

---

# TECH AGAINST TRAFFICKING

2021-2022 BIENNIAL REPORT

**TECH  
AGAINST  
TRAFFICKING** 

**CONTENTS**

**ABOUT TECH AGAINST TRAFFICKING**.....3

**OUR IMPACT** ..... 4

    ACCELERATOR PROGRAM ..... 4

    AWARENESS-RAISING AND NETWORK ENGAGEMENT .....6

    TAT SUMMIT .....7

    ON-THE-GROUND SUPPORT .....8

    POLICY WORKSTREAM .....8

**LOOKING FORWARD**..... 10

# ABOUT TECH AGAINST TRAFFICKING

TECH AGAINST TRAFFICKING (TAT) IS A COALITION OF LEADING TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES COLLABORATING WITH GLOBAL EXPERTS TO HELP ERADICATE HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY USING TECHNOLOGY.

Founded in 2018, the Tech Against Trafficking coalition supports the anti-trafficking field by tapping into these companies' technical expertise, capacity for innovation, and global reach. Tech Against Trafficking is currently led by Amazon, Google, Meta, Microsoft, and Salesforce. Together, this group works with anti-trafficking experts to identify and support opportunities to develop and help scale promising technologies.

Tech Against Trafficking is supported by a network of advisors including The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GITOC), GSMA, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), techUK, the University College London, and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

The RESPECT Initiative, led by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, serves as the Research Lead for the group, while BSR acts as the Secretariat.

## OUR VISION

Technology presents a massive opportunity for the anti-trafficking field. Effective, thoughtfully deployed technology solutions can be catalytic for organizations hoping to advance and scale the impact of their work. For example, technology solutions can connect disparate actors across geographies, share data to facilitate the identification of victims and traffickers, improve case management and survivor care, and raise awareness in at-risk communities.

However, the anti-trafficking ecosystem is largely siloed, and collaboration between the organizations deploying these technologies is minimal. Over the past four years, TAT has helped advance the work of organizations to utilizing technology, while simultaneously creating a platform to bring together organizations and operating across the anti-trafficking sector to enable systems-level change.

### Member Companies



### Advisory Group



### Research Leads



### Secretariat



## OUR IMPACT

In the last two years Tech Against Trafficking worked to leverage technology to advance and scale the work of anti-trafficking organizations around the globe. The outputs and impact of TAT activities undertaken in 2021 and 2022 are described below.

### ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

Building on the success of the [inaugural Accelerator](#), Tech Against Trafficking launched the second Accelerator in June 2021—this time supporting two participants: The Lantern Project and Unseen UK.

- [The Lantern Project\\*](#) (formerly Seattle Against Slavery) is an organization dedicated to combatting labor and sex trafficking. Their online platform [Freedom Signal](#) enables direct service organizations to send targeted, text-based outreach to potential victims of online sex trafficking or sexual exploitation.
- [Unseen UK](#) provides direct support to survivors and uses its frontline expertise to inform anti-trafficking and modern slavery advocacy efforts. Unseen runs the Modern Slavery Helpline and Resource Centre which provides victims, the public, statutory agencies, and businesses with access to information and support on a 24/7 basis.

The Accelerator had two main workstreams, one focused on Data Analysis and Productization, and another one focused on Software-as-a-Service business model improvements.

In the first workstream, TAT members and advisors supported both organizations in

optimizing their data infrastructure and making sense of the human trafficking data they collect.

In both cases, data was extracted and analyzed in a cloud environment hosted by Amazon Web Services. Leveraging technologies developed in the previous TAT Accelerator in partnership with the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative, the organizations created synthetic datasets from the human trafficking data they collect to share data responsibly and by preserving the privacy of victims. Dynamic graph technology developed by Microsoft Research was applied to these anonymized datasets, allowing the organizations identify patterns and generate insights. In turn, this will help the organizations improve operational efficiency and provide more effective services to reduce human trafficking.

Outputs were shared at a virtual [Showcase event](#) that brought together technologists, nonprofits, academics, governments, and policymakers from 60 countries to celebrate the close of this second Accelerator cycle in May 2022.

A more detailed description of the outputs is provided on our [blog post](#).

*“Data is powerful, but it’s only powerful if you do something useful with it. We’ve been so delighted with the TAT Accelerator program to maximize the potential of our rich data.”*

Justine Currell, Executive Director, Unseen UK

\* Since the close of the Accelerator, the Lantern Project ceased its operations; Freedom Signal is now being managed by [Scarlet Hope](#).

## KICKING OFF THE THIRD ACCELERATOR

At the 2022 TAT Summit, we announced the participants for the third Accelerator. TAT will be working with the Issara Institute and the Polaris Project's Nonechka program. Our partnership with these organizations will expand TAT's geographic reach and its expertise on forced labor.

- [Issara Institute](#) seeks to prevent human trafficking and forced labor through worker voice technologies, including their Inclusive Labor Monitoring system and Golden Dreams app. Their work focuses on identifying and remediating labor abuses in Southeast Asia, while also studying the root causes of exploitation.
- [Polaris Project's Nonechka program](#) uses a mobile technology platform to communicate with agricultural workers in the US and Mexico, in order to collect information about their working conditions and to connect isolated migrant workers with crucial networks of support and information.



TAT representatives Claudio Formisano (BSR), Ha Trinh (Microsoft), Phil Bennett, Thi Hoang (RESPECT), Radu Cucos (OSCE), Taylor Hannegan (BSR), and Lale Tekisalp (BSR) meet with Polaris team members Andrea Rojas, Diana Fimbres, and Vera Belazelkoska (Ulula) at the TAT Summit.

These two organizations were chosen from a group of 34 highly competitive applicants across Africa, Europe, the UK, the US, Asia, and the Middle East, based on their alignment with TAT's mission, the potential and actual impact of their

tech tools, and their innovative approaches to addressing human trafficking and forced labor.

TAT has been working with the two organizations to identify potential workstreams. The third TAT Accelerator will take place between February-October 2023.

## CONTINUED IMPACT WITH CTDC

Throughout 2021 and 2022, TAT members continued engaging with the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC), the participant of the inaugural TAT Accelerator.

As a continuation of [the work](#) that was done on data standards and private data sharing, in August 2021, CTDC and Microsoft [released](#) the largest public dataset on human trafficking victims. The synthetic records in the dataset do not correspond to actual individuals, thereby preserving the privacy of those impacted by human trafficking while still allowing for the critical analysis of trafficking data.

**Synthetic data set of human trafficking victims could allow big data work without privacy compromises**

Tech Crunch article announcing the release of the dataset

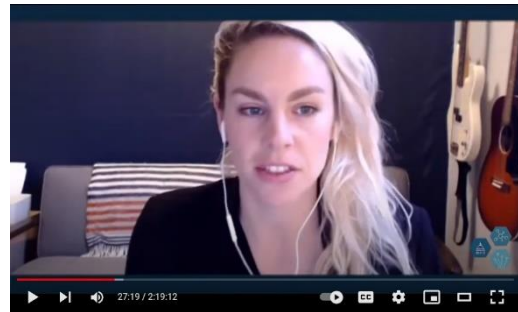
In December 2022, CTDC and Microsoft [released](#) the second synthetic dataset from trafficking victim case records. This is the first ever public dataset to describe victim-perpetrator relations, and the first to be generated with differential privacy, which provides an additional level of privacy and allows for more rigorous research.

The TAT Accelerator also continues to build on this work. The privacy-preserving mechanisms that were created in the inaugural Accelerator have allowed Unseen UK to generate synthetic datasets and conduct analysis on the human trafficking data they collect. We will continue to expand on this work in the third Accelerator.

## AWARENESS-RAISING AND NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Tech Against Trafficking stayed active with events and publications throughout 2021 and 2022 and continued to raise awareness on the potential use of technology to combat human trafficking at scale.

- **ERA Seminar on Trafficking in Human Beings:** TAT Research Lead Thi Hoang spoke at a seminar for legal practitioners and prosecutors, “Trafficking in Human Beings – Countering Impunity,” organized by the [Academy of European Law](#) in Vienna in December 2022.
- **Bali Process 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Border Cooperation in Practice and Technology Forum:** TAT representatives led a workshop, “Building Cooperation and Capability Through Technology” at an [event](#) marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process in Bangkok in October 2022.
- **UNODC Regional Expert Group Meeting on Addressing Cyber and Technology Facilitated Trafficking in Persons for Sexual Exploitation in Southeastern Europe:** Representatives from Microsoft, TAT Advisory group member Radu Cucos, and TAT Research Lead Thi Hoang presented TAT in a meeting organized by UNODC in collaboration with the governments of Montenegro and France in July 2022.
- **United States Congress Hearing:** TAT representative Hannah Darnton participated in a [session](#) on “Data Challenges Impacting Human Trafficking Research and Development of Anti-Trafficking Technological Tools” for the US House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology in February 2022.



TAT representative Hannah Darnton sharing her testimony at the US Congress Hearing.

- **UN General Assembly Meeting:** TAT representatives spoke at a [side event](#) as part of the November 2021 meeting of UN Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, “Leveraging the power of partnerships in the fight against human trafficking.”
- **UNHCR Event on Digital Technology and Anti-Trafficking:** TAT representatives spoke at a panel with the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons as part of an [event](#) hosted by the UNHCR on “Digital technology and anti-trafficking action in crises: a practice view on opportunities and challenges” in October 2021.
- **OSCE Annual Police Experts Meeting:** TAT representatives participated in the 2021 OSCE [Annual Police Experts Meeting](#) on “Preventing Transnational Organized Crime” in October 2021.
- **Khartoum Process Webinar:** TAT Research Lead Thi Hoang spoke at the [Khartoum Process Webinar](#) on Partnerships in June 2021, presenting TAT alongside other successful anti-trafficking partnerships such as the FAST initiative.
- **Human Trafficking in the Era of COVID-19:** TAT Advisory Group member Christina Bain contributed to a March 2021 [article](#) discussing the impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking, citing [TAT’s 2020 insights](#).

## TAT SUMMIT

In September 2022 TAT hosted the first global [Tech Against Trafficking Summit](#) at the Amazon headquarters in Seattle. The summit brought together over 160 leaders from the anti-trafficking field, including businesses, survivors and activists, governments, investors, and civil society, to expand opportunities for collaboration and accelerate the impact of innovative technology solutions addressing human trafficking.

Throughout the summit, 10 organizations presented their innovative technology tools that help combat different forms of human trafficking: Polaris, Diginex, Winrock, Stop the Traffik, Pacific Links Foundation, Fundación Pasos Libres, Altana AI, Commit Global, Trilateral Research, and Quizr. In addition to these organizations, TAT members provided examples of how their companies are supporting anti-trafficking efforts and preventing the misuse of their platforms.

Speakers included Dr. Kari Johnstone, Acting Director of the US State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; Sophie Otiende, CEO of the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery; Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings; and Dan Viederman, Partner at the Working Capital Innovation Fund.



Claudio Formisano (BSR) in conversation with Valiant Richey (OSCE) and Anousheh Karvar (ILO) at the TAT Summit.

The summit included panel discussions on the state of the tech and anti-trafficking field, financing technology innovation, cross-sector collaboration on policy, the evolution of human trafficking, ensuring privacy in the use of data. In addition to panels, attendees had a chance to participate in a workshop exploring how human trafficking and the response of the anti-trafficking field may evolve in time, using Futures methodology.



Kendall Alaimo, artist and activist, presenting her gift to Leigh Anne DeWine, director of worldwide social responsibility at Amazon.

Participants surfaced several important messages including the need to address the barriers that prevent effective deployment of technology, the importance of adopting a survivor-first approach, and complementing technology innovation with policies and due diligence measures. Most importantly, the summit highlighted that multi-stakeholder partnerships remain essential to harness the potential of technology to help prevent and address modern slavery.

A more detailed read-out of the Summit can be found on blog posts published by [BSR](#) and [Amazon](#).

## ON-THE-GROUND SUPPORT

In 2021 Tech Against Trafficking continued to pilot new ways to provide support to anti-trafficking organizations working on the ground. As part of the partnership launched between TAT and the Freedom Fund in June 2020, TAT provided technical support and capacity-building for two anti-trafficking organizations providing on the ground services: eLiberare and the Emmanuel Development Association. TAT also provided support to the Salvation Army.

While the Accelerator Program focuses on long-term engagement, these were short-term engagements that provided targeted support to address smaller technical challenges faced by the organizations.

- [eLiberare](#) (Romania): The organization wanted to improve their workflow for authorizing online teaching resources. To address their needs, TAT members made recommendations that can be applied in the short, medium, and long term. These included the development of a CRM system, to be considered as part of a broader strategic shift in the organization’s management systems.
- [Emmanuel Development Association](#) (Ethiopia): To address the organization’s needs around data collection, storage, standardization, and expanding their data infrastructure, TAT members presented potential technology options and provided general guidance on data management.
- [Salvation Army](#) (UK): TAT members made recommendations to improve the organization’s regional case management system used for their anti-trafficking work and introduced various technology solutions.

In 2022, TAT did not further engage with Freedom Fund grantees due to challenges faced in engaging with the organizations, primarily related to COVID-19 complications and limited bandwidth.

## POLICY WORKSTREAM

In 2022 TAT launched a Policy Workstream intended to explore the ways in which companies, including the technology sector, can engage strategically on policies, regulations, and accompanying guidance with policymakers to better address human trafficking and forced labor across their value chains.

The workstream was structured in two main phases:

**Phase 1: Landscape Analysis:** To begin, TAT conducted a landscape analysis on the evolution of modern slavery standards, their scope, norms, and regulations to identify challenges, gaps, opportunities for stakeholder engagement, priority areas for intervention, and current promising practices to enhance responses to modern slavery. This landscape review informed TAT’s approach to the second phase of the workstream, the expert consultations.

**Phase 2: Expert Consultations:** Throughout 2022, TAT engaged in several multi-stakeholder expert consultations assessing how companies, regulators, and policymakers can exchange ideas and collaboratively work together on identified challenges by developing new and disruptive processes and practices that lead to systemic change.



Participants at the Policy Expert’s Roundtable in Seattle, WA.



TAT's expert consultations included the following:

- One-on-one meetings in Washington, D.C. with representatives from the US State Department, the Department of the Treasury, and various experts,
- A governmental and expert roundtable in Brussels with members of the EU Commission,
- A Policy Expert's Roundtable in Seattle, WA prior to the official start of the TAT Summit.

The Policy Expert's Roundtable saw the participation of TAT member companies and others such as Walmart and Delta, as well as leading government representatives behind much of this legislation including the US government (Trade, Labor, State Department), Australia Border Force and Australia Ambassador-at-large to combat modern slavery, UK Home Office, Canada, ILO, and the French delegate to the ILO/Alliance 8.7 President.

The group expressed appreciation and interest in BSR's facilitating and convening role, and in piloting collaborative projects in the areas of supply chain mapping technologies, and private-public partnership in sourcing countries on responsible recruitment.

At the Roundtable, participants discussed the current state of modern slavery regulations and the increasing harmonization and certainty of the legal regulatory landscape. Some corporate participants noted the challenges they face in adhering to these new laws and called for increased engagement between governments and the private sector.

*"We see the momentum and urgency of doing more to develop and enforce policies and tools to address human trafficking. Now is the time to come together to collaborate on these important issues. There is strength in our collective and respective expertise, wisdom, and work."*

Dr. Kari Johnstone, Acting Director and Principal Deputy Director of the United States Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

TAT's initial engagements for the Policy Workstream highlighted an opportunity for stronger collaboration between the public and private sectors, and we look forward to continuing to convene relevant stakeholders for more effective modern slavery policies.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The last two years have been instrumental in formalizing Tech Against Trafficking and its activities.

In 2022, the Tech Against Trafficking membership grew to five members with the addition of Google and Meta. In 2023, we will continue to recruit new members and partners who share a strong commitment to combating trafficking, to help provide greater support and capacity building to anti-trafficking organizations, and to generate wider impact in the anti-trafficking field writ large.

The TAT Summit not only demonstrated TAT's important role in convening stakeholders in the tech and anti-trafficking fields, but it also surfaced several opportunities for TAT going forward:

- Opportunity for engaging with a wider set of stakeholders including policymakers
- Need for better including survivor perspectives
- Increased interest in addressing forced labor in supply chains
- Increased interest in prevention strategies by companies

In 2023, TAT is planning to build on the momentum and boost the coalition's impact by focusing on the following priorities:

- Increasing the number of opportunities for collaboration among companies and the broader anti-trafficking field, including civil society and policymakers
- Creating a robust mechanism to better include survivor perspectives in TAT's work
- Developing a new workstream focused on supply chain technologies used by companies and governments to address forced labor risks
- Facilitating best practice sharing among member companies to improve companies' prevention strategies
- Revamping the TAT Advisory Group for more effective engagement with a diverse set of stakeholders