



Federal Ministry
of Labour and Social Affairs



ALLIANCE

Pathfinder Roadmap of the Federal Republic of Germany

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Foreword

“Human trafficking, forced labour and child labour are serious human rights violations. Combating them effectively at the international and national level is a matter of highest moral priority for us and a declared aim of Germany.”

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**Lilian Tschan, State Secretary,
Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs**

Germany has been a partner of Alliance 8.7 since 2017. This global alliance, of which the International Labour Organization is a co-initiator, is dedicated to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 (2030 Agenda) of a world without forced labour, human trafficking and child labour. Partner countries are committed to taking immediate, effective action to end forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking and the worst forms of child labour by 2030, and to end child labour in all its forms by 2025.

In the summer of 2021, Federal Labour Minister Hubertus Heil expressed Germany's interest in becoming a Pathfinder Country in order to increase and strengthen Germany's commitment for Alliance 8.7 and its goals at both national and international level. As part of its application, Germany organised two strategy workshops and drafted the attached roadmap. It serves as a guideline for Germany's commitment going forward, and brings together what Germany is doing to help to achieve Goal 8.7. On 15 February 2023, Germany presented the roadmap to the Global Coordinating Group (GCG) of Alliance 8.7 and officially received Pathfinder status. While the roadmap does not explicitly highlight the elimination of modern slavery as an area of action, the elimination of forced labour as one form of modern slavery is the key element of the roadmap.

In light of the impact of the pandemic on the incidence of forced labour and child labour worldwide and the approaching deadlines of the target, Alliance 8.7 provides an indispensable framework for international cooperation to make the required progress in the fight against forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour.



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The challenge and the target

8.7

The situation globally

Modern slavery and forced labour:

In 2021, fifty million people around the world live in forms of modern slavery according to the estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Of these, 28 million are victims of forced labour. These figures must encourage to action. The urgency of the need for action is also demonstrated by the fact that since the last survey in 2016, the number of victims of modern slavery has increased by 10 million.

Before the pandemic, the international community had had significant success in combating forced labour. However, the COVID-19 pandemic reversed the positive trend, and the situation has worsened dramatically since. Often, the crisis led to a significant worsening of working conditions that were already exploitative. Victims of labour exploitation are forced into a spiral of abuse that often ends in forced labour and human trafficking. Among the groups of workers at increased risk due to the pandemic are migrant workers stranded in precarious conditions and domestic workers, most of whom are women.



Human trafficking:

With regard to human trafficking a seemingly paradoxical effect can be seen: According to the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons from 2022 (GLOTIP 2022), the number of identified victims of trafficking is decreasing for the first time in 20 years. This is not grounds for complacency. It is rather almost certainly a statistical effect resulting from the fact that the global COVID-19 pandemic has limited the possibilities of identifying victims and prosecuting perpetrators. The pandemic has pushed the whole phenomenon further underground or onto the internet. For the most recent data period, 2020, GLOTIP 2022 indicates that on average one victim of all forms of trafficking is identified per 100,000 inhabitants in 120 countries.

The exact extent of human trafficking is difficult to estimate reliably because of undetected cases. It is recognised, however, that trafficking in human beings is a complex, global phenomenon. To a large extent, its causes lie in the economic and social inequalities between the individual countries and regions as well as within the individual societies. Climate change and the accompanying destruction of many livelihoods is becoming an increasingly important factor.

Child labour:

There has also been an increase in child labour worldwide for the first time in 20 years. The number of affected children rose to 160 million worldwide in 2020. This means that about one in ten children is engaged in exploitative child labour. Almost half of them, 79 million, work under the worst conditions. These include exploitative child labour in the agriculture, industry/mining and services sectors, commercial sexual exploitation and being used in armed conflicts.

Sub-Saharan Africa has seen the largest increase in the proportion of children working in recent years. This is particularly true for children aged 5-11. This means that more children are engaged in child labour in that region than in all other regions of the world combined (86 million, about 24% of all children).

The progress made so far in eliminating child labour has been partially reversed due to multi-factorial causes and remains under acute threat. In addition to existing vulnerabilities, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are responsible for the increase. On top of reduced family income and rising poverty, COVID-19-related school closures led to more child labour. Furthermore, more children have been forced to work due to increasing socio-economic pressures and food insecurity as a result of climate change. Without increasing its ambition, the target formulated by the global community as SDG 8.7 to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025 will be missed.



The Situation in Germany

Forced labour:

Germany has also seen an increase in cases of labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking. Although the absolute number of closed cases is only at 28 (closed cases in 2021), in comparison to previous years there has been a steady increase in cases. The low absolute numbers are no reason to assume that the situation in Germany is a single outlier in an otherwise successful prevention effort. Close cooperation with the counselling centres and other actors shows that there must be a considerable number of undetected cases. Work needs to be done to improve this. In particular, there is a need for successful investigations and prosecutions, and the establishment of a reliable database.

Successfully preventing forced labour, labour exploitation and human trafficking in this context is also crucial for Germany as a country that is a destination for immigration. This applies in particular to the low-wage sector, where workers are sometimes employed without sufficient knowledge of their own rights.

Human trafficking:

According to the „[Bundeslagebild Menschenhandel](#)“ („Federal Report on Trafficking in Human Beings“), taking all forms of trafficking in human beings together, 510 investigations in the field of human trafficking and exploitation were concluded in 2021 (including offences against minors). However, the federal report only covers the criminal cases that were detected; here, too, a considerable number of undetected cases can be assumed.

Supplementary information on the phenomenon is provided by the “[Data Report on Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Germany 2021](#)” by the “Bundesweiter Koordinierungskreis gegen Menschenhandel e.V.” (German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings), whose data was collected by specialised counselling centres for victims of human trafficking. It was possible to evaluate 612 cases. According to the records of the specialised counselling centres, only in very few cases (29% of the documented cases) was an investigation started. Only these cases can be included in the police statistics.

This shows the important role that civil society has not only in the fight against human trafficking, but also in the (statistical) documentation of human trafficking on the one hand. On the other, it shows that even more precise data and data collection is necessary in order to adequately document the phenomenon and take action against it.

Value chains:

In addition to its responsibility for the situation in Germany, Germany’s Federal Government is also committed to the universal protection of human rights and guaranteeing decent work around the world. It is the duty of the Federal Government to take measures to ensure that companies respect human rights by implementing due diligence obligations. Our companies with business activities around the globe must also take responsibility around the globe for the people who make, transport or sell their products, or who are affected by their operations as locals.

The current situation of many people working along global value chains is unacceptable. This is especially true in view of the rising numbers of forced labour and child labour. A total of 1.4 billion people worldwide work under inhumane conditions. Those affected by business-related human rights abuses in transnational value chains rarely have access to effective remedies. At the root of this problem is a global governance gap that can only be closed through binding due diligence obligations for companies along their supply and value chains. This requires efforts at all levels: national, European and international.

Target 8.7

While some progress has been made, much remains left to be done and target 8.7 continues to be of fundamental relevance:

Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

Target 8.7 belongs to goal 8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” as one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. They were adopted by all UN member states in 2015 as 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Goals representing an urgent call for action.



**The way
forward**

Alliance 8.7

The Alliance 8.7 was launched in September 2016 during a side event of the UN General Assembly to join forces to achieve target 8.7. It is a global multi-stakeholder partnership co-initiated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) that is committed to eliminate child labour by 2025, and forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030. In February 2017, key stakeholders met in Wilton Park, UK, to establish the cornerstones of the Alliance 8.7, develop its governance structure and set priorities. It is a unique initiative whose members include governments, international organizations such as UNICEF, IOM and FAO, trade unions, employers' organizations and broad variety of non-governmental organizations.

After consolidating political support and commitment on the global level, in 2018 the Alliance 8.7 established a Pathfinder Country strategy and developed respective guidance, initiatives and support mechanisms. Pathfinder Countries commit themselves to accelerate efforts to achieve SDG 8.7, to collaborate with other countries and to prioritize the goal on their political agenda. Initiated by an official Manifestation of Interest, countries have to organize a strategy workshop and develop a national Roadmap with concrete actions to achieve target 8.7. After approval by the Global Coordinating Group (GCG) of the Alliance 8.7, countries receive the Pathfinder status and are obligated to annually report their progress.

In addition, the Alliance is a crucial actor in raising awareness and sharing knowledge and best practices. So-called action groups allow relevant regional and global stakeholders to connect and collaborate on certain focus areas such as supply chains, and conflict and humanitarian settings. During the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour 2021, the Alliance 8.7 members played an essential role in developing the Durban Call to Action which serves as a global roadmap to eradicate child labour.

At the beginning of 2023, the Alliance 8.7 continues to gain international support and counts over 30 Manifestations of Interest for Pathfinder Countries and almost 400 partner organizations.



Germany and the Alliance 8.7

Germany announced its accession to Alliance 8.7 during the IV. Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in November 2017 in an effort to demonstrate its strong commitment to actively engage in the global achievement of target 8.7. Shortly before, in June 2017, Germany had hosted the first supply chain action group workshop in Berlin and had helped Alliance 8.7 produce a comprehensive report on “Ending child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in global supply chains”. As a partner to the Alliance, Germany continued to actively participate in the Alliance 8.7 and to promote both national and international measures that contribute to the achievement of target 8.7.

In the context of the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour 2021, Germany formally declared its interest to assume the status of a Pathfinder Country within the Alliance 8.7. In the Manifestation of Interest, Germany committed to assume further responsibility and to further national and international engagement to achieve target 8.7. As part of the application, Germany organized two strategic workshops.

The first of these workshops was held in November 2021 under the title “Fighting human trafficking and forced labour - what does Germany need to get done by 2030?” The first part of the event had an international focus and concentrated on the goals and work of Alliance 8.7, as well as the efforts of France, a Pathfinder Country since 2021, in the fight against human trafficking and forced labour. The heart of the event was a national workshop. There, the topic of discussion was „Concrete approaches to address the challenge: The most urgent measures for the new legislative period“. Several independent experts gave presentations on what they consider as the most important, urgent measures in the fight against forced labour, labour exploitation and human trafficking for Germany’s Federal Government to tackle in the that legislative period. The Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking and the experts then summarized these measures in a Call to Action. Consequently, the results were presented to the then newly elected Federal Government as recommendations for concrete improvements. The event concluded with a political panel. Here, the focus was again on the question of how to effectively combat human trafficking and forced labour. Requirements in working with the social partners were discussed in addition to national and international priorities in the fight against human trafficking and forced labour.

First Pathfinder workshop, November 2021




A second strategic workshop was organised in May 2022. The workshop took place in the context of the G7 conference “Sustainable value chains - Success factors for an internationally accepted binding standard” under the German Presidency. The conference addressed the importance of an internationally recognised binding standard on business and human rights in value chains and what factors would lead to its success. It was an opportunity to share lessons learned and report on the progress of the G7 countries since Germany’s last G7 Presidency in 2015. The discussion also touched on corporate responsibility for the abolition of child and forced labour. The importance of fair, adequate wages was addressed in this context. The Pathfinder workshop was one of two workshops that were held simultaneously at the conference and dealt with „Effective tools for businesses to identify and avoid child and forced labour“. It addressed, in particular, the questions of how companies can measure and report on fair and adequate wages, and further, what measures companies can take if they operate in countries with forced labour.

Subsequent to the workshops, the German government developed this Roadmap that identifies the core priorities and actions to be taken to achieve target 8.7. It was presented to the GCG on February 15 2023 and approved by all its members. After France and the Netherlands, Germany is the third industrialized country to receive the Pathfinder status within Alliance 8.7.

Second Pathfinder workshop, May 2022.





**National
Roadmap:
The priorities**

The Roadmap is built on four priorities that have been identified as the most urgent following the workshops and consultations within the German government. The first three priorities represent a comprehensive view on all issue areas listed in target 8.7 and cover actions on national, European and international level. The fourth priority on the promotion of dialogue is overarching and permeates all spheres of action contributing to the achievement of target 8.7. The four priorities are:

1. Accelerate the efforts **labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking** and prioritize it on the political agenda.
2. **Due Diligence in global value chains**; holistic approach which includes the importance of binding standards on responsible business conduct to ensure, in particular, decent work, adequate minimum wages and living income at the national and international level.
3. Reinforce engagement on a national and international level, support and international cooperation in order **to eliminate child labour worldwide**; a multi-sectoral as well as cross-sectoral and comprehensive approach across different levels.
4. Promote **national and international dialogue** on these topics in order to inspire, promote and motivate NGOs, the civil society, survivors, the private sector and other countries to enhance their engagement to eliminate forced labour, child labour and human trafficking etc.

The following chapters delineate the rationale behind each priority. In addition, they outline a defined number of objectives for each priority and numerous actions to achieve them. While objectives define broader goals, the actions serve as concrete guidelines for the next years. Some actions have specific timeframes, while others are continuous processes. Regular evaluations and adjustments over the next years assure necessary and effective progress towards achieving target 8.7.

Priority 1: Eliminate labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking

Introduction

Accelerate the efforts to eliminate labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking and prioritize it on the political agenda

In recent years, Germany has implemented a number of measures to combat labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking. These measures are based in particular on the joint strategy of the Federal Government/Länder working group on combating human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, which was adopted in 2017.

The strategy has six strategic goals:

1. Stepping up prevention
2. Raising awareness on the part of authorities and improving the identification of victims
3. Expanding counselling and support structures
4. Bolstering criminal prosecution - assessing the effectiveness of the new criminal law provisions
5. Improving the available data
6. Raising public awareness.

To implement the strategy, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has been funding the Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking since 2017.

The Service Centre is run by ARBEIT UND LEBEN – DGB/VHS Berlin-Brandenburg. Bundling expertise as it does, the Service Centre provides strategic support for the establishment and expansion of long-term cooperation structures nationwide for prevention, protection and counselling of victims and for effective prosecution. It also contributes to capacity building, in particular through training of key actors, especially the investigating authorities. The Service Centre is thus an integral part of the implementation of the strategic goals adopted in 2017.

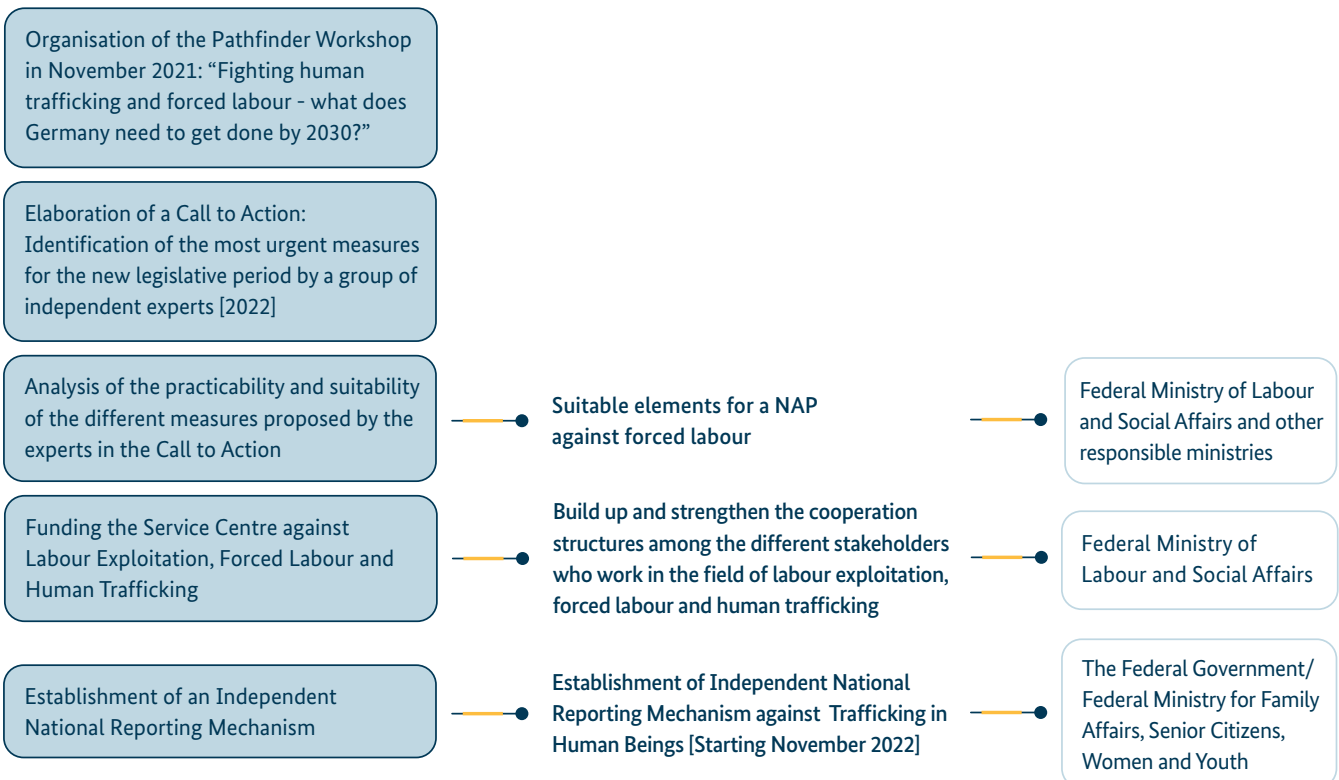
In order to step up and focus the measures to combat forced labour already implemented as well as those planned for the future, Germany has set itself the goal of drafting a National Action Plan to Combat Forced Labour with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, in particular the social partners from business and labour. This is also in line with the obligation under the Protocol of 2014 to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930. An important basis for drafting this plan are the findings from the Pathfinder Workshop in November 2021 on „Fighting human trafficking and forced labour - what does Germany need to get done by 2030?“, in particular the „Call to Action“ developed on the basis of the recommendations of independent experts.

As an overarching issue, human trafficking remains a serious violation of the human rights of the victims and also poses a major threat to states and societies as a whole. It is a complex phenomenon that is rooted also in global economic imbalances and injustices as well as gender, economic and social imbalances and injustices within the societies affected. It does often but not necessarily entail a cross-border dimension. To properly analyse and structure our efforts to eliminate human trafficking, labour exploitation and forced labour, the federal Government installed an independent monitoring mechanism at the German Institute for Human Rights. This will help to strengthen our efforts and sets a strong signal of our prioritisation on the political agenda.

Objective

Developing a **concrete multisectoral National Action Plan to tackle forced labour** including measures against human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation and extending the measures against labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking.

Actions



Priority 2: Due Diligence

Introduction

Due Diligence in global value chains; holistic approach which includes the importance of binding standards on responsible business conduct to ensure, in particular, decent work, adequate minimum wages and living income at the national and international level.

Voluntary measures alone have not brought about the behavioural changes needed to close existing protection and accountability gaps with regard to human and labour rights in global supply chains. This is why the Bundestag passed the Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains in 2021. Since January 2023, large German companies are obliged to exercise human rights (and environmental) due diligence in their supply chains. In particular, they need to be aware of all the risks and potential adverse impacts of their own operations and those of their suppliers. The Act gives companies clear guidance and thus legal certainty on how to respect human rights. For the first time, there are binding rules on the due diligence obligations that companies must meet along the supply chain. At the same time, the Act improves the protection of human rights worldwide and makes it easier for victims to assert their rights. The Act is a milestone on the path to achieving target 8.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure effective implementation, the Act is complemented by targeted measures to support, enable and advise companies in terms of exercising due diligence along their supply chains.

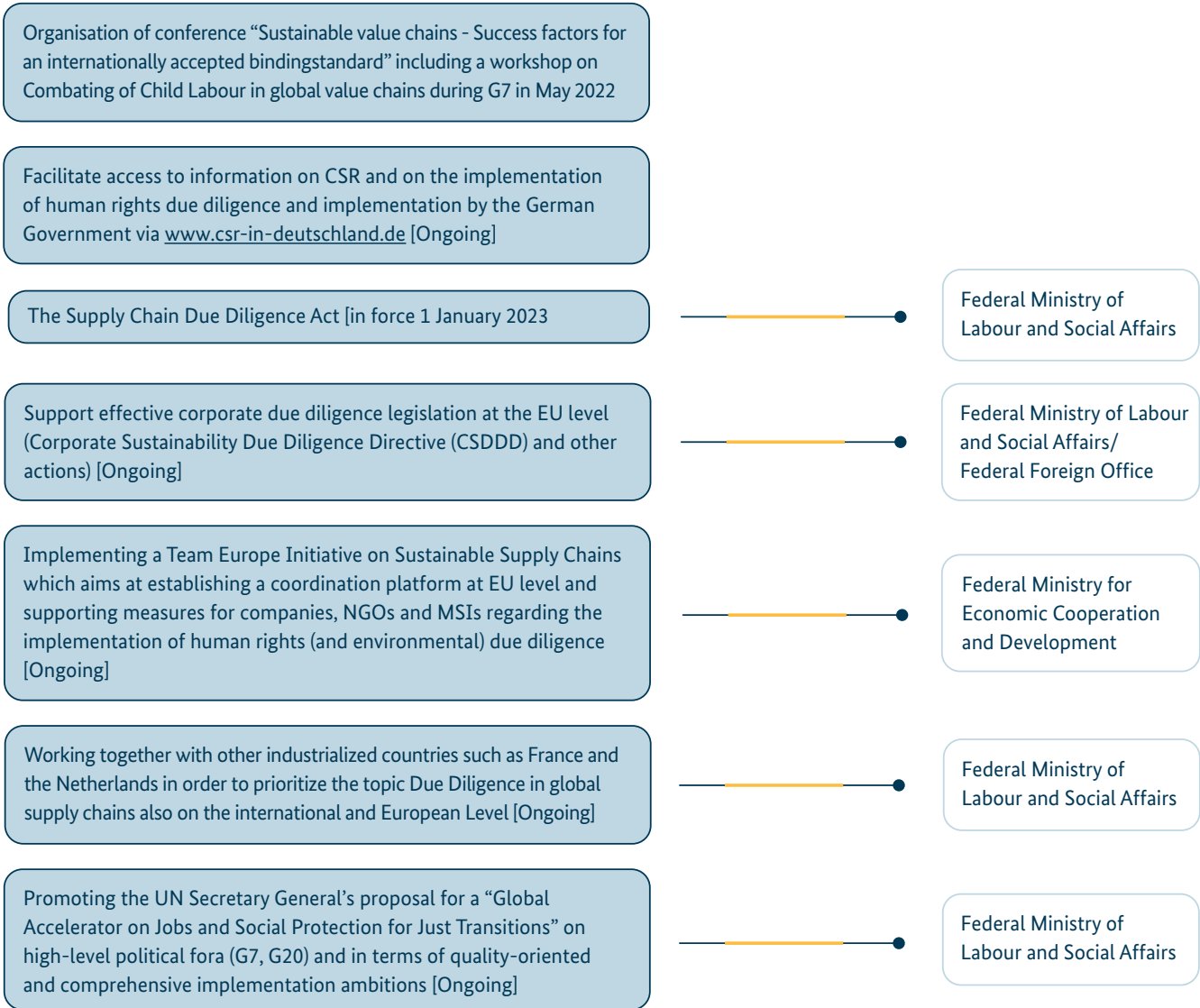
Not only German companies, but also companies within the EU should respect human rights and the environment in their value chains. The next step will be statutory due diligence requirements for all large European companies. Germany is committed to an effective corporate due diligence directive in the field of sustainability. Swift adoption of the EU directive would be an enormous step forward in the fight against child labour, forced labour and human trafficking.

At the level of the United Nations and the International Labour Organization, Germany supports an international treaty or convention on the issue of corporate due diligence along global value chains. During Germany's G7 presidency in 2022, the G7 set out their ambition to contribute to a global level playing field aligned with the relevant standards of the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights, the ILO Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The G7 countries have committed to working towards an international consensus on business and human rights to increase compliance with these standards, including through compulsory measures. The G7 countries aim to engage constructively in discussions on this issue at the UN and ILO levels to explore ideas and options for a legally binding instrument at the international level.

Objectives

- 2.1. Promoting **legally binding standards** at the national and international level for the regulation of responsible business conduct along global value chains (EU, G7, ILO, VN).
- 2.2. **Supporting companies** in the implementation of human rights (and environmental) due diligence with a specific focus on the risks of child labour, human trafficking and forced labour and highlighting the importance of stakeholder engagement in the identification and addressing of these risks.
- 2.3. Contributing to a **global level playing** field aligned with the authoritative standards of the UNGPs, ILO's MNE Declaration and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.
- 2.4. Engaging constructively to explore ideas and options for a **legally binding instrument at the international level** (as part of EU).
- 2.5. Promoting **adequate minimum wages, a living income** and **access to social protection** as well as **inclusive, free and accessible quality education** in order to eradicate child labour.

Actions



Priority 3: Eliminate child labour worldwide

Introduction

Reinforce engagement on a national and international level, support and international cooperation in order to eliminate child labour worldwide; a multi-sectoral as well as cross-sectoral and comprehensive approach across different levels.

Child labour deprives children of their childhood, their right to education, and their dignity. The international community has recognized these severe consequences and has committed itself to end child labour in all its forms by 2025 as part of achieving SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. In order to meet the goal, it is crucial to immediately enforce trend-setting improvements. Thus, the German government has set itself the objective of reinforcing the engagement for the elimination of child labour on a national and international level. Becoming a Pathfinder country was an important first step. Now it is time to enter into a regular exchange with peers as well as to encourage other countries to become Pathfinder Countries and reinforce their engagement in order to achieve SDG 8.7. The German government will continue its ex-

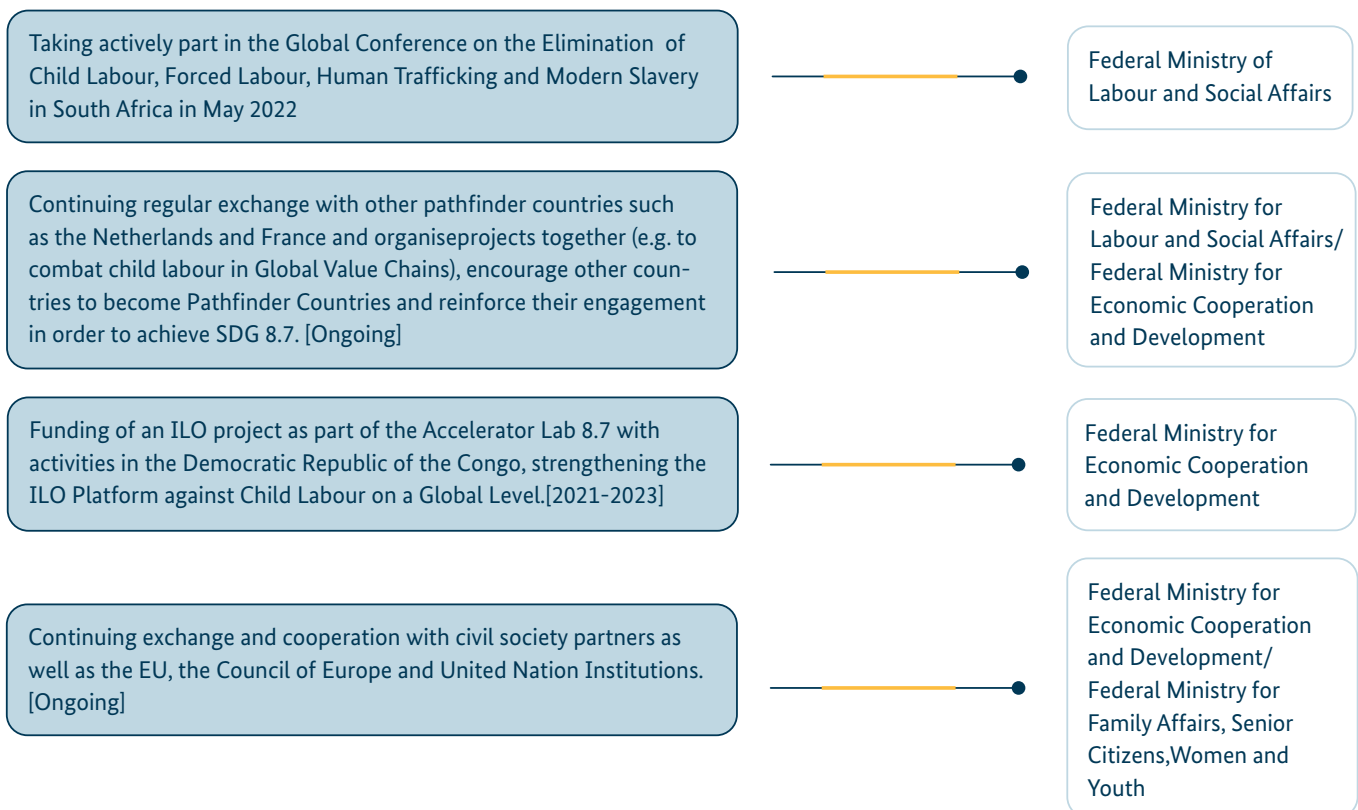
change and cooperation with partner countries, civil society as well as the European Union, the Council of Europe and United Nations institutions such as ILO to support projects aimed at addressing child labour at global and national level.

Moreover, protecting and strengthening the rights of children and youth is an important objective of the priority to eliminate child labour worldwide. This also includes the strengthening of child and youth participation to prevent and address child labour. To prioritize eliminating child labour worldwide, Germany will take multi- and cross-sectoral as well as comprehensive approach across different levels.

Objectives

- 3.1. **Encouraging and engaging in dialogue** about human trafficking, child labour, forced labour and labour exploitation with social partners, ensuring the participation of women and representatives of vulnerable groups.
- 3.2. **Protecting and strengthening the rights of children and youth**, including children in the most vulnerable situations, and strengthening and encouraging their effective, ethical, and meaningful participation to prevent and combat child labour.

Actions



Priority 4: Dialogue

Introduction

Promote national and international dialogue on these topics in order to inspire, promote and motivate NGOs, the civil society, survivors, the private sector and other countries to enhance their engagement to eliminate forced labour, child labour and human trafficking etc.

Only by joining forces at the global level can we effectively combat child labour, human trafficking and forced labour. Dialogue is therefore crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As a multi-stakeholder alliance, Alliance 8.7 provides a definitive framework to promote achieving those goals and making progress in combating forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour.

Consultation and the exchange of ideas provide important opportunities to support each other, to individually adapt measures to achieve the goals and to jointly develop them. Consultations with workers’ and employers’ organisations, as well as consultations with the various partners of Alliance 8.7 as equals, are an essential part of strengthening global partnerships. Equally important are the external effects of transparency. This sends a signal to survivors that they are being heard and encourages them to speak up. It also improves the chances of attracting more partners to the Alliance and expanding the Alliance. Germany intends to actively encourage other countries to expand and intensify their efforts to combat forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour. The flow of information about existing projects plays an important role here. It can serve as an incentive and motivation for tackling the challenges in timely fashion.

A guiding principle is that the objective of exchange and dialogue is central to the implementation of all priorities and is essential in the fight against child labour, human trafficking and forced labour.

Objectives

- 4.1. Keeping in mind **the global dimension** of these issues: encouraging other countries to also intensify the action against child labour, human trafficking and forced labour and promote and engage in global cooperation in these areas.
- 4.2. **Continuing and enhancing support** to partners, International Organizations such as the ILO, and governments in addressing the causes of child labour and eradicating child labour.
- 4.3. **Informing about and promoting existing projects** with regard to child labour, human trafficking and forced labour.

Actions



Annex

Annex 1: Dokumentation Workshop 1



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