Guidelines for Annotating Forced Labour Indicators in Text

Overview

Thank you for agreeing to help us with this task -- the annotation of forced labour indicators in text data. We will present you with one news article at a time and ask you to assign forced labour indicators to and tag specific phrases in each one of them. We will be using this data to build a computational model that can recognise risks of forced labour on text data and generate human-understandable justifications for its predictions.

Instructions

We would like you to assign indicators of forced labour as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to news articles. These indicators represent the most common signs or "cues" that point to the possible existence of a forced labour case. They are derived from the theoretical and practical experience of the ILO's Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SPA-FL). For more information, please **visit**.

We have created a **short video** (less than 5 minutes) describing the tool and the annotation process to facilitate your work. In summary, we are asking you to identify the risks of forced labour in news articles. To assign an ILO indicator to a news article, tag what phrases or sentences led you to decide the presence of that indicator. You can do this by clicking on the label corresponding to the indicator or using the shortcut keys we have defined for you and highlighting the phrases/sentences that support your decision.

ILO Indicators

For each news article, please choose one or more of the following tags:

1. Abuse of vulnerability: Referring to people who lack knowledge of the local language or laws, have few livelihood options, belong to a minority religious or ethnic group, have a disability or have other characteristics that set them apart from the majority population.
- **Example**: A Chinese maid who worked 365 days a year did not speak a word of French except "good morning" and "good evening".

2. Abusive working and living conditions: Forced labour victims may endure living and working in conditions that workers would never freely accept. Work may be performed under conditions that are degrading or hazardous and in severe breach of labour law.
- **Example**: "The workers were housed in plastic shacks, drinking contaminated water, and they were kept in holes behind bushes in order to hide them until we left."

3. Debt bondage: Victims of forced labour may be working to pay off an incurred or sometimes even inherited debt. The debt can arise from wage advances or loans to cover

recruitment or transport costs or from daily living or emergency expenses.

- **Example**: "A worker borrowed Rs. 20,000 from a middleman. When he had paid back all but Rs. 4000, the middleman falsely claimed that the worker owed him Rs. 40,000."

4. Deception: Deception relates to the failure to deliver what has been promised to the worker, either verbally or in writing. Deceptive practices can include false promises regarding work conditions and wages, the type of work, housing and living conditions, or the employer's identity.

- **Example**: "It was my auntie who promised to pay for my school expenses but did not fulfil her promises. Instead, she turned me into a maid."

5. Excessive overtime: Referring to the obligation of working excessive hours or days beyond the limits prescribed by national law or collective agreement.

- **Example**: "I had to work 19 hours a day without any rest and overtime payment or holiday."

6. Intimidation and threats: In addition to threats of physical violence, other common threats used against workers include denunciation to the immigration authorities, loss of wages or access to housing or land, sacking family members, and further worsening of working conditions.

- **Example**: "When I told the woman I was working for that I wanted to leave, she threatened me and said that unless I paid $600, she would go to the police and tell them I had no papers."

7. Isolation: Workers may not know where they are, the worksite may be far from habitation, and there may be no means of transportation available. But equally, workers may be isolated even within populated areas by being kept behind closed doors or confiscating their mobile phones to prevent them from contacting their families and seeking help.

- **Example**: "The camp was in an area that was very difficult to reach. To travel to an urban centre, you had to plan the journey several days in advance."

8. Physical and sexual violence: Violence can include forcing workers to take drugs or alcohol to have greater control over them. Violence can also be used to force a worker to undertake tasks that were not part of the initial agreement.

- **Example**: "I was regularly slapped, whipped and punched."

9. Restriction of movement: Victims of forced labour may be locked up and guarded to prevent them from escaping, at work or while being transported. If workers are not free to enter and exit the work premises, subject to certain restrictions which are considered reasonable, this represents a strong indicator of forced labour.

- **Example**: "There were bars on the windows and an iron door, like a prison. It was impossible to escape, not even worth contemplating."

10. Retention of identity documents: Referring to the retention by the employer of identity documents or other valuable possessions.

- **Example**: "As I passed through immigration, the driver grabbed my passport. I cannot leave because my passport is with the employer, and I cannot move around without it."

11. Withholding of wages: Workers may be obliged to remain with an abusive employer while waiting for the wages owed to them.

- **Example**: "At the beginning, he promised me a salary and I started to work. He gave me food and sometimes bought me some clothes. But I was still waiting for my salary."

To check a summary of these indicators that might facilitate your work, please refer to our **Cheat sheet** with information about definitions, examples and shortcut keys.

Additional Instructions

We have gathered a list of "special" situations that you might encounter while annotating a news article and our recommendation on how to deal with them:

- **Phrases or sentences instead of individual words**: We strongly recommend you tag phrases rather than specific words when assigning an indicator to a news article. In this way, our model can better understand the context in which these indicators appeared.
- **There is no indicator of forced labour**: If you consider that a particular news article does not contain any indicator of forced labour, submit it and continue to the next one.
- **Two or more phrases/sentences justify my decision**: Your decision of assigning an indicator might be based on more than one phrase/sentence. Please highlight all phrases/sentences relevant to your decision (there is no limit on the number of phrases/sentences that can support your decision).
- **There is a phrase/sentence that supports my decision for two or more indicators**: Unfortunately, LightTag allows the use of a sentence or phrase as justification for just one indicator. Consequently, please highlight the sentence/phrase with the risk you consider is more strongly related.

If there is any other situation not covered in these guidelines, or if you have suggestions on how to improve them, please reach out to Erick Mendez Guzman (**erick.mendezguzman@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk**).

Many thanks!