Dining for Women  
Final Report, August 2019

Nepal Youth Foundation  
Vocational Training for Freed Kamlaris  
Three-year sustaining grant of $20,000 per year  
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Project Goal and Outcomes Recap

The primary goal of the project was to enhance the economic condition of young women freed from a form of servitude known as Kamlari. By teaching vocational skills and helping them become employed, NYF empowers them to support themselves and their families. The expected outcome was that 30 freed Kamlaris each year for three years would receive vocational training and be placed in jobs or set up their own micro-businesses.

Project Objectives and Accomplishments

*Objective 1: The girls will be enabled to choose an appropriate occupation for themselves through career counseling*

NYF’s Vocational Training program offers orientations on the scope of vocational and technical education, and the various career opportunities available to the former indentured girls. NYF also provides assessments and career counseling to help trainees choose the career most suitable and interesting to them.

Over the three-year project period, 240 freed Kamlari girls participated in orientation sessions and 90 received assessments and career counseling to help them choose an appropriate occupation from more than 30 diverse trades.

*Objective 2: They will have acquired a marketable skill through vocational training*

Once the girls identified an appropriate career path, NYF provided skills training for meaningful employment. Of the 30 girls who were selected for training each year, all enrolled in high demand skills-based programs - based on their interest and aptitude.
For those wishing to launch their own businesses, trainings also included small businesses skills like accounting, inventory, and marketing.

Among the most popular courses were trainings to establish tea/snack shops, poultry farms, or tiny kiosks that serve as the “convenience stores” of their villages – all of which provide incomes that allow the young women to begin supporting themselves and their families immediately, invest small amounts into the Freed Kamalari Cooperatives, and re-invest to expand their businesses.

Additionally, NYF staff who are trained in Rapid Market Appraisal evaluated all trade offerings for their level of marketability and conducted interactive sessions between training graduates, employers, and relevant stakeholders to analyze the opportunities and challenges in different trades.

**Objective 3: They will be enabled to earn and support themselves and their families through gainful employment or self-employment.**

Our goal for the project was that 30 new trainees would be gainfully employed each year and be able to support themselves and their families. Of the 90 trainees in total over the three years, all girls completed the training and were employed within three months (an employment rate of 100%!). In the first year, 20 girls started their own businesses, and ten were employed in good jobs. In the second and third years, all 30 each year started their own businesses.

As of June 2019, follow up interviews identified only two girls who had taken the carpet weaving training in the first year of the project were not still currently employed. Each had recently married and are now running the family farm.

The 80 girls who underwent the popular business development training also received a stipend for start-up support for their businesses. Example purchases include food cart, cooking utensils, inventory, and other items to help them launch.

Among the employed girls, some are earning as much as $5,000 or more annually – enough to care for themselves and their families. Taking into consideration the average family size of five in Nepal, we estimate that an additional 450 individuals are benefitting from their economic improvement.

**Accomplishment Highlights**
Number of Beneficiaries

Thanks to the generosity of Dining for Women, the number of women and girls directly and indirectly impacted by this project increased three-fold! The original project proposal to benefit 30 freed Kamlari girls with vocational training in one year increased to 90 girls in total receiving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Activities</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct orientation session on vocational training opportunities</td>
<td>80 girls become aware about the scope of vocational training and NYF’s training opportunities</td>
<td>80 80 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selection of girls</td>
<td>30 girls will be selected for training</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill analysis and selection of training courses for the selected girls</td>
<td>30 girls receive career counseling &amp; skill analysis by which appropriate training courses will be determined for each</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment of girls in training courses</td>
<td>30 girls will be enrolled in training courses</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing training courses</td>
<td>30 girls will attend regular classes</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>30 girls will receive internship</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business development training</td>
<td>20 girls will receive business development training</td>
<td>20 30 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job placement or business setup/provide seed money</td>
<td>All 30 girls will be employed out of which at least 20 girls will start their own business, and the remaining girls will be placed in jobs</td>
<td>30 employed (20 started their own business) 30 employed (all of them started their own business) 30 employed (all of them started their own business)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow up and monitoring</td>
<td>All 30 girls will continue to be employed Business will be well set up</td>
<td>30 30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow up in June 2019)</td>
<td>28 30 30</td>
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training through the expanded three-year sustained grant. As mentioned above, the ripple effect of one girl’s economic improvement is felt throughout an entire Nepalese family.

Challenges

Reflecting on the overall vocational education program’s last three years, while NYF has not been able to meet the incredibly high demand of training for all interested freed Kamlari, our offerings – especially the very popular short-term, entrepreneurial-focused training - provided a cost-effective solution to ensuring their independence in a short time. Of the 240 girls who become aware about the scope of NYF’s training opportunities over this project’s three years, only 90 were able to be selected for training. (Many unable to participate due to limited capacity are on the waiting list for future trainings.)

As noted in last year’s report, a particular challenge in fiscal year 2017-2018 was the unanticipated number of freed Kamlari interested in starting their own business (allocated at 20 women in the first year), and the originally budgeted stipend amount for each girl starting their own business.

After realizing that the $135 we had been giving to each girl didn’t fully meet the need (and that few girls had other economic resources to rely on), NYF consolidated training funds in fiscal year 2018-2019 to offer all 30 participants stipends averaging $250.

Another ongoing challenge of work in Nepal continues to be the country’s shifting political landscape. Fortunately, NYF has intentionally remained above the fray of politics – and our long tenure and strong track record provide a buffer against a variable political environment.

Despite these challenges, and from what we’ve heard from girls who’ve received training (stories in Attachment B) they are very happy with the achievements they’ve made through employment and extremely grateful for the support.

Changes in the Overall Freed Kamlari Program

While support for vocational education and training for freed Kamlari will remain a high priority for NYF, in 2020 we plan to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the program by transitioning its full ownership to the Freed Kamlari Development Forum. (As part of the leadership development, NYF assisted the freed girls to form their own NGO.) Through FKDF, the girls now have the leadership, advocacy, and management skills they need to carry on the cause.

The FKDF will continue to lobby the government on behalf of the Freed Kamlari. The cooperatives, started with $40,000 in NYF seed funding, now have over 12,000 members (including Freed Kamlari, their relatives, and others from the community) and USD capital of $864,000, and will play an important role in sustaining the economic development of the freed girls and their communities. As more girls are earning money and repaying their loans (the repayment rate is near 100%!), they’re also investing in the Co-ops with available funds - enabling the Co-ops to give out more loans.
Post-handover, NYF will continue to offer advice and be a resource, and offer vocational training through an existing Vocational Education program.

There are no major organizational changes to report.

**Most Important Lessons Learned**

Important lessons learned from this project are that the very popular short-term, entrepreneurial-focused training - provided a cost-effective solution to ensuring the freed Kamlari girls’ independence in a short time. Additionally, the business development courses helped empower the girls – the majority of whom did not attend school during their servitude - with confidence, business skills, and self-respect. While not an element of the Dining for Women grant project, the advanced technical trainings are also impactful, especially in the health sector, as they helped the girls enter into gainful employment, including government jobs.

**What’s Changed Within the Organization as a Result**

Through the success of this program, NYF has only deepened our commitment to offering holistic, sustainable, and scalable solutions for some of the most disadvantaged, at-risk, and exploited girls in Nepal. NYF staff and stakeholders understand the importance of an assistance model that leads to self-sufficiency and independence. Our years of experience providing sustainable solutions for marginalized and at-risk girls and women will continue to inform our work with the freed Kamlari and throughout Nepal.

**Unexpected Events & Outcomes, Including Unexpected Benefits**

Providing vocational training, along with aptitude assessments and career counseling proved to be a winning formula that exceeded expectations for sustainable, high impact, and immediate results. Since launching the Indentured Daughters program in 2000, NYF rescued nearly 13,000 girls and helped to end the practice of Kamlari. More than just bringing the girls home, however, we built an infrastructure to provide peer counseling, vocational training, and support to establish small businesses. By investing in their emotional healing and ability to create independent adulthoods, NYF ensured that this deep-rooted cultural practice was permanently eradicated.

**Strategy Shifts and Overcoming Obstacles in the Future**

As previously mentioned, the main strategy shift came with the success of the short-term, entrepreneurial courses and the available stipends per girl offered to help start their own businesses. The originally budgeted $135 per girl was increased to an average stipend of $250 to better accurately reflect start-up costs, and improving the girls’ transition into gainful employment.

**Lives Touched**

With generous support from Dining for Women, NYF’s Vocational Education for Freed Kamlaris project benefitted 90 girls and the families they support over three years. Many of these young women are now married and have children of their own – who they can now support and send to school.
This project was an impactful element of NYF’s overall Vocational Education & Technical Training (VETT) program for Freed Kamlari, which began in 2012. Since the start, more than 4,000 former indentured servants have received career orientation and 2,111 girls received vocational training in more than 30 trades. While 421 girls undertook advanced technical courses (some lasting up to three years), 1,690 girls received basic vocational training. Overall, we achieved an impressive graduation rate of 96%, with a three-month employment rate of 81%.

**Measurements of Success & Impact Study**

Measurements of success for this project included the number of girls completing training and employed at the three-month mark. This was monitored by NYF staff conducting direct follow up with the girls.

An impact study was conducted in 2014 by an independent team of researchers to measure the outcomes of NYF’s Vocational Training program for the former Kamlari girls. In addition to review and analysis of available documents and previous reports, main metrics included on-site observations, personal interviews with stakeholders, and focus groups.

The study concluded that the program was making a significant difference in the lives of the beneficiaries by means of employable skills, entrepreneurial awareness, and improved socio-economic status. The average annual income increased more than 400%, and for some more technical jobs, salaries increased to over $4,000.

Additionally, taking courses led to increased self-confidence and self-respect among the freed girls, and contributed to their continued freedom. The major weakness identified in the program was that the amount of funding limited the scale and scope of the number of girls who could benefit. As NYF approaches the 20th Anniversary of the Indentured Daughters/Empowering Freed Kamlari program in 2020, we are planning for a comprehensive impact assessment of the entire program, as funding allows.

**Ongoing Program**

While the Dining for Women project has ended, vocational education for these former child servants will continue to be a high priority among our programs. As NYF approaches the 20th Anniversary of the Indentured Daughters/Empowering Freed Kamlari program in 2020, we are seeking funding for a comprehensive impact assessment of the entire program.

**Attachment A – Expense Budget**

**Grant Assistance in Other Funding**

Support from Dining for Women has helped the credibility of NYF’s VETT program and our efforts to secure additional funding from individual donors for these formerly indentured girls. We were so pleased to be invited to speak at three different Dining for Women Chapter events in Northern California.