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New Study Assesses Corporate Compliance with the UK Modern Slavery Act

[LEIPZIG, GERMANY, April 19—] Section 54 of the UK Modern Slavery Act (2015) requires all organisations that operate in the UK, with a worldwide revenue over £36 million per year, to report annually on the steps they are – or are not – taking to prevent modern slavery in their value chains and business.

Development International (DI) has produced a study that focuses on the corporate response to the existence of Modern Day Slavery. This assessment systematically benchmarks the legal compliance, disclosure conformance, and anti-slavery/anti-human trafficking good practice performance on the part of 6,501 organisations – most of them private sector companies – that issued a statement pursuant to the law.

This report moves the debate forward to the examination of what is actually taking. Dr. Chris Bayer, the study's principal investigator, remarked: "This assessment cuts straight to the point: What are UK-registered organisations doing – emphasis on action – in the way of anti-slavery and anti-human trafficking, and what are they not doing?"

"We hope this gap analysis on the micro- and macro-level will inspire constructive conversations."

The study finds that organisations performed better on legal compliance and disclosure conformance than on anti-slavery/anti-human trafficking good practice. Yet there are several examples of organisations who excelled in all three areas, indicating that it is possible to meet the letter and spirit of the law.

Along with the report, the study also makes freely available individual scorecards for each organisation assessed. An interactive bubble chart allows for an easy comparison between organisations' scores.

In the pursuit of rooting modern slavery out of their value chains, an organisation is directly contributing to 7 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Development International (DI) is a not-for-profit organization specialized in areas where law, business and development intersect.

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