

# ENDING EXPLOITATION

These stories from our partners and projects are centered around our efforts to help victims of abuse and survivors of exploitation. Feel free to adapt and share on your channels and in your presentations.



## MASIKO'S STORY

Masiko\* was just 9 years old when she was trafficked to Uganda's capital city. Her parents couldn't afford to send her to school, so her uncle promised that if Masiko moved with him to Kampala, he would enroll her in school and protect her.

But Masiko never began her studies. Instead, she became entrapped by forced labor as her once trusted family member made her do all the housework, care for his children, and abused her physically and emotionally. When she finally ran away from her uncle, Masiko's parents couldn't afford to travel to Kampala to search for her. Given Masiko's uncle was unwilling to look for the missing child, her family assumed she was dead.

But luckily, Masiko was rescued and brought to one of Hope for Justice's Lighthouses, where she was able to make friends, receive counseling, and resume her schooling. Hope for Justice's team then worked to locate Masiko's family so they could be reunited.

When her father heard that his little girl was alive, healthy, and would soon be coming home, he fell to his knees, weeping with joy. We are so proud to be a part of reuniting families with our partner Hope for Justice. Learn more about how you can get involved, too, at [YoungLivingFoundation.org](https://YoungLivingFoundation.org).

\*Name changed to protect survivor's identity.

## JUSTICE FOR RATANA

At the age of just 14, Ratana's\* family was plunged into extreme debt. Her mother was unable to work due to a chronic illness, and her large family was reliant on their stepfather's income. The fourth oldest of six siblings, Ratana was forced to drop out of fourth grade and search for a job. A friend of hers introduced her to a couple who offered her a job at their restaurant in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh. Instead, young Ratana was forced into commercial sex work.

Ratana\*, now 15, was rescued during a police operation at the premises and was referred to a local Hope for Justice's Lighthouse. Here, she received trauma-informed care, education about her rights as a child, catch-up schooling, and the opportunity to bring her abusers to justice. After bravely testifying against the couple who forced her into exploitation, they were sentenced to nine years in prison.

Hope for Justice continues to follow up with Ratana to make sure she stays safe until she turns 16 and can participate in a local community-based project that provides vocational training. This will empower her to earn an income safely and support her family. Channan, a counselor at the Lighthouse said, "Ratana is happy to be home and is enjoying spending time with her family after being separated for so long."

\*Name changed to protect survivor's identity.