



2023-2024
Annual Report

FREEDOM FIRM
RESCUE | RESTORATION | JUSTICE



"If a man has a hundred sheep but one of the sheep gets lost, he will leave the other ninety nine on the hill and go to look for the lost sheep." Matthew 18:12



Freedom Firm believes in the power of the one: One girl, one rescue, one conviction, one fight, one life. Trafficking on a global scale feels impossible; however, as we have continually witnessed, one victory creates a ripple effect that leads to great transformation. The battle for our girls, cities, provinces, and nations can be won one step at a time.

Freedom Firm searches for the one girl who has been tricked, trafficked, and trapped. We commit to pressing forward one difficult step at a time to see her rescued.

With every rescue, we face opposition from broken systems, corruption, and apathy. We reach through trauma and fear to offer freedom and healing to one girl. And we fight for the one conviction that contains the nuclear power to transform an entire region.

This team is made up of ordinary individuals who are willing to stand to protect and restore each girl. You are a part of this team, and we are so grateful for you. Together, we can win this battle—One girl, One life, One step at a time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah Henck".

Leah Henck
President, Freedom Firm USA

Freedom Firm seeks to know each rescued survivor by her name. We discover that she has several names: her family name, which connects her to her origins; a name given by her perpetrators, which we acknowledge but never use; and an alias that protects her identity and privacy.

We commit to knowing and valuing each survivor for who she is and supporting her to thrive as the person she is created to be. She is more than a statistic; she is ONE girl, ONE woman, with a unique name and story. We honor her humanity by always referring to her by her name, never reducing her to a case number, a date, or a reference.



As we complete one more financial year, it is my privilege to thank each of you for supporting us. Whether financially as a donor or as a volunteer raising awareness, every act of yours has carried us closer to our mission. God bless you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Raja".

Catherine Raja
National Director, Freedom Firm India

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.

Since our beginning in 2006, Freedom Firm has rescued over 900 young women from commercial sexual exploitation. Today we operate from 6 offices located strategically in India's most needy states and regions where trafficking is a major industry.

our pillars

sacrifice

We lay aside the expectation of comfort in pursuit of this mission.

dignity

We believe in the unique and intrinsic worth of each person.

stewardship

We are grateful for every resource and steward them in service of others.

our promise

Our ALL for every ONE

rescue

Freedom Firm undercover operatives locate minor girls in brothels and document the crime. Our team partners with local police to raid brothels, rescue the girls, and arrest perpetrators. The survivors are then placed in shelter homes.

650+

investigations

148

new areas investigated

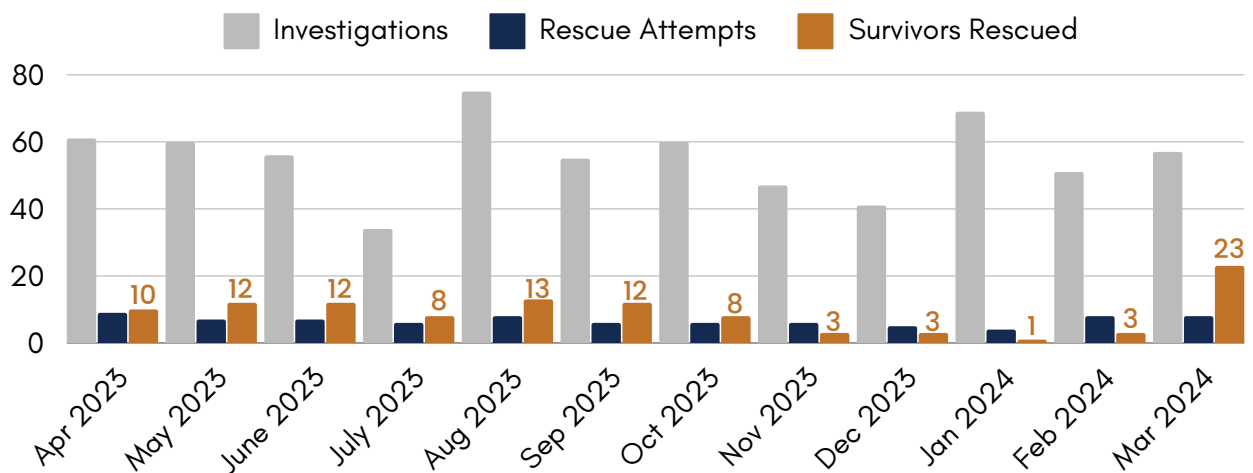
108

victims rescued



The pursuit of 1 girl leads to 7 being rescued from a lodge in Midnapore District, West Bengal.

Persistent Searching Brings Freedom to Many



Rescuing Young Girls from Exploitation

In 2006, Freedom Firm committed to rescuing girls trapped in exploitation. Over the years, we gained valuable insight. Our work often follows a familiar pattern: initial cooperation, then resistance when root issues are exposed. After relentless perseverance and considerable effort, protection systems have improved and regions transformed. In 2010, we were advised to abandon our efforts in Nagpur's red light district as corruption was deeply entrenched and impossible to change. Yet, after years of persistence, we now witness a transformed city with few instances of exploited minors. Our work in Nagpur led us to a source state, Madhya Pradesh, where the prostitution of young girls is prevalent due to poverty and generational practices. Despite opposition, we believe that as we persevere together, we will witness great transformation in Madhya Pradesh, just as we have in Nagpur.



12-year-old Kara was rescued from a brothel in Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh on May 12, 2023



15-year-old Raniya was rescued from a brothel in Madhya Pradesh on October 18, 2023



13-year-old Amrita was rescued from a brothel in Madhya Pradesh on November 9, 2023

WE WILL FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IN MADHYA PRADESH!



14-year-old Kiya (left) speaks with a social worker after her rescue from a brothel in Madhya Pradesh on April 1, 2023

Over the past year, we rescued 7 minors and 1 major from Madhya Pradesh. Most of these girls were 12-15 years old at the time of their rescue and younger still when they were first exploited. But there is hope for these young girls; each survivor has started a new journey of hope and restoration.

restoration

After a survivor is rescued, she begins a journey of restoration. Our social workers often walk with her for years to come. In partnership with shelter homes across the country, Freedom Firm provides rescued girls with counseling, job training, education, and health care. Even after survivors return to their villages, our social workers visit and connect with them to offer resources and encouragement.



During a self-awareness session, a staff member told 26 survivors that they were each like a rare diamond—precious and valuable. The survivors were encouraged and delighted!



Social workers taught a session in Kolkata at a large shelter home, then enjoyed watching 75 girls get creative making their own bookmark designs.



Sajini is a Landmark Case of Restoration



Sajini with her family, a social worker, and their new home that is being built on their farm

"I like my life better now because I am home, married, and live with people who love and care for me." - Sajini

Our journey with Sajini began in 2011, when she was just 15 years old. The police first rescued Sajini from Nagpur's red-light district but she was immediately released back to her exploiters. Freedom Firm rescued Sajini on May 13, 2011. She stayed in a shelter home, but was released after 6 months when a brothel keeper produced fake documents claiming she was Sajini's mother.

We did not give up but continued to search for her, and our investigators found and rescued Sajini for the third time on August 26, 2011. We advocated for her to be moved to a distant shelter home for her safety. Eventually, she was able to return to her home. Our social workers continued to watch over her and rejoiced to see her flourish.

"Today she (Sajini) is very bold, leading a family, taking care of [her] husband and kids, building her own house, and she's more than happy [with] whatever she has, living a life of respect, [with] the dignity she realizes today... A landmark case in our eyes." - Social worker, Asha

Jansi Expresses Her Feelings

Our social workers, Asha and Rupeli, visited Jansi in her home in Maharashtra. She appeared withdrawn and unhappy. Asha invited her to share what was on her heart, and Jansi broke down in tears. She expressed a lot of hurt and shame, and Asha and Rupeli took turns to reassure her that she could find healing and continue to take steps towards a better future. Jansi seemed encouraged and shared her desire to move forward and do something different with her life.



Jansi then showed Asha and Rupeli her vegetable garden and prepared chai for everyone.

We admire Jansi's resilience to press on through the suffering and trauma she has endured.



Asha (right) reassures Jansi

Chasing Dreams, Pursuing Education

Survivors Find Jobs to Sustain Themselves



Namrata (rescued from Pune in 2011) was offered a job at a café in February 2024. She was given a stipend and travel allowance for her 3-month training period and is on the path to receiving a salary and benefits, which include retirement and health insurance provisions. The owner of the café also offered to assist her with accommodation and with her son's education!

Carulata (rescued February 2007) is now a successful beautician at a reputable salon in Mumbai. Her clients and colleagues love her. She faithfully contributes to her family income and hopes to open her own beauty parlor one day.

Carulata and her husband are happily married and work hard to create a bright future for their four-year-old daughter.

Carulata says that her dark days are behind her and will never define her. She declares she will always have hope for a bigger and brighter future.

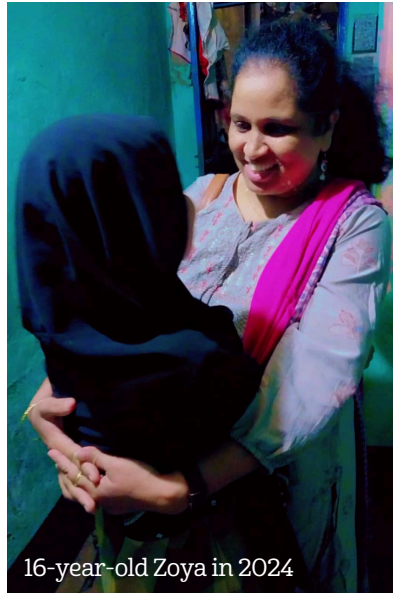


Rekha was rescued from Bihar in December 2020 and is now working in the housekeeping department of a restaurant in Punjab. She is enjoying her job, earning a good salary, and is happy that her workplace is close to her home. Rekha's husband has been very supportive of her.

Survivors Work Hard on their Studies



14-year-old Zoya in 2022



16-year-old Zoya in 2024

Asha was on the team that rescued Zoya from a brothel in Maharashtra in September 2022. Asha recently visited Zoya, who leaped up from her seat to hug her. Asha encouraged Zoya to keep working hard in school.

Our social workers visited Tanvi (center: rescued Sep 2023) and her parents in their home. Tanvi completed grade 12 and is considering pursuing a bachelor's in social work. Although poor, her parents are supportive of Tanvi in her studies.



Two survivors of sex trafficking who are studying law were the special guest speakers for Women's Day at a shelter home in Kolkata. They shared about their classes and fun extra curricular activities. 13 survivors listened intently and were excited about the possibility of attending a law school in the future.

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 bring them to justice. Every trial and conviction creates a deterrent and raises the cost of sex trafficking in India.

44

cases filed against
perpetrators

131

perpetrators
arrested

194

bail applications
denied

This year we witnessed our strongest conviction!

Justice for Simi

In March 2023, Simi testified in court. Three months later, we received amazing news: the four people responsible for sexually exploiting Simi were sentenced to 10 years in prison! This is our strongest conviction to date. Although nothing can undo the horrors of what Simi endured in the brothel, there is comfort in knowing those who exploited her are behind bars.



Simi inspires 48 other survivors as they celebrate the victory together in the shelter home

"I was scared in the beginning. How could I speak against these people? Will my life be in danger? But then the shelter home staff and Freedom Firm staff counseled and motivated me to speak up. This made me speak boldly in court. I don't want what happened to me to happen to other girls, so this is the main reason why I testified in court."

Compensation for survivors

Compensation is sourced partially from reparations from convicted accused, which further increases the cost and risk of this crime. Government funds sometimes provide compensation, which incentivizes the authorities to join our fight against sex trafficking. However, compensation is not considered a right; therefore, every approved application is a small victory. This year, 9 survivors received compensation for the crimes they endured.



Rekha

Rekha was rescued from a brothel in Bihar in December 2020. In June 2023, the court granted Rekha Rs 500,000 (~\$5,970). This money will help her to take care of her home, her daughter, and save for their future.

In April 2023, thanks to a generous donor, Rekha was given a sewing machine. She uses it to sew clothes for her daughter. When her daughter is older, Rekha plans to launch a tailoring business to supplement her family's income.

Shradha

Shradha was referred to us by the police in Nagpur in 2021, and in June 2023 she was granted Rs 300,000 (~\$3,660) through a local government program that provides financial assistance to women and children who are victims of sexual offenses or acid attacks. Shradha was thrilled to receive the compensation.

Basanti

16-year-old Basanti was rescued in November 2023 from a dark and dingy brothel in Kolkata. In March 2024, Basanti was granted Rs 150,000 (~\$1,790).



Koki

13-year-old Koki was rescued from a brothel in Moradabad in August 2022. On January 10, 2024, we learned that the government passed an order for Koki to receive compensation of approximately Rs 400,000 (~\$4,830). Although no amount can make up for what she has endured, this will help make Koki's life a little easier. We hope this paves the way for more survivors to be compensated.



Spring Ambassadors 2024

From March-April 2024, 20 ambassadors joined us to help plant seeds of awareness for survivors of sex trafficking. Our ambassadors shared survivors' stories on social media, reached out to our team in India with encouraging words, wrote letters to rescued girls, and created art and poetry related to survivors. These activities served to spread awareness in their communities near and far. Thank you to everyone who joined us as an ambassador. Your efforts continue to grow into lasting change.



Seeds that Grow

*An oak tree grows in the middle of the city
Dust and regret cling to roots that weave in and
out of the asphalt*

*She has felt the weight of a thousand injustices
Yet she has not buckled
No axe can break through the
Strength of a trunk sown in suffering*

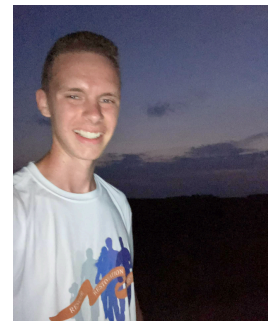
*Anguish and shame fall like reddened leaves
And smiles peak through branches green with life
The healing break new earth and plant
Seeds that grow*

- Sophia Godfrey, Ambassador 2024

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

- Helen Keller

Charlie, Sam, & Aaron hiked Three Peaks barefoot in 24 hours to raise awareness and funds for rescue, restoration, and justice!



Become an Ambassador for Freedom Firm!



Throughout the year, Freedom Firm offers multiple opportunities to impact survivors of sex trafficking. Visit freedomfirm.org/get-involved to learn more and join us as an ambassador!

14 people raised their voices for a survivor of sex trafficking on our *Voices for Her* podcast



Voices for Her: A Podcast from Freedom Firm

Brought to you by Freedom Firm USA, *Voices for Her* is a podcast created to share stories of rescue, restoration and justice. Each episode features a different narrator whose voice speaks for a survivor of sex trafficking in India.

Listen here:

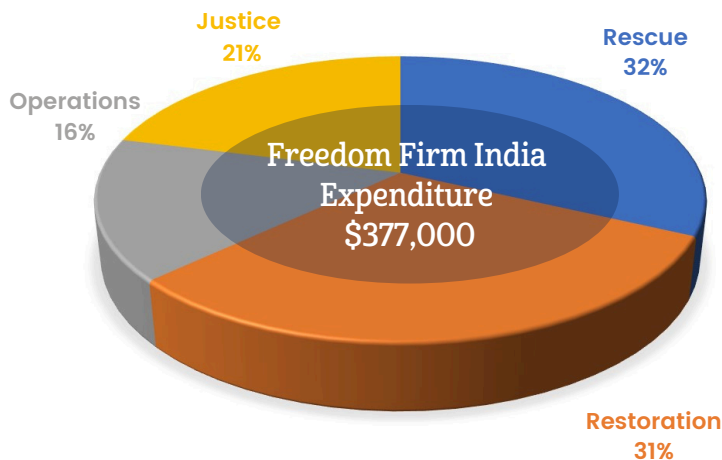
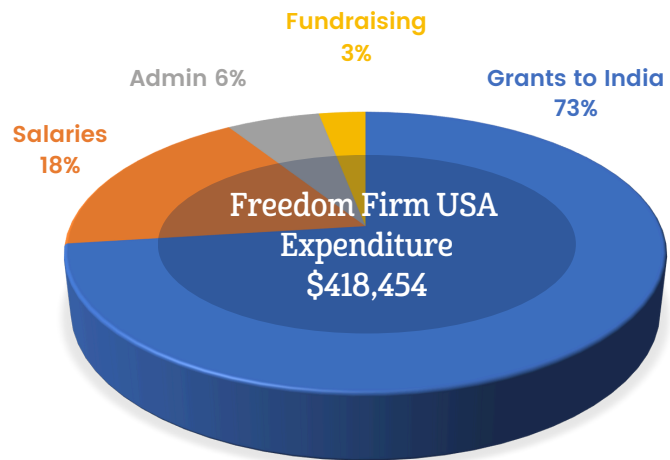


Email podcast@freedomfirm.org to be a voice for a survivor and we will send you a short story to record.

voicesforher.buzzsprout.com

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 victims of sex-trafficking. Freedom Firm USA's total revenue in our 2023-2024 fiscal year was \$345,629. Our net assets ended the year at \$368,852. We steward these funds seriously, striving to accomplish our mission efficiently and effectively.



Freedom Firm India's total revenue from April 2023 to March 2024 was \$444,450. Freedom Firm USA contributed \$249,000 (56%) of those funds. Other revenue was granted by international donors (16%) and from within India (28%). Many children and young women experienced hope and healing this year because of generous donations from individuals and foundations in the U.S., India, and around the world. Thank you.

Funds received through Freedom Firm USA

Browncroft	Milo C. Cockerham Inc
Caterpillar Foundation	Ocean Spray Cranberries Inc
Crossroads	Redeemer Community
Freedom 4/24	The Mary Lynn Richardson Fund
Girls Rights Project	Wood-Mizer Holdings Inc
Greg's Core Supply Inc	WoodsEdge
Memorial Park	Generous Individual Donors

To contribute online, please visit

www.freedomfirm.org/give

Donations by check can be mailed to:

Freedom Firm USA
214 Cherry Street
Galax, Virginia 24333

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.

This annual report reflects the activities and financial details of Freedom Firm from April 2023 to March 2024. 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. Their fiscal year is from July to June. Freedom Firm and Freedom Firm USA are independent, legally distinct entities with two separate Board of Trustees.

who we are

Freedom Firm USA Staff

- Leah Henck, President
- Anne Dean, Grants Coordinator
- Tabitha Pinckney, Awareness Coordinator
- Esther Varghese, Communications and Development Associate



Freedom Firm India Staff



- Catherine Raja, National Director
- Ashwin Rathod, Program Associate India
- 3 Regional Program Associates
- 5 Administrators
- 5 Liaison Officers
- 12 Social Workers
- 12 Investigators (faces blurred for their protection)

Freedom Firm USA Board Members

- Roger Rumer, Chairman
- Brian Rightler, Vice Chair
- Margie Gardner, Secretary
- Reuben Arulanandam, Member
- Amy Swanson, Member
- Raghu Velaga, Member
- Bethany Lueers, Member

Freedom Firm India Board of Trustees

- Shirley Aaron
- Pamela Clark
- Stephen George
- Nirmala Stephen
- Augustine Williams



Sajini (rescued August 2011) with her husband and four children catch up with a social worker. “I like my life better now because I am home, married, and live with people who love and care for me.”

Front Cover: Jansi (rescued October 2022) shares her feelings with social worker Asha during a follow-up visit.



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