

FREEDOM STRATEGY



DEFINED

The Freedom Strategy developed by Engage Together® defines all **areas of focus that must be addressed simultaneously** within your community in order to end human trafficking and to protect the vulnerable. This strategy has been distilled from years of research and countless conversations with those in the field. It is built to scale from local community efforts to the entire global movement, and applies to labor and sex trafficking. If communities are strong in one area, but lacking in another, gaps will be present that will allow trafficking to continue. For instance, if we are **rescuing** victims without having **restoration** resources available, then survivors may become victims again. If we are strong in **identifying** trafficking situations, but our laws are in need of **reforms** regarding both victims and perpetrators, we have work yet to do. If we are not focused on **preventing** human trafficking in the first place, vulnerable individuals will continue to be exploited.

PREVENTION

Much of the fight to end human trafficking is won by preventing it in the first place. In order to PREVENT human trafficking, communities must be made **aware** that trafficking exists and must be educated about what puts children, youth, and adults at risk in their cities. While there is no one face of a human trafficking victim, certain populations are more **vulnerable**. Understanding and addressing factors that lead to vulnerability will aid in preventing exploitation. Further, without **demand**, human trafficking would not exist. We must address this root problem - in the lives of individuals, in our culture, and in our laws and policies.

IDENTIFICATION

The next step in combating human trafficking is to IDENTIFY victims. There is much work to be done in this area of focus. Those who are most likely to be in contact with victims - such as law enforcement officers, health care providers, teachers, parents, service industry workers, and others - need **training** to properly identify and detect a case of trafficking. Additionally, **outreach** to vulnerable populations is also essential to identify trafficking operations.

RESCUE/EXIT

Once properly identified, those caught in trafficking situations must be RESCUED, or else provided support if they are able to EXIT on their own. While it is the responsibility of law enforcement officials to **intervene** physically and remove victims from dangerous circumstances, community members are needed and positioned to assist in this moment. Victims of human trafficking have many immediate and critical needs, including **temporary shelter** for immediate and safe housing; **services** such as medical, dental, legal, and counseling; and **victim advocates** who will come alongside and link them to needed resources in the community. Increasing the availability of these resources ensures that every victim of human trafficking receives the instant care they need.

RESTORATION

Survivors of human trafficking, whether upon rescue or after exit, need access to appropriate RESTORATIVE **aftercare** programs and/or service offerings, tailored to meet the needs of each individual. The range of care may include medical, psychological, familial, spiritual, educational, and vocational services. Needs differ greatly from adults to minors, and from foreign national to domestic survivors. The end goal, however, is the same - a successful **reintegration** and a solid foundation upon which to build a healthy, safe, and fulfilling future.

REFORMS

In addition to all the above, we must also take affirmative steps to REFORM our **laws** and **policies**, and even entire **systems** that are in place to care for the vulnerable. This process requires first becoming informed and then considering how to enact laws and policies that protect victims and deter perpetrators (both traffickers and buyers). It is also critically important to assess whether our policies - at the legislative level and in our own communities - are addressing this issue appropriately. Further, monitoring the impact of reforms is essential to understand whether efforts are successful or need to be further refined and enhanced.