

# Apne Aap Women Worldwide Press Kit 2013

# Apne Aap Women Worldwide: A grassroots movement to end sex trafficking.



## Who we are

We work to empower girls and women to resist and end sex trafficking by organizing marginalized women and girls into small self-empowerment groups, where they work collectively to access their legal, social, economic, and political rights. Founded by twenty-two courageous women in prostitution, who had a vision for a world where no woman could be bought or sold, Apne Aap Women Worldwide is determined to make their vision a reality.

Since 2002, we have formed 150 self-empowerment groups in red light districts and slums. Through this work, we have created and proven a community-centered solution to end sex trafficking.

## Our Impact In 2012

- **45 women accessed bank accounts**
- **516 girls were mainstreamed to government or private schools**
- **70 girls were provided safe space in residential schools**
- **357 women and girls completed vocational training successfully**
- **108 women accessed safe and independent housing**
- **297 legal sessions and camps were provided**



## The Apne Aap Approach Supply, Demand, Movement Building

**Supply Side** Apne Aap enables marginalized women and girls to gain independence from prostitution by organizing them into **self-empowerment groups** of ten, where they campaign collectively for access to their most basic rights: legal protection, education, livelihood, and housing.



**Demand Side** We simultaneously confront the “demand” side of the industry. Despite the fact that male demand for purchased sex fuels the industry, men are rarely the focus of anti-trafficking efforts. By pushing for policies that shift the burden of criminal punishment from the victims to the perpetrators, and by raising awareness, **we deter** men from buying sex. We recently launched the [Campaign Against the Sexual Slavery of Indian Children & Women](#) to demand change to existing laws.

**Movement Building** To seed and grow a movement, Apne Aap brings together clusters of self help groups to form networks with the capacity and numbers to **advocate** on the national level for their rights and a change in anti-sex trafficking policies. In this way, their “supply side” and “demand side” come together.



## Sex Trafficking is a Perfect Business.

For traffickers, it's low risk, low investment, high demand, high revenue, with an inventory that can be sold again and again.

### The Annual Report

It's covert and criminal and impossible to measure exactly. But here are the estimates:

- Every year, **1.7 trillion** Rupees profits are made from all forms of trafficking (forced labour and sexual exploitation).<sup>1</sup>
- Every year, nearly **2 million people are trafficked for sexual exploitation**;<sup>2</sup> of these, the vast majority are female<sup>3</sup>, and over half are aged 12-16.<sup>4</sup>
- Every year, **1 million children are exploited by the global commercial sex trade**.<sup>5</sup>
- **In India, the median age of entry into prostitution is 11**,<sup>6</sup> with girls 10-12 in highest demand.<sup>7</sup>
- Every year, **about 1 person is convicted for 800 people trafficked**.<sup>8</sup>

## Unless You're the One Being Sold.



**Fatima**  
Bihar, India



**Asvini**  
Calcutta, India



**Fatima** was married into the Nat community – a caste where society expects the men to be pimps and the women to be prostituted.

At 15, **Asvini's** family sold her into Prostitution.

**Fatima** was beaten by her mother-in-law for running away from her husband.

For many years, **Asvini's** pimp controlled her through violence, beating her each time she tried to escape.

**Fatima** couldn't go to school or get a job if she tried; societal discrimination wouldn't allow.

When she finally escaped, **Asvini** was ostracized by her local community, with no where to turn to.

**Fatima** organizes Nat women to escape prostitution – and non-Nat women to support them.

**Asvini** envisions a world where girls and women in prostitution get help, and pimps and johns get jail time.

## See for yourself.

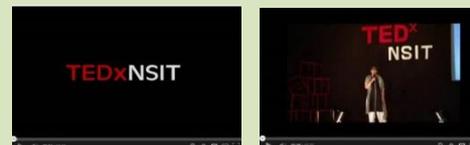
Links to vides:



Ending sex trafficking of girls and women in India (3:56 video) [link: <http://bit.ly/Xc4zXv> ]



A Survivor's Story (4:47 video) [link: <http://bit.ly/10vPM95> ]



Ruchira Gupta speaks about sex trafficking in a TED talk (17:27 video) [link: <http://bit.ly/KGYJ8C> ]



Poonam describes growing up in the Red Light District in Calcutta (2:03 video) [link: <http://bit.ly/YupLsC> ]

<sup>1</sup>International Labor Organization (ILO), 2005,

<sup>2</sup>UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2012, <sup>3</sup>UNODC, 2012, <sup>4</sup>ILO, 2005

<sup>5</sup>US Department of State, 2005, <sup>6</sup>Institute of Social Sciences, India, 2004,

<sup>7</sup>Save the Children India, 2006

<sup>8</sup>UNODC, 2010

## Our Founder: Ruchira Gupta



**Ruchira Gupta** is the Founder and President of Apne Aap Women Worldwide – a grassroots organization in India working to end sex trafficking by increasing choices for at-risk girls and women. She has striven over her 25 year career to highlight the link between trafficking and prostitution laws, and to lobby policy makers to shift blame from victims to perpetrators.

She testified in the United States Senate before the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000, and she lobbied with other activists at the United Nations during the formulations for the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons — resulting in the first UN instrument to address demand for trafficking in Article 9.

In 2009 Gupta won the Clinton Global Citizen Award and in 2007, she won the Abolitionist Award at the UK House of Lords. In 2008 and 2009, Gupta addressed the UN General Assembly on human trafficking. She won an Emmy in 1997 for her work on the documentary “The Selling of Innocents,” which inspired the creation of Apne Aap. Her work has been featured in 11 books including Half the Sky by Sheryl WuDunn and Nicholas Kristof.

Prior to founding Apne Aap, Gupta worked in the United Nations in various capacities in 12 countries for over ten years. She is on the board of Coalition against Trafficking in Women and the advisory councils of the Polaris Project, Vital Voices, Ricky Martin Foundation, Asia Society, Nomi Network, The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and Cents for Relief. In 2012 and 2013, she designed and taught courses on human trafficking for New York University’s School of Global Affairs.



## Advancing the Movement Recent Press

**NGOs to MPs: Retain Justice Verma recommendations on trafficking**

**First Post India:** <http://bit.ly/WcKtJ1>



**Sex work activist takes aim at 'pimps and johns' of the prostitution trade**

**The Guardian:** <http://bit.ly/YHnDPU>



**Bravehearts shun flesh trade to spread hope**

**Times of India:** <http://bit.ly/106syrc>



**Put the business out of business**

**Interview by Sujoy Dhar:**  
<http://bit.ly/12b9GLE>



**Ashton has a job(s)**

**The Telegraph:** <http://bit.ly/12baEaM>

## For Media Inquiries: [Lindsey@apneaap.org](mailto:Lindsey@apneaap.org)



[www.apneaap.org](http://www.apneaap.org)



[@aneaaap](https://twitter.com/aneaaap)



[www.facebook.com/apneaap](https://www.facebook.com/apneaap)



**If you are interested** in exploring a story about the reality of the sex trade in India, and a new approach that is proving successful in combating sex trafficking, we would love to speak with you. We can give you stories of the incredible resilience and spirit of the women who come out of this slave trade to change their lives and the lives of others, and about the laws they have changed. We can also take you on a tour of the communities where we work.

Photos taken by Photographer Bernard Henin,  
and Apne Aap Staff Members

## How is Apne Aap Different?

Sex trafficking is a billion dollar industry in India. Millions of girls and women are living in forced, inhuman conditions of brutal violence and repeated rape. In Delhi, Bihar and West Bengal, girls as young as 9 years of age are raped by eight to ten men every night. The National Human Rights Commission of India says that the numbers of the trafficked are going up while the ages coming down.

Non-profit organizations have worked for decades to curb sex trafficking and to help the women trapped in its system. International legislation has been passed, some groups have even tried regulating the sex trade, but nothing has worked. The devastatingly high numbers of sex trafficking victims in India have only grown.

Apne Aap may have actually cracked the code to upending the industry. Our approach is centered on this: because sex traffickers prey on those with no choice, increasing the choices available to marginalized girls and women is the most sustainable solution.

And it is already succeeding in India.

When Apne Aap began working in the red light area of Uttari Rampur in 2004, the community had 60 home-based brothels; today there are 25. When we arrived in the red light district of Khawaspur, there were 17 home-based brothels.; today, there are 3.

In Kolkata we have managed to put 814 children in school, thereby helping to prevent the inter-generational prostitution of their own daughters and siblings. The voices of the women of Apne Aap have lead to the UN to set up a Trafficking Fund for survivors, and to force the Indian government to amend the Indian anti-trafficking law.

And the change Apne Aap is causing goes well beyond the reach of our small organization. Other organizations are catching on: This approach works.

Human Rights Project for Girls (Rights4Girls) in the U.S. and Embrace Dignity, in South Africa, among others, have said they are using Apne Aap's method for combating sex trafficking. Men Can Stop Rape and Girls for Gender Equity have said their approach is greatly influenced by Apne Aap. Gloria Steinem, Nicholas Kristof, Kansas Governor and former US Senator Sam Brownback, UN high commissioner for human rights Jan Goodwin, and Peter and Jennifer Buffet, among others, all tout the incredible strides and potential of the organization and the woman at it's center who truly believes she can end the trafficking of girls and women in India.