profiles of slavery survivors and the civil society practitioners accompanying them on the road to recovery were released for 30 days, following the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery on 2 December 2022.

42. As part of the commemorations, the fund also participated in and co-sponsored activities. For example, it co-sponsored a subregional event on slavery in the Sahel region organized by the Government of Mauritania and the Group of Five for the Sahel Anti-Slavery Network in Nouakchott on 16 and 17 March 2022. Board member and former Chair Ms. Cabral gave a presentation on the work of the fund and challenges related to the provision of assistance to survivors of slavery. On 5 May 2022, Board member and Chair, Mr. Chirwa, participated and delivered an online presentation during the Night of Global Social Rights, organized by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. On 16 September 2022, Board member Ms. Schilling gave a speech at a side event of the fifty-first session of the Human Rights Council entitled “Minorities subjected to contemporary forms of slavery: addressing a global concern” (see para. 31).

43. The celebrations of the anniversary concluded on 2 December 2022, International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, with a public event entitled “Road to recovery: 30 years supporting victims of contemporary forms of slavery”, co-sponsored and chaired by Germany. The event took place on the final day of the twenty-seventh session of the Board and featured testimony from grantees, survivors, donors, trustees and United Nations experts. They explained how holistic services provided thanks to the fund’s support prevent further victimization, fostering the transformation of project beneficiaries from victims to survivors to advocates. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery concluded the panel with an appeal for the fund, complementing the joint statement issued by United Nations independent experts on the same day (see paras. 47–49).

44. As the anniversary year concluded, the Board recommended an impact assessment of its work over the previous decades, as an opportunity to draw lessons to improve monitoring, evaluation, learning and accountability systems and tools.

E. Intersessional grant mechanism

45. In 2022, the Board adopted the inclusion of an additional section XII, Special calls, to the current guidelines of the fund for the use of applicants and grantees. The Board recommended that, on an exceptional basis and subject to the availability of funding, the fund may issue, during the intersessional period, thematic or geographical special calls for applications to organizations and other established channels of assistance that deliver direct assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery underrepresented in the current annual grants portfolio of the fund (thematic) or provide such assistance in countries underrepresented in the current ongoing grants overall portfolio of the fund (geographical). The Board also set the
admissibility criteria and the rules of procedures for organizations submitting applications under special calls.\(^6\)

V. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

46. On the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, a statement\(^7\) was issued by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery with the Board of Trustees of the fund. The statement was also endorsed by other special procedures mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

47. In the statement, the experts expressed concern over an alarming rise in the number of people subjected to trafficking in persons and contemporary forms of slavery due to conflict and crisis, including the continued pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic and the adverse effects of climate change. They also highlighted that 28 million people are estimated to be in situations of forced labour, predominantly in the private sector. They emphasized the need to strengthen human rights compliance, oversight and due diligence in alignment with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Experts also underlined that contemporary forms of slavery have an outsized impact on members of ethnic, religious or belief, and linguistic minority communities, migrant workers and workers in the informal economy, and that women and girls are disproportionately affected by certain manifestations of slavery.

48. To prevent exploitation, which may amount to contemporary forms of slavery, experts called on States and businesses to take concrete steps to ensure workers’ association and collective bargaining rights, safe and dignified working conditions, expanded social safety nets, strengthened labour inspectorates and rights-based migration governance, easy access to protection and increased access to adequate health care and health services. Experts also emphasized the importance of psychological support, remedy and reintegration for those freed from slavery and of combating forced labour and trafficking in supply chains. Experts also called on States to address the practice of child and forced marriage by ensuring adequate civil and criminal protections against this crime and by investing in the agency of women and girls. Finally, experts appealed to States to step up their contributions to the fund.

49. In a statement issued on the same day,\(^8\) the Secretary-General expressed concern at the growing prevalence of contemporary forms of slavery. He called upon Member States and civil society to recommit to eradicating slavery and stressed that “increased action needs to be taken with full participation of all stakeholders, including the private sector, trade unions, civil society and human rights institutions”.

VI. How to contribute to the fund

50. Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities are invited to contribute to the fund. Donors should indicate “for the slavery fund, account SH” on a payment order. For more information on how to contribute and further details about the fund, donors are requested to contact the secretariat of the fund at the following address:

---

\(^6\) Guidelines of the fund for the use of grantees and applicants, paras. 93–95.


VII. Conclusions and recommendations

51. The fund continues to play an indispensable role in enabling victims and survivors of contemporary forms of slavery to gain access to essential services, by supporting civil society organizations and other service providers. Since its establishment 30 years ago, the fund has awarded more than $11.5 million through over 890 grants in 110 countries helping tens of thousands of victims and survivors to recover their lives and dignity. For 2023 alone, the fund awarded 38 annual grants to civil society organizations providing direct medical, psychological, social and legal services to over 7,700 victims and survivors in 33 countries across the world subjected to contemporary forms of slavery, such as the worst forms of child labour, bonded and forced labour, sexual exploitation and child, early and forced marriage. The fund also awarded nine additional grants under a special call for the Sahel region to assist approximately 5,000 survivors of descent-based slavery in four countries.

52. In 2022, the fund received contributions, pledges and public donations from 10 donors amounting to $878,892. As it finalizes its thirtieth anniversary, the fund would need to enlarge its donor base to receive a minimum of $3 million yearly to respond adequately to the high demand for the fund’s assistance from civil society actors worldwide. The applications received represent a small fraction of the real needs of persons to be liberated from slavery and to gain access to services to recover. The Board of Trustees, as well as the Secretary-General, urges all countries and other stakeholders to intensify their efforts to support victims and survivors by contributing to the United Nations voluntary trust fund on contemporary forms of slavery.