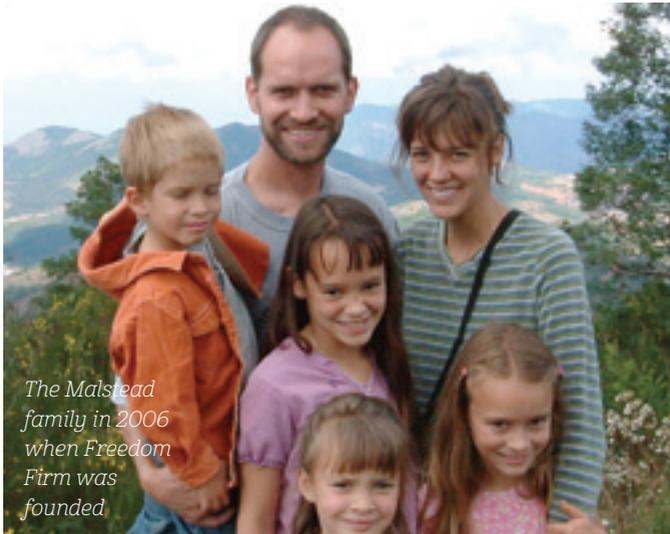




FREEDOM FIRM

Rescue, Restoration, Justice





The Malstead family in 2006 when Freedom Firm was founded

THE BIRTH OF FREEDOM FIRM

In 2000, Freedom Firm founders Greg and Mala Malstead moved their family to Mumbai, India to join the fight against sex trafficking. For five years, Greg established the International Justice Mission's (IJM's) first overseas office. He built a team of investigators, lawyers and social workers who partnered with local authorities to rescue and bring justice to victims of sex trafficking.

Greg led and participated in interventions that resulted in the rescue of over 450 victims of sex trafficking. He assisted in the prosecution of more than 180 perpetrators and successfully obtained convictions in 6 ground-breaking cases.

While passionately believing in rescue and legal work, Greg and Mala longed to be in closer relationship with the rescued girls. Every girl brought out of the brothel had deep emotional wounds

and no viable marketplace skills. They needed long-term care, mentoring and investment.

In 2006, the Malsteads moved from Mumbai to Ooty, South India and founded Freedom Firm, an organization that rescues girls, brings their perpetrators to justice, and walks alongside survivors.

Freedom Firm specializes in highly flexible response teams that work in small cities, towns and remote areas where no anti-trafficking work exists. Pioneer efforts in these areas have rescued over 300 women and created a significant decrease in the trafficking of minor girls.

With an emphasis on empowerment, Freedom Firm teaches the girls crucial life skills, paves the way for dignity through employment and fosters healthy independence.

Girls come from villages of abject poverty



CAUSES OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

Freedom Firm rescues girls under the age of eighteen, legally considered children, who have been trafficked into the sex trade. According to Indian government figures, at least 1.2 million children are exploited in brothels in India each year. They are a generation of young women betrayed by family, lured by promised jobs, and sold to be sexual slaves. Their exploitation takes place in every place imaginable: hotels, bars, massage parlours, petrol stations, temples, truck stops.

Poverty, lack of education, family dysfunction, societal prejudice against women, the caste system and even religious rituals are among root causes of trafficking in minors. However, the greatest cause is lack of law enforcement. Wherever laws are strictly enforced, prostitution of minor girls is hard to find. While efforts at poverty eradication, educational programs

and gender sensitization are important, these do not have a direct impact on the sex-trafficking of young girls in the way that effective implementation of the law has.



An article in the Los Angeles Daily Herald in 1886, depicts a Devadasi dancer. This ancient religious custom of marrying a young girl to a Hindu deity is still followed and is now a fast track into commercial sex trafficking.



Girls end up trafficked to red-light areas like this one in the city of Pune

THE MISSION

Rescue, Restoration and Justice

Freedom Firm seeks to eliminate child prostitution in India by rescuing minor girls, providing effective rehabilitation and prosecuting the perpetrators of sex trafficking.

Rescue: Freedom Firm undercover operatives locate minor girls in brothels and document the crime. This information is then reported to the police. The Freedom Firm team, along with the police, raid the brothels, rescue the girls and arrest the brothel keepers and traffickers. The rescued girls are then placed in government remand homes, and the police file criminal complaints against the perpetrators.

Restoration: Freedom Firm's social workers, working in partnership with shelter homes across the country, provide rescued girls with counselling,

therapy, job training, education and health care. The creative program includes a summer camp, animal therapeutic activities with partner organisation Leg Up, and employment with business Ruhamah Designs to help the girls grow in confidence and independence.

Justice: Freedom Firm actively pursues the conviction of those responsible for trafficking minor girls. Freedom Firm lawyers assist public prosecutors at each stage of the criminal trial. Rescued girls are empowered to testify against their abusers and help bring them to justice. Every trial and every conviction creates a deterrent and raises the cost of sex trafficking in India.



Rescue begins with the investigation of red-light areas

RESCUE (MAHARASHTRA, UTTAR PRADESH)

\$270 - covers one week of investigations
 \$250 - an investigator's salary for a month

cal law enforcement authorities. Along with them, the team raids brothels and rescues victims. Perpetrators are arrested and charges are filed against them.

Rescue begins with the investigation of red-light areas and the search for minor girls in prostitution. The rescue team comprises undercover investigators and operatives who form a mobile unit and travel to red-light areas across the country in order to investigate and determine the existence and prevalence of child sex-trafficking. We focus our efforts in locations where there is little or no anti-trafficking measures in place.

Once the investigators have gathered evidence of a trafficked girl and know their location, condition, and identity of their brothel keeper, the interventions team takes this information to lo-





Our social workers visit far-flung corners in remote villages to make sure rescued girls are safe

RESTORATION (MAHARASHTRA, UTTAR PRADESH, WEST BENGAL, TAMIL NADU, MADHYA PRADESH, RAJASTHAN, KARNATAKA)

\$367 - covers the salary of a social worker for a month

\$370 - cost of a home investigation trip (to ascertain whether it is safe for rescued girls to return home)

From the moment of rescue until long after her reintegration into society, Freedom Firm is committed to each survivor's healing, care and equipping for a meaningful life. Freedom Firm's restoration program is designed to meet the emotional, psychological and physical needs of girls wherever they are in India. With well over 300 girls rescued, their needs, locations and levels of assistance are as diverse as the girls themselves. Our effective restoration and reintegration approach is not time bound and is sensitive to each girl's specific needs.

Through our restoration program, we provide holistic rehabilitation to the girls and ensure that once rescued, each girl is living in a safe and secure environment, free from physical and emotional abuse, and has the opportunity to pursue an education or an alternative livelihood. Our social workers provide counselling, group therapy, vocational training, life skills, education and healthcare support, home investigations to ensure safe reintegration, home visits to meet and follow up on rescued girls, and legal support in preparation for the girl's testimony in the court.





A Freedom Firm social worker heading in for a hearing of a rescued girl at sessions court in Allahabad, UP.

JUSTICE (MAHARASHTRA, UTTAR PRADESH)

\$290 – cost of one week of legal aid in one region

The third part of our strategy is justice. This is the legal battle to enforce the law and prosecute brothel keepers and traffickers in order to create a deterrent against future sex trafficking. Laws in India prohibit the exploitation of minors in prostitution but there is a huge gap between the law and its implementation. Freedom Firm is working to close that gap. Each time a brothel keeper is convicted, other perpetrators realize that trafficking minor girls will not be tolerated.

Freedom Firm works to achieve convictions by assisting public prosecutors at each stage of the legal process. The average court case takes more than two years to reach a verdict. Each case is unique, requiring a great deal

of patience, persistence and effort. Freedom Firm social workers stay in regular contact with rescued girls, travelling throughout India to visit and counsel girls, ensuring that they are safe and moving forward in life.

Finally, the Freedom Firm legal team coordinates the task of finding and bringing rescued girls to court so they can testify against their traffickers and help bring them to justice.



In the police station just after a rescue of minor girls.



Our artisans are highly skilled at making delicate hand hammered jewelry with an ethnically Indian design.

RUHAMAH DESIGNS

Another platform for Freedom Firm's restoration strategy is Ruhamah Designs, a business employment opportunity for rescued girls, currently operating in Ooty, Pune, Kolkata and Nagpur.

Ruhamah Designs' employees are survivors (18 years or older) with little or no education, few marketable skills, from backgrounds of poverty and low caste, who end up in the margins of Indian society. Girls can choose to work for Ruhamah Designs where they can have a fresh start in life in a viable, sustainable occupation. Earning a meaningful wage is a huge deterrent for girls who might otherwise be forced to return to the brothels in order to support themselves. The art and craft of jewelry are not only a means for livelihood, it is also therapy. As the girls create, they heal.

Along with employment and life skills, Ruhamah Designs also facilitates education and healthcare for the girls. Ruhamah Designs offers short term training programs in various shelter homes to introduce them to employment opportunities available to them at Ruhamah Designs.



For employees with young children, Ruhamah Designs offers a "Work at Home Option" that gives flexibility for mothers to earn while caring for their children. Here is Asha at home with her young daughter, Aradhana.



"We forget all our problems for a few moments" (Moni, a rescued girl)

LEG UP

Leg Up \$150 - cost of running horse therapy for a week

Leg Up is the compassion outreach component of Freedom Firm that facilitates rescued young women helping disabled children ride horses. Girls heal when they focus on helping others instead of themselves.

Annapoorna recently joined Ruhamah Designs at the Freedom Firm office in Ooty. She is thirty, one of our oldest women, and is physically challenged. Deeply depressed and traumatized, she cried every day when she first arrived in the workshop.

Every Saturday she joins the other girls at Leg Up. She reaches for a brush and starts grooming Firefly, our highly strung Marwari horse. A smile lights her whole face. He is completely

relaxed and enjoys her caress. She grasps the lead rope to guide him as he carries a small child on his back. She is choosing to lead. She is choosing to reach out and touch horses, touch children, and, in the process, change lives.

The double impact of physiotherapy the young women receive and the mental and emotional release through riding and interacting with the horses and children, continues to be a magical recipe in the lives of the girls who are part of our Ooty program.





A survivor cliff jumping with complete abandon

AVALANCHE CAMP

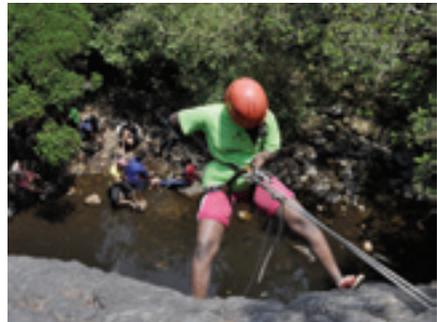
Avalanche Camp is a signature Freedom Firm event designed expressly for girls rescued from sex-trafficking.

Deep in the heart of the Nilgiri Mountain range in Southern India is a small camp on the edge of a pristine blue reservoir. Gorgeous mountains circle the lake, and wildlife abounds. Far from paved roads and villages, it is quiet, peaceful, and quite simply, glorious. Heaven on earth. The perfect retreat for a wounded soul.

Girls come from all over India, from government homes, from private rehabilitation homes, and from employment centers. Four precious days are spent immersed in nature. Cell phones are switched off. The outside world with all its dangers and distractions recedes.

The camp is wild; a place to confront

fears. The lake, forests, streams and terrain presents challenges the girls have never encountered before. Rappelling down a thirty foot cliff and waterfall and kayaking in the lake requires risk and trust, the perfect recipe for change. The camp hits a pause button in their lives where they can meet new friends, forget about the past and have fun! Camping in the wilderness is not a typically Indian cultural experience. This is a once in a life-time opportunity.





Mina was rescued from living out her life standing on a street corner.

CASE STUDY: MINA'S STORY

On 17th September 2014, our interventions team along with local law enforcement rescued Mina from Pune's red-light area. Mina tells her story to our case worker:

"After I finished 9th grade, I didn't want to continue studying, so my father found a job for me at a company dealing with electronics. A month later I was walking back home when a car pulled up in front of me. They threatened me and told me to sit in the car. I hurriedly got in and began to panic. I heard my phone ringing and when I answered the call, it was my father. The kidnappers grabbed the phone and threw it out of the window. They knew my father, knew where he worked and also knew the school where my brother was studying. Who were these people and why were they taking me away?"

We reached a place late at night but I didn't know where I was. I was kept in a

room for a month and a half. I attempted to run away several times. Finally, I escaped and got to a railway station to catch a train to go back home. I had no money and I was getting hungry. A woman approached me and I shared my story with her. She offered to find me a job but instead brought me to the Pune red-light district and sold me to Bali, a brothel keeper. At first I refused to work there but then I thought that I should save up money and run away. Bali never gave me money but she gave me food and clothes in exchange for having sex with customers. I believed her when she said that if I spoke about my past, or told my real name and age to anyone, I would be sent to a brothel in another country."

Mina is now at a short-stay home for rescued women. Our social workers visit her regularly to follow-up on her case, providing counselling as she deals with the trauma of the past months.



*Serina
travelled a long
way for justice*

CASE STUDY: SERINA'S STORY

Soon after a girl is rescued, it is vital to file criminal charges against the perpetrators of trafficking at the police station. Ultimately victims must testify when their case comes to trial so that perpetrators are tried and convictions are won.

When a Freedom Firm social worker visited Serina in her village in West Bengal to ask her to testify against her brothel keeper, her response was 'No'. Five years had passed since she was trafficked, sold to a brothel in Pune and then rescued by Freedom Firm's investigation team in 2009. She had kept her past a secret and she was afraid. Now, she was married and had children. She was not ready to jeopardize her relationship with her family and her status in the community. When the social worker reminded her that a policeman would personally summon her to court, Serina quickly changed

her mind and decided to testify.

When she boarded the train to travel the 1900 km back to Pune, Serina was completely focused. She was going to testify against the person who had forced her into prostitution. She knew that without her cooperation, the law would be powerless to punish the brothel keeper.

However half way to Pune, Serina learned that her young son was seriously ill. Although deeply concerned about his welfare, Serina kept traveling forward. She took charge of her own life and boldly testified against her brothel keeper, Lata Thapa.



Map: The 1900km journey from Kolkata to Pune



**THE IMPACT OF FREEDOM FIRM'S
WORK IN INDIA**

**FREEDOM FIRM'S OFFICES IN OOTY,
PUNE, NAGPUR AND ALLAHABAD.**

**RUHAMAH DESIGN'S EMPLOYMENT
CENTERS IN OOTY, PUNE, NAGPUR
AND KOLKATA.**

**OVER 250 INVESTIGATIONS IN 25
CITIES.**

MORE THAN 300 GIRLS RESCUED .

OVER 100 CRIMINAL CASES FILED.

**9 BROTHEL KEEPERS OR
TRAFFICKERS CONVICTED TO
THREE, FIVE OR SEVEN YEARS IN
PRISON.**



CHOOSE A SPECIFIC PROGRAM THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT!

Rescue

- \$270 - covers one week of investigations
- \$250 - an investigator's salary for a month

Restoration

- \$367 - covers the salary of a social worker for a month
- \$370 - cost of a home investigation trip (to ascertain whether it is safe for rescued girls to return home)

Justice

- \$290 - cost of one week of legal aid in one region

Leg Up

- \$150 - cost of running horse therapy for a week

General Monthly Donation

- \$10/month
- \$25/month
- \$50/month
- \$100/month
- Other

One Time General Donation

Amount _____

Freedom Firm USA is a US registered non-profit 501 (c) (3) Tax ID: 20-5280075

All donations are tax-deductible for US taxpayers.

If you wish to make a donation in the US by mail please send your contribution to:

Freedom Firm P.O. Box 33056 Denver CO 80233

or

Donate Online: www.freedomfirm.org/donate

A young child with dark hair and eyes, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a pearl necklace, is looking over a vibrant, multi-colored fabric with large polka dots in shades of blue, yellow, and pink. The child's expression is serious and contemplative. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the colorful fabric and a hint of an outdoor setting.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT IN THE LIFE OF EACH YOUNG WOMAN?

MOTHERS are reunited with their children

Girls find their parents

Young women discover good and decent JOBS

They have the choice to marry

Women nurture a home and a family

They study and pursue higher education

Survivors sustain themselves

and DREAM for the future

Mothers, reunited with their children



To continue giving in the coming year, please send your contributions to:

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