



her  
FUTURE

COALITION

ANNUAL REPORT  
2018

## MISSION

To help survivors of gender violence - and girls at the highest risk - find and realize their individual goals and dreams, and to provide them the tools they need to remain free and independent, forever.

## IMPACT

In 2018, Her Future Coalition served over 1000 women and children in India, Nepal and Thailand, through long-term, intensive programs offering shelter, education and employment.

Since our beginning in 2005, our focus has been on rebuilding lives and ensuring that survivors and extremely vulnerable girls have what they need to remain safe and independent, and to become leaders in their families and communities. Girls who joined our program as little children are growing into empowered, successful young women, and it is our greatest joy to see them paying it forward by rescuing, mentoring, supporting and leading others.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

What do you do when everything falls apart? What do you say to someone who has lost everything - her home, family, childhood, dreams, identity, control over her own body, her place in society, her hope? The kind of despair that girls experience in the days or weeks after rescue is overwhelming and it's natural to worry about what to say or how to help. I learned from watching some brilliant leaders in this movement, that the only thing you need to do at first - indeed the only thing you can do - is to show love and to quietly, repeatedly assure a girl in crisis that you will be there for her, to figure out the next steps together.

Ironically, the part that I was most worried about turned out to be the easiest. It is impossible not to love these girls!. Although they are wounded and vulnerable, they are also resilient and eager for hope. It is easy to connect with them, and to envelope them in love, and then to do whatever it takes to give them a future that is better than their past.

To be honest, the hard part is what comes after - figuring out what each girls needs, and providing the intensive support she needs to heal and realize her potential. There is no app for this! It is a long and sometime frustrating labor of love, but this is what we at Her Future are committed to doing, whatever the obstacles we face. We and are going into 2019 stronger than ever, with new ideas and what feels like limitless energy to walk with our girls from oppression to freedom, from despair to joy. Thank you for walking with us! Together we hold these girls in their darkest hour, with a promise to be there for them as long as it takes to rebuild all that has been lost. And it is enough.

SARAH SYMONS

# THE PROBLEM

When girls are trafficked, forced into child marriage or child labor, raped or otherwise victims of violence based on their gender, their entire lives are adversely affected. Families suffer, society loses potential contributing citizens, and the girls themselves are caught up in cycle of exploitation that can last their whole lives, and often into the next generation.

Gender-based violence is an especially severe problem in India and Nepal - where our work is focused - because of:

- ▶ The low status of women and girls in society
- ▶ Traditional cultural practices such as the caste system, dowry, the bonded labor system, and forced early marriage (often due to incest or large family size)
- ▶ A large and sophisticated network of sex traffickers, brothel keepers, labor traffickers and slave-owners

According to the United Nations, over 5 million women and girls in India are currently living in slavery. There are more underage brides in India than any other country in the world. More than a quarter of Indian and Nepali girls are married by the age of 18. And tragically, India has been the site of some recent horrific gang rapes. If a girl is lucky enough to escape or be rescued from such circumstances, her difficulties are far from over, because she is blamed for the abuse and often outcast from her family and village. With nowhere to go, and usually with low education and no job skills, survivors are an easy target for re-trafficking, or they drift back into exploitative situations because they simply have no other options.

To put the problem in context, in one Indian red light area - Delhi's GB Road - there are an estimated 144 brothels with approximately 100 girls in each - a captive population of over 14,000 girls. Each girl is expected to service 20 men a night at an average cost of 700 rupees (\$10). That adds up to over four million dollars a night, and incalculable misery for these girls.

## TRAUMA & HEALING

The Western world has recently seen a surge of interest and research around trauma, its effects and its treatments. We at HFC have long been interested in trauma recovery, and we stay abreast of the new research with great interest, always making sure that our programs align with proven best-practices.

Many of our girls come to us with severe trauma-related issues. The most common of these are body-dissociation and PTSD, although tragically some girls are traumatized to the point of being non-verbal, crying uncontrollably, losing short-term memory, or being unable to make decisions or imagine a different future. Although each rescued girl receives counseling upon her rescue, we have found that talk therapy alone is not enough to move past the actual trauma. We use many approaches, including art therapy, music, dance, journaling, individual and group counseling to address their healing.

In addition to this, many of our girls have been kept in sheltered, dark places, and have had limited exposure to sunlight, nature, and normal human interaction. Where safe, we try to expose the girls to as much of this as possible.

# OUR SOLUTIONS

Her Future serves survivors of gender violence, and extremely vulnerable women and girls in the poorest and most dangerous (*to be a girl*) parts of the world. Most of our programs are in India. We are dedicated to providing long-term intensive and meaningful support to the girls in our programs. We are not interested in short-term or occasional interventions because we have found they don't work for extremely traumatized people.

We operate many of our programs in close partnerships with respected local agencies, with whom we have built relationships of trust over the last decade. Together, we are able to provide a circle of protection and love around our girls, and it's working! Girls and women are moving from a place of profound trauma - utter hopelessness, disassociation from their bodies, wishing to die or disappear - to a place of empowerment and promise - going back to grade school or going to college, learning to read or learning to code, healing their own pain or helping others to heal.

It takes time, and laser focus, to help girls make rebuild their lives, but it is worth every minute and every dollar. Their early years were full of pain and humiliation. They deserve a brilliant future and we are committed to offering that to as many girls as we can.



## THEORY OF CHANGE

To remain free forever, survivors need to gain tools to overcome the root causes of violence and discrimination. With education, employment, empowerment and emotional healing, the women and girls we serve will become leaders in their families and communities - the vanguard for broader social change. Our goal, working together with partners round the world, is to create an army of activists who will end the scourge of trafficking and gender violence once and for all.

For our organization to remain successful, our community of women and girls must eventually assume leadership. Through a human-rights based approach, a culture of continuous learning, and advancement opportunities, we empower and employ women in our programs to be leaders, teachers, and mentors for the next generation. We also invest in local leaders working at our partner agencies - enabling them to get further education, or to attend conferences where they can build their professional and fundraising networks.

## SHELTER

Her Future works with local operating partners to build, expand and maintain shelters for rescued girls, and to support the ongoing needs of girls in shelter care, such as food, clothing, medical care and counseling.

Having a safe and loving place to recover - guarded from traffickers and pimps - is a crucial first step in a girl's journey to recovery. Many girls are rescued as children and need a safe, loving home until they reach adulthood. In our shelters, they receive counseling, education, and vocational training, and begin to envision a different kind of life.

### Our 2018 Shelter Projects:

[Jalpaiguri Shelter, West Bengal, India](#)  
Built in 2015 by Her Future, operated by Women's Interlink Foundation. In 2017, we added a third floor, making room for **150 girls**

[Red Light Resource Centers, Kolkata](#)  
Three centers in the Bowbazar and Sonagachi red light areas, Provides a safe space and counseling for **250 children and mothers**

[Rescue Foundation Shelter, Mumbai, India](#)  
Rescue Foundation conducts the most rescues of any agency in Asia. We are proud to support care for **100 survivors** in Mumbai and Delhi

[Nijoloy Shelter, Calcutta, India](#)  
We have been supporting survivors at this home for **150 girls** since 2011, including constructing a 2nd floor and vocational training building

[HomeAway Shelter, Kolkata, India](#)  
Our newest shelter project provides a transitional home to **25 girls** as they move out of shelters or red light areas to live independently

## EDUCATION

In 2018, Her Future supported the education of **750+** survivors and high risk children in India, Nepal and Thailand. Our Education programs are designed to transform individual lives, families, and communities.

Our education sponsorships take children from kindergarten to college, and this year we sent our first three survivors to graduate school! Our local staff, as well as partner agencies, provide valuable and consistent enrichment workshops and tutoring, as well as remedial education enabling rescued girls to catch up with their peers.

### Our 2018 Education Program Sites:

[Apple of God's Eye/Nepalese Home](#)  
Trafficking survivors and girls from highly trafficked border areas. Many of our college-sponsored girls grew up here. In 2017 and 2018, we sponsored Apple's entire school for 300 children,

[EkTara](#)  
Topsia slum community in Kolkata, India. This year we are working on a joint project to open a middle school for 225 girls, who would otherwise not be able to continue their education past fourth grade.

[Red Light Resource Centers - Hamari Muskan](#)  
Children living in a red light area in Kolkata, India

[Women's Interlink Foundation, West Bengal, India](#)  
Survivors of gender violence and high risk girls at shelters in Kolkata and Jalpaiguri

[Mirror Foundation Free Schools, Thailand](#)  
Marginalized, stateless, hill tribe children in the Mekong region

## EMPLOYMENT

Survivors need quality employment to get out of shelters, overcome stigma, gain decision-making power in their families and communities, and support their children. Employment is an essential part of ending the cycle of poverty and violence, and ensuring that slavery or abuse does not continue in the next generation.

Our innovative and holistic training and employment programs ensure that survivors are not re-trafficked or otherwise exploited - enabling them to pursue their individual goals and dreams, and leave the anguish of the past behind them

### Our 2018 Employment Programs:

[Rabindra Jewelry Center, Kolkata](#)  
Our flagship employment center provides an income - equal to that of a college graduate - to **20 skilled artisans**.

[Red Light Resource Centers, Kolkata](#)  
Training center in cooking and jewelry making for **30 women**. In 2019, we are expanding the training to include bookkeeping and computers

[Nijoloy Training Center, Kolkata](#)  
**10 survivors** received 2 years of training as artisan goldsmiths. Several are now ready to join our Rabindra production unit full-time.

[Chiang Rai Entrepreneurship Center](#)  
Goldsmithing and entrepreneurship training for **10 women**, in partnership with Durga Tree International. In December, the training center successfully transferred to the ownership of the women themselves!

[Vision for Empowerment Photography Program, Kolkata](#)  
Job skills, life skills and creative self-expression for **35 girls**



## PORTRAITS OF HEALING AND HOPE

### ANANYA'S STORY

Ananya's father died when she was 11. Her mother soon remarried, became pregnant, and gave birth to a son, Ananya's stepfather sold her to traffickers to pay for the expenses of the new baby. Ananya thought she was going to be working as a domestic servant, and went willingly, to help her family. She was raised to put others first. When Ananya realized she had been tricked - sold to a brothel in Delhi where she was required to service 20 men every night - she swore she would find a way to escape, and return home to save her younger sister from being trafficked. She began hiding her tips from customers in a hole in her mattress. The brothel madam found the money she was hiding and punished her with unthinkable cruelty. *"You will never escape,"* she told Ananya, *"you will be here until the day you die"*.

The situation was grim, but Ananya did not give up. She found a better hiding place, and saved tips for over a year until she had enough to bribe a houseboy to help her escape. She made it out of the red light area and to the train station, where she intended to sneak on a train and make her way home. Thankfully she was caught by the railway police, who called ChildLine (a helpline for children), because if she had gone home, her family would almost certainly have sold her all over again. Instead she was sent to Nijoloy shelter, where she remembered what it was to be a young girl. She was 14. Ananya had become pregnant while in the brothel. She gave birth to a baby girl, who she named Karishma, which means miracle. Ananya and Karishma are thriving at the shelter home, where they will stay until Ananya is old enough to support them.

### PINKY'S STORY

Pinky is 9 years old. She lives near one of our Red Light Resource centers. When I say she lives nearby, I mean she literally sleeps on the same street. Pinky and her brother and mother do not have a regular place to stay. They are what is called 'pavement dwellers' - in the red light area. Pinky's mom is no longer young and healthy. She has TB, so it is hard for her to attract customers and she has to agree to more violent sexual practices, and rent a room by the hour when she gets a customer. Pinky has learned to always lay face down when she sleeps, and to cover her head and body with a sheet to disguise the fact that she is a girl. Otherwise, men will come and lay on top of her to assault her while she is sleeping. Because of the Resource Centers, Pinky now has a safe place to stay when her mother is working. She has been able to go to school for the first time through our sponsorship program. Her dream to become a police officer so she can protect children and women in her community.

### SABA'S STORY

Saba, pictured at right, is one of our many shining stars! She is in her second year of medical school, studying to be a gynecologist. She will be the first female gynecologist in her community, a Muslim community in which many women do not seek OB/GYN care - even when pregnant, because they are embarrassed to see a male doctor. Saba is overjoyed, through the support of Her Future, to have a way to change the equation. She is also passionate about photography, as a graduate of our Vision for Empowerment photography training program, and as a mentor and translator for new photography trainees.





From left to right: Sonali, Sarah, Soma, Sumaiya and Nafiza

## OUR TEAM

### US TEAM

Sarah Symons - Founder and Executive Director  
 Amanda Bonfiglio Cunningham - Development Director  
 Heather Deyo - Director of Business Strategy

### ASIA TEAM

Nafiza Khatun - India Country Director  
 Soma Seal - Program Director & Social Worker  
 Paul Suit - Managing Director, Thailand Project Mentor  
 Maura Hurley, Education Program Director  
 Soma Halder, Jewelry Program Supervisor  
 Sonali Khatoon & Sumaiya Khatun, Communications & Program Assistants

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diane Dávalos Beale - Board Chair - President, Expanded Learning  
 Sarah Symons - Founder and Executive Director  
 John Berger - Co-founder of Her Future, Impact Solutions Architect at Tonic  
 Shira Weinert Cornfeld - Arts Educator, Artist, former New York City Art and Special Education Teacher  
 Jeanette Pavini - Consumer Reporter and Film Producer, Reel Deal Productions  
 Jenny Hansell - President, Berkshire Natural Resources Council  
 Farah Khan - Partner, L Catterton Investments  
 Kara Penn - President, MissionSpark

## PART-TIME, CONSULTANT, ADVISORY & VOLUNTEER TEAM

Sarah Annay - Photography Program Director  
 Angela Walter - Building Her Future Jewelry Party Coordinator  
 Aslyn Baringer - Videographer

Dianna Badalament -International Jewelry Program Director  
 Nancy Edwards & Felicity Denby Jewelry Trainers & Designers

## FOUNDATIONS

Durga Tree International  
 Anonymous Family Foundation, Brooklyn  
 Bill Cook Foundation  
 Yoga Seva Foundation

Foster Family Foundation  
 Annenberg Foundation  
 Kasperick Family Foundation  
 Eric P. and Evelyn E. Newman Foundation

## 2018 PARTNERS

**INDIA**  
 Women's Interlink Foundation  
 EkTara  
 Rescue Foundation  
 South Kolkata Hamari Muskan  
 Divine Script

**NEPAL**  
 Apple of God's Eye/Nepalese Home  
 Princess Home  
 Chora Chori

**THAILAND**  
 Mirror Foundation

## FINANCIALS

2018

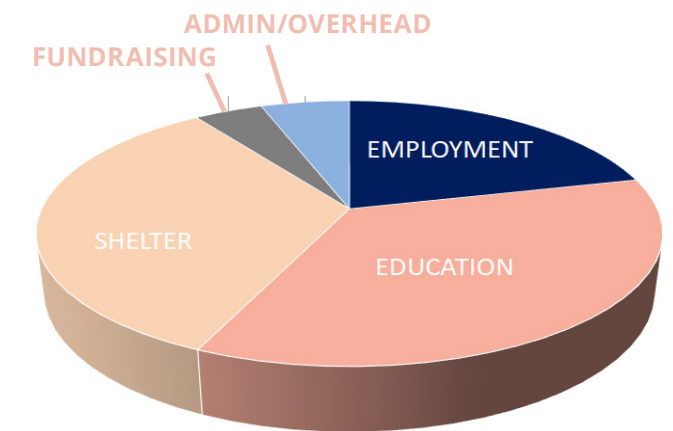
### 2018 FINANCIALS (audit in progress)

#### INCOME

Individual Donations	\$216,961
Grants	\$74,256
Sponsorship Donations	\$28,652
Sale of Products Made by Survivors	\$61,273
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$381,142</b>

#### EXPENSES (Expenses exceed income because of funds raised in 2017, but spent in 2018)

Employment Programs	\$112,459
Education	\$188,118
Shelter	\$178,161
Fundraising Expenses	\$22,376
Admin/Overhead	\$28,967
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$530,081</b>



*"Her Future means to me a family, where everyone takes care of me like a family does. Whenever I feel lost, they encourage me. They never give me a chance to feel that I don't have my own family. HFC has given me a chance to take an English course. I had the biggest dream that I would someday take a Jewelry Design course in college, and now I'm taking that course!. HFC always proves that if someone wants to be something in her life, she can and she must be that. Thank you for supporting me, HFC!"*

SUMAIYA



Photography for this Annual Report was donated by Sarah Annay through the Vision for Empowerment Project



## CONTACT US

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