



She is strong.
She is brave.
She is free.



IJM salutes 'sheroes' of freedom!

#internationalwomensweek2018 #sheroes

FILED UNDER: BONDED LABOUR

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Roopa's story

I have happy memories of my first few years before my family and I moved into a brick kiln as bonded labourers. Life changed drastically — everyday was a never-ending cycle of hard work, emotional and physical abuse at the hands of our owner.

Fearing for my safety, my parents married me off at 13 to a man at another brick kiln. However, my previous owner threatened my parents. I feared for their safety. Eventually, my husband and I moved back to the brick kiln so that the owner would stop harassing my parents.

I became pregnant at 16. When I was in my eighth month, I was forced to carry heavy loads. I collapsed bleeding. My baby was born still. I cannot forget those harrowing moments. I almost died.

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baby to a doctor. We were locked away, beaten and starved. My husband managed to escape. Finally, the Bangalore Anti Human Trafficking Unit and IJM heard about us. They found us and rescued us.

Today, my husband works in a corn processing factory. I am a homemaker; I have two beautiful children. I want them to be well-educated and find a good job. They should never face what we have had to endure.

Every opportunity I get, I speak up for other bonded labourers. I have been invited to share my experiences at many events and I make sure I do. If I do not speak up, how can we stop other poor labourers from getting exploited?

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