IMPROVING WORKER SCREENING DURING SOCIAL COMPLIANCE AUDITS

INTRODUCTION
The Issue

• 40.3 million modern slavery victims
• 16 million linked to the private sector
  (Global slavery index 2018)
• 0.2% victims identified in 2017
• 25% of which forced labour cases
  (Trafficking in Persons report 2018)

Without an increase of victim identification, chances for rescue and remediation, survivors’ intelligence collection and trafficker prosecutions remain very low.

Low or no understanding of forced labour problems in supply chains means high reputation and business risk for companies.
The Issue

A recent survey* identified the following challenges with worker interviews’ current methods:

**Communication/language barrier**
51% auditors speak 2 languages, 44% 1 language – Yet, only 4% use translation services.
71% auditors select workers to interview based on workers’ ability to speak their language.

**Privacy**
99% auditors use a private room, however 61% added they also interview workers at their work station.
51% auditors interview 10+ workers in one audit, but 98% of them does so through group interviews.

**Time constraints**
Almost half of auditors encounter time constraints while interviewing workers.
41% auditors take 10-15 mins to interview one worker.

*UNU-CS & Mekong Club survey, results from a total of 201 responses collected in December 2018 and January 2019*
The Issue

A recent survey identified the following challenges with worker interviews’ current methods:

**Vulnerability due diligence**
- 7% auditors interview migrant workers
- 13% auditors collect information regarding indicators of forced

**Data collection consistency**
- Over 50% of auditors don’t have a consistent way of data collection and storage

**Perception of tech**
- 98% auditors agree that technology can be useful in their jobs
- 92% auditors think that technology could be useful to help to assess workers' conditions

... but current workers voice tech solutions do not target auditors. That’s why we developed Apprise Audit.
Apprise’s goal is to:
- Support screening of workers
- Increase accuracy of screening
- Increase frequency of screening
- Increase inclusivity of screening
- Increase consistency of screening
- Increase chances to spot vulnerabilities and exploitative practices

What apprise is not for:
- Replacing in-person workers interviews
- Asking complex questions
- Confirming that a worker is a victim of forced labour
- Determining follow ups

Apprise offers advantages:
- Saves time
- Overcomes language barriers
- Overcomes workers’ fear of reprisals
- Screens against several categories
- Eliminates costs
- Enhances data collection consistency
- Provides immediate response summary

Introducing Apprise Audit
Select and interview any sample of workers during audits
Workers will answer a questionnaire available in multiple languages
The results are summarized for the auditor in real time
The web-based platforms allows for data analysis and factory tracking over time
Testing Apprise Audit

We have been testing Apprise Audit, a worker screening app with 4 companies in factories in 5 countries since December 2018

MAIN FINDINGS

• Most workers we spoke to told us that they felt comfortable using the app because they could answer sensitive questions freely.
• With Apprise Audit, we were able to interview a larger sample of workers, in a short amount of time.
• Workers who spoke a language the auditor did not know and/or were illiterate could successfully complete the app interview.
• The app enabled auditors to make recommendations to the factory managers during the closing meeting.

“I did an Apprise app test yesterday in one of our factory, the result was great. [...] I did check the responses [...] and because of this result, I did a deep dive [...] and actual found some issues & suggest factory management to improve it immediately” – testimonial from Auditor in SE Asia Country.
The Mekong Club is a catalyst for change, engaging and inspiring the private sector to lead in the fight against modern slavery.

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Interested in more information, getting involved or sponsoring this project?

Please reach out to apprise@unu.edu

Thank you!