

2. HOW TO SET UP AND RUN YOUR ANTI-SLAVERY GROUP

2.1 Recruiting new members

When you initially set up your group you will need to grow your membership. Remember to try and attract a diverse group membership in order to draw upon the varied ideas, skills and knowledge of the group members. Even if there are only a few of you, you can form your group and get started on planning your activities.

Here are a few ideas to build the membership:

- Organise an Inaugural event or meeting to introduce people to the issue and what the group wants to do. An event such as a speaker meeting or DVD viewing is a great way to publicise the existence of the group and ultimately attract more people. See section 4.0 for more ideas.
- If you organise an event then you can use the local media to publicise it and the formation of the group. See section 5.0
- Ask around your network of friends, family, and work colleagues. Ask them to forward an email to their friends and networks about the group.
- Put up a notice or poster in a local shop window, library, community centre or church hall (in most cases you will need to ask permission first).
- Try and contact other local campaigning groups. See section 5.9 'working in partnership' for some ideas for other groups that may exist in your area.
- We can list your group on our website with your contact details and include details of new groups that have been set up in our supporter mailings to specifically attract members in your area.
- Look for people who you think might have the time to commit to the group, for example, retired people's groups, University of the Third Age etc.

Patrons

You may wish to invite local dignitaries to be Patrons of the group in order to make them aware of what you wish to do in your local community and harness their support for the initiative. For example, you could invite your local MP, Lord Mayor or a religious/ community figurehead.

2.2 Retaining members and running meetings

Once you have attracted members to the group, it is important to keep the momentum going and ensure that members are kept active to make their membership worthwhile. Establishing a regular meeting time and place is essential. Ideally choose the same day, time

and place each week or month (for example first Tuesday of every month) for members to meet. It is worth having everyone's email addresses and mobile numbers so that a block text and reminder email can be sent.

It is also important that all members of the group feel motivated and valued otherwise they may drop-out. Therefore ensure the meetings are well-facilitated and organised. Keep abreast of Anti-Slavery International's updates and developments in news stories so that members can take on campaigning actions during the regular meeting and plan further actions as required.

The rest of this pack outlines ideas for the different activities groups can undertake. Use the regular meetings not only to inform the group about slavery, but also to plan the group's activities.

If your group is already up and running and you invite new or prospective members to a meeting, make sure you welcome them, explain to them how the group works and follow-up with them after the meeting to maintain their interest.

2.3 Group structure and roles

How you decide to structure your group is up to you but more formal roles or structures within the group will help to ensure that it stays organised and can therefore carry out work more efficiently. Many groups often have a central organising committee, especially where the group membership is quite large. This committee may wish to meet more frequently to plan activities.

You may wish to form your group according to a constitution (please see the 'example of a constitution' included in this pack). A group can have between three to six roles who are elected at the AGM. Usually a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are essential, however additional posts can be adopted which can include a Fundraising coordinator or Campaigns Officer.

2.4 Communicating with your group members

Ensure you have a consistent way to communicate with all your group members. Email is probably the easiest way but not all people may have access to the internet so ensure you can use the telephone, group texts to mobile phones or post. If you have a website, make sure this is kept up to date.

A Chairperson/President shall:

- Chair all official meetings of a group. In their absence the members present will elect someone to chair the meeting.
- Convene all meetings of the organising committee where relevant.
- Keep up to date with all aspects of the group and ensure the group is achieving its goals.
- Be a signatory for the group budget.

A Treasurer shall:

- Keep the group informed about the group's financial situation.
- Maintain a record of all receipts and payments giving details of the transactions.
- Present the group's accounts at the AGM.
- Be responsible for the group's fundraising activities (where no fundraising officer is present).

A Secretary shall:

- Record decisions made at all meetings of the group.
- Inform all members of meetings.
- Ensure that all members are kept informed of issues affecting the group and developments in Anti-Slavery International's work.
- Be responsible for communication between the group members, Anti-Slavery International and the other bodies.
- Take minutes of official meetings and maintain a minutes book containing the constitution of the group, and where applicable the results of elections.
- Maintain a file of all correspondence for the current and preceding year.
- Maintain an inventory of all items of equipment belonging to the group.

Aside from using standard email you could also think about using an online forum such as Yahoo Groups which enables you to email all members of the group, have multi-way communication and share documents. The following are the most useful:

Google Groups <http://groups.google.com/>

Yahoo Groups <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/>

Rise Up <http://www.riseup.net/>

Newsletters

A monthly or quarterly newsletter is a very effective way to communicate with group members on a regular basis and ensure that they are up to date with all past and future activities of the group, particularly for those who may have missed a meeting. This can be sent either by email or post.

2.5 Communicating with Anti-Slavery International

When you return the Memorandum of Understanding and register your group, Anti-Slavery International will automatically send the group a starter pack and add the group (with the contact details provided) to receive the following regular communications:

- Campaigns Network emails to receive the latest actions from Anti-Slavery International and updates about campaigns and events
- The Reporter to receive Anti-Slavery news and features on our work
- A bi-annual Anti-Slavery group network newsletter containing information about other groups and their activities and new information for groups.

NB: All individual members of the group can receive the campaigns network emails if they wish. Please send a request contact details to us. If group members would like to receive the Reporter individually, then you can subscribe as a member of Anti-Slavery International (£35/ £11 unwaged).

For any additional questions or information needed, please use the contact details below:

Gemma Wolfes, Campaigns & Outreach Officer
g.wolfes@antislavery.org

+44 (0)20 7501 8936

Anti-Slavery International, Thomas Clarkson House, The Stableyard, Broomgrove road, London SW9 9TL

2.6 Communicating between different Anti-Slavery groups

For the time-being, the bi-annual Anti-Slavery group network newsletter will be the main source of information for groups regarding what other groups are doing.

We will also encourage networking and the sharing of ideas amongst groups by providing contact details for other Anti-Slavery groups in these newsletters and on our website. Once the group network is better established, we hope to set up a secure area on Anti-Slavery International's website where groups can display further details about their activities and an online discussion forum where members of different groups can communicate, alongside organising skill-share sessions for group members.

2.7 Funding support for your group

The following could be useful in helping to fund some of your groups' activities:

- Local trusts (use any contacts you are aware of)
- Awards for all- www.awardsforall.org.uk
- Grassroots Grants-

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/community_action/grassroots_grants.aspx