

MATA TRADERS

INDIA

Walking through the brightly lit workshop, one can sense the happy energy in the room. Women talk and laugh as they sit at their sewing machines, creating beautiful works of art. Throughout India, however, similar pieces are made in drastically different circumstances. Instead of an airy, well-lit space, it's a cramped room tucked away in the slums. Instead of chatting women, the workers are often children, slaving for up to 12 hours a day to earn less than a dollar. In this pleasant workshop, another sound fills the air: children laughing. While mothers work for a fair wage, their sons and daughters can be heard singing and playing at the day care provided by our partners. A mother can work peacefully, knowing that her child is cared for in a safe, happy place. As this program empowers these mothers to work with dignity, it also creates a brighter future for the next generation and casts a vision for a world without child labor.



STORIES OF RESCUE & EMPOWERMENT

COUNTRY: INDIA • PROGRAM: MICRO-ENTERPRISE



Sunita

Sunita has a gift. Her beautiful, handmade jewelry has always stood out from the rest. It's no wonder that Sunita's former boss exploited her skills. Afraid to speak out, Sunita endured the verbal abuse, deferred payments, and poor working conditions for years. Then she heard about a cooperative that stands for the preservation of fair wages and healthy working conditions. Sunita saw her opportunity, but she was afraid. In a great act of courage, Sunita left her job and joined with our partners to start her own cooperative. At first, her community looked down on her, a woman trying to run her own business. But soon, Sunita established herself as a successful businesswoman. Now, the people of her village flock to her for business advice, information about the program, and job requests. She employs other men and women in her village, empowering them to support themselves with dignity. Sunita is spreading opportunity and bringing hope to her community.

*For more stories of rescue & empowerment, please visit our story gallery at www.warinternational.org/story-gallery
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