FREE THE SLAVES

BUILDING A WORLD WITHOUT SLAVERY

MISSION

Free the Slaves liberates slaves around the world and changes the systems that allow slavery to persist.

HISTORY

Free the Slaves was founded in 2000 and is widely regarded as a pioneer and leader in the modern abolitionist movement. Our history is one of groundbreaking research, advocacy to change government policies and business practices, compelling documentary films to spread awareness that slavery still exists, and frontline field programs that free slaves and demonstrate the feasibility of eradicating slavery.

Free the Slaves operates programs in many of the world's worst trafficking hot spots: Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Haiti, India and Nepal. Rigorous evaluation of our field programs provides the evidence that informs our advocacy with government and business.

Free the Slaves is committed to using every dollar wisely: 82% of our funds goes directly to programs.

STRATEGY

Slavery is the result of vulnerability: the poor, the uneducated and the marginalized are exploited and coerced to provide free labor. People are forced to work without pay, under threat of violence, and they're unable to walk away. Our strategy is to reduce people's vulnerability. We strengthen the capacity of grassroots organizations, government agencies, advocacy coalitions and the media to take action against slavery. We support vulnerable communities through education, mobilization, and increasing access to essential services. We rescue those in slavery and help them rejoin their families and communities. We systematically assess our work to ensure accountability and to continuously improve our programs.

IMPACT

In 2013, Free the Slaves helped free 3,127 people from slavery; educated 18,465 villagers on how to protect their families from traffickers; supported 1,157 village and neighborhood groups to protect their communities from slavery; trained 1,518 government officials on how to more effectively stop slavery; and initiated legal action against 105 traffickers and slaveholders.

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FREE THE SLAVES
ON THE FRONTLINES

India has the largest concentration of slaves in the world today. Many are in debt bondage, where loans illegally enslave laborers at farms, brick kilns, quarries and embroidery factories. Free the Slaves helps villagers liberate themselves by challenging slaveholders, as well as by demanding official raids by police. We help villagers move from passive acceptance of slavery to sustainable freedom.

Nepalis are trafficked into domestic slavery as maids, into circuses as performers, and into sex slavery at brothels, restaurants and massage parlors. Free the Slaves is strengthening and uniting women and girls so they can resist traffickers. We are training field staff at large anti-poverty development organizations. We are working with rural communities to find ways to permanently end trafficking from their villages. We support a coalition that advocates for a national plan of action on trafficking.

Our partners in Brazil have developed groundbreaking programs to rescue and rehabilitate slavery survivors at remote farms, ranches and work camps, by triggering action by elite government teams when slavery is uncovered. They also trace the path of slavery-tainted products and raw materials to business and consumers who buy them. By informing companies that their supply chains may be tainted, activists harness the power of the marketplace to curb slavery.

Slavery has been illegal in Haiti longer than in any other nation. Yet the sending of children to work for other families continues. Free the Slaves enables communities to discuss and face up to the effects of restavek slavery. Grassroots leaders teach impoverished rural villagers about actions they can take to protect vulnerable children.

Our work in Ghana is focused on gold mining and fishing. In small-scale gold mining regions, we work to end debt bondage, child slavery and sex slavery. Activists engage with local community members to understand their rights. In fishing villages, we help rescue children and place them in a transitional shelter where they rebuild their physical and psychological strength, and for the first time experience being in a classroom.

Millions have died in the DRC during the conflict between rebel militias and the national army. At stake in the war: vast mineral wealth and control of slaves who are forced to work the mines. Free the Slaves teams are uncovering the scope of slavery, and developing ways to end it through community-based action. Slavery itself must end for lasting peace.

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