

A photograph of two women standing outdoors in front of a dense green leafy background. The woman on the left is wearing a yellow kurta with a white dupatta and blue sandals. The woman on the right is wearing a maroon kurta with colorful embroidery and red sandals. They are both smiling and holding hands. In the top right corner, there is a semi-transparent dark box containing the text 'her FUTURE COALITION ANNUAL REPORT 2020'.

her
FUTURE

COALITION

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020**



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FINDING THE LIGHT

2020 was a most challenging year in our fight for the survival, healing and human rights of trafficking survivors and high risk girls. Thank you for being part of our struggle and our solution for those at the margins. As I write this in May of 2021, we are facing an unexpected and devastating second wave outbreak in South Asia. We are again seeing a sharp increase in gender violence, loss of livelihoods, and a breakdown of education systems that has left many girls out of school for over a year.

Her Future Coalition has always focused on long term solutions. We're not a relief organization, but this year we were compelled to change the way we did things to meet the need and to prevent girls from being exploited due to hunger and desperation. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we were able to provide emergency food and medical supplies to 1500 girls in the most urgent need, and their families, for many months. We supported the education of over 500 girls this year, mostly remote education in shelter homes, in our red light area Resource Centers, or in the girls' own homes.

I am overjoyed to share that none of the thousand girls we serve were trafficked or re-trafficked last year. It was a really tough year for them, but they all lived to fight another day. Meanwhile, we spent our time developing new programs, completing a Strategic Plan with our Board, supporting girls by phone and video chat, and building new relationships and alliances for the future. We increased awareness of our work through our partnership with the Obama Foundation/Girls Opportunity Alliance. Two HFC girls had the opportunity to participate in events with Michelle Obama, reaching millions of people globally!

Over the last 16 years, I've learned that it's not about doing things perfectly, it's not about 'saving' girls, or fixing their lives. It's about standing alongside them. Being the family they have lost, or maybe never had. Holding their pain and their hopes in your own heart, and allowing it to touch you, to change you. Only then, can we find the best solutions together, giving the girls

the tools to save themselves and to build their own lives according to their unique personal visions. Thank you for standing with us and beside thousands of vulnerable women and girls. I have never felt more supported than during this past year. I've always said that when the situation is at its darkest, that is when your own light can shine the most brightly. You, our community, have surely lit the way for our team and girls through this difficult year,

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 and dowry systems, and bonded labor
- ▶ Forced early marriage (often due to incest or large family size)
- ▶ A large and sophisticated network of sex traffickers, brothel keepers, and slave-owners
- ▶ The normalization of trafficking in some communities, traditions of intergenerational prostitution
- ▶ Breakdown of the rule of law, or corruption in law enforcement and judiciary, leading to a lack of prosecution and weak sentencing for offenders

According to the United Nations, over 5 million women and girls in India are currently living in slavery. More than a quarter of Indian and Nepali girls are married by the age of 18, more than any other region of the world. And tragically, India has been the site of some horrific gang rapes in recent years.

If a girl is lucky enough to escape or be rescued from trafficking, her difficulties are far from over, because she is likely to be blamed for the abuse and outcast from her family and village. With nowhere to go, and usually 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.



According to a Government of India report, 300,000 to 500,000 children are involved in the sex trade. The UN reports that the vast majority of all human trafficking victims – 71% – are women and girls and one third are children

The COVID crisis has created an even more precarious situation for girls at the margins.

The UN estimates that 20 million girls worldwide who are not in school due to COVID will never return. Leaving school early will make those girls even more vulnerable to gender based violence.



OUR SOLUTION

Our mission is to break the cycle of exploitation, poverty, and gender violence, by providing education - and a full circle of other services - to survivors and vulnerable girls.

Her Future works with survivors and high risk women and girls in the poorest parts of India and Nepal. Since 2005, our focus has been on rebuilding lives and ensuring that survivors and 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 children are now growing into empowered, successful young women, and it is our greatest joy to see them becoming leaders who rescue, mentor, and support others.

In 2020, Her Future Coalition served over 1500 women and children with shelter, education, counseling, vocational training employment, and emergency food relief during the COVID lockdowns.

A FULL CIRCLE APPROACH

Through Her Future's holistic approach, survivors are able to heal, and develop the tools they need to overcome the root causes of exploitation: poverty, discrimination and lack of education. Unfortunately, the rate of recidivism for girls who have been violated or trafficked is usually quite high. So often, this is because only one part of the girls lives are addressed. They are rescued but given no options for a new life.

LONG TERM COMMITMENT

We are dedicated to providing long-term and intensive support, because that is what it takes to get girls out of situations where they are powerless and vulnerable.

LOVE, HEALING, FAMILY & CONNECTION

Through mental health counseling, team-building, therapeutic arts, and consistently showing up, we are able to create a loving and healing environment where girls can move from a place of utter hopelessness, disassociation from their bodies, and wishing to die or disappear, to a place of healing, resilience and promise.

We work closely with exemplary local organizations because we believe the best solutions often come from within. Having been embedded in the communities where our girls live for over 16 years, we have a deep understanding of the challenges they face, and an even deeper commitment to supporting their efforts to improve their society. Each year, we are inspired to see more women and girls use their healing, voice, and hope to not only advance themselves, but to support and advocate for others facing poverty and oppression.



OUR PROGRAMS

EDUCATION

Each year, Her Future Coalition supports the education of over 500 survivors and high risk kids in India and Nepal. We believe that education is the most powerful, long-lasting tool for preventing trafficking and other forms of gender violence. Her Future's education programs include sponsorship, college scholarships, computer education courses, adult literacy and remedial education, and working with local partner organizations to build and operate schools.

Many survivors, and girls growing up in red light areas, slum communities or remote villages with a high rate of trafficking, have never been to school before, or their education has been interrupted. Our education programs take children from preschool to college, and even graduate school.

To ensure that girls stay in school, and succeed academically, our local team provides daily tutoring, counseling and extracurricular activities. We provide nutritious meals to our school children every day, enabling them to remain healthy and to concentrate. For girls who are rescued later in their childhood, or who have not been able to start school at the usual time, we offer remedial education which enables them to catch up with their peers.

This year, we are expanding our education programs to include the Freedom School - a school for children in a remote, indigenous community of Nepal, led by survivor-activist Anjali Tamang. We have also launched computer learning courses serving 200+ girls in Kolkata, provided tablets for remote learning to girls in red light areas and urban slums.





2020 Education Program Sites

Apple of God's Eye/Nepalese Home - Kathmandu, Nepal

A school and homes serving trafficking survivors and girls from highly trafficked border areas. Many of our college-sponsored girls grew up here.

EkTara - Kolkata, India

A school in the Topsia slum community of Kolkata. In 2019, we partnered to open a middle school for girls in this community, who would otherwise not be able to continue their education past fourth grade.

Red Light Resource Centers - Kolkata, India

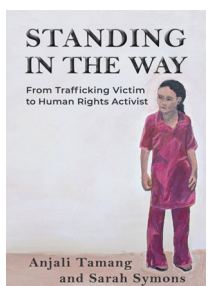
Education programs for children living in red light areas of Kolkata, India.

Nijoloy and Jalpaiguri Shelter Homes - West Bengal, India

Survivors of trafficking and high risk girls at shelters In Kolkata and Jalpaiguri, India.

Freedom School, Nuwakot, Nepal

Trafficking survivors and high risk kids from an indigenous community with an extremely high rate of trafficking and child marriage. This project is being spearheaded by survivor-activist Anjali Tamang, who recently co-wrote a book - *Standing in the Way* - about her story, with HFC founder Sarah Symons.





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 - 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 residential shelters, they receive loving care, and grow up in safety and dignity. Children who are born into brothel communities are at extreme risk for being trafficked alongside their mothers. 90% of girls and 75% of boys growing up in red light areas are sexually abused by the age of eight. Their mothers, who are themselves trafficking victims, are powerless to prevent it. Our red light Resource Centers provide a safe haven from early in the morning to late at night, breaking the cycle of second generation exploitation.

2020 Shelter Programs

Jalpaiguri Shelter, West Bengal, India

Built in 2015 by Her Future, operated by Women's Interlink Foundation. In 2017, we added a third floor to the home, making room for 150 girls.

Rescue Foundation Shelters, Mumbai and Delhi India

We are proud to support care for over 100 survivors at Rescue Foundation Shelters in Mumbai and Delhi.

Red Light Resource Centers, Kolkata

Three Drop in Centers providing safe Space for **300 children** born into brothel communities from early morning to late at night while their mothers are seeing clients.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Survivors need training and employment to get out of shelters, overcome stigma, gain decision-making power in their families and communities, and support themselves and their children. Employment ends the cycle of poverty and violence, ensuring that slavery or abuse does not continue in the next generation. Our innovative training and employment programs ensure that survivors are not re-trafficked or otherwise exploited, and enable them to pursue their individual goals and dreams.

We were able to continue paying full wages or training stipends to all women in our vocational programs throughout the past year, although they often were not able to go to work due to lockdowns.

2020 Vocational Programs

Computer Training, Kolkata

Training center in cooking and jewelry making for **30 women** wishing to get out of prostitution.

Rabindra Jewelry Center, Kolkata

Our flagship employment center provides an income - equal to that of a college graduate - to **18 artisans**.

Red Light Resource Centers, Kolkata

Training center in cooking and jewelry making for **30 women** wishing to get out of prostitution.

Sewing Training, Kolkata

Sewing training for **25 women** in an urban slum, whose families were pushed into extreme poverty during COVID.

COVID EMERGENCY RELIEF

At the peak of the COVID crisis, India and Nepal were in a strict lockdown for several months. Families who had no food stored were going hungry, and this put our girls at increased risk for exploitation - trafficking, being forced to beg or into child marriage. To help them remain safe, free and fed, we undertook emergency relief efforts:

- Distributed food relief packets to 2500 families in the red light areas, urban slums, and impoverished tribal areas, with supplies to sustain a family for 2 months
- Engaged health care workers to visit hundreds of families, providing health information and support, and basic medical supply kits
- Provided phone data cards for remote education to 275 children
- Provided tablets for online learning to 65 girls.
- Paid the salaries of teachers and tutors to provide remote education by mobile phone
- Provided mental health care to survivors experiencing PTSD during the lockdown
- Operated safe spaces and day learning centers for girls who were not safe in their homes during lockdown







STORIES OF HOPE & CHANGE

PRIYA

Priya is growing up in a red light area of Kolkata, India. Her mother died when she was 12 and since then, she has been living with her older sister. Priya started school late and it was hard to catch up. At Her Future's Resource Center in her neighborhood, Priya now has a safe place to study and to spend time with people she trusts. She goes to the center 6 days a week to get tutoring, arts classes, karate classes, computer classes and mental health counseling.

"Here in India, there is a lot of stigma around red light areas, People think that the kids here can't achieve anything, and that we will end up in the same situation as our mothers. But that's not true. We have the same dreams and the same potential as anyone. This year was tough with the lockdowns, but still with the help of my teachers and counselors, I passed my final exams with high marks. My dream is to go to college and become a photojournalist".

ANJALI

Anjali was trafficked at age twelve from her village in Nepal to the brothels of Kolkata, India. She was sold and transported by people she trusted - members of her own family and village - following the death of her father. Anjali went willingly, not knowing what kind of 'work' she would be made to do, because she wanted to help support her parents and younger sister.

Despite enduring the worst abuse imaginable, today Anjali is working to combat trafficking and protect the next generation of girls in her community. She is able to do so because of the help and healing she has received since being rescued in 2008. After two years at a shelter in Kolkata, Anjali was able to return to Nepal, go back to school and make up the many lost years of education, sponsored by HFC. Now in her final year of college, she is back in her village to open a school and anti-trafficking charity that will prevent other girls in her village from having to suffer as she did. HFC is proud to be a partner on this vital project.

"The changes I wish to see in my village are large, and the system of trafficking is deeply rooted. Change may not come quickly but I believe if I work hard with all my energy and love, then after many years change will come. Future generations of girls will live in peace...The terrible things that happened to me, happened. They were out of my control, and they cannot be undone. I choose to release the power of these events to hurt me, by focusing on the things I can control: my dream, my attitude, my values, my faith, and my commitment to the next generation. . I can't change the past, but I can write a new story with the same words".

LOOKING AHEAD - NEW & UPCOMING PROGRAMS

NEW LEARNING CENTER IN KOLKATA

We are excited to announce the opening - projected for fall 2021 - of a large new learning center. This facility will bring together under one roof a variety of training programs, classes, support services and workshops to hundreds of survivors and vulnerable women and teens in Kolkata. We are designing this center to bridge the gap between trafficking (or shelter care, or growing up in a marginalized community) and a successful life in mainstream society. We aim to give girls the tools to heal from their trauma, to succeed in higher education and/or careers, and to move beyond the very limited options they have in slum communities, red light areas, and rescue shelters, to create their own unique and brilliant futures.

NEW VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

We are expanding our vocational training options to include computer careers, home health care, retail, and more. Our Vocational Program Director, Kulsum Hamid, has been working hard to expand our network for training and placement in Kolkata, and we look forward to launching more new training programs as soon as the COVID situation allows.

EXPANDED & FORMALIZED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

The isolation and uncertainty of the pandemic highlighted the need for more comprehensive mental health support. With the help of our Mental Health Program Director, Tish Roy, we are re-envisioning, expanding and formalizing our mental health protocols and programming to better meet the needs of the most traumatized girls..



FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Obama Foundation/Girls Opportunity Alliance
SEVA Foundation
University of Texas Philanthropies
Catherine Bertini Trust for Girls' Education

Annenberg Foundation
i=change
Durga Tree International
Bill Cook Foundation

OPERATING PARTNERS

South Kolkata Hamari Muskan
Ek Tara
Rescue Foundation

Women's Interlink Foundation
Uddami India Foundation
Divine Script Society

Apple of God's Eye
Freedom & Hope Nepal
Pipal Tree

OUR TEAM

SARAH SYMONS	NAFIZA KHATUN	AMANDA BONFIGLIO CUNNINGHAM	SOMA SEAL	MAURA HURLEY	KULSUM HAMID
					
Founder & Executive Director	Country Director, India	Chief Operations Officer	Program Director	Education Program Director	Vocational Program Director

SONALI DAS	TISH ROY	TOBY BANKS	CAROLINE HUGHES	DIANNA BADALAMENT
				
Assistant Country Director - India	Mental Health Program Director	Director of Institutional Giving	Communications Director	Jewelry Program Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kara Penn, Board Chair, 2021 - Principal and Owner, MissionSpark
 Diane Dávalos Beale - Outgoing Board Chair. President, Expanded Learning
 Sarah Symons - Founder and Executive Director
 John Berger - Co-founder of Her Future; Director of Operations at Toniic
 Shira Weinert Cornfeld - Arts Educator
 Jeanette Pavini - Consumer Reporter, Author and Film Producer, Reel Deal Productions
 Jenny Hansell - President, Berkshire Natural Resources Council
 Farah Khan - Partner, L. Catterton Capital Partners
 Danielle Hartley - Realtor

PART-TIME, ADVISORY & VOLUNTEER

Annette BonGiorno - Accountant
 Tori Roy - Communications & Art Direction
 Sarah Annay - Visual Storytelling
 Abigail Jones & Lauren Bridgewater - Our Future of Change Founders, Youth Advocates
 Nancy Edwards - Jewelry Trainer & Designer
 Felicity Denby - Jewelry Trainer & Designer
 Aslyn Baringer - Videographer & Musician

IN LOVING MEMORY



Minu Chetri worked as an advocate and community liaison in Kolkata for over 15 years. Her son was one of Her Future's first school-sponsored children. She officially joined the HFC team in 2018, doing outreach to women and children in the Kidderpore red light area. Minu passed away in 2020 and is greatly missed by all of us.



INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITIES

Through our partnership with the Girls' Opportunity Alliance, Priya (pictured above right), a participant in HFC's Resource Center in Kolkata, had the incredible opportunity to interview Malala and Michelle Obama for an article in Teen Vogue celebrating International Day of the Girl! Our very own Ruby Sisodia took the photo of Priya and got a photo credit in the magazine.

"For many girls across the world, education isn't a guarantee. In fact, even before the pandemic, more than 98 million adolescent girls around the globe weren't in school for reasons like fear of danger on the commute, inability to afford education, stigma around menstruation, or cultural beliefs that sequester women to the home. Today, millions more are currently out of school as a result of COVID-19 — and are at risk of never returning at all. But each of these girls, no matter her circumstance, deserves the opportunity that education provides."

*That's why we're excited to share a conversation between two champions for girls' education globally: Malala Yousafzai and Michelle Obama... **Joining the indomitable pair is Priya Mondol, a 17-year-old student in Kolkata, India, for whom their work is personal. Priya faced obstacles to getting an education, but with the help of Her Future Coalition, an organization supported by the Girls Opportunity Alliance, she's able to keep learning during this challenging time.***

Mrs. Obama: Priya, I'd love to hear more about your own story. I know that you've faced barriers as you continue to pursue your education. What drives you to keep studying and learning?

Priya: I grew up in Kolkata in India, and my family struggled to get by. My mother passed away when I was young, so I live with my older sister and brother now. I was afraid it wouldn't be possible for me to finish school or to get my education. So many of my friends dropped out to get married and have children, but I have different dreams for myself. I learned about the Her Future Coalition which gives girls like me scholarships and a safe place to learn. They have given me the support I need and they give me hope, too. I am really inspired by my teachers there. They tell us that those who have education also have respect. I want respect in my life. That's why I am studying.

Mrs. Obama: I am so inspired by that, Priya—and your determination and your perseverance as you chase your goals and your dreams is something to be proud of. And it's so important to have support along the way—so make sure you lean on those teachers every chance you get. They can be a tremendous resource for you.

Malala: Being a student and an activist is a lot of pressure and it is discouraging sometimes. But, for me, there is no other option. I can't pursue my own education while millions of girls are denied the same opportunity. I believe a lot of young people feel the same way and are balancing their studies with trying to create change in their communities. This gives me so much hope for our shared future".

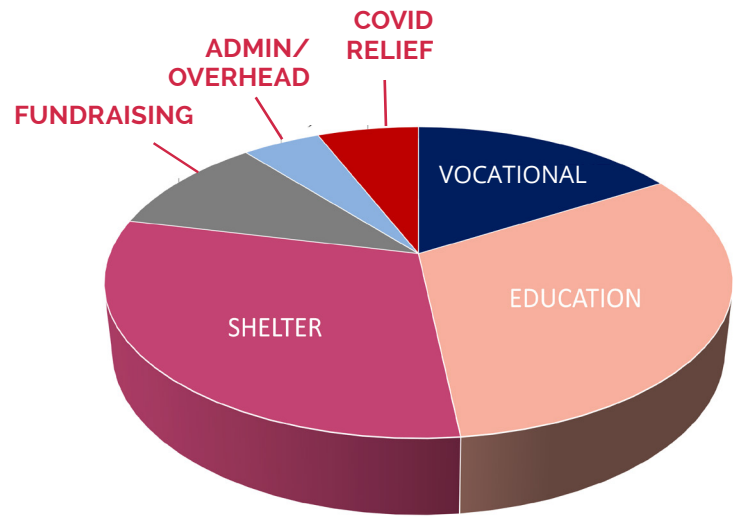
2020 FINANCIALS (audit in process)

INCOME

Individual Donations	\$431,450
Grants	\$122,000
Sponsorship Donations	\$38,700
Sale of Products Made by Survivors	\$30,327
Total	\$622,477

EXPENSES

Education	\$162,815
Shelter	\$151,430
Vocational Training/Employment	\$96,502
COVID Emergency Relief	\$48,155
Fundraising Expenses	\$16,982
Admin/Overhead	\$26,750
Total	\$502,634



2019 Income

\$415,779

2018 Income

\$398,025

STRATEGIC PLAN

For the first time, in 2020, we undertook a strategic planning process with our Board. You can view the full plan on our website: <https://herfuturecoalition.org/financials-and-annual-reports>.

STRATEGIC GOALS - 2021-2023



Vision of Success: (1) Girls are supported through and beyond the pandemic and remain free from trafficking; (2) Girls are completing their education and more girls are receiving education; (3) We have defined multiple pathways towards economic security; (4) Our organization has matured and created a stable base of funding.

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- Should Her Future Coalition focus more exclusively, or primarily, on Education?
- What kinds of employment and vocational training are most effective and sustainable?
- In what ways should Her Future strengthen its governance and management structure, and fundraising capacity, to be most sustainable and effective?



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*Photos by Sarah Annay, Jim Kennedy,
John Berger and Ruby Sisodia*

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