



2020-2021
Annual Report



Letter from Leah Henck Freedom Firm USA President

A storm gathered on the horizon. Dark and ominous clouds loomed leaving a certain uneasiness, a fear of the unknown. In 2020, our world crashed into a time unlike anything we've known in recent history.

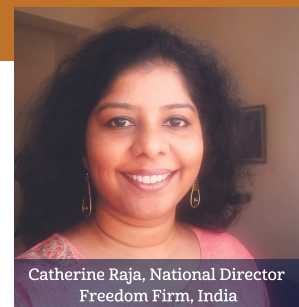
For many, life abruptly changed and we were left navigating rough, uncharted waters. But in the midst of the swirling and spinning waves, we found something entirely unexpected. Hope and victory.

In spite of the uncertainty and many challenges in our environment, we have gotten stronger in every respect. In the U.S., we have reconnected with old friends, communicated better, and explored new methods to get the word out (think virtual!). Rejecting fear, you have been generous. In one day, donors responded to pain and suffering in India and surpassed our \$5,000 goal to give over \$7,500. In India, the teams have created stronger connections with police, government agencies, other partners in the field, and most importantly the girls we serve. External restrictions have caused them to be intentional and creative. The result: more girls have been rescued than ever were in a normal year! When I see these outcomes, beyond what we could have ever thought possible given the circumstances, I smile. The light is breaking through.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah Joy Henck". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Straight from the Field

I am humbled by the lawyers, volunteers, law enforcement agencies, district administration and our own staff, who, undeterred by what was happening around them, were committed to their work. I am amazed at the 61 girls miraculously rescued despite a raging pandemic, lockdowns and shortage of the most basic products.



Catherine Raja, National Director
Freedom Firm, India

I am thankful for the 35 girls we had not heard from for many years, who called to ask for help. I am astounded at the courage of one girl who did not have our phone number, but walked up to the nearest police station and asked for help to contact our social worker. I am inspired by the 10 special girls who are eager to pursue their education and are proactively taking steps towards achieving that goal. I am encouraged by the 24 girls who returned to impoverished and challenging homes, safe because of the tele-counselling sessions and the accountability that local law enforcement provides. Those girls are now applying for jobs or even starting their own business.

March 2021, the situation now is worse than last year. We have lost family, friends, volunteers, lawyers to this pandemic and I am sure many of you have experienced intense loss as well. We persevere in hope.

our mission

Freedom Firm seeks to eliminate child prostitution in India by **rescuing** minor girls, providing aftercare for effective **restoration** and bringing **justice** by prosecuting the perpetrators of sex trafficking.

our pillars

sacrifice

We lay aside the expectation of comfort in pursuit of this noble mission. We invite others to join in making sacrifices, believing it readies us for the task and leads to feeling rewarded.

dignity

We believe in the unique and intrinsic worth of each person. We lend our strength to help victims of oppression awaken to their strength, helping everyone feel empowered.

stewardship

We are grateful for every resource and steward them in service of others. We value simplicity and embody an innocence that makes us feel free.

our promise

Our ALL for every ONE

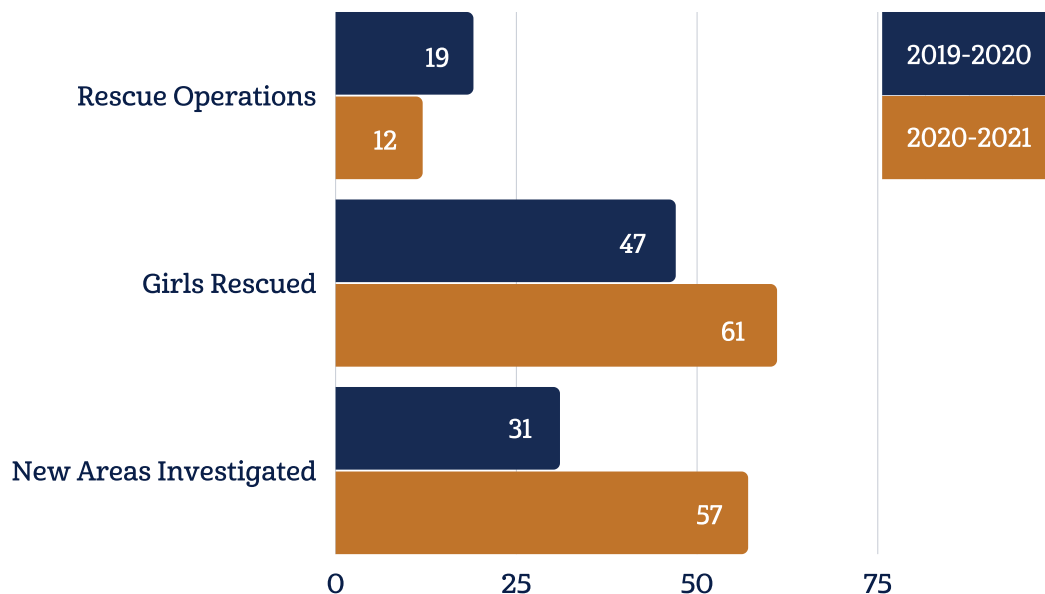
rescue

Freedom Firm undercover operatives locate minor girls in brothels and document the crime. The Freedom Firm team, along with the police, raid brothels, rescue the girls and arrest perpetrators. The rescued girls are then placed in government shelter homes.



On September 22nd, Freedom Firm rescued these 5 underage girls from sexual exploitation in Happy Land Resort.

More Rescues despite COVID Lockdown



Rekha's Rescue

Though hopeful for all, we are compelled by every single ONE



A Freedom Firm staff (left) comforts Rekha (right) after her rescue

Freedom Firm and local police rescued 14-year-old Rekha in Muzzafarpur, Bihar on December 18th. Three months earlier, Roshan promised to marry her but instead sold her to the red-light area.

At the police station, Roshan claimed that he and Rekha were married and produced forged documents as "proof." Rekha denied signing any marriage document. We later learned that Roshan is already married and has a child.



Roshan (in the orange leather jacket) was sent to jail



Two brothel keepers and an agent were also arrested

The local press showed up in the crowded police station to capture the story and photos.

restoration

Freedom Firm's social workers, working in partnership with shelter homes across the country, provide rescued girls with counseling, therapy, job training, education and health care. While we had to cancel our wilderness camps this year because of the pandemic, other incredible opportunities developed instead. Government shelter homes all over India are asking for Freedom Firm's life skills classes!

202

average number of survivors attending life skill sessions each month*

145

life skill sessions conducted in the shelter homes

317

follow up phone calls and visits to survivors

*time period between November 2020 and March 2021; virtual classes took place from April-October 2020, virtual participants not counted.



A celebration and motivational talk in a village in Uttar Pradesh. Both boys and girls learning about the dangers of trafficking has the potential to change the next generation.

“ Freedom Firm works hard to bring changes in each survivor's life. Through their life skill training sessions one can see changes in behavior - survivors start thinking positively and responding to topics they once found hard. ”

Mrs. Mandawekar
Superintendent, Karuna Home

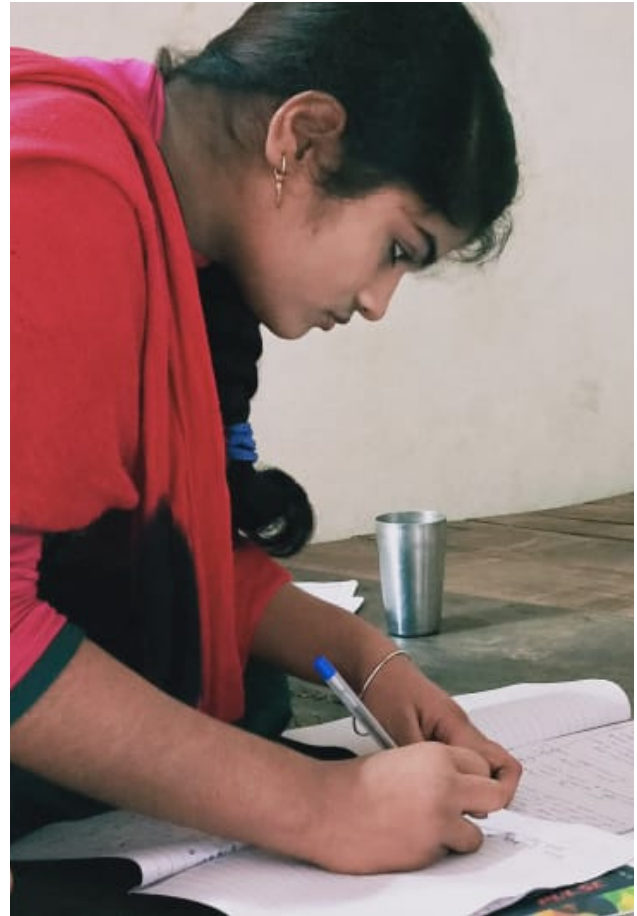
Life Skills Give Hope

“ Freedom Firm has been instrumental in providing justice and care to the victims of human trafficking lodged in our home. The organization

ignites a hope

in us of there being a sister organization working hand in glove with us. ”

Poornima Mane
Superintendent, Observation Home
Ahmednagar



A survivor from Bihar taking her exams



Survivors learn to make cakes in a shelter home in Pune



A life skills session for survivors in Kolkata

Survivors Share



Government Shelter Home in Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh

"During life skills classes, I learned about myself, who I am, my strengths and weaknesses, my value, wants and needs. Self awareness taught me that there are people like me who have different values, likes, dislikes and behaviors. With this now I'm able to understand myself better and understand others too. Now I try to have better communication and have learned to manage my emotions and stress." - Jyoti

*"I have learned creativity from drama, dance and craft."
– Radha*

"I have learned to talk and communicate. I was not willing to participate before or talk but now I am interested." – Anita

"I learned about interpersonal relationships and that it's important for our overall physical and emotional happiness, it helps fight loneliness." – Pooja



Government Shelter Home in Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh

"We are not just taught to sit and listen but we get to interact, have fun and enjoy our sessions through stories, fun activities, videos, games." – Jyoti

"I did not want to attend the sessions, but I heard my friends talking about it and decided to go. I went a few times and slowly began to enjoy it as didi (refers to the social worker) hoped I could live a better life." – Sureshbai

"I am more relaxed now and have enjoyed every bit of it." – Riya



Shelter home in Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh



Shelter home in Uttar Pradesh

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.

140

perpetrators
charged

19

cases filed against
perpetrators

140

bail applications
opposed

Police arrested
customers and
resort staff after
rescuing 13 young
women on
September 22nd



Local news station
reported arrest of
three customers
on November 29th

Victory in Battle: Freedom Firm's 11th Conviction!

This year, we celebrated a victory in the fight to free children from sexual slavery. On March 16th, 2021 Freedom Firm won its 11th conviction in its case against child trafficker and brothel keeper Parveen Sheikh.

May 31st, 2017

Freedom Firm rescued Sugi and Chaya, both minors, from a brothel in Wani, Maharashtra. We filed a criminal complaint against the brothel keeper, Parveen Sheikh.

October 12th, 2017

Freedom Firm raided the brothel again, and rescued Minu, Shilpa, Nazma and Piya. Again we filed a complaint against Parveen. She escaped arrest both times.

March 16th, 2021

Parveen is now behind bars. She was convicted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for two years.

"It's good news that the court has punished her."
- Minu, one of Parveen's victims



Shilpa, another of Parveen's victims, was rescued in October 2017. Now she is married and expecting her first child. Her freedom has given her a wonderful new life.

पीटा अक्ट अंतर्गत महिलेला दोन वर्षाचा कारावास

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क
वर्णी : येथील प्रेमनगर परिसरात
महिला व मुलींकडून देहविक्रीचा धंदा
करतून घेणाऱ्या एका महिलेला येथील
प्रथम श्रेणी न्यायदंडाधिकारी के.के.
चाफले यांनी दोन वर्षाचा सश्रम
कारावास व दोन हजार रुपये दंडाची
शिक्षा ठोठावली. दंड न भरल्यास तीन
महिनांचा अधिक कारावास तिला
भोगावा लागेल, बुधवारी हा निकाल
देण्यात आला.

शेख परवीन शेख महेबूब (३५)
असे शिक्षा झालेल्या महिलेचे नाव
असून ती वर्णीतील पटवारी कॉलनी
परिसरातील रहिवासी आहे. १२
ऑक्टोबर २०१७ रोजी पोलिसांनी

येथील प्रेमनगर परिसरात धाड टाकून
शेख परवीन शेख महेबूब या महिलेला
देहविक्री करतून घेण्याच्या
आरोपाखाली अटक केली होती.
तिच्याविरुद्ध कलम ३ पीटा अक्ट
१९४६ अन्वये गुन्हा दाखल केला.

गुन्हाचा तपास तत्कालीन
पीएसआय संगीता हेलोडे यांनी केला
होता. बुधवारी येथील न्यायालयाचे
प्रथम श्रेणी न्यायदंडाधिकारी के. के.
चाफले यांनी या प्रकरणावर निकाल
देत शेख परवीन शेख महेबूब हिला
शिक्षा ठोठावली. अॅड. पी.एस. वानखेडे
यांनी या प्रकरणात सरकारतर्फे बाजू
मांडली, तर पैरवी अधिकारी म्हणून
अशोक टेकाडे यांनी काम पाहिले.

News article headline: "A Woman convicted under ITPA sections, 2 years imprisonment and Rs.2000 penalty"

Asha, Regional Director of Nagpur shares her thoughts:

"This conviction to me is a victory and gives me hope for other cases in Wani, just as a light in the darkness. It will definitely lead to a great awareness and a change in the criminal network who traffic and exploit children for their own interests."

COVID Relief



A survivor and her child receive vital supplies during 5 months of lockdown.

690

Food
Provisions Kits

With the first COVID outbreak in March, the government mandated a lockdown that lasted 5 months. A Freedom Firm investigator shared, "When the pandemic first broke out, I got a call from a girl who lives in a brothel in Nagpur. *She said 'I haven't eaten for two days. The brothel keeper isn't feeding us. Please can you send me some food'.*

In response to many desperate calls from all corners of India, our team quickly networked with the police, local grocers, and NGOs to help supply survivors and women in red light areas with food. We purchased, organized and distributed 690 ration kits consisting of rice, lentils, salt, spices, oil, and soap.

Masked and standing the prescribed six feet apart, women in a red-light area in Kolkata wait in line for rice and lentils.



Coming together through generosity

As the entire world plunged into a global pandemic, an emergency Giving Tuesday was announced on May 5th, 2020. When we launched our campaign, we were overwhelmed by your immediate and generous response! Many sent messages of love and concern which deeply encouraged the staff in India. Your gifts fed survivors and their families all over India.

\$7,973

given toward
COVID relief

Life Saving Provisions for Survivors in

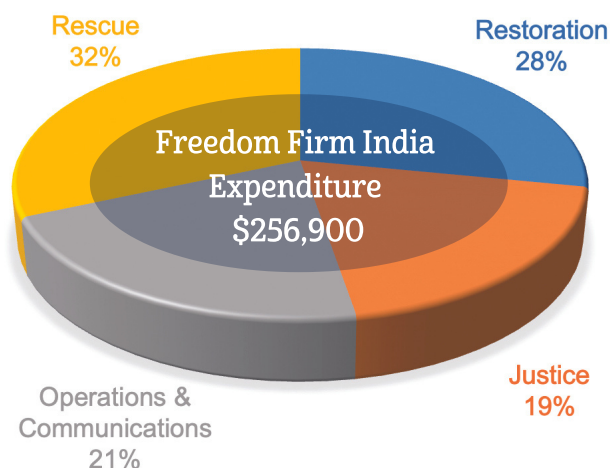
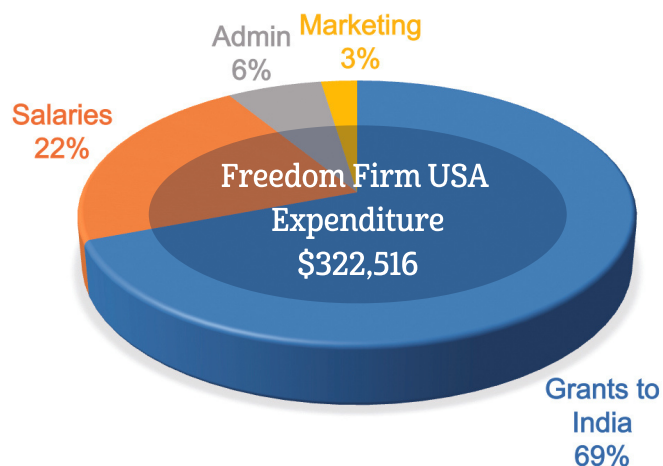
29 Cities

Across India



funding

Freedom Firm USA exists to support Freedom Firm in India by raising awareness and financial support for their work of rescue, restoration, and justice for the victims of sex-trafficking. Freedom Firm USA's total revenue in our financial year was \$373,106. We steward these funds seriously, striving to accomplish our mission efficiently and effectively.



Freedom Firm India's total revenue from April 2020 to March 2021 was \$344,000. Freedom Firm USA contributed \$200,000 (58%) of those funds. The other sources of revenue were grants given through donors in Europe (16%) and India (26%). Many children and young women experienced hope and healing this year because of the sacrificial giving of individuals and foundations from the U.S., India and around the world. Thank you.

Funds received through Freedom Firm USA

AlongSide Asia	Memorial Park
Browncroft	Woodsedge
Engage Foundation	Our generous
Freedom 4/24	individual donors
Grace	
Jernigan Foundation	

To access Independent Auditor Reports and IRS Tax Forms 990, please visit

www.freedomfirm.org/annual-reports

Freedom Firm USA is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Tax ID: 20-5280075.
All donations are tax-deductible for U.S. taxpayers.

To contribute online, please visit

www.freedomfirm.org/give



Donations by check can be mailed to:

Freedom Firm USA

811 North Kansas Avenue
East Wenatchee, WA 98802

who we are

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- Sarah Mulley, Awareness Coordinator
- Anne Walters, Grant Writer

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A social worker spends time caring for a rescued girl in her home.

Front Cover: A Survivor now has enough food for a month.

This annual report reflects the activities and financial details of Freedom Firm from April 2020 to March 2021. Freedom Firm is a charitable trust registered in Udthagamandalam, Tamil Nadu. Freedom Firm USA is a nonprofit organization incorporated in the state of Minnesota, USA. Freedom Firm and Freedom Firm USA are independent, legally distinct entities with two separate Board of Trustees as listed.


FREEDOM FIRM
RESCUE | RESTORATION | JUSTICE

**811 N.Kansas Avenue
East Wenatchee, WA 98802**

freedomfirm.org