

Empowering Freed Kamlaris

An amazing transformation is happening in Nepal. Vulnerable girls who were rescued from the Kamlari system of child slavery are now free — and they're becoming powerful young women who are leading the way to a better life for themselves and their communities.



In 2000, NYF began a campaign to end the practice of Kamlari, a centuries-old system of indentured servitude embedded in the culture of rural Nepal. Our Indentured Daughters Program was twofold: to rescue the girls who had been sold into slavery and to abolish the practice going forward. More than 12,000 girls, some of whom had been enslaved since the age of six, were rescued and returned to their home communities, deeply wounded and lacking any education.

NYF's Empowering Freed Kamlaris program (EFK) helps former Kamlari girls become healthy, happy and independent young women. The program also stimulates the cultural and economic development necessary to ensure that no girl will ever again become a victim of Kamlari.

The EFK program served 8,000 young women this past year, with 18 full-time staff providing leadership training, mentoring services, and financial and business management training in conjunction with other NYF programs.

Leadership Training



EFK staff provides training in leadership skills, organizational management, political literacy, accounting and financial literacy, entrepreneurship and business management for the 4,930 young women who have created the Freed Kamlari Development Forum (FKDF).

Economic Development



There are now 41 FKDF business co-ops in Western Nepal with over 7,000 members. We provided \$30,000 to start the co-op loan fund, which FKDF members administer, and more than 750 young women have successfully launched their own businesses. Co-op members have already reinvested \$40,000 back into the loan fund.

Career Training and Counseling



The EFK programs works closely with Vocational Education and Career Counseling program to support the freed Kamlaris. Our staff provides structured counseling sessions and assessment tests, and then helps girls enroll in top-quality training programs for a wide variety of careers. 82% of graduates are currently employed — a remarkable achievement given that the unemployment rate in Nepal is 40-46%.

Psychological Support



With training and supervision from the staff of our Ankur Counseling Center, FKDF peer counselors provide emotional support for former Kamlaris, along with a referral service for those who need more help. There are now 70 FKDF peer counselors and five assistant counselors conducting 175 monthly support groups with 2,800 participants.