

Opening tentoonstelling door Kees Hoogendoorn

Most welcome ladies and gentlemen in Impulse, as we start a journey today. A journey that will last a few weeks. A journey where we will be confronted with different faces of Modern Slavery. Wait a minute, Slavery? Today? That is something that our ancestors practised, but we can wash our hands! Can't we? Okay, maybe in Africa or Asia, but here in Holland? And even if so, what has WUR to do with it?

In order to answer these questions it is important to know what we're talking about. What is modern slavery? How do we recognize Modern Slavery? To tip the scale: it is closer than you know. But you will find out there are a lot of chances to jump on! In private life, and as an employee or student at WUR. Today, opening this exhibition we want to give you an opportunity to explore and reflect on different faces on modern slavery. Because, although it might sound naive, there is much you can do about it! So please, join this journey and find the answers for yourself: open your eyes!

My name is Kees Hoogendoorn, 42 years old, head of the finance department at the Facilities Company. A few years ago I was confronted with modern slavery and read about it. Once I realised more than 40 million people today are victim of Modern Slavery, I desired to do something about it. To be the voice of people who don't have a voice. Besides, 48 million is an estimation, also called a dark number. Because so often we don't know... How is that possible today? All nations signed the Universal Human Rights in 1948? Where we stated not to allow slavery or child labour? So I started the post-hbo study "Fighting Human Trafficking" at the CHE in Ede. To finish my study, I had to write an essay: how can you apply all the things you have learned into your working area?

So that is how I, with blessing of my boss, took an initiative to gather a group of people who now became a working group on Modern Slavery. We work on three main topics: procurement, partnerships and education.

- *Procurement, following the UK legislation as in 2015 the Modern Slavery Act was adopted. Companies have to prove their supply chain is free of slavery.*
- *Partnerships, because WUR is doing projects in Industries and countries highly risk rated for human trafficking. What may we or do we want to expect from our partners?*
- *Education is about raising awareness. Our goal is that WUR graduates, as future professionals are sensitive to any possible signs of modern slavery and say firmly no to such practice.*

This is my story. But everyone has its own that is being re-written every single day. I hope that this exhibition will inspire you to make choices and decisions that make strong statement against modern slavery.

My appeal to you is to take a chance these coming weeks. Take your time to explore modern faces of modern slavery, even it feels hard and unpleasant. If you join us on this journey, you might feel empowered to be a voice for 40 million voiceless victims at the end. So please... join the TED talks, go see the movie organised by Otherwise, en join the discussion "modern slavery and the fruits we love" on October 11th, same time same place, with Tamme de Leur, producer, teacher and domain expert.

Will you join us on this journey? Come and open your eyes.....

