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New Shelter Opens for Slavery Survivors in India

The shelter's name means "beginning of new life." And for sex slavery survivors in the Indian state of Bihar, the name is a perfect fit. The **Punarnawa ashram** has opened its doors. The shelter provides a **safe place for survivors to recover and rebuild their lives.**

When **Free the Slaves'** local Indian partners told us of the desperate need for a shelter for young women they rescued, we **helped make it happen.** The ashram can house up to **40 women** at a time, each staying for about six months. Survivors will **receive medical and legal assistance, psychological counseling, educational classes and vocational skills training.**



The recent ribbon cutting was a festive affair. The shelter already had three residents, all teenage girls. **Their greatest hope? That people's perception of them will be changed because of the skills and education the ashram will provide.**

Protecting Children in Haiti

We received the following **dispatch from Free the Slaves staffer Zorba Leslie in Haiti.** He is helping our partner organizations **combat the country's "resavek" system of child slavery.** Zorba's account underscores how **dangerous Haiti** remains three months after the devastating earthquake, and how **community organizations are working to save children from slavery.**



Zorba writes:

"Some children that were in restavek slavery prior to the earthquake subsequently lost their "host" families and **have been left to fend for themselves.** And then there are **children who were simply orphaned** and now left unaccompanied who **are falling into restavek slavery.**

"The international agencies are working with the Haitian government and local groups to try to protect these children, but **so many appear to be falling through the cracks.**

“The whole world knows what happened to us, and people think it was [our] fault,” one girl said. “It’s very painful.”
“People only see the outside,” another ashram resident confided. “But what’s happening on the inside, nobody knows. Who will understand our pain?”

The new ashram will **help these survivors restore their pride**. That’s especially important for those emerging from slavery to lead lives of **dignity and freedom**.

Freedom Awards Gets Bigger and Better



Save the Date!

The 2010 Freedom Awards will be November 7th in the Los Angeles area. The annual Freedom Awards ceremony celebrates the Frederick Douglasses and Harriet Tubmans of our time—the grassroots heroes of today’s anti-slavery movement.

Our documentary crews are currently filming this year’s award winners in the U.S. and worldwide. We’ll announce the winners soon.

This year, we’re **moving the awards ceremony to an even bigger theatre**, the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, so everyone can get good seats. **The host will be the noted education and creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson.**

Then, right outside the door, it’s **Freedom Rocks, hosted by music VJ and entertainment reporter Quddus Philippe.** It’s the anti-slavery movement’s best after-party.

You can see **how much fun you can have** at the Freedom Awards by **watching our [highlights video](#).**

Sponsorship packages are now available for the awards. Visit the **[2010 online sponsor page](#).**

“Many children that who have been taken in by families in camps are falling into the traditional role of a restavek: fetching water, running errands, cooking, cleaning, etc. But the **conditions are so much worse and more dangerous**. For instance, a family isn’t likely to send its own **child on an errand after nightfall** because they know the **chances of that child being raped are heightened**. So they’ll send the restavek child out into the dark.

“The community group KOFVIV is continuing its essential work of providing support to victims of sexual violence. **Participants trained in child rights are now advocating for children in the camps, and some parents are actively retrieving their children now that they understand the extreme harm inflicted upon them through the system.**



“Free the Slaves’ collaboration with Beyond Borders, Limye Lavi and KOFVIV seeks to significantly scale up this work.

“We’re planning to provide the training in child rights to dozens of groups across the camps. Participants will then form child protection committees to foster collective action to prevent abuse of children.”

Our work in Haiti is made possible by your continuing support.

Visit our **[online donor page](#)** to make a one-time or recurring contribution. Enter “Haiti Fund” in the designation window.

We'll let you know about tickets later in the year.

New Video Documents Nepal Slavery

You've never seen anything like it. **Children turned into pack animals, hauling slabs of stone** down steep mountain paths. It's one of the **gripping moments in the newest Free the Slaves documentary**, called "Turning the Tide: Fighting



Slavery in Nepal.” The documentary highlights three **grassroots groups fighting various forms of slavery**, both in the city and in remote mountain villages. **What they’re accomplishing is amazing.** Former slaves are becoming community leaders. They’re even banding together to get better rights for slavery survivors put into Nepal’s constitution. **Check it out on the [Free the Slaves online video page.](#)**



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1320 19th Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036 USA (202) 775-7480 info@freetheslaves.net
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