



# FREE THE SLAVES eUPDATE

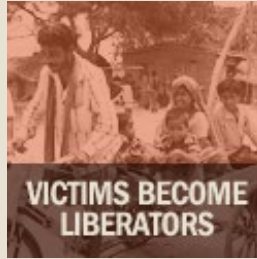
A quarterly progress report to supporters about Free the Slaves activities and impact



**NEW EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**



**PICTURES  
SPEAK**



**VICTIMS BECOME  
LIBERATORS**



**TRAFFICKING LAW  
SURVIVES**



**TOP CHARITY  
RATING**



## Welcoming our New Executive Director, Maurice Middleberg

“Nothing is more joyous than the work of freedom.”

Those words from our new executive director underscore how Maurice Middleberg views his job. Slavery is one of the world’s most challenging human rights abuses. But Maurice says that helping people overcome it is one of the most rewarding things a human rights activist can do.

“There is nothing more gratifying, more fulfilling, than watching people claim their freedom,” he says.

Maurice brings remarkable skills and experience to guide Free the Slaves. He has worked in the field of international development and social justice for 30 years, with experience on projects in 50 countries for CARE, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Futures Group, IntraHealth International, and others. He has a 15-year record in senior and executive positions, including extensive relationships with international development institutions and the United Nations. He’s an accomplished writer, public speaker and fundraiser.

“His experience with groups outside the anti-slavery movement, as well as with international development institutions, will be a great asset as Free the Slaves moves toward our strategic objective of persuading other organizations to include an anti-slavery component in their own international development work,” says Free the Slaves Board Chair Jane Covey.

Maurice says he joined Free the Slaves for personal as well as professional reasons. His grandfather survived forced labor in Auschwitz in World War Two, and his wife is a descendant of the Lovejoy family, the outspoken American abolitionists from the 1800s.

“I am honored as someone whose family has been touched by slavery in the past to be in a position where I can work to eradicate slavery in the future,” he says.

Maurice took the reins as executive director last month, and he’s already hard at work managing and inspiring the Free the Slaves team worldwide. He will keep supporters up to date with regular posts in the [FTS blog](#).

## Pictures Speak as Loudly as Words

Creativity can be just as important as courage when it comes to combating trafficking and slavery. That's why Free the Slaves has been helping our frontline partner organizations to use art to teach community members about their rights.



Picture strips are remarkably successful at showing those in slavery – and those vulnerable to slavery – that life can be different.

In Brazil, illustrated handouts teach laborers the risks of leaving home to become migrant farm workers. In Haiti, picture books help poor rural families learn the risks of sending children to work as domestic servants in the city. In Ghana and Congo, pictures help families understand what can happen to children working in mines. And in Nepal, a picture strip tells the story of a woman who is tricked into slavery by an offer of a job overseas. She ultimately turns the table and sends the trafficker to jail.

Pictures “open the eyes of parents” who’ve sent kids into risky circumstances that often lead to slavery, says Free the Slaves Haiti Coordinator Smith Maxime. “Parents feel the need to go retrieve their children.”



Art is particularly effective where people can't read. In some cases, pictures help people escape.

“There was a situation where a trafficked worker used a comic strip picture about slavery to show police the situation he was in,” says Free the Slaves Associate Programs Director Ginny Baumann. “Using the leaflet, the police could then help him get back home.”



## From Victims to Liberators: A Chain of Freedom in India

Munnu had a simple dream: start his own business and support his family. But what happened to Munnu on his path to fulfilling that dream has made him an anti-slavery hero.

And he's not alone. Munnu is one of a growing number of slavery survivors who are helping others – creating a chain of freedom.

Like millions in India, Munnu had fallen into debt-bondage slavery. He had escaped brutal conditions at a brick factory when Free the Slaves South Asia Director Supriya Awashti first met him. But he was distraught. His family was still trapped.

Free the Slaves had been helping villagers in Bahari to organize a community vigilance committee to reduce trafficking in their area. These committees are a key component of our frontline strategy. Committee members decided they would help reunite Munnu's family.

"All of them will be rescued," they told Munnu, "as we were rescued." The chain of freedom in action.

With help from our partner organization [MSEMVS](#), Munnu and the committee pressed authorities to organize a raid. The pressure worked: 22 people moved from slavery to freedom. The government provided compensation to all. Munnu's family used the money to buy a plot of land, and he bought a bicycle rickshaw to start a hauling business.

Munnu could have settled into a quiet life, but he soon found that it was his turn to continue the chain of freedom. While working on his bicycle rickshaw, he encountered more people in slavery. He could not remain silent. He set the wheels of justice in motion. This time, authorities rescued 25 families.

This is happening again and again in India, one survivor helping the next. "We are free now," the survivors say. "Now nobody can suppress us." Read more about our innovative India projects on the [Free the Slaves website](#).

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## Trafficking Law Survives Washington Gridlock

Congress has passed and President Obama has signed reauthorization of America's most important anti-trafficking law, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).

It's a remarkable achievement in polarized political times. Renewal of the TVPA proves that the anti-slavery movement has successfully built a resilient base of political support. It also shows that your actions as Free the Slaves supporters can really make a difference.

The TVPA was first passed in 2000 to authorize a wide range of federal action to combat slavery at home and abroad — from prosecuting traffickers, to providing shelter for slavery survivors, to preventing vulnerable people from enslavement in the first place. It must be reauthorized every few years. Renewal was stuck in Congress until last month, when the law was combined with the Violence Against Women Act.

The anti-slavery movement mobilized quickly — and Free the Slaves supporters helped answer the call. Phone calls, tweets, e-mails and Facebook posts poured into the Capitol. It helped the combined legislation pass on strong bipartisan votes. The president signed the bill early this month, with a sex slavery survivor standing beside him.

Thanks to all who helped make the renewal of TVPA happen. We couldn't have pushed the bill through Congress without your impressive display of public support. But don't rest yet. TVPA is a blueprint for change, but it's not a budget. Federal appropriations battles are ahead. Please keep an eye out for more Action Alerts from Free the Slaves.

If your organization, corporation, association or congregation would like to help, "sign-on" letters to the congressional appropriations committees are already in the works. Your group can join the growing list of organizations that are signing these letters, by visiting the [Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking \(ATEST\) website](#).



## Top Charity Rating for Free the Slaves Three Years in a Row

It's a three-peat! America's premiere charity evaluation organization has given its highest designation to Free the Slaves for the third straight year.

The four-star rating indicates that Free the Slaves "adheres to good governance and other best practices," says [Charity Navigator](#) President and CEO Ken Berger, "and consistently

executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way."

Only 10 percent of organizations rated by Charity Navigator receive the "exceptional" score for three consecutive years. This indicates that Free the Slaves "outperforms most other charities in America," Berger says. It demonstrates to the public that Free the Slaves "is worthy of their trust," Berger says.

Free the Slaves earned this rating because of our efficient spending practices. We spend 85 percent of every dollar on programs and services. You can review our complete financial disclosure forms on our [website donation page](#).

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**Free the Slaves**

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