



# RCD Women's News

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## New report on violation of women's rights at Yarl's Wood Removal Centre

A report entitled *A Bleak House for Our Times: An investigation into women's rights violations at Yarl's Wood Removal Centre* has been published by Legal Action for Women (LAW). The report findings are based on the collaborative work of LAW, Black Women's Rape Action Project and Women Against Rape who conducted telephone interviews with 90 detained women from Jamaica and Africa. The report cites some useful case studies, which highlight the severity of women's treatment and conditions in detention. Some of these are:

- 70% of those interviewed had suffered sexual violence in their home countries
- one third spoke of inadequate food and health provision
- 13 women experienced violent assaults during deportation

For a copy of the report, contact the publisher, Crossroads Books on 020 7482 2496 or email [booksvideos@crossroadswomen.net](mailto:booksvideos@crossroadswomen.net)

## Campaigning against honour killings

The United Nations estimates that every year, 5,000 women are killed globally by their relatives in honour killings. Women are killed for a variety of reasons such as, rejecting an arranged marriage, demanding a divorce, getting pregnant or being raped so that 'family honour' may be preserved. Campaigning groups like International Campaign Against Honour Killing (ICAHK) believe that official figures grossly underestimate the number of global honour killings due to a number of factors including, unreported murders in rural areas, missing women, and women whose births or deaths are unregistered. There are also many women and young girls who have self harmed or committed suicide because of family pressures, religion, cultural issues, forced marriages, and domestic violence.

ICAHK is a non-governmental network which was established in 2003 by women refugees and asylum seekers. The network seeks to raise international awareness about the issue of violence against women, in particular honour killing, and to ultimately put an end to honour crimes around the world. Since its creation, ICAHK has been successfully campaigning against honour killings and developed strong links with Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and various European countries in combating the crime. In 2003, Abdullah Yones, a Kurdish Muslim was the first person in the UK to be sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his daughter for being too 'westernised'. In the UK, ICAHK has been urging the police to not take reports of young girls killed by strangers at face value, but to look inside the family. In many cases, families will persistently lie to protect the killer and mislead the police. For further information about ICAHK and forthcoming events, visit [www.stophonourkillings.com](http://www.stophonourkillings.com) or contact **Diana Nammi** on 020 7490 0303.

## Rape now illegal in Liberia

Rape is now illegal in Liberia for the first time following new legislation passed under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Under the new law, rapists can be sentenced to between seven years and life imprisonment, depending on the individual case. The legislation was drawn up by a coalition of women's groups, led by the Association of Female Lawyers in response to a growing number of cases of rape and sexual assault. Accused rapists will not be granted bail. For more information visit, [www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=50500&SelectRegion=West\\_Africa&SelectCountry=Liberia](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=50500&SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=Liberia)

## More countries sign up to European Trafficking Convention

On 17 November 2005, the following seven countries became the latest signatories to the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: Andorra, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. The total number of signatories now stands at 23, however, the UK has yet to sign.

## Training

### Free driving instructor training

Account3 is offering free driving instructor training to 20 female refugees in east London. Potential applicants must adhere to the following criteria as required by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA):

- Full driving licence held for at least four years, can be from other EU countries and countries on the DSA list
- Good standard of English as required for teaching (level 2 minimum)

For more information contact Angie Jackman on 020 7739 7720 or look under Projects at

**[www.account3.org.uk](http://www.account3.org.uk)**

### Free human rights training courses

Education Action International is running a series of human rights advocacy courses for refugees and asylum seekers from **13 March - 2 June 2006**.

Courses will include:

- presentation skills
- lobbying parliament and visiting MPs
- working with UK media

**Deadline: 13 February 2006, 1pm**

For an application pack, contact Sonia Omar on 020 7426 5814 or email [enquiries@refugee-advocacy-project.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@refugee-advocacy-project.org.uk).

## Funding

### Victims Fund: Provision for Victims of Sexual Offending

The Home Office will put £1.25 million into the 2006/7 Victims Fund to support the development of community-based services for victims of sexual offending. This new funding scheme is available to all established voluntary and community organisations working in England and Wales, with experience and expertise of working with victims of sexual offending. Applications are particularly welcome from the following:

- Organisations currently funded through the Victims Fund wishing to develop successful existing services
- Organisations working with victims who have experienced sexual violence as a result of their membership of a minority group
- Organisations working with victims of stalking

The maximum grant is £30,000. For more information visit [www.governmentfunding.org.uk](http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk) or email [victimsfund@homeoffice.org.uk](mailto:victimsfund@homeoffice.org.uk).

## Support for refugee nurses and midwives

The Ethnic Minorities Employability project is offering the following support to refugee nurses and midwives:

- registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council
- writing and updating CVs to highlight qualifications and experiences

If English is your second or third language, you have qualifications or experience in nursing and would like help with the above, contact Zahra Sabbagh on 0151 233 1868 or write to, Ethnic Minorities Employability Project, Job Bank, 4 Tunnel Road, Kensington, Liverpool L7 6QD.

## New online publication: The Survivor's Handbook

Women's Aid has launched its new online resource for women experiencing domestic violence. It is available at [www.womensaid.org.uk/survivors\\_handbook/](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/survivors_handbook/)

*The Survivor's Handbook* provides simple and accessible information on all aspects of seeking help and support and how domestic violence can affect health, including mental health issues and alcohol and drug use.