

Preventing Human Trafficking in Nepal

“My own daughter was trafficked three years ago. I was successful in bringing her back home. I think if this awareness program had started earlier, my daughter would not have been trafficked.”

– *Community member living in the region where SERRV’s partner has initiated an anti-trafficking program*



Cumla in front of her tailoring shop. Hetauda, Nepal



Women trained in felt-making

Human trafficking is a prevalent problem in Nepal. When promised a job in a wealthier country, low-income and uneducated families give up their daughters in hopes they will receive more income and a better life. Instead, traffickers transport the women into forced labor or brothels in Indian cities, where they become sex slaves and can become infected with HIV/AIDS. According to the Center for Reproductive Rights, between 5,000 and 7,000 Nepali girls are trafficked every year across the border into India, where an estimated 200,000 Nepali women are sex workers.

SERRV’s partner for 8 years, Get Paper Industry (GPI), and their sister social welfare organization General Welfare Pratisthan (GWP), have created an anti-trafficking program that is working hard to bring an end to these horrific numbers. Focusing on the marginalized and vulnerable Tamang and Mager castes in a rural district of Nepal where trafficking is rampant, the program visits families and communities to bring awareness to the risks and realities of trafficking. So far, with support from SERRV, the program has reached more than 25,000 girls and their parents in this district.

(continued on next page)



A student holds her backpack that reads “Send your daughter to school”

To tackle the core of the problem, however, awareness alone is not enough. That’s why the program also focuses on educating women and fighting high illiteracy rates in these communities. Through their “Send your daughter to school” campaign, GPI and GWP support 125 scholarships a year for girls from low-income families to attend school. These families have come to understand how an education will lead to a better future for their daughters.

The program also creates income-generating projects for women by providing training and tools they need to earn their own income. The

project has already taught more than 600 young women new trades such as tailoring, ginger farming, cattle farming, felt making and beauty parlor skills. With this fresh knowledge, women find work or start their own businesses. Cumla, age 23 (see front cover) and four other women began a tailoring business after obtaining training and a loan from GWP. “We love to make our own clothing designs,” Cumla shares. Their shop is doing very well in the community.

The GPI/GWP program’s newest initiative is called the “Highway Café”, a restaurant in the busy city and popular truck stop of Hetauda. In addition to serving delicious food, the women plan to make the café a community center to educate customers about trafficking and HIV/AIDS. With a donation from SERRV for start-up costs, the café will open soon.

The network of empowered women that the GPI/GWP program has created is remarkable. So far the women have put three traffickers in jail, and within the last six months there have been no additional reports of trafficking within their network. 95% of the women in the program are in school, and they’ve started 54 different micro-businesses that employ 900 women and family members in their communities.

You can support Get Paper Industry’s various social programs by purchasing their products, such as the handmade paper ornaments featured on page 61 of our Holiday 2012 catalog and on our website.

Or, donate directly to the Get Paper Industry Anti-trafficking program at www.serrv.org/GPI.



Jewelry Training in Africa

Mali, where our partner Delta Survie is located, has suffered increasing unrest in 2012. While most of the violence is in the north, the areas in the south near Delta Survie have not remained untouched, and it is increasingly difficult for SERRV to work with the women artisans on new designs.

Instead, SERRV partnered with French jewelry designer Frederic Alcantara to conduct a training for Delta Survie artisans in neighboring Burkina Faso. They developed new ideas and were able to tour the nearby West African Craft Fair to learn about regional crafts and to develop relationships with reliable suppliers of beads. Frederic shared, “The artisans have come with a lot of energy to the training...they are super motivated to learn new designs!”

Building Better Websites

Part of SERRV’s mission is to help our partners build sales so they can provide employment to more disadvantaged artisans. As our world becomes increasingly connected via the internet, showcasing information and product online in an attractive and intuitive format is crucial.

Sara Swartzendruber, SERRV Graphic Design and Marketing Coordinator, traveled to Nepal in August to work with our partners to improve their websites. Brainstorming together on color schemes, structure and navigation, product photography, search engine optimization and social media, she and our partners were able to make important changes to the sites based on their needs, and to think about updates for the future.

She also conducted a workshop for all of the member organizations of Fair Trade Group Nepal on techniques for creating a well-designed website.



Photo: La Siembra

Cocoa Camino

SERRV recently revitalized a relationship with La Siembra, a worker-owned cooperative based in Ottawa, Canada that offers a variety of fairly traded and organic foods from Latin America.

Our four new Cocoa Camino hot chocolate mixes are made with cocoa from ACOPAGRO Cooperative in an area of Peru that was active in cocaine trafficking prior to the creation of a local cooperative. Fair trade terms and pricing allow farmers to shift from coca to cocoa and earn a sustainable, and peaceful, living.

Watch for more La Siembra food products! We are working with them to import coconut, sugar and chocolate chips soon.

A Better Future, One Thread at a Time

At St. Mary's in Ahmedabad, India, disadvantaged Christian, Muslim, and Hindu women have been coming together for 50 years to create stunning works of art. Each embroidery piece showcases the hours of work that has gone into every perfect detail, and represents the empowerment and stability the work provides to the women.

"My daughter and son are in school because of the income I make from my embroidery work," says Sushila Ashok, an artisan working with St. Mary's. Her husband makes irregular daily wages that wouldn't be enough to cover the cost of school. Sushila herself has completed only the 7th grade in school, so she is proud to provide the opportunity of further education for her children. She was also able to buy her own house for her family with a low-interest loan from St. Mary's that would not be available elsewhere.



Sushila demonstrates embroidery on the Under the Sea Wall Art and Pillow, page 47 of the Holiday Catalog

SERRV, a partner of St. Mary's for over 20 years, recently had the pleasure of welcoming Sushila and Sister Silvia Aranha, general manager of St. Mary's, for a visit. Sushila demonstrated her embroidery skill for customers, volunteers, friends, and staff, and we were in awe of the intricate work involved for each design. Sushila and her co-workers at St. Mary's are creating a better future for themselves and their families with each thread stitched.

Eradicating poverty is about education and empowerment.

With knowledge and skills, hardworking artisans can develop successful, sustainable businesses that will provide for their families and communities for a lifetime.

Your tax-deductible* donation will allow us to support more struggling families in their journey to a better life with practical training like the kind Sara provided in Nepal.

Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to support our work today. Or, visit us online at www.serrv.org/donate.



Sara, Marketing Coordinator, works with Satyendra from Kumbeshwar Technical School in Nepal to redevelop their website

*SERRV is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Visit www.serrv.org/donate for financial and regulation information.



SERRV International
 500 Main Street
 PO Box 365
 New Windsor, MD 21776

NONPROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 WESTMINSTER, MD
 PERMIT NO. 874

OUR MISSION

to eradicate poverty wherever it resides
 by providing opportunity and support
 to artisans and farmers worldwide

www.serrv.org
 1.800.423.0071



2012 "Best in Fair Trade" winner!
*Outstanding Long-term
 Commitment to Producers*



SERRV Retailer Retreat

More than 25 participants joined our inaugural workshop for retail store managers held in Madison, Wisconsin this fall. Several sessions were facilitated by Candi Horton of Baksheesh who has extensive retail experience, and we also learned from Renee Bowers of the Fair Trade Federation and two designers from SERRV artisan partners in Asia. SERRV's goal was to offer practical support to retail store managers who are dedicated to building the market for fair trade here in the US. The opportunity to network was extremely useful to all participants, and the evaluations were overwhelmingly positive.

"Great ideas that will help my store increase sales!"

"These were tools I knew I needed in my tool belt, I just didn't know how to use them effectively before."