

BE FREE

UPDATE FOR ASPIRE INTERNATIONAL

Thank you so much for all your giving to the work of Be Free through Have a Heart! This newsletter will give you some brief updates on the work we are doing through our Be Free Campaign thanks to your generosity.

Cambodia

Following Genocide in Cambodia during the 1970s, resulting poverty led to a huge rise in sex tourism. Sadly this includes children who are often 'sold' by parents. Be Free Cambodia is helping those rescued from the sex industry, and those at risk of being forced in to the commercial sex trade. Young women are offered a one year residential programme at the Be Free centre in the capital city in Phnom Penh. Here they receive rehabilitation and counselling, together with Bible teaching and English classes. They are also taught new skills in the sewing room and make crafts which are sold in the UK by Elim Churches and at Elim conferences and events. In 2023 the Elim Cambodia Be Free Salon opened, which provides work in the hair and beauty trade for some of the graduates of Be Free. Some of the most vulnerable women are offered a second year living at the Be Free home if this is of benefit to them. Other women are offered a chance to go and study so that they have skills to find good jobs away from the sex industry. Be Free Cambodia remains in contact with those who have graduated from the programme.



THE OPENING OF THE BE FREE SALON

Indonesia

Elim Missionaries Sheryl & Novi Maatitawaer have established Hope House which provides a refuge for single mothers who have had to flee domestic and sexual violence. These women are provided with safe accommodation and are looked after by 'House Parents'. They are offered counselling and guidance as they work through their pain and trauma. A discipleship training programme is run for them. God is working powerfully and lives are being transformed and restored. Childcare is provided whilst the mothers are in class. The women are allowed to stay in Hope House for as long as is necessary and some go on to work in the neighbouring Elim project Kings Kids which is a children's home for orphaned children.



SOME MOTHERS & CHILDREN IN THE BE FREE HOME

APRIL 2024

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Pakistan

According to statistics provided by Unicef, Pakistan is home to 4.2 million vulnerable street girls and boys. 1.7 million of these are working under forced or bonded labour and many in brick kilns. Due to the crippling debt of their parents, both boys and girls are forced to work in very severe and difficult circumstances. Working six days a week, from first light to midnight, their hands repeatedly delve into the furnace that bakes the bricks. The more bricks they make, the more food their family can afford to buy that night. Child labour is illegal in Pakistan but is regularly practised. Elim Pakistan is providing vital support by offering education to many of these children through Grace School. The school provides a mini bus service to ensure they can there. Vulnerable girls, who are being sexually exploited and trafficked are provided with a safe home in the Little Bethel project. A recent addition to Elim Pakistan has been the building of a maternity clinic. Many women who have converted to Christianity are denied basic maternity care, resulting in the loss of their babies where there are complications in the pregnancy. Elim Pakistan has been able to purchase an ambulance to get these women to hospital.



A LESSON AT THE GRACE SCHOOL

India

Be Free India is currently working with women who have been forced to live as Devadasi. The Devadasi system is a Hindu religious ritual. It offers prepubescent females to gods for marriage. When Devadasis reach adolescence, they are compelled to perform sexual duties as servants to the deities. The history of Devadasi culture may be traced back to the 7th century, mainly in southern India. Devadasis are nothing more than child sex workers. This practise is based on the Andhra Pradesh tradition that says it is possible to ward off evil from the family or the village by devoting a girl to the temple deity.

In 1988, the system was made illegal, but is still widely practised. With growing age, once a Devadasi is unable to provide 'physical pleasure' to the deity, she will often end up working in agricultural labour, often homeless and even having to beg. No one will marry a Devadasi. Emptiness in life and exclusion from society became lifelong companions for Devadasis.

Be Free India, working with Elim Global partners, is seeking to rent a property where women can come and live safely and free from sexual abuse. They will be provided with food, clothing, toiletries and medication. For those who have children cots and baby equipment will also be provided. Many of the women are already attending church and have given their lives to Christ.



DEVADASI WOMEN IN A BE FREE SERVICE

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Thank you for your support!



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