

MARCH 2012 KATHMANDU, NEPAL

Dear Friends:

A few months ago in Nepal, a dozen beautiful young women came to visit me at my house - young women we had freed from bonded servitude years before who had come to Kathmandu to assert their rights to the highest officials of the country.

They came from all five districts in western Nepal where the custom of Kamlari (bonding young girls as laborers) still exists. As most of you know, we have been working for over a decade to eradicate this inhumane and illegal practice. In the process, NYF has liberated over 11,000 girls. These fiery young women were in the city (most for the first time) on a mission – to assure that the millions of dollars budgeted by Parliament for the education of freed Kamlaris, would actually be paid out for that purpose.

Although a decade of lobbying by NYF resulted in the appropriation of large sums of money in the government's budget for the education and rehabilitation of formerly bonded girls, (\$1.6 million in 2009) very little of the money trickled through the endless bureaucratic channels to the girls who were the intended beneficiaries. The NYF staff practically camped out for months on the premises of the various ministries concerned, pleading with them to release the funds, without success.



FKDF Meet with Prime Minister

Although the appointment with the Prime Minister, at his official residence, was scheduled for only a half hour, the visit extended to more than one and a half hours. The Prime Minister promised that he would rectify the situation and asked them to come to his office first thing the next morning, where he would summon the ministers of the various departments responsible for the payments. ►



Manjita- From Slave to Leader

So we arranged a visit between the Prime Minister and this group of formerly bonded girls, all leaders of the non-profit organization Freed Kamlari Development Forum (FKDF) created by girls we liberated from servitude. While they were in Kathmandu, they decided to drop by at my house for a visit. We chatted over momos (Nepali dumplings), chips and tea, and here is what I learned:

There were tears in the eyes of the tough, wily, battle-hardened Maoist Prime Minister when these young women told him about how they had suffered when they were enslaved to work in the homes of strangers far from home, for about \$50 a year.

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FKDF Visit Olga after Meeting with Prime Minister

They did so, and spent the day talking with various senior government officials about the situation. Many promises were made. It remains to be seen whether they will be kept. But what is certain is that these determined and spirited young women will continue to fight with energy and smarts for their rights and those of their formerly bonded sisters.

The girls were pretty tired by the time they arrived at my house, and since they had a 14 to 18 hour bus ride ahead of them back to their villages, they did not stay long. It was a great gift for all of us to see these youngsters, who had

been sold into virtual slavery when they were young, now asserting their rights at the highest level of the Nepali government.

Your donations have helped restore these young women to lives of dignity and purpose. And the work goes on. Please continue to give as much as you can so that we can continue to make such transformative changes in the lives of impoverished Nepali children. Thank you for your generosity.

Warm regards,



Mansa and Sunita Freed Last Year

P.S. Two of the easiest ways to support NYF and increase the value of your contributions, are employer matching programs and recurring monthly credit card donations. Many employers will double your donation through their matching program. You send us the form and we fill it out. Recurring monthly credit card donations are an easy way for you to manage your gifts and allow NYF to invest more of our resources helping these deserving children. Please email Teresa Parker at tparker@nepalyouthfoundation.org to help you get started.