

FLIP

Forced Labor Indicators Project

Introduction from the FLIP Team

In 2024, the Forced Labor Indicators Project (FLIP) made significant strides in addressing forced labor and human trafficking risks in West Africa. Through a sub-regional forum, training initiatives, and high-level visits, FLIP strengthened partnerships across Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. FLIP brought together stakeholders from civil society, government, and the private sector. This collaborative effort is helping to build capacity, raise awareness, and develop sustainable strategies for addressing labor exploitation in the region. With growing momentum and commitment, FLIP is poised for continued success in 2025.



Group picture of participants of the sub-regional forum for members of the FLIP Technical Working

Sub-regional forum for members of the FLIP TWGs from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana

The Forced Labor Indicators Project (FLIP) successfully convened a sub-regional forum on forced labor and human trafficking in Cotonou, Benin on November 21 and 22, 2024, bringing together FLIP Technical Working Groups (TWGs) from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana.

This forum brought together stakeholders across sectors, from civil society organizations and labor unions to business leaders and government officials, to create a platform for knowledge exchange and strategic collaboration.

Participants shared:

1. Critical insights into new forms of trafficking and forced labor
2. Successful interventions and best practices
3. Regional challenges
4. Strategies for successful cross-border coordination

This forum laid the groundwork for enhanced cross-border cooperation, ushering in a new era of joint action against human trafficking and forced labor among the three West African nations. With support from the U.S. Department of Labor, Verité is strengthening multi-stakeholder networks and transforming their extensive knowledge of forced labor and human trafficking risks into scalable prevention strategies.



Group picture of speakers from left to right: Laurette Tovalou, Josephine Dadzie, Madam Adidjatou Mathys, Shawn MacDonald



Left: Verité's CEO Shawn MacDonald and the Minister of Labor and Public Service of Benin, Madam Adidjatou Mathys Right: Josephine Dadzie and the Minister of Labor and Public Service of Benin, Madam Adidjatou Mathys

Verité CEO's visit to West Africa in November 2024

On his way to the FLIP sub-regional forum in November, Verité CEO Dr. Shawn MacDonald visited each of FILP's country teams. The visit underscores Verité's commitment to fostering partnerships for sustainable and fair labor standards worldwide.

During his visit to Ghana, Dr. MacDonald engaged in a series of meetings with key stakeholders. As part of his itinerary, he paid courtesy calls on the Chief Labor Officer of the Labor Department under the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR), the Secretary General of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), and the General Secretary of the General Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU). These meetings facilitated discussions on strides made to address labor issues and the need for collaborative efforts to promote ethical labor practices.



Left: Shawn MacDonald meets with the TUC of Ghana Right: Shawn MacDonald meets with the Chief Labor Officer of the MELR

The FLIP team in Côte d'Ivoire were also glad to welcome the Verité CEO to meet with the team and observe FLIP operations.

While in Côte d'Ivoire, the CEO met with the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP) to discuss collaboration. He commended the CNLTP's work and partnership with Verité in addressing human trafficking and forced labor.



Shawn MacDonald meets with CNLTP at their office

Benin Country Updates



Exchange sessions with unions and employers association

On the sidelines of the FLIP sub-regional forum, the CEO of Verité met with partner institutions of FLIP, including trade union confederations and employers' associations. These meetings helped strengthen the collaboration between Beninese stakeholders and the FLIP team. Discussions focused on the challenges facing the private sector in Benin, the challenges facing workers in Benin, the activities of informal sector workers in the economic sector, and opportunities for collaboration with Verité.



Exchange session between Verité and the union members

Exchange session between Verité and Benin's Minister of Labor and Public Service

On November 20, 2024, a team from Verité, led by the Verité CEO, Dr. Shawn MacDonald, met with the Minister of Labor and Public Service of Benin, Madame Adidjatou Mathys, and officials of the Ministry. In her opening statement, the Minister thanked Verité for its efforts and expressed support for initiatives to improve working conditions and protect vulnerable individuals. Dr. Shawn MacDonald, Verité's CEO, emphasized the importance of policy revision, local capacity building, and regional collaboration.



Meeting between Verité CEO Dr. Shawn MacDonald and the Minister of Labor and Public Service, Madam Adidjatou Mathys

Forced Labor Training for NGOs and the Police – November 5 to 6, 2024

In collaboration with RAO (West African Network of NGOs), FLIP held a training on indicators of forced labor and human trafficking in Porto Novo on November 5 and 6, 2025. A total of 32 people participated, including 25 NGO staff, 5 police officers, and staff from the National Office for the Protection of Minors. The opening session of the training was attended by the Departmental Director of Labor for the department of Ouémé. Day one covered topics such as the definitions of forced labor and human trafficking, international standards, and the legal landscape in Benin, with interactive case studies and discussions on the root causes and risks of forced labor. Day two focused on practical tools for risk assessment, collaboration with stakeholders, and strategies for preventing forced labor. Furthermore, the General Director of Labor presented the importance of work contracts and the declaration of workers, whatever their status. The event concluded with a discussion of labor contracts, the presentation of certificates, and recognition of the training's success and impact.



Left: Group picture of participants of the Forced Labor Training for NGOs and the Police on November 5 to 6, 2024 Right: Benin Country Director Mrs. Laurette Tovalou presents a certificate to

Awareness raising training for Craftsmen in Abomey-Calavi on forced labor, child labor, and the applicable rules in Benin

On Friday, November 29, 2024, a sensitization session took place at the Abomey-Calavi Town Hall, gathering 69 local craftsmen to raise awareness of forced labor, child labor, and relevant laws in Benin. The event began with speeches from the President of APDFT, the representative of the Departmental Director of Labor and Public Service-Atlantic (DDTFP-Atlantic), and the Benin FLIP Country Director. The Mayor officially opened the session, emphasizing the importance of these issues for community development. Presentations from Verité, CNP-Benin, and DDTFP-Atlantic explained the dangers of forced labor, human trafficking, and child labor. Participants, many of whom were unaware of these issues, engaged in discussions and shared concerns. The session ended with resolutions focused on addressing forced labor and child labor, along with strategies to raise awareness and vigilance in the community.



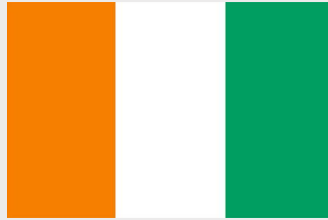
Group picture of participants of the awareness raising training for Craftsmen in Abomey-Calavi on forced labor, child labor, and the applicable rules in Benin

Stepdown training for labor inspectors in the Ouémé and Plateau departments

On December 12 and 13, 2024, Verité, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Public Service, organized a training workshop at Novelas Hotel in Abomey-Calavi for 10 participants, including labor inspectors and controllers from the Plateau and Ouémé departments. The workshop focused on enhancing participants' ability to identify and prevent forced labor. Through case studies and discussions, participants explored solutions to challenges in the informal economy. This is part of a series of stepdown trainings conducted by labor inspectors who have received capacity building on forced labor from Verité through a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach. The trainings will allow

them to cascade the knowledge down to their colleagues.

Côte D'Ivoire Country Updates



FLIP builds the capacity of media professionals

From October 24 to 25, 2024, Verité conducted a two-day training for 12 media professionals in Côte d'Ivoire. The training covered forced labor, human trafficking, and relevant legal contexts. Pre- and post-training tests showed significant improvement in participants' understanding. They learned to identify risks, understand root causes, and develop awareness strategies. By the end, participants were able to design awareness raising projects with clear strategies, target audiences, timelines, and key messages. Feedback suggested extending the training to peers in key regions of the country.



Group picture of media professional training participants with their certificates

Ghana Country Updates



The Ghana Employers' Association (GEA) collaborates with Verité and the Ghana Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR) in Accra for a Training of Trainers (ToT) on forced labor

From October 15 to 17, 2024, the FLIP team in Ghana, in collaboration with the Ghana Employers' Association (GEA) and the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR), hosted a three-day training for 20 members of the GEA from various sectors, including health, agriculture, finance, and fisheries. The training focused on forced labor, human trafficking, and the use of ILO forced labor indicators. Participants were tasked with creating action plans to raise awareness and empower their institutions on these issues, particularly in their roles as employers.



GEA members attend the training of trainers

The Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) receives training on forced labor for its Gender Desk

The Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) supports cocoa farmers through disease control, seed production, farm improvements, and education. In partnership with FLIP, CHED hosted two two-day training sessions for its Gender Desk Unit from November 11 to 15, 2024, at Bunso Cocoa College, with 74 participants from all seven cocoa regions. The training covered forced labor, human trafficking, and the ILO's forced labor indicators, emphasizing the importance of subject area expertise as government and private sector actors collaborate to raise awareness and

empower stakeholders across the cocoa value chain.



Left: Group picture of the first batch of participants Right: Group picture of the second batch of participants

2024 FLIP Year in Review

FLIP's 2024 progress highlights **significant strides in addressing forced labor and human trafficking** across Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, building on the success of 2023. Throughout the year, FLIP has fostered stronger partnerships and expanded its impact, focusing on the interconnectedness of forced labor, human trafficking, and international regulations.

In Ghana, FLIP **strengthened collaborations** with the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations, conducting training in two pilot districts for the Child Labor Free Zones program as well as a training for law enforcement officers also received training with the Ministry of Gender, Childre and Social Protection. **The team also partnered with the Economic and Organized Crime Office to improve its capacity to address forced labor and human trafficking.** The quarterly Technical Working Group (TWG) met quarterly to strengthen collaboration among members.

In Côte d'Ivoire, **FLIP trained 43 diplomats** from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on forced labor and human trafficking, in partnership with the National Committee for the Fight Against Human Trafficking and the IOM. **The team also trained members of the National House of Kings and Chiefs.** The CDI TWG also met to review ongoing initiatives and future plans.

Benin marked a key milestone in May with the official launch of FLIP activities, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and other stakeholders. Several impactful training sessions followed, targeting unions, civil society organizations, and labor inspectors to raise awareness and build capacity on forced labor.

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire collaborated on **a joint awareness-raising event in the Sud-Comoé region** in Côte d'Ivoire.

New team members joined FLIP in 2024, including Laurette Tovalou (Benin Country Director), Maria Djon (Project Associate, Benin), Annie Bauer (Program Manager), Sophiatou Babaedjou Collee (Côte d'Ivoire Country Director), and Stéphane Monney (Project Associate, Côte d'Ivoire), enhancing FLIP's capacity to drive its mission forward.

With expanding collaborations and growing impact, **FLIP remains poised for continued success** on efforts in addressing forced labor and human

Year End Message

On behalf of the FLIP team, we thank you all our stakeholders, especially our Technical Working Group (TWG) members from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana for your support of the project. We wish you all a happy and healthy 2025!



Elizabeth Garland
Chief Program Officer, Verité



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Global Program Director, FLIP



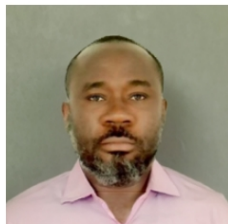
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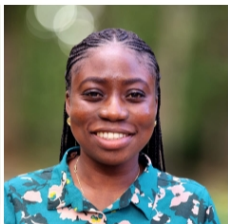
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