

CODE Forum 2026

Introduction to the Papers and Workshops

Alison Gardner

Measuring and Understanding Faith-Based Responses to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Global conflict, as well as political, economic, migration and climate crises, are currently creating unprecedented pressures for actors seeking to address modern slavery and human trafficking. Faith-based organisations play a substantial role in contemporary anti-slavery and human trafficking efforts and have long been at the core of civil-society efforts towards liberation from exploitation. However, limited research currently exists on what motivates and sustains individual faith actors in their work, and how differing theologies influence action on the ground. This presentation will introduce a 3-year project (May 2025-April 2028) funded by the Templeton Religion Trust, called Measuring Motivations: The Underlying Orientations of Religious Anti-Slavery Action. This global, multi-faith study seeks to understand the nature of faith based-actors' distinctive roles in this sector, bring more precision and scale to understanding the role of religion in combating slavery and seek pathways to improving connections between faith and action across religious-based anti-trafficking organisations. We hope to shed new light on the scope, diversity and underlying orientations of faith-based responses to modern slavery and human trafficking.