



**Together Women Rise Project
EverFree Final Progress Report
December 2023**

Please provide the following information:

- a. Organization Name:** EverFree
- b. Project Title:** Protection for Women and Girls through Holistic Anti-trafficking in Uganda and the Philippines project
- c. Grant Amount:** \$50,000
- d. Contact Person:** Kelsey Morgan, Co-founder and Chief Program Officer
- e. Address:** PO Box #40 Orange, CA 92856

1. Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve.

EverFree's Project "Protection for Women and Girls through Holistic Anti-trafficking in Uganda and the Philippines", funded by Together Women Rise, supports EverFree's anti-trafficking programs including the delivery and participatory evaluation of trafficking survivor aftercare, prevention, and legal programming in Uganda, and pilot expansion of education and data collection in the Philippines.

2. What was accomplished in connection with this project? Please address each stated objective. If any project objectives were changed, please also explain the circumstances leading to the modification of the objective(s).

EverFree has achieved significant milestones that showcase the effectiveness and impact of our programs. We are delighted to share some of the highlights from this year:

- In 2023, 1,298 survivors and vulnerable people were served at our Signature Sites in Uganda and the Philippines
- 180 survivors started businesses or obtained dignified employment
- 146 survivors received educational scholarships
- Survivors has 25,470 nights of safe sleep since coming into our programs
- 5,187 counseling sessions were held to help survivors heal and overcome trauma from their exploitation
- Our programs have achieved a success rate of over 95% in preventing revictimization since inception.
- Pre- and post-program surveys measuring survivor happiness, life satisfaction, and physical and mental health have shown remarkable improvements. Survivor happiness and life satisfaction have increased by 170%, and physical and mental health have improved by 78%.

- 3. Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this please refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under Number of women and girls Directly Impacted and Indirectly Impacted.**

The number of beneficiaries has increased due to the demand of residential and community-based care services in the communities we serve. EverFree works to keep up with the demand based on the number of beds available at our residential facilities and the capacity of our staff members/availability of resources.

- 4. What challenges did you face in connection with this project? How did you address these challenges?**

As mentioned in our previous report, the demand for aftercare services in Uganda and the Philippines continues to rise, posing an ongoing challenge for our local staff teams. Unfortunately, we find ourselves unable to meet this demand adequately due to the constraints of growing cost and limited employee capacity. As a result, we are unable to respond to all the requests for assistance and are still at risk of having to restrict the number of survivors we can care for and potentially facing employee burnout.

EverFree is actively working to address these issues. In 2023, we have hired new staff members for both Signature Sites and have allocated additional resources to both locations, reflected in our 2024 approved budget. We continue to look for additional funding opportunities to ensure staff needs are met, resources are available, and we can continue providing the best possible care to survivors in our programs.

- 5. Is your organization or project situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant project staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?**

In 2023, we made strategic staff changes to support our growth and ensure our current staff is not burned out. We expanded our philanthropy team and welcomed a new program officer to keep up the increasing demand of new partnership opportunities presented this year. Additionally, we took the opportunity to refine our mission and vision to more accurately reflect our growth and work. They are:

Mission: We empower survivors and communities by deploying data-driven programs and solutions that effectively equip the global movement to end human trafficking.

Vision: We develop and scale transformative solutions to end human trafficking so that all people (everyone) can thrive in freedom and dignity.

- 6. What were the most important lessons learned?**

As an organization that has faced major growth in the past year, some of the most important takeaways we have learned are making sure that the foundation of our organization is solid- with proper staffing, adequate resources, and opportunities for individuals to grow, learn, and collaborate.

We also learned the importance of taking time to rest and celebrate accomplishments together as a team. In September of this year, we held our very first post-merger staff retreat. This special event brought together HQ staff from around the country and 2 representatives from both of our Signature Sites in Uganda and the Philippines. For most of our staff members, this was the very first time meeting each other in person! During the retreat, we celebrated our accomplishments from the year, revised our mission and vision statements, and began strategic planning for 2024. Witnessing the incredible progress we made in such a short span of time, simply by being in the same room and freely exchanging ideas, was truly remarkable. The week left us feeling united and energized, ready to tackle our ambitious goals for the upcoming year.

7. What has changed within your organization as a result of this project?

Nothing notable has changed within our organization as a result of this project. This project allowed us to continue to serve survivors of human trafficking in Uganda and the Philippines this past year.

8. Describe the unexpected events and outcomes, including unexpected benefits.

Due to the demand for quality aftercare services in Uganda, EverFree partnered with another local organization called Hope's Cry to train them on effective programming and best practices. This partnership has been overwhelmingly successful and has allowed us to serve a greater number of survivors of human trafficking in a remote area of Uganda.

9. Did you change your strategy as a result of obstacles you encountered? How will you address these challenges in the future?

Our overall strategy did not change, but we have increased our replication model to partner with more organizations in Uganda and the Philippines to bolster local efforts and serve a greater number of survivors.

10. Approximately how many lives have been touched, both directly and indirectly, by the project?

This project supported 100 survivors in Uganda in receiving comprehensive care after their situations of exploitation. In total, EverFree served ___ survivors in Uganda in the past year. This would not have been possible without the support of Together Women Rise!

11. What are the measurements used to monitor success and how was this information measured (e.g., surveys, observation)? Be specific and include measurable results.

EverFree employs experienced M&E managers at both of our Signature Sites who are responsible for data management, program monitoring, information dissemination, documentation, and report production. These individuals monitor project activities, track metrics, and ensure the project is hitting the outputs detailed in our original proposal. We utilize an online case management system to track cases and conduct qualitative and quantitative evaluation as well as our qualitative, research-based monitoring and evaluation system that tracks the participant's progress towards healing, measures well-being, and goal achievement. We conduct this upon survivor intake, after 12 months, and preceding graduation. Monthly activity trackers, well-being surveys, and regular feedback mechanisms ensure the interventions are effective and meet the participants identified needs.

12. If the project is ongoing, provide plans and expected results, including projected timeframe.

Ultimately, success for us is measured by the positive and sustainable changes we bring about in the lives of the survivors we serve and the communities in which those individuals are a part of. We hope to see them empowered, thriving, and free from the chains of exploitation and violence. Our work has shown that survivors who are empowered economically also go on to support their families and create jobs and opportunities for exponentially more vulnerable people in their communities. Rehabilitating and restoring the lives of survivors is critical in anti- trafficking strategies and has a ripple effect in the community – ending cycles of abuse, poverty, and exploitation for generations to come. Many of the survivors served this year are still receiving services and economic and education empowerment opportunities.

13. Provide a detailed list of all expenses incurred during the grant cycle which have been paid for with the Together Women Rise grant.

All expenses incurred during the grant cycle which have been paid for with the Together Women Rise grant were outlined in our May 2023 Interim report. They are as follows:

Uganda Program: <i>Livelihood training and education program for community-based care participants</i>		
Livelihood Training Costs Total	\$67,360	
TWR Project Expenses	\$50,000	
Project Expenses	UGX	USD
Participant Medical	76,725,000.00	\$21,312.50
Participant Care	10,486,000.00	\$2,912.78
Participant Transport	22,530,449.00	\$6,258.46
Vocational Fees	21,073,000.00	\$5,853.61
Vocational Requirements	23,042,300.00	\$6,400.64
Per Diems	26,144,100.00	\$7,262.25
\$500 per participant per training cohort	TOTAL	\$50,000.24
100 unique participants supported through these funds		

14. Did this grant and relationship with Together Women Rise assist your organization in obtaining other funding, partnerships with other organizations, or public recognition in some capacity?

We were so thankful to be one of Together Women Rise’s featured grantees in September 2022 and have leveraged this partnership to obtain other funding opportunities from like-minded organizations.

Stories from the Past Year:

Haza* was 14 years old and in her last year of primary school. It was almost time for exit examinations, but her parents wouldn't let her take them.

A 24-year-old man came to their home one day. He was promised Haza's hand in marriage.

"I was in primary seven when a 24-year-old man came to our home and requested my father to give me a hand in marriage. I didn’t know my worth, my values and the world outside our home," Haza recalls.

Haza's father said that her husband would educate her, that he would pay for her further schooling, that she would be a happily married woman living a comfortable life. The promise of an education and being cared for was a rare dream for many girls.

But as she began married life, Haza experienced nothing of the sort.

"When I reached my husband's home, the story changed," she recalls. "I was confined to the house; he used to provide food, and other basic needs but he took away all my freedom."

And still the story worsens. "He hid his true identity from me," Haza continues. "He would go away for some good time and come back... I didn't know that he was a terrorist."

As Haza realized that her husband was part of a terrorist rebel group, she learned that her father had been part of the group as well. The whole purpose of her marriage wasn't for her well-being— it was to add to their ranks.

Haza's father began the process of indoctrinating her. He instructed her to harden her heart and distrust everyone but him. He forced her to swear fealty through a ritual covenant. Soon, the rebel forces saw her as one of their own.

For five years, Haza was exploited by the terrorist rebel group. She lived in distrust of everyone but her father and husband.

Earlier this year, Ugandan military intelligence found Haza. They referred her to EverFree Uganda for urgent support. Haza was in immediate need of safety, medical care, food, and counseling. The abuse left her with hallucinations and painful ulcers. Deeply traumatized by the terror she experienced, Haza refused to eat or sleep and distrusted everyone around her.

"With all the disappointments from different people," Haza says, "I lost trust in everyone because even my own people who I trusted misled me."

EverFree staff took Haza to a hospital for urgent medical care. At EverFree's safe home, she started to receive restorative counseling. There she was surrounded by a community of other girls like her. At night she slept safely in her own bed, free from threats of harm and control. She had hot meals and cool water to nourish and refresh her.

For the first time, Haza was home. Slowly, she began to open up to her counselor. She began to tell her story.

Now, Haza's story continues as a student at EverFree's Freedom First institute, which empowers survivors of human trafficking with skills and career training in a safe and nurturing space.

"I was empowered with economic skills, soft skills, and trained in catering services and I have developed meaningful values for myself," Haza says.

Looking to start her own business someday, Haza dreams of helping keep her community safe so that other girls like her will be free from trafficking and exploitation.

"If God still blesses me with life, I will sensitize people in my community and I will make sure that I spread information about human trafficking and the different forms of trafficking so that no child is trafficked again."

"You have opened my eyes to the world," she says of EverFree.

"I feel EverFree is a spring of water sprinkling on all my plants. I do not have the best words to describe the everlasting home that EverFree has proved to be for me."

**Pseudonym to preserve survivor privacy*