



# reporter

Summer 2016

Established in 1825

## Women against slavery

Meet Mauritanian women who fight for freedom against all odds

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**In this issue:**

- UK Parliament votes against protecting domestic workers
- We help businesses clean up their supply chains



**Jakub Sobik**  
Press and Digital Media Manager

*"I hope you are inspired by this special issue on women and girls."*

**Cover: Aichana Mint Abeid recently escaped from slavery. Read her story on page 15.**

Photo: Michael Hylton

**The Reporter magazine was established in 1825 and has been continuously published since 1840.**

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## Widespread discrimination has left women and girls more vulnerable to slavery.

This is why here at Anti-Slavery International we recently started our Women and Girls Programme, focusing on their special vulnerabilities. We have made it a theme of this *Reporter*.

In the main feature we celebrate the women who have left slavery in Mauritania and those who campaign against it. They really have the odds stacked against them, so their powerful stories serve as source of constant inspiration (page 10, and full gallery on our website), as are the stories of other girls and women throughout this *Reporter*.

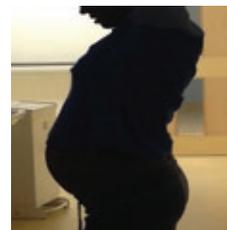
Women make an overwhelming majority of domestic workers, one of the most vulnerable groups of workers on the planet, and an important part of our Women and Girls Programme. It is a shame then that many British MPs chose to vote against protecting them from slavery, in spite of our campaigning efforts (page 4).

The UK's response to slavery also overlooks the special vulnerabilities of trafficking victims who are pregnant or have children, as our new research indicates (page 16).

For an insight into the whole of our Women and Girls Programme, read the interview with our co-ordinator Silvia Cormaci (page 23). Check also how our project in Lebanon tackles the racist attitudes of many employers towards migrant domestic workers and how female abolitionists shaped the anti-slavery movement throughout history (page 20).

Finally, our new work helping businesses to clean up their supply chains is worth paying attention to, it has the potential to make a longstanding impact to reduce slavery all over the world.

For now, I hope you are inspired by this special issue on women and girls and continue to support our work, for which we are as always eternally grateful.



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Anti-Slavery International, founded in 1839, is committed to eliminating all forms of slavery and slavery like practices, such as human trafficking, forced labour, child slavery, bonded labour, descent based slavery and forced marriage. We work closely with local partner organisations and communities from around the world to support people affected by slavery to claim their rights and take control of their lives, as well as campaigning and lobbying on the structural level for long standing sustainable policies tackling slavery and its root causes.

# UK Parliament rejects opportunity to end domestic slavery

**Press and Digital Media Manager Jakub Sobik on the decision of UK MPs to reject protections for overseas domestic workers from slavery.**

■ **April.** The House of Commons voted against protecting overseas domestic workers from slavery.

The MPs rejected the amendment that the House of Lords had included in the Immigration Bill, endorsing the main recommendations made by James Ewins QC in his recent review of the Overseas Domestic Workers (ODWs) visa rules.

In his review, commissioned by the Government after it had refused to include protections for domestic workers in the Modern Slavery Act, Ewins recommended that domestic workers arriving to Britain on the ODW visa should be allowed to change employers

and that they should also be able to extend their visa for that purpose.

The extension of the visa is crucial. Although the Government has bowed to lobbying and public pressure and has conceded to allow the workers to change employers, this change is made meaningless by limiting their time to do it to the duration of the six-month period for which they were originally admitted. This means that a domestic worker wanting to leave their abusive employer would have to search for someone to hire them for maybe only a few weeks which makes it virtually impossible.



**Jakub Sobik**, Press and Digital Media Manager

## How tied and untied domestic workers compare

- Workers who were tied to their employers were twice as likely to report having being physically abused than those untied (16% to 8%).
- 71% of those tied reported never being allowed out of the house unsupervised, compared to under 43% untied.
- 65% of tied workers didn't have their own rooms, so shared with the children or slept in the kitchen or lounge, compared with 34% of those not tied.
- 53% worked more than 16 hours a day compared to 32% of those who had the right to change employer.

It is well documented that tying domestic workers to their employers significantly increases their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Evidence gathered by the London-based organisation Kalayaan, who specialise in supporting domestic workers, points to greatly increased levels of abuse amongst the domestic workers who arrived on the tied visas (see the box).

Here at Anti-Slavery International we have worked hard to influence MPs. In addition to lobbying behind the scenes, we established a special

*'We will not stop until domestic workers in the UK are properly protected from slavery.'*

online action as part of our Victim Protection Campaign, asking our supporters to write to their MPs to vote against slavery. Many of you have done so, for which we are very grateful, and which leaves us hopeful that this is not the end of this issue.

We are now expecting the Government to roll out their latest proposals on changing the Overseas Domestic Workers visa rules. We will be watching closely how these changes are implemented.

We will not stop until domestic workers in the UK are properly protected from slavery.



Anti-slavery campaigners outside of the UK Home Office demanding protection for domestic workers.

# Anti-Slavery Mauritania landmark court victory

■ **May.** Two slave owners were convicted for slavery in Mauritania in a landmark case brought by Anti-Slavery International and its partners SOS-Esclaves.

It was the first ever conviction by the Special Courts for Slavery, introduced last year alongside a new anti-slavery law. It was also only the second ever conviction for slavery in the country, where the perpetrator in the only other case was freed on bail and has never served his sentence.

*“For the first time the authorities are moving beyond empty promises to hold slave-owners to account. It could be a real game changer.”*

*Sarah Mathewson,  
Africa Programme Manager.*

Both slave-owners received a five year prison sentence, with one year to be served and four years suspended, and ordered to pay significant compensation to the two female victims.

The case is made more significant by the fact the slave masters convicted come from a highly influential and powerful family.

Anti-Slavery International’s Africa Programme Manager Sarah Mathewson hailed the judgment as a “potential

game changer for Mauritania.

Maitre Mohameden Elid, the lawyer who represented the victims, of slave descent himself, said: “It was a real privilege to be the first lawyer to argue a slavery case in the Special Slavery Court.”

The victims, Fatimetou Mint Hamdi and Fatimata Mint Zaydih, had grown up as the slaves of the Ould Daoud family. They both escaped with their children last year with help from local SOS-Esclaves activists, a network trained and supported by Anti-Slavery International.

As part of a joint legal project with SOS-Esclaves, Anti-Slavery have another 13 slavery cases pending in Mauritanian courts.

Mauritania is one of the last countries in the world where people are still born into slavery and literally owned by their masters, facing a lifetime of abuse and forced labour. Mauritania has long been under domestic and international pressure to enforce the law, but most anti-slavery initiatives so far have proved to be empty promises.

In a separate development, the Supreme Court freed anti-slavery activists jailed over 20 months ago for a peaceful protest against slavery practices. The Court downgraded the charges, and the activists were able to walk free.



Maitre Mohameden Elid, the lawyer who represented the victims as part of a joint project by Anti-Slavery International and SOS-Esclaves, here talking to a woman who recently escaped slavery and our Africa Programme Co-ordinator Sarah Mathewson.

**Fatimata Mint Zaydih:** *‘I was the property of four masters from the same family. They shared me, so each one had a period of the year where I was at his service.*

*I herded their goats from a very young age. But I was never allowed to milk the goats to feed myself or my children. I was only ever allowed to eat the leftovers from the masters’ meals, which I cooked. Sometimes my masters would see me getting ready to eat and they would suddenly confiscate my food. So sometimes my children and I would go for several days without eating.*

*I never received any money or anything else for the work I did. When I went out with the animals for long periods, my children would remain with the larger family of masters. My 10-year old son became the slave of one of the masters, and was under his control all the time. This meant I never knew that my boy was eating enough, or if he was eating at all.*

*Now I can hope for a better future. I want to do training that will enable me to set up a profitable business to support my family. All I want is to live a dignified life, and be able to feed and educate my children.’*



## Coffee giants admit forced labour risk in their supply chains

■ Two of the world's biggest coffee companies, Nestlé and Jacobs Douwe Egberts, admitted that coffee from Brazilian plantations using slavery may have entered their supply chains.

The admission came after the media and research centre DanWatch published a report claiming that on the plantations which may have supplied the two companies, workers were forced to work with little or no pay and live in squalid conditions.

*“Previously, most companies wouldn't admit problems until the evidence left them with absolutely no choice”.*

Aidan McQuade, Director of Anti-Slavery International

Trafficking into forced labour is still rife throughout Brazil's agricultural industry, despite considerable efforts of Brazilian government to tackle these abuses.

The corporations admitted that they don't know the names of all their suppliers in complex and muddled supply chains.

However, Anti-Slavery International's director Aidan McQuade sees a positive in the admission, saying that it is *“indicative of a business' growing tendency towards greater transparency in supply chains and more attention to human rights. Previously, most companies wouldn't admit problems until the evidence left them with absolutely no choice”.*

## Anti-Slavery's Brexit concerns

■ Anti-Slavery International said that the UK's potential exit from the European Union “is likely to have a negative impact on fighting slavery”.

In a statement released to its members and supporters, the organisation's trustees said: “Based on our analysis of the evidence, [we believe] that the charitable purpose of Anti-Slavery International is best served within the continued UK membership of the European Union.” Specifically, Anti-Slavery believes that UK exit from the EU would increase the risks for victims of trafficking within Europe, reduce the capacity of law enforcement to cooperate to combat trafficking, and reduce the capacity of the UK to influence wider European law and policy against slavery.

Full trustees' statement and a briefing analysing the possible impact of Britain's exit from the EU is available on our website [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org) or by following this code on your mobile device.



*“UK's potential exit from the European Union is likely to have negative impact on fighting slavery”*

## Pressure mounts on World Bank to stop financing Uzbek forced labour

■ **March.** The World Bank is coming under increasing pressure from human rights advocates to stop financing agricultural projects in Uzbekistan.

Campaigners from Anti-Slavery International and its partners from the Cotton Coalition delivered a petition signed by about 120,000 people calling on World Bank President Dr Jim Yong Kim to suspend payments until the Uzbek government stops using forced labour in its cotton industry, including in the World Bank project areas.

Receiving our petition, the representative of the World Bank condemned forced labour, but he stopped short of committing to withdraw the funding to Uzbekistan.

We would like to thank all Anti-Slavery supporters who signed this petition.

Watch Uzbek citizens talking about their experiences of forced labour in the cotton industry at [www.antislavery.org/cottoncrimes](http://www.antislavery.org/cottoncrimes)



Uzbekistan's forced labour continued, even in the World Bank project areas.  
Photo: Simon Buxton

## Anti-Slavery International in landmark European court case intervention

■ **April.** Anti-Slavery International were granted permission by the European Court of Human Rights to intervene in the landmark case of *Chowdhury v Greece*.

The case concerns 42 Bangladeshi pickers working on a strawberry farm in Greece. When after not being paid for several months the workers went on strike, the farm guards shot at them, injuring 30 workers.

The farm owner and two guards were later acquitted by the Greek court, despite them admitting shooting at the workers. The case sparked international outrage.

The case will re-examine the scope of Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights on prohibition of slavery and forced labour.

Anti-Slavery International's director Aidan McQuade said: *“This is an important case for the whole of Europe to advance the understanding of trafficking and forced labour, and for improving protection of vulnerable migrant workers throughout the continent.”*

# Women against slavery

Born into slavery and members of a 'slave caste', meet Mauritanian women who fight for freedom against all odds.

**Moulkheir Mint Yarba** lived in slavery until 2009. SOS-Esclaves facilitated her release after her brother brought the case to the association. They also advocated to get Moulkheir a monthly stipend from the State. "My life has changed. I arrived here like a crazy person; I didn't even know how to behave around people. But it's been with the help and support of the members of SOS-Esclaves that I have found a new life. I have even been trained in dyeing and sewing veils." Unfortunately Moulkheir's seven children have been unable to enrol in school, due to their lack of identity documents.



Words:  
**Sarah Mathewson, Africa Programme Manager**

Photos:  
**Michael Hylton**

■ **In the system of descent-based slavery in Mauritania both men and women are treated as property from birth and are subjected to a life of forced labour.**

Yet experiences of women and girls in slavery are not only very different, they face far greater difficulties in leaving slavery.

In this system children born from a mother of a slave status are also considered slaves, and as such, women are an important and valuable resource for new slaves for their masters. Girls and women are therefore routinely subjected to sexual abuse and rape by masters and forced to bear their children.

This also means that girls and women are usually given duties in the domestic sphere, in order to restrict their movements and social interactions, and to prevent their escape or other threats to the sexual and reproductive control of the masters.

Inequality between the sexes can also make it much more difficult to escape from slavery.

Because women have dependant children, both the decision to run away into the unknown can be much harder to take, and the practicalities become much more demanding.



**Sarah Mathewson,**  
Africa Programme Manager

Many times women have to take dramatic decisions to leave their children behind in slavery.

Indeed, over 80% of the slavery victims requiring assistance from our local partner organisation SOS-Eslaves are women.

### Out of slavery

After achieving freedom, life is not easy for women. The law tends to work against them. According to the 2001 Family Code, women have the same legal status as children. Women escaping slavery are usually unmarried (masters usually forbid them from marrying), but Mauritanian law affords few rights to single women. Those with children are also vulnerable to Sharia laws against extra-marital sex, which can incur harsh punishments. Male violence against women is commonplace. Sex discrimination and inequality are deeply rooted, which means there are fewer opportunities for women to work and earn a decent income for their families.

Access to redress is also more difficult for women. Since men from the slave-owning classes dominate the judiciary and police, delays and failures to follow due process are very common. Disempowered by the law, usually destitute and illiterate, women



**Mariam Mint Bougary,** founding member of SOS-Eslaves in 1995 and Vice President of the organisation. “SOS-Eslaves represented the only opportunity there was for me to participate in the fight for freedom. On my mother’s side there are still slaves in my family today...”

**Fatimétou Mint Mohamed Nagi,** SOS-Eslaves representative in the Teyarett region. “Slavery is hereditary and passed down the maternal line, which is why we are focusing on the liberation and emancipation of women in slavery. Women generally can’t leave slavery. There may be children they cannot abandon or leave behind. For women in slavery, their children are the property of their masters. He can sell them or give them away as gifts...”

**Aissa Fall,** Consultant on Reproductive Health and Human Rights, founding member of SOS-Eslaves. “As a member of the Haratine social group, I grew up in an environment where slavery was common. Founding of SOS-Eslaves was like a godsend – I joined immediately, without question.”

who escaped slavery are often too intimidated to pursue cases in courts. Indeed, only one slave owner had been prosecuted until our recent success in the Special Court.

Sadly, women even have to contend with sexism within anti-slavery movement itself. I have heard many men describe the condition of men in slavery by saying: ‘he wasn’t allowed to own anything – not even his own wife!’.

### Women inspire

With all that in mind, it is even more heartening to see so many incredibly inspiring women leaders and women who have overcome the odds stacked against them.

Organisations led by men may be better known or be given more of a voice in the political arena, but it’s really important to us that we recognise biases in favour of men and take positive action in favour of women.

This is why we wanted to present this gallery of women who escaped slavery or campaign against it and inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

Some of these women have become anti-slavery activists and members of our fantastic longstanding partners SOS-Esclaves; others are trying to lead independent lives and informally support other women who take the risk to leave their masters. Some, although never in slavery themselves, fight the discrimination that comes with belonging to the ‘slave caste’ in society. Some have overcome massive obstacles to gain positions of social influence, even becoming MPs.

All these women face enormous challenges on a daily basis, but are unwavering in their pursuit of freedom and dignity.

For a full gallery of Mauritanian women fighting for freedom, go to [www.antislavery.org/Mauritaniagallery](http://www.antislavery.org/Mauritaniagallery), or scan here:



**Zeinabe Mint Ghoulam**, gardener and member of SOS-Esclaves. “It’s thanks to the various training courses organized by SOS-Esclaves for members, and for women members in particular, that I’ve learned to express myself better in public and speak up for women’s rights. I’ve learned so much about women’s rights – mainly the laws and policies to protect women’s rights that exist, even in Mauritania.”



**Aichana Mint Abeid**, who lived in slavery. “I worked for a master who shared my services with his brother. I wasn’t getting on with the wife of one master – even though I was doing all the housework for the family, for no pay. One day she called two people who forced me into the car to be sent back to my other master. My little twin boys were put under the seat of the car, for a journey of several hours. My other master took me by force to the fields with his other slaves, under special surveillance. But I fled along the river, using barrels connected by ropes attached to the shore. It was dangerous but I took the risk. With my cries, I alerted my cousin on the other riverbank, and he came to my rescue just as the slave overseer was pulling on the ropes to get me back to him. Thank God, I got to the other side. My cousin put me in touch with SOS-Esclaves, who helped me to liberate myself and take back all my children.”

### What we do about slavery of women in Mauritania

We at Anti-Slavery International recognise the way women face extra disadvantages, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation and slavery. In Mauritania, we run a special project targeting support specifically for women and girls coming out of slavery and promoting female solidarity, mobilisation and leadership in advocacy.

The project targets two regions where slavery is particularly widespread. With our local partners SOS-Esclaves we work to mobilise their female staff and network members to identify cases, reach out to the victims and bring more cases of slavery forward.

The main focus is on supporting women emerging from slavery, with a special fund to cover emergency needs, as well as regular contact and monitoring of the women’s progress as they establish independent lives.

We also provide legal support for women who have left slavery. At least 35 cases have already been opened, with lawyers submitting cases to court and engaging with local police and judicial officials to urge action.

Finally, we advocate in international, regional and national fora to improve the implementation of anti-slavery legislation, with a particular focus on the plight of women in slavery.

# Time to Deliver

**Vicky Brotherton, Co-ordinator of the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (ATMG), explains why pregnant victims of trafficking and those with children are overlooked by the UK authorities.**

■ A new report, entitled *Time to Deliver*, puts the spotlight on some of the most vulnerable victims of trafficking in the UK – those who are pregnant or have children.

Being pregnant or a parent brings extra vulnerabilities for victims of trafficking. Traffickers often use threats against a victim's child to control them, which can make the parent much more vulnerable to exploitation. Pregnancy, especially if it is a result of rape, can be a source of trauma.

It is therefore disappointing that the government's response does not systematically consider these vulnerabilities.

*'It is time for the UK Government to look at the special needs of victims and ensure that no trafficked people are overlooked'*



The Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (ATMG), hosted by Anti-Slavery International, is a coalition of twelve UK-based charities working together to monitor the UK's progress in implementing anti-trafficking policies. Full 'Time to Deliver' report is available at [www.antislavery.org/atmg](http://www.antislavery.org/atmg)



When a potential victim of trafficking is referred to the authorities, questions aren't asked about their

parental status. This means, firstly, that no data is collected on this issue, so we don't know how many victims of trafficking in the UK have children or are pregnant. The report collected data from individual support organisations who estimated that as many as half of the victims may be parents.

Secondly, crucial support might not be provided to them unless they come across local authorities or organisations who follow good practice of their own accord.

Often families and single parents are being housed not in specialist safe houses but in National Asylum Support Service accommodation, which is often sub-standard and located far away from their support networks.



**Vicky Brotherton,**  
Co-ordinator of the  
Anti-Trafficking Monitoring  
Group (ATMG)

Childcare is very limited for trafficking victims, often preventing parents from attending educational or vocational classes, making it extremely difficult to put their lives back on track.

In some regions of the UK, childcare also isn't provided when parents have to attend important meetings, such as interviews at the Home Office, meaning that children might have to listen to their parents disclose stories of abuse.

Children of trafficking victims are also being overlooked. Those accompanying their trafficked parent may witness their parent's exploitation, or may even be abused themselves. However, not all children of trafficking victims are referred to social services for an assessment of their needs.

It is clear from the research that, whilst good practice for supporting this group of victims exists in places, it is more down to experienced professionals who have developed it, but whose efforts are often undermined by the lack of a systematic holistic response.

It is time for the UK Government to look at the special needs of victims and ensure that no trafficked people are overlooked in their protection and support. Only then can they begin to rebuild their lives and create a stable environment for their children.

## Grace\*, 20, from Nigeria

When I was ten years old, my parents died in a car crash and I had to sleep on the streets and beg for food to survive.

When I was 15, I was trafficked to England, where I was raped, beaten, and forced to have sex with lots of different men. It was horrible.

Finally, I managed to run away. I was pregnant at this point. I slept on the streets until I was found by the police; they said that I had been trafficked and told me to apply for asylum.

At first I lived in a hostel, but when I was seven months pregnant, I was sent to a detention centre because my asylum claim had been rejected. I didn't get any healthcare.

I would've been sent back to Nigeria if the church I had attended before didn't help me to find a lawyer who lodged an appeal; I was released just before giving birth. But six months later they took me and my baby to another detention centre. The room we stayed in had no cot and no one ever changed the sheets. I was so depressed – I've never done anything wrong, but my daughter and I were being punished.

I met someone from Poppy Project (an organisation supporting trafficked women in London) and they helped me to appeal my case. They took me to their safe house where I finally felt safe and had lots of support.

\* Not her real name.

# “I don’t trust you, but please look after my children”



**Nay El Rahi,**  
Migrant Domestic Workers  
Programme Coordinator at  
KAFA (Enough) Violence  
& Exploitation

**Nay El Rahi from local partner KAFA (Enough Violence and Exploitation) on changing the racist attitudes Lebanese employers have of migrant domestic workers.**

■ Lebanon is the host of an estimated 200,000 female migrant domestic workers coming from African and South-East Asian countries.

Unfortunately, catastrophically high numbers of them suffer from exploitation, abuse, and slavery-like practices, as well as being treated like second-class human beings.

There are systemic reasons for this. First and foremost, the sponsorship (or kafala) system which ties a migrant worker’s residency and work permit to one specific employer, creating enormous power inequality and putting the worker in total subordination to her employer.

However, migrant domestic workers also face racist attitudes and stereotypical assumptions from their employers, making them even more vulnerable. KAFA’s and Anti-Slavery International’s “Think About It” campaign is aiming to change those attitudes.

The campaign, based

on a nation-wide survey exploring the attitudes and practices of 1200 employers towards migrant domestic workers, uncovered stark gaps in employers’ knowledge of the legal requirements of the system. For example, while the contract doesn’t mention the worker’s official documents, 94% of the employers surveyed withhold the worker’s passport, more than half of which think it’s stipulated in the contract.

It also uncovered a flagrant contradiction between the negative perceptions the employers have of domestic workers, and how much they rely on them in their everyday life. The study revealed that despite entrusting



**Many migrant domestic workers in Lebanon have to contend with their employers’ racist attitudes towards them.**  
Photo: KAFA (Enough) Violence & Exploitation/ Matthew Cassel © 2010

the worker with the wide range of domestic responsibilities, employers have negative, low and borderline racist perceptions of the workers (see box).

Under the umbrella of this campaign we produced a series of videos and visual materials targeting employers’ weak knowledge of the kafala system’s legal requirements and highlighting the employers’ contradiction when it comes to migrant domestic workers.

We wanted this campaign to be a call for employers to think through their misconceptions of migrant domestic workers, over whom they have such a great level of control. The ultimate aim however, is to change the environment domestic workers work and live in and end their exploitation in Lebanon.

For more information about KAFA (Enough Violence and Exploitation) go to [www.kafa.org.lb](http://www.kafa.org.lb).

Scan here to watch all the campaign videos



## Key findings of the survey of employers of migrant domestic workers:

- 41% consider that the worker has psychological problems, but have no problem with her staying with their elderly parents when they’re away
- 51% consider that the worker is not to be trusted, but have no problem with her staying with their children
- 27% consider that the worker is not clean, but have no problem with her cleaning and cooking
- 36% consider that the worker is stupid, but have no problem with her managing the household in their absence.

## Fasika, from Ethiopia.

When I was sixteen I decided to go to Lebanon to work as a domestic worker. Soon I realised it wasn’t the good life I hoped for. I had to clean, cook and look after two grandchildren of my employer. I worked eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, without any rest. I worked like a slave and was treated like one. They beat me regularly. The son of Madame tried to rape me several times. I wasn’t allowed to call anyone. My mother thought I was dead. They always kept me locked inside the flat on the 13th floor. I couldn’t go out for three years! The worst thing was that they didn’t even treat me like a human being. Finally, after becoming so tired I couldn’t work anymore, Madame allowed me to go home.

**Fasika wrote a book based on her experiences entitled ‘No Lipstick in Lebanon’, available at [www.penguin.co.uk](http://www.penguin.co.uk).**



# “Am I not a woman and sister?”



Richard Huzzey

**Richard Huzzey on women’s emancipation in the history of anti-slavery abolitionism, symbolised by a famous poster.**

■ Although Anti-Slavery Society at first was better known from its efforts to ban women at its first anti-slavery convention in 1840, the power of female activism and the particular exploitation of enslaved women has been growing in significance throughout the history of abolitionism.

In the 1790s and then again from the 1820s, British women organised the famous campaigns to abstain from West India sugar, replacing it on their tables with East India sugar ‘not made by slaves’. Though traditional campaigning activities were led by men, female abolitionists successfully played on gender stereotypes about the sensibility, religiosity, and domesticity of the ‘fairer sex’ to politicise their shopping baskets.

In places like Sheffield, ladies’ auxiliary societies began to trespass on public campaigning, for example canvassing door to door to distribute copies of the Anti-Slavery Reporter (the same one you’re holding in your hand right now).



Emblem of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society

These groups’ embraced gendered forms of philanthropy – such as knitting or sewing goods to be sold ‘for the sake of the slave’ – while increasing their influence in male-dominated campaigns.

This influence manifested itself most famously during the campaign to end ‘apprenticeship’, a transitional form of slavery, in the British West Indies. By 1837, dissatisfied abolitionists resumed the struggle which they thought they had won with the passing of the Emancipation Act five years earlier. In Sheffield, female activists in the Society for Universal Abolition of Slavery issued a specific appeal to fellow women, emphasising how female slaves ‘especially, are the victims of every species of degradation and cruelty’.

That image of female slaves appealing particularly to British women’s sympathies would be immortalised in a striking banner from this period. The “Am I not a woman and sister?” query played on the famous image of a kneeling African man, placed on

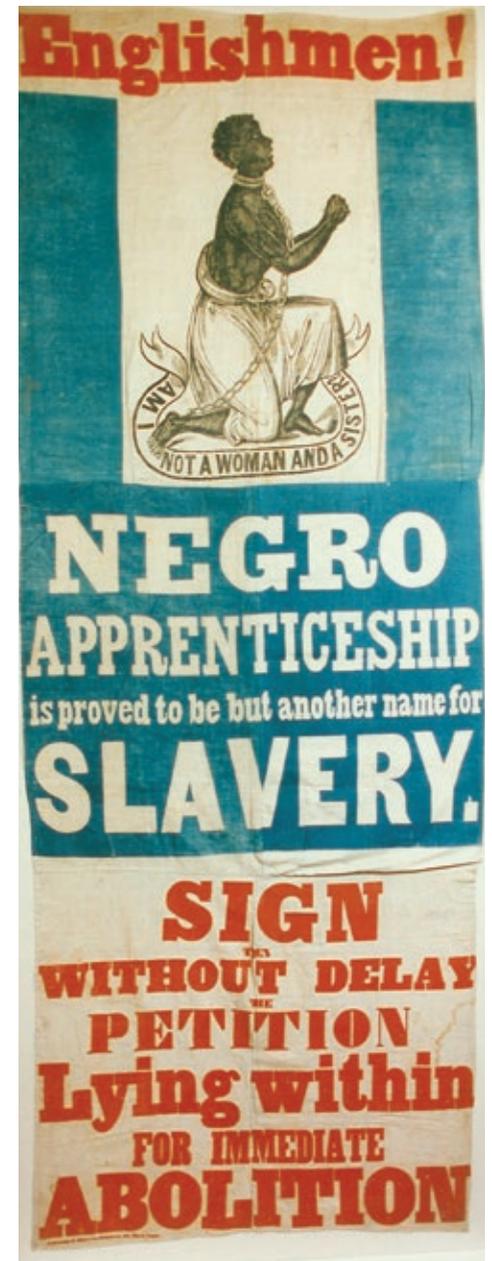
the emblem of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

Violence against enslaved women had an entirely different dimension than against men. This was publicised by James Williams, a Jamaican held in apprenticeship, who witnessed the plight of female apprentices since emancipation. The text described women punished on treadmills and commonly vulnerable to rape. Williams shocked British readers by relating how ‘when the driver open the door to take the people out of the shackles, he call for any one he want, to come to his room’.

The example of female campaigners from Sheffield was followed by many women who had an enormous influence on ending slavery systems across the world. Women such as Harriet Tubman and Harriet Beecher Stowe in the British colonies, or Alice Seeley Harris in in Belgian Congo, continue to inspire today’s abolitionists.

Linking female emancipation from bondage and their empowerment to become anti-slavery leaders plays a much greater role today, following from a 200-year tradition of abolitionism. As Anti-Slavery International staff pursue the cause today, they still have the “woman and sister” banner of 1838 hanging on the walls of Thomas Clarkson House as a reminder of their first campaign.

Richard Huzzey is a lecturer in History at the University of Liverpool and Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of International Slavery. He is the author of *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Cornell University Press, 2012).



‘Am I not a woman and a sister’ banner still hangs in the Anti-Slavery International’s offices  
Images: Anti-Slavery International

## Anti-Slavery helps businesses to clean up their supply chains from slavery

■ The Modern Slavery Act has made it obligatory for UK businesses with a turnover over £36 million to publish an annual Modern Slavery Statement disclosing what they are doing to tackle modern slavery in their supply chains. It marks a new era for businesses and makes them think much more proactively about their supply chains. At Anti-Slavery International we understand that the global complexity of trade today means that no business can safely say that slavery does not occur within their supply chains, and we recognise that there are no simple solutions to these issues. However, it is crucial that businesses not only comply with the new law, but



We are helping Mondelez transforming their cocoa supply chains in West Africa.  
Photo: Nile Sprague

seriously review their practices and introduce changes to reduce risks of slavery in their supply chains.

We think full transparency is a starting point of making a real difference for people in slavery across the world. But we know that businesses don't always have the knowledge and focus needed to spot the risks of forced labour in their supply chains.

This is why we decided to offer our expertise to businesses that want to take this issue seriously.

Building on our work with businesses such as Mondelez International on cocoa in West Africa, UK supermarkets sourcing seafood from Thailand and global apparel companies, our consultancy provides expert and independent advice on due diligence and supply chain transparency, as well as developing proactive policies tackling risks of slavery affecting the business.

We hope our work with businesses will raise ethical standards of trade in Britain and ultimately lead to the transformation of a wider political economy that will take labour rights seriously.



Anna Shepherd,  
Philanthropy and  
Partnerships Manager

## “It’s all about equal opportunities”

In this series, we present Anti-Slavery International staff. This time we are introducing **Silvia Cormaci**, who manages our recently opened Women and Girls Programme.



Silvia Cormaci,  
Women and Girls  
Programme Manager

### *What led you to join Anti-Slavery International?*

Before joining Anti-Slavery International I spent more than ten years working on women's rights issues. I really think Anti-Slavery has the right approach to women and girls, focusing on reducing their vulnerability to slavery and working with women to claim their rights.

### *What does your role involve on a daily basis?*

I'm responsible for the Women and Girls Programme and co-ordinate all the projects. We focus on different aspects of exploitation affecting women and girls, such as migrant domestic work. At the place of origin, for example in Nepal or India, we try to limit the risks of women getting exploited when they travel to their destination. In the destination country, for example in Lebanon, we support them to organise themselves and provide legal and psychological assistance when needed.

My work involves regular visits to the countries where we have our projects.

For example, recently I've been to Peru where we have a project on child domestic work. Instead of going to school, these girls spend the majority of their time cleaning someone else's house.

### *What needs to happen to end slavery of girls and women across the world?*

Obviously so many things have to happen but I think the most important one is equal opportunities.

When girls don't have the same opportunities as boys to study, and get a good job, they often end up in low paid jobs where it's really easy to be exploited.

It's up to governments to enact relevant policies. But it's also about changing attitudes, about what societies think what girls can accomplish, and about women and girls claiming their rights and power over their own lives.

Only when we change the way societies think about women can we reduce their enslavement.

### London Marathon 2016

■ This year we had a team of four incredible women running for freedom. They all showed a huge amount of passion and commitment, and raised over £9,000! Thanks to our runners and to all who supported them.

Margreet Groot, (second from left), said: *"The first 30km were like a dream, but then things got tough. In that moment I remembered myself I'm not here for myself*



*alone. Supported by all those friends and family members who believed in me, and by the thought that the money I raised will be so welcome for Anti-slavery's activities, pushed me through to a decent 4.06.... Thank you for giving me the opportunity for this experience."*



### Modern Slavery Garden

■ We are delighted to have worked with the Modern Slavery Garden who have a wonderful exhibit highlighting the existence of modern day slavery at the Chelsea Flower Show. The garden (above), designed by the award-winning Juliet Sargeant, is a celebration of the Modern Slavery Act, as well being as a symbol of hope, looking forward to a day when slavery no longer exists. The Chelsea Flower Show took place between 24-27 May.

■ **6-years-old Fiona Njorge** is, as far as we're aware, our youngest freedom fighter!

On Sunday 15th May she ran the Great Bristol Family Mile with her Dad in support of Anti-Slavery International. Well done!

Fiona would be thrilled if more supporters sponsored her.

Please scan this code:

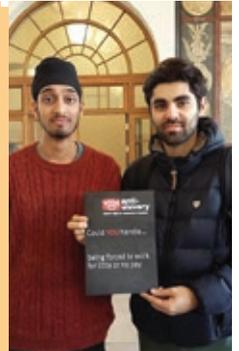


### Anti-Slavery Groups get active

■ Big thanks to our student groups for continuous support.

Glasgow Group recently organised a big event of food and talks from slavery historians Dr Iain Whyte and Dr Stephen Mullen, and our Glasgow group leader Laura Wood, (read Laura's and Iain's voices on the next page).

Our student group at University College London also organised an awareness-raising stand and photo petition on campus (right)



**If you'd like to join or set up your own local or student group, please get in touch with Ellie McDonald, e.mcdonald@antislavery.org or 020 7737 9434**

Support Anti-Slavery International by booking your favourite restaurant through the amazing application [charitablebookings.org](http://charitablebookings.org).

Every time you book, £1 for every diner can be donated to support our work at no cost to you! Scan here to download free app:



### RAG fundraising

■ A huge thank you to the RAG societies at Cambridge and Bradford Universities who this year selected us as one of their partner charities.

From 'Lost' challenge, to Blind Date, Jailbreak, table tennis tournaments, bake sales and more, the students have been creative to support the causes they care about, including slavery, raising in total over £11,000.



*If you would like to receive more copies of the reporter please email us at [supporter@antislavery.org](mailto:supporter@antislavery.org)*

### Supporters' survey

■ Please spare a few minutes to tell us your opinions about your experience as an Anti-Slavery supporter and how we can improve it. Please go to [www.antislavery.org/survey](http://www.antislavery.org/survey) or scan the code to fill out the survey.



# Why I support Anti-Slavery International

Laura, leader of our Glasgow Anti-Slavery Group, has been raising awareness about modern slavery, campaigning and fundraising since 2014. Iain, a long term Anti-Slavery International member, campaigner and fundraiser, is a historian exploring Scotland's links to slavery.

## Laura Wood

■ Through reading Harriet Tubman's biography, I discovered connections between her and Anti-Slavery International. She was a slave, escapee, incredible abolitionist and she is soon to be on the face of the American \$20 bill.

I admire Harriet Tubman. I wish I could help women leave slavery and abusive employers in the UK, such as migrant domestic workers, whose exploitation is facilitated by our government through tied visa rules.

I hope the work of Glasgow Anti-Slavery Group in raising funds and awareness and campaigning to end slavery is making a difference.

If we come together we can end slavery.



Iain and Laura at a recent event organised by the Glasgow Anti-Slavery Group.

## Iain Whyte

■ In 1825 Zachary Macaulay, one of William Wilberforce's closest allies, founded and edited The Anti-Slavery Reporter. In 1848 Ellen Craft and her husband liberated themselves from chattel slavery in the Southern States, and later found refuge in Britain. I have been privileged to meet descendants of these remarkable people.

Today, when there are so many more people in the world enslaved, Anti-Slavery International has dedicated staff like Macaulay, and is in partnership with many courageous men and women throughout the world who, like the Crafts, seek to liberate themselves.

That is why I am proud to be a supporter.

**If you'd like to campaign and fundraise in aid of Anti-Slavery International, please get in touch with Ellie McDonald on [e.mcdonald@antislavery.org](mailto:e.mcdonald@antislavery.org) or 020 7737 9434**

## Yes, I want to support the fight against modern slavery

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Mobile Telephone

I give Anti-Slavery International permission to contact me  By telephone  By SMS

Email address

Please send me news and updates by email (you may unsubscribe at any time)

*giftaid it* I am a UK taxpayer and would like Anti-Slavery International to reclaim the tax on all my donations made this year, in the previous four years and on all future donations. (Please note, you must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we, and other charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs you donate to, reclaim on all your donations and in the appropriate tax year. If you pay less income and/or capital gains tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all your donations, it is your responsibility to pay any difference. Tax year is 6 April one year to 5 April the next).

Date:  . Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or address, or if your tax status changes.

Please accept my gift of £

(Please do not send cash)

I enclose a cheque or charity voucher made payable to Anti-Slavery International

Please debit my Visa/Mastercard/CAF Charity Card

(last 3 digits for CAF cards only)

Card No.

Expiry date

Name on card

Signature

Date

To help us save on administrative costs, we will only thank you for your donation if you tick this box.

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Please return this form to **Anti-Slavery International** donate online at [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org) or call +44 (0)20 7501 8920

## Luzmila Lliyacc, 16, a child domestic worker in Lima, Peru

■ Luzmila was twelve when she went to Lima to work as a domestic worker.

Her employer ill-treated her for over two years. She forced Luzmila to work extremely long hours, convert to Catholicism, cut her hair against her will and controlled her every move.

Luckily, Luzmila was allowed to attend an evening school, where her teachers told her about La Casa de Panchita, the home of a project working with child domestic workers run by Asociación Grupo de Trabajo Redes (AGTR) and Anti-Slavery International.

Her employer didn't allow her to "go there and get ideas", but soon Luzmila secretly started visiting La Casa de Panchita.

Luzmila slowly opened up about her situation, the fear she had of her employer and how difficult she found it to stand up to her.

A few months later she finally gathered her courage to leave.

She found new employment through an agency, where she now enjoys a regular day off and much lighter work. Luzmila found it much easier to negotiate her working conditions.

She now plans to carry on studying and become a beautician.

Luzmila has become a leader among her colleagues, sharing information about their rights as domestic workers. Her favourite saying is: *"If you love yourself, do not let them mistreat you"*.



### Your donation could:

- help meet the costs of counselling, legal advice, shelter and other support children like Luzmila need
- contribute towards the costs of pursuing the cases of former victims of slavery through the courts, like the one just won in Mauritania
- ensure that all victims of trafficking in the UK have their rights protected

Donate online at  
[www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)  
or call  
**+44 (0)20 7501 8920**  
or scan here:

