



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY TO ELIMINATE EXPLOITATION

According to the 2018 Modern Slavery Index, Afghanistan sadly ranks amongst the top two nations within the Asia-Pacific for incidence of, and vulnerability to, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Exploitation.

Yes, despite the tragic scale and scope of the challenge in our young nation, there is reason for optimism even in these darkest moments as the private sector is working in partnership with Government of Afghanistan to Acknowledge, Act and Advance to strengthen the nation's laws prohibiting Slavery, Human Trafficking and Exploitation — and support efforts to educate Afghans about this critical issue.

For example, in order to **Advance** The Bali Process Government and Business Forum's mission of eliminating Forced Labour, Child Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, The Bayat Group (www.bayat-group.com) — Afghanistan's largest private sector employer — has developed its Double B Plan, namely: **Building Up** Economic Opportunity to **Break Down** Slavery & Exploitation which focuses on the following:

- The Ethical Employment and Ethical Treatment of Employees
- Using Technology To Provide Safeguards and Redress Mechanisms For All Employees — Secure Salary Payments and Fair Wages
- Supporting Afghan Entrepreneurship and the Creation of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's)

The Ethical Employment and Ethical Treatment of Employees

Today, in Afghanistan, The Bayat Group provides direct employment to about 6,000 people, and the economic activity generated by the company's three largest divisions — Afghan Wireless, Ariana Television and Radio and Bayat Power — together with associated vendor relationships with small and medium sized Afghan companies — has helped create over 125,000 jobs in every part of Afghanistan.

But, as the Bali Process Government and Business Forum has affirmed, protecting Afghan employees from the perils of exploitation depends on two important factors: providing them with the information that can protect them from slavery and labor exploitation, and developing an economy that empowers every Afghan to harness their potential and their ability to build a better life.

Ethical employment starts with treating all employees with equality and respect. The Bayat Group proudly published Afghanistan's first Modern Slavery Statement in April 2018, and is the only Afghan owned company to have issued a comprehensive Equal Employment Opportunity Policy which forbids employment discrimination based upon a person's race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender and other legally protected designations.

Using Technology To Provide Safeguards and Redress Mechanisms To All Employees—Secure Salary Payments and Fair Wages

The Bayat Group's role as Afghanistan's largest private sector employer and leading mobile telephony, internet, and digital media service provider has allowed it to take a leading role in deploying technology to help provide safeguards for employees.

For example, today, **My Money** — Afghan Wireless' digital payments service — helps provide secure and transparent digitized salary payments to thousands of Afghans working in the governmental and private



sectors. The digital delivery of government salaries helps prevent middlemen and corrupt officials from embezzling a portion of individuals' compensation.

As part of The Bayat Group's commitment to developing a resilient, fair, and transparent Afghan economy, the My Money service will continue to be rapidly expanded to give thousands of other Afghan organizations — both large and small — a safe, secure method of paying their employees.

There are also plans to explore the application of leading edge call center technology to provide an anonymous "Hot Line" for those at risk or those who may already be victims of modern slavery to gain information and find helpful counsel to extricate themselves from these tragic situations.

Supporting Afghan Entrepreneurship and the Creation of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's)

Afghanistan is a young nation rebuilding its economy. Many new jobs are needed and such economic growth will help provide those potentially at risk of modern slavery with transparent, sustainable options. Thus, the Bayat Group's commitment to **Building Up** Economic Opportunity to **Break Down** Slavery & Exploitation.

Since 2002, The Bayat Group has invested over \$500 million dollars in the rebuilding and renewal of Afghanistan. In 2017, The Bayat Group — working in partnership with several Afghan based NGO's — launched "Bright Future Afghanistan," a five-year program that features a business accelerator to teach young Afghans — the pride and future of the nation — how to launch and lead their own small and medium sized enterprises.

And soon, to provide necessary capital to these and other deserving entrepreneurs, The Bayat Group will debut an innovative Philanthropic Venture Fund — the first of its kind in Afghanistan — called the Ariana Impact Fund which will provide very early stage capital to empower thousands of Afghan entrepreneurs to launch and lead companies of their very own.

Together: Ending Exploitation and Building Hope

Working in partnership, all partners in the Bali Process Government and Business Forum must be relentless in our determination to help eliminate slavery, trafficking and exploitation from Afghanistan—and the world. Afghanistan may have a long way to go, but all Afghans share the core belief that **WHERE OPPORTUNITY CAN BE EXPANDED, EXPLOITATION CAN BE ELIMINATED.**

As the Founder and Chairman of The Bayat Group, I am honored to make this promise to all the men and women around the world who are working to end the scourge of Modern Day Slavery: you have The Bayat Group's fierce and unyielding commitment to help you forge a new world where the evils of Human Trafficking and Human Slavery are vanquished from every corner of the earth.

Dr. Ehsan Bayat
Bayat Group Chief Executive Officer
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