



University of
Nottingham
Rights Lab

Helping to end global slavery

Rights Lab

Beacon of Excellence

nottingham.ac.uk/rights-lab

2019–2020

Research
innovations
towards
the historic
possibility
of ending
slavery in
our lifetime

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Pictured: A mural created by slavery survivors.
Courtesy of Joel Bergner and local partners

We are home to the world's leading modern slavery experts and have built a large-scale research platform for ending slavery.

Introduction

The modern antislavery effort is 20 years old and a commitment to end slavery by 2030 is part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (target 8.7). To achieve this goal, we need long-term, evidence-based strategies for abolition. With the Rights Lab, we have built a large-scale research platform for ending slavery. We are the largest group of modern slavery scholars in the world, and home to the world's leading academic experts on modern slavery.

We have five Rights Lab research programmes, each focused on answering a major question:

1. **Data and Measurement** – how many slaves are there in the world and where are they?
2. **Survivors and Cultures** – why does slavery persist?
3. **Communities and Society** – what factors underpin resilience against slavery?
4. **Law and Policy** – how can we close the implementation gap?
5. **Business and Economies** – what difference does freedom make?

We have also launched the Modern Slavery Evidence Unit (MSEU), which brings together all of the Rights Lab's research to ask a final big question: what works to end slavery?

As our programmes unfold, we use their results to update our Freedom Blueprint: a plan for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 – the end of slavery. We update this roadmap as we make discoveries, test intervention techniques, and complete our evaluation processes.

This year, we launched a series of flagship projects (described in this brochure). By scaling up these and other initiatives to become global research-led strategies, we hope to help end slavery. To achieve this goal, the world needs the antislavery community of survivors, policymakers, civil society, researchers and business to work together. Ending slavery will only happen if everyone works together towards a shared vision, and we hope our Rights Lab research innovations can be a useful part of that joint vision and work towards ending slavery in our lifetime.

Ending slavery by 2030 is an ambitious goal. But this would be a watershed moment when the world finally rejects the great lie of history – that some people are sub-human – and embraces the great antislavery truth: that labour must not be forced and that people are not for sale.

Pictured left: A mural created by slavery survivors. Courtesy of Joel Bergner and local partners

We now estimate that more than a third of the world's slavery – trapping 40 million people – is visible from space



Innovation: the Global Antislavery Observatory

Our Data and Measurement Programme is asking: how many slaves are there in the world, and where are they?

To tackle modern slavery, we need to know how many slaves there are in the world – and where they are. Robust measurement and analysis will give the antislavery movement credibility, confidence and the foundations to build effective action. Governments need an accurate measure to design and resource appropriate policy responses. By understanding the location and prevalence of slavery, NGOs can plan more effective programmes on the ground. And businesses will benefit from understanding slavery in the context of particular commodities.

In our Data and Measurement Programme, geographers, political scientists, sociologists, mathematicians and business systems specialists have made globally-recognised advances in measuring the risk and prevalence of modern slavery.

As part of that work our Slavery from Space initiative is the first use of geospatial observation to map and measure slavery. Using new machine-learning techniques and citizen science, the team

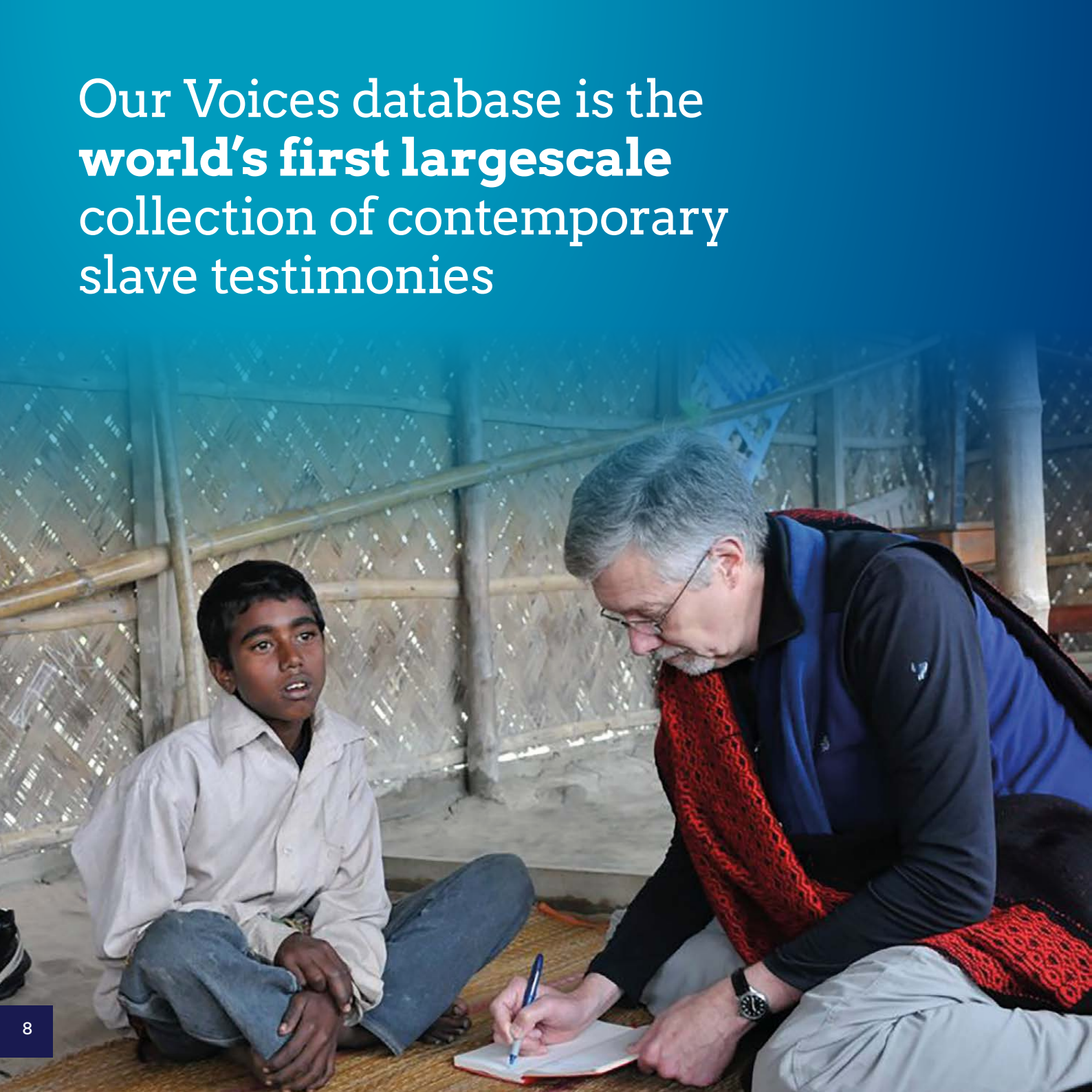
has uncovered sites and industries with high levels of slavery. We now estimate that more of a third of the world's slavery – trapping 40 million people – is visible from space.

Our work with satellite imagery has also generated new data on the relationship between slavery and eco-systems. Demonstrating the slavery footprint on our environment, we have calculated for the first time slavery's environmental costs – and the environmental gains of ending it.

We have now joined the United Nations University's Delta 8.7 project and other partners to launch Code 8.7 at the UN headquarters. This global network uses computational science and AI to tackle modern slavery, working together to deliver a Global Antislavery Observatory that harnesses the value of satellite data for antislavery action. With close-to-real time mapping of slavery sites via geospatial observation and other non-standard, novel data streams, we can find and predict the locations of high-prevalence industries and hotspots.

Pictured left: An enslaved worker in a north Indian brick kiln; the Rights Lab has mapped slavery across the Brick Belt from space. Courtesy of Free the Slaves

Our Voices database is the **world's first large scale** collection of contemporary slave testimonies



Innovation: the Voices Database

Our Survivors and Cultures Programme is asking: why does slavery persist?

If we understand why slavery exists today, we will have a better chance of ending it. Key to understanding why slavery continues to thrive in multiple cultures of today's world are the ideas and perspectives of slavery survivors. By seeking input from former slaves on definitions, antislavery policies and programmes, we can ensure that policy and practice fit the actual experience of enslaved people and their recovery needs. We can understand what survivors of slavery themselves suggest would enable their communities to become slavery-free and slavery-proof.

In our Survivors and Cultures Programme, political scientists, sociologists, health scientists, philosophers, and scholars of law and literature work with survivors to put their voices at the heart of the antislavery movement.

Integral to this programme has been the perspective of the Survivor Alliance, a new NGO incubated in the Rights Lab and directed by survivor-leader Minh Dang, a current Rights Lab PhD student. The Survivor Alliance unites and empowers survivors of modern slavery around the world and brings the ideas of survivors into policy and research. This work with survivors also has a focus on recovery, including

mental health, to better meet the practical, health and wellbeing needs of survivors over the long term.

We have now launched the world's first large-scale database of contemporary slave testimonies. When fused with our prevalence, geospatial and business data, these millions of words reveal why slavery persists in particular hotspots around the world. This new Voices database lets us analyse patterns in the data to understand trafficking routes, uncover reasons for slavery's emergence across different sectors, identify vulnerabilities and the challenges survivors face in liberation, and discover new antislavery solutions.

Across thousands of narratives, we can highlight the possibilities for systematically designing new antislavery strategies based on the solutions of enslaved people. For example, we are mapping these life-stories onto the 169 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets to answer a key question from the point of view of enslaved people themselves: which SDG achievements, beyond 8.7 (ending slavery) are more likely to prevent or end enslavement?

Pictured left: Professor Kevin Bales interviews a former child slave during fieldwork in Bangladesh

Our resilience framework is revealing how cities can become slavery-free



Innovation: the Slavery-Free Cities Index

Our Communities and Society Programme is asking: what factors underpin resilience against slavery?

Efforts to prevent slavery, discover victims, and provide support for survivors draw upon a complex web of services at locality-level. Yet development of coherent antislavery policy at the sub-national and local level is frequently ignored or under-funded. Similar to other global challenges, such as climate change, modern slavery requires local action to underpin international and domestic legislation.

In our Communities and Society Programme, sociologists, political scientists, and scholars of education, law, and business, are showing that community engagement remains – as across history – an essential facet of the antislavery movement. Our slavery-free communities project aims to establish how we might work locally, as well as nationally, to create sustainable and resilient localities where slavery cannot flourish. We are developing transferable, scalable and sustainable initiatives which can help communities to become slavery-free.

This includes national comparative research on multi-agency antislavery partnerships, work alongside the Church of England and other faith partners to understand the contribution of faith groups to antislavery action and grassroots mobilisation, and evaluations of the impact of local press and media campaigns. We are also working alongside

statutory and community partners towards creating a slavery-free Nottinghamshire, and this place-based approach to addressing slavery is receiving increasing attention from a number of other cities in the UK and internationally.

We are now starting work on a Slavery-Free Cities Index. This builds on our international collaborations with other cities to pilot place-based approaches to addressing slavery. We have theorised social determinants of slavery-free communities, setting them in context with a systemic view of the antislavery agenda, that stretches from prevention through discovery to respite, recovery and sustainable resilience.

This framework will now underpin a new index of city resilience to slavery, one that will share the components required to develop slavery-free communities in diverse social and economic contexts. By understanding the factors contributing to slavery-free communities, we can measure and compare resilience across a wide range of local settings, and so challenge and inspire communities to further action.

Pictured left: Local volunteers work with the Rights Lab to assess data and model slavery vulnerability in the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

We can create blueprints for antislavery law and policy enactment, reform and implementation around the world



Innovation: the Antislavery Legislation Database

Our Law and Policy Programme is asking: how can we close the implementation gap—the gap between principle and practice in antislavery governance?

From the global to the domestic, states are increasingly engaging with the issue of modern slavery in their legal frameworks. Yet significant gaps remain in antislavery laws and national approaches often fail to satisfy international commitments.

Disparities between states' legal frameworks create confusion, prevent effective cooperation, and result in incomplete coverage of the phenomenon – particularly in its transnational manifestations.

In our Law and Policy Programme, legal scholars, political scientists, sociologists, and scholars of business and area studies are interrogating the law and policy frameworks that operate at the global, regional, and domestic level. We are working to determine the elements of effective antislavery governance and to map trends, successes, and failures in its realisation and implementation. This includes work defining the parameters of slavery and related forms of exploitation, investigating the full range of potential mechanisms for modern slavery governance, and engaging victim-centred approaches.

To support evidence-based action in antislavery governance, we have launched and are analysing the world's first comprehensive database of the domestic legislation and international obligations of all 193 UN Member States with regard to slavery and related forms of exploitation. From this Antislavery Legislation Database, we can construct blueprints for antislavery law and policy enactment, reform, and implementation around the world, working with government, legislators, and practitioners to lay the legal foundations for a future free from slavery.

Building and honouring consensus through a greater harmonisation of approaches is critical for delivering on the global commitment to antislavery action. The database allows states to learn from global practice and comparative analyses in order to develop robust governance frameworks that respond to the changing dynamics of slavery. As the database expands, it will include new areas of law, national policies, international and regional frameworks, and information on implementation.

Placing a world of law and policy evidence at stakeholders' fingertips, the database allows us to access, understand, interrogate, and ultimately achieve prohibition in practice, as well as on paper.

Pictured left: Members of the Rights Lab team in conversation with parliamentarians from Malawi and Namibia about antislavery legislation

We are helping businesses to understand the risks of slavery in their global supply chains



Innovation: the Commodities Risk Index

Our Business and Economies Programme is asking: what difference does freedom make – what is the Freedom Dividend when slavery ends?

We know that slavery exerts a disproportionate drag, inhibiting social and economic development for free people as well as the enslaved. The UK Government's own analysis calculates the economic cost of modern slavery at between £3.3 and £4.3 billion. We argue that ending slavery would mean a better world for everyone – what we call the Freedom Dividend.

In our Business and Economies Programme, business scholars, economists, sociologists, political scientists, and computer scientists are measuring demand and supply for slave labour, demonstrating slavery's impact on a country's economy and economic benefits of ending slavery. Our analyses are revealing the economic value of slavery-free production and making the business, as well as the ethical, case for slavery-free supply chains.

As we research slavery in supply chains, we work with partners to change supply chain design in response. We are also showing the global benefits of slavery-free economies: dividends to social and gender equality, educational enhancement, peace, health, and the environment.

Building on our sector-specific work into global supply chains, we are now piloting a Commodities Risk Index. This aims to help eradicate slavery in commodity production through the development of an index score. The pilot identifies and catalogues the factors that impact the occurrence of modern slavery in the production of key agricultural commodities, including cotton. It structures these factors into influencer categories, measure them, and develops an index from their measurement.

By incorporating the modern slavery risk in commodity production into the decision-making of global supply chains, we can enable stakeholders – including producers, commodity traders, procurement and supply chain managers, and government bodies – to measure their exposure to slavery, measure progress, and build a commercial case for modern slavery prevention. The index score will help us understand at which point in the supply chain modern slavery is likely to occur, and so enable businesses to understand the impact of their decisions and allocate resources towards improvement.

Pictured left: Enslaved person harvesting cotton, a high slavery prevalence commodity. Courtesy of Trafficking in Persons Office, U.S. Department of State

We work closely with partners to design a roadmap for ending slavery – what we call The Freedom Blueprint



Innovation: the Modern Slavery Evidence Unit

Our Rights Lab Modern Slavery Evidence Unit (MSEU) brings together all of our programmes' research to ask: what works to end slavery?

Our aim of helping to end slavery by 2030 can only be delivered if the work of key stakeholders in policy-making, business and civil society is informed by a clear roadmap – what we call The Freedom Blueprint.

Without this blueprint, antislavery cannot draw upon successful practices at all levels of activity – from slavery-free supply chains and global prevalence estimates, to survivor care and multi-agency partnership working.

Domain specialists from each of the Rights Lab's five programmes work in the MSEU alongside specialist MSEU staff members who bring extended capacity in systematic review, policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation, and translation and impact.

Drawing on evidence our five research programmes, along with evidence from the wider global antislavery research community, MSEU delivers consultancy and briefings, and tackles key evidence gaps identified by policy-makers and other partners.

We also anticipate potential shifts in the landscape of modern slavery, for example with a scoping reports on new and emerging forms of slavery and on promising antislavery techniques.

Our team shares this expertise with government departments, NGOs and other policy partners via briefings, consultancy and contract research.

We also share our findings through our MA in Slavery and Liberation and our free Massive Open Online Course on Ending Slavery, which has been taken by over 10,000 participants in more than 150 countries.

MSEU has now launched an antislavery monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) service, demonstrating effective processes of antislavery intervention and helping our partners to further develop evidence-based approaches.

Our current evaluations include an assessment of the Freedom Dividend of a survivor employment programme in Cambodian garment factories, to better understand the impact on factory employees, their families and wider communities over time. We are also evaluating the efficacy of a national faith-based programme in the UK; assessing a domestic workers programme led by an NGO in Tanzania; and analysing survivors' reintegration journeys and experiences via a new framework for sustained liberation with NGOs in Ethiopia and India, among many other evaluations.

Pictured left: Members of the Rights Lab team and partners at the United Nations University event, Code 8.7, about slavery and computational science at the United Nations headquarters in New York

Snapshot of achievements

100 Rights Lab team members at the University of Nottingham

Over **1.4 billion** audience reach annually for print, online, broadcast and media coverage

8 briefings submitted to Parliamentary calls for evidence in the past year

4 Rights Lab researchers in the top UK 100 Modern Slavery Influencers, including the #1 influencer

200 local, national and international organisations in the Rights Lab partner network

1,551,997 km² mapped by our Slavery from Space project across South Asia's 'brick belt'

1.5 million words of survivor narratives gathered and analysed

900 cases of labour exploitation over five months identified with new UK car wash app

Discovery: more than a third of the world's slavery is visible from space

Discovery: 47% of countries have not yet made slavery a criminal offence

Discovery: slavery is the third largest emitter of CO₂ after China and the United States

Discovery: 90% of the 3,000 conflicts since World War II have involved slavery



Some of our leaders and experts



Professor Zoe Trodd,
Rights Lab Director



Professor Todd Landman,
Rights Lab Executive Director



Professor Kevin Bales, CMG,
Rights Lab Research Director



Sarah Kerr, Director of the Modern
Slavery Evidence Unit (MSEU) and
Rights Lab Deputy Director



Professor Doreen Boyd,
Rights Lab Associate Director:
Data and Measurement Programme



Vicky Brotherton, Rights Lab
Associate Director: Survivors and
Cultures Programme



Dr Alison Gardner,
Rights Lab Associate Director:
Communities and Society
Programme



Dr Katarina Schwarz,
Rights Lab Associate Director:
Law and Policy Programme



Dr Alexander Trautrimms,
Rights Lab Associate Director:
Business and Economics
Programme



Sir Bernard Silverman, Rights
Lab Professor of Modern Slavery
Statistics and MSEU Chair



Dr Jessica Sparks,
Rights Lab Lead on Slavery
and the Environment



Dr Helen McCabe,
Rights Lab Lead on Slavery and
Forced Marriage



Arianne Griffith, Rights Lab
Senior Research and Policy Fellow
and Business Services Manager



Minh Dang, Rights Lab Research
Associate and PhD Student,
Director of the Survivor Alliance



Dr Andrea Nicholson,
Rights Lab Nottingham Research
Fellow in Survivor Voices



Dr Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick,
Rights Lab Associate Professor
of Human Rights and Social
Movements



Dr Nicola Wright,
Rights Lab Assistant Professor in
Mental Health



Dr Deanna Davy,
Rights Lab Research Fellow in
Survivors and Cultures



Juliana Semione,
Rights Lab PhD Student in Politics
and International Relations



Amelia Watkins-Smith, Rights Lab
Research Associate in Slavery-
Free Communities and David
Brion Davis memorial Scholar (MA
in Slavery and Liberation)



Dr Andrew Mumford,
Rights Lab Associate Professor
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Relations



Dr James Goulding,
Rights Lab Assistant Professor in
Business Analytics



Ioannis Kougkoulos,
Rights Lab Research Fellow in
Antislavery Intervention Impact



Chloe Brown,
Rights Lab Research Fellow in
Antislavery Remote Sensing



Dr Akilah Jardine,
Rights Lab Research Fellow
in Antislavery Business and
Communities



Dr Selim Cakir,
Rights Lab Research Fellow in
Business and Modern Slavery



Professor Thomas Chesney,
Rights Lab Professor of
Computational Social Science



Professor Giles Foody,
Rights Lab Professor of
Geographical Information Science



Ben Brewster, Rights Lab Research
Fellow in Antislavery Policy and
Communities



Phil Northall,
Rights Lab Research Fellow in
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Dr Emily Wyman,
Rights Lab Monitoring, Evaluation
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Laoise Ní Bhriain,
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Hannah Lerigo Stephens,
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Discover more about our world-class research

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Cover image: Mural created by slavery survivors.
Courtesy of Joel Bergner and local partners.

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