

From Gary Haugen,
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Dear Friends,

When I set foot in Cebu, the Philippines, five years ago, it was a place ravaged by the evil of human trafficking – a place where teenagers like Glenna* were deeply vulnerable. Glenna had been spending time with friends at a local pier when her group was joined by a friend's acquaintance.

The man invites Glenna to join him in a waiting taxi, and when she refuses his offer, he physically forces her into the vehicle. Glenna quickly realises that the man is a pimp, and that he plans to sell her when they arrive at a nearby hotel. She is terrified, and the man casually laughs off her panic.

Behind the neon signs of the clubs lining Cebu's streets and in the alleys prowled by its pimps, the abuse of girls like Glenna was brutally routine. The under-trained and under-resourced police rescued just a handful of trafficking victims each year, and the court system moved at such a grindingly slow pace that virtually no traffickers were convicted.

The criminals held the upper hand – and they knew it. Truthfully, it is unlikely that IJM's decision to open an office in Cebu in 2006 caused them any serious concern. They had no idea what kind of fight they were up against.

In IJM's work around the world these past 13 years, we've discovered that slave masters and traffickers expect their opponents to show up late and quit early – and they are simply not intimidated. What they do not expect is fearless, sacrificial love *that does not go away*. But now, after nearly four years of casework and partnership with local law enforcement in the community, Cebu's traffickers have started to realise that we simply will not give up, and they are getting scared.

When I visited my colleagues in Cebu this summer, I saw the results of their tenacious love and fierce commitment:

- **Traffickers are going to prison.** In 2009, IJM partnered with the government to establish a specialised police force: the Regional Anti-Human Trafficking (RAT) Task Force. Now the RAT Task Force and other police units have charged more than 100 trafficking suspects in IJM cases.
- **Victims are rescued.** Since the field office opened, IJM and the local police have rescued more than 200 trafficking victims in Cebu. As a result of IJM partnership with the government, girls are now taken to a safe, calming centre to share their stories with authorities after a rescue operation, rather than an intimidating police-station waiting room.
- **Girls once viewed as property are now thriving in meaningful careers.** IJM Cebu and our local partners are giving trafficking survivors the opportunity to discover their skills and engage in specialised job training, with the goal of drastically reducing their odds of being re-victimised.

Through God's favour, these victories have created a seismic shift in Cebu. This summer, external researchers found that, **after nearly four years of IJM casework, the number of minors available for exploitation in the commercial sex industry in Metro Cebu has plummeted 79 percent** from their initial study. Though there is still much work to be done, we are in awe of all that God has accomplished so far through the faithfulness of IJM's Cebu team and our partners.

Together, we are building a different kind of future for girls like Glenna. Indeed, when she and her trafficker arrived at the hotel that night, it was the criminal, not the teenage girl, who was most vulnerable. The pimp had been under surveillance for months by IJM investigators and local police – and the waiting "customer" was an undercover police officer partnering with IJM. Glenna was rescued before ever being abused; the pimp was placed under arrest and taken to jail. His trial is ongoing.

Today, Glenna is a happy young wife and mother. She has graduated from IJM Cebu's job-readiness training programme and is grateful for and proud of her new career, working at a local bakery. She is cared for deeply by IJM Cebu's team – men and women who seek each day to reflect the kind of relentless love their Maker has shown them.

We have seen that not only is this fight worth fighting, but that it is working. Thank you for your faithful commitment to this mission. Your commitment enables us to show up and rescue girls like Glenna before they are even violated. **Please would you consider giving a gift this Christmas season so that we can continue to push forward in the battle for justice in the coming year?** Together, we can bring protection and freedom to more people in great need. Thank you for considering this request and for standing with us in this worthy fight.

With deep gratitude for your partnership and wishes for a joyous Christmas season,



Gary A. Haugen
Founder and CEO, *International Justice Mission*

PS, from the IJM UK office:

This Christmas season my team at IJM UK is overflowing with joy as we reflect upon the wonderful stories of freedom and justice that have inundated our office throughout the year. It is especially exciting to share stories like Glenna's in the knowledge that such stories would not have been made possible without the support of people in the UK who have chosen to make a difference. A few highlights have been:

- Exceeding our fundraising goals for the projects we are supporting in Bangalore, India and in Cambodia. On his recent trip to Cambodia, Gary Haugen shared how he was deeply encouraged by the way in which the team has been able to expand its operations into the north of the country.
- The sending of several British professionals into the field and to IJM HQ in order to serve as interns and fellows.
- The commissioning of Kirsten Singleton as a Legal Liaison, following her Field Office Fellowship in Uganda. In this role she spent two months coordinating a unique and essential multi-disciplinary study in East Africa.
- Having Gary Haugen share the story of IJM with thousands of people at Holy Trinity Brompton Church in London.
- A visit from Sean Litton who was able to brief senior lawyers, politicians and business leaders on developments that have taken place through his leadership of IJM's global justice operations.
- Continued growth in a year of recession and an expansion of our UK network that has resulted in many more people choosing to step up and become a voice for the violently oppressed.

If you haven't had an opportunity to partner with IJM UK financially this season, please consider using the response materials enclosed, so that my colleagues around the world can push forward in the fight for justice in the coming year. Please do contact our office if you would like to discuss any of the opportunities that exist for you to change the horrific reality of injustice that we face today.

Yours joyfully,



Terry Tennens
Executive Director, *IJM UK*

**a pseudonym*

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