

Editorial

Perspectives on Human Trafficking and Modern Forms of Slavery

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When I first began researching human trafficking and modern forms of slavery fifteen years ago, there was very limited awareness of these offences, and even less scholarship. While non-profit organizations, activists, and charitable foundations have worked assiduously to raise awareness of human trafficking and to tackle root causes, investment by the academic community to analyze the nature, scale, and functioning of the phenomena has been slower to evolve. Indeed, much of the confusion relating to basic terms and concepts on the topic of modern forms of slavery has been due, in large part, to the lack of scholarly analysis of the issues. Following on this gap has been a dearth of robust, first-hand field research that can guide scholarship, investment, and activism, and help frame the complex questions relating to law, economics, human rights, gender, poverty, corruption, migration, the rights of children and minorities, and many other issues that are fundamental to our understanding of human trafficking.

While extensive field research into human trafficking remains a challenge, I have been pleased to see a significant increase in analysis of the offence from the aca-

ademic community across the last several years. Scholars from around the world and from myriad disciplines have contributed significantly to our knowledge of various aspects of forced labor, child labor, debt bondage, human trafficking and related modes of servile labor exploitation. To that end, I am pleased to present this special edition of *Social Inclusion*, “Perspectives on Human Trafficking and Modern Forms of Slavery”. This edition includes an illuminating collection of scholarship from around the world. For example, Professor Stewart informs our understanding of contemporary slavery with a comparative look to slavery in the past. Kay and Hastie, along with Craig, analyze crucial legal challenges relating to human trafficking in Canada and the UK respectively. Acharya presents health consequences of sex trafficking in Mexico, and Reisen and Rijken outline new forms of trafficking in the Sinai Peninsula. LGBT issues are interrogated, along with the roles of corruption and issues of gender in human trafficking shelters. The authors have individually and collectively made vital contributions to our understanding of human trafficking, and I hope their scholarship will inspire additional analysis of these issues.

About the Author



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Siddharth Kara is the Director of the Program on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and a Visiting Scientist on Forced Labor at the Harvard School of Public Health. He is the author of several books and articles on modern slavery, including *Sex trafficking: Inside the business of modern slavery* and *Bonded labor: Tackling the system of slavery in South Asia*. Siddharth Kara currently advises the United Nations, the U.S. Government, and several other governments on anti-trafficking policy and law.