
REBUILDING HOPE: A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH TO RECOVERY FROM TRAFFICKING

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ABSTRACT

Human trafficking victims frequently have severe psychological, emotional, and social difficulties that hinder them from leading regular lives following their rescue. In order to give survivors their dignity, independence, and functionality back, this essay examines the crucial procedures of rehabilitation and reintegration. Treatment of the psychological and emotional pain caused by the abuse is the main goal of rehabilitation. It helps victims process their traumas and regain a feeling of self-worth by providing them with psychological assistance, medical attention, and therapy. Conversely, reintegration aims to reintegrate the victim into society by providing them with shelter, work, education, and supportive social networks. Reintegration allows victims to move past their history and create a secure, independent life, whereas rehabilitation helps them deal with it. A victim's long-term recovery may be seriously hampered by the lack of either of the two processes, which are intricately linked. Without the right help, victims run the risk of becoming socially isolated, becoming victims again, and developing a persistent mistrust or dread, especially of strangers and unfamiliar situations. In order to properly support survivors' recovery journeys, this study contends that a thorough, victim-centered strategy that incorporates both rehabilitation and reintegration is necessary. Using case studies, victim testimonies, and recommendations of policy, offers a thorough examination of best methods, difficulties, and suggestions for intervention and legislative measures. The ability of a society to both rescue victims and reintegrate them into society is ultimately measured by effective reintegration.

Keywords: Human trafficking, Victim rehabilitation, Victim reintegration, Survivor-centered approach, Human trafficking survivors

INTRODUCTION:

The acknowledged that human trafficking is a type of contemporary slavery, across time, space, and culture, it is regarded as one of the most powerful organized crimes in the world today. Thousands of people have lost their basic dignity and right to life as a result of this horrifying practice worldwide. Trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, is defined as follows by the "United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons".

A horrible kind of contemporary slavery, human trafficking dehumanizes and infringes upon a person's fundamental rights. Most of the time, these activities take place in nations with lacks anti-trafficking laws and incapacity to defend individuals' fundamental rights. Asia has become as the world's center for human trafficking throughout time. The United Nations Development Programme estimates that between 300,000 and 450,000 persons are trafficked within Asia annually, with South Asia accounting for more than half of these cases. According to the 2014 Global Slavery Index, 23.5 million of the 36 million victims of human trafficking worldwide are from Asia. India is the nation with the highest incidence of human trafficking worldwide, with over 1400,000 victims (Hope for Children Organization, 2014)¹.

In India, hundreds of thousands of women, men, and children are trafficked each year; some of them end up in international networks. According to a 2002 Asian Development Bank estimate, just 10% of human trafficking in India occurs internationally; the majority, 89%, occurs within the country's borders². Because a significant portion of Indian population lives in abject poverty with no source of income, no job security, and other associated issues, it has grown to be a profitable industry. People from such disadvantaged states are ideal targets for human trafficking by agents who make false promises of employment, marriage, higher living conditions, housing, and security, according to a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)³ study (Sen & Nair, 2005). Trafficking victims typically face a variety of kinds of exploitation, including forced labor, prostitution, forced marriages, forced begging, armed combat, forced labor, forced domestic servitude, and the trading in organs. Women and girls are frequently trafficked into the commercial sex industries, while males are typically trafficked

¹ Hope for Children Org., The Global Slavery Index 2014 (Hope for Children Org. Austl. Ltd. 2014).

² U.N. Off. on Drugs & Crime, UNODC on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling (2011).

³ Amnesty Int'l, People Smuggling (Mar. 23, 2009), <https://www.amnesty.org.au> (archived Mar. 9, 2011).

and forced into heavy labor; youngsters are trafficked to work as domestic servants or in industrial settings in the textile, fishery, and agricultural industries⁴. According to United Nations statistics, 26% of all trafficking in people victims in Asia are exploited for sex trafficking, while 64% are trafficked for forced labor, servitude, and slavery (UNODC, 2014). Despite this flagrant violation of human rights, human trafficking is growing at an alarming rate due to its emergence as a highly organized and profitable industry that makes \$51.8 billion in profit annually in Asia alone (ILO, 2014).

WHY THE NORTH-EASTERN STATES ARE VULNERABLE?

Due to its unstable geographic location in respect to the rest of the nation, the eight states that make up the North Eastern Region (NER)—Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim—are at a disadvantage. It is a landlocked area that shares more than 98% of India's borders with China, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. The North East is vulnerable to cross-border trafficking because of its isolated geopolitical location and lack of interest in its development⁵. To established slavery syndicates to operate covertly, Hasina Kharbih claims that most of the frontiers are "open and unattended... enabling an easy movement in and out of India" (Kharbih, 2013: 348). Furthermore, the issue of trafficking is made worse by the intricate ethnic disputes that have emerged in different sections of the region.

The NER has developed into a key area that serves as the origin, route, and destination of illicit trafficking. India's NER is susceptible for several reasons. In comparison to other regions of the nation, the NER has a poorer economy. Ethnic violence, armed conflicts, and political movements for autonomy all contribute to the issue by overlapping and creating an atmosphere that is unsuitable for social stability and stable employment.

These elements produce a setting and circumstances that make people extremely susceptible to human trafficking, particularly women and children. Poverty and unemployment are directly related to human trafficking, particularly when combined with a lack of social awareness. Many social groupings are also made more vulnerable by natural and man-induced disasters. People are displaced in large numbers because of natural catastrophes and all types of war, forcing

⁴ Difference Between Smuggling and Trafficking, Anti-Trafficking.net, <https://www.anti-trafficking.net>

⁵ The Worst Countries for Human Trafficking, Radio Free Eur./Radio Liberty, <https://www.rferl.org>

them to seek safety in relief camps. For traffickers, this scenario offers a well-marked and organized path to preserve the market's supply side.

In a paper published in "Of Vulnerability and Coercion: A Study of Sex Trafficking in Assam," Sawmya Ray analyzes the impact of mass population displacement brought on by natural disasters and conflicts in different regions of the state and links it to the thriving human trafficking industry in those areas. She contends that poverty, violence, natural catastrophes, and innate patriarchal norms all play a part in making women and children easy prey for human trafficking (Ray, 2015)⁶.

Even worse, a growing number of communities are marginalized as a result, and these people and their families frequently become caught in a vicious cycle of forced migration, poverty, and eventually human trafficking. The demand from the flesh trade market serves as the primary motivator.

The Times of India said that the biggest market for trafficked women from North East India is found in states like West Bengal, Goa, and Kerala, as well as in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata (Baruah, 2012)⁷.

Due to the traditional preference for male children, places like Punjab and Haryana have a skewed sex ratio, which has led to the kidnapping and trafficking of young girls as brides, particularly from Assam (UNODC, 2013).

Rapid urbanization and family members' growing involvement in earning a living are further factors. A maid or assistant is required for household duties because the whole family must go for work. In India, many urban homes are depending more on domestic servants to take care of their kids or do menial tasks. As a result, demand is rising, particularly for youngsters, who are seen as simple subjects who are naïve and uncomplaining. These youngsters frequently labor in situations where they are exploited by their employers and coerced into slavery (Prabhakaran, 2013)⁸.

⁶ Sawmya Ray, Of Vulnerability and Coercion: A Study of Sex Trafficking in Assam, 64 Sociological Bull. 305 (2015).

⁷ Pranjal Baruah, Traffickers Target North East Indian Women, Sell Them Like Cattle, Times of India (Dec. 23, 2012), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Traffickers-target-northeast-Indian-women-sell-them-like-cattle/articleshow/17725299.cms>

⁸ Preetha Prabhakaran, Globalization, Sexuality, and Human Trafficking, in Human Trafficking: The Stakeholders' Perspective 67 (Veerendra Mishra ed., Sage Publ'ns 2013).

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) published statistics in 2015 showing that Assam has become the nation's trafficking hotspot. Because of its unique geographic location, Assam is susceptible to invasion. Slow economic growth has been caused by a lengthy insurgency issue and frequent floods. The state of Assam has seen a significant influx of locals moving to the mainland, driven by hopes for a better quality of life.

Traffickers frequently assist these migrations by posing as recruitment agents and luring vulnerable populations with the promise of a better life. The severity of the issue in the state is demonstrated by the rising number of missing children from Assam.

The government of Mizoram has taken several actions to combat the negative effects of human trafficking. According to UNODC (2013)⁹, it is the first state in the Northeast to create the "Victims of Crime Compensation Scheme." Nevertheless, human trafficking continues to occur throughout the state despite these innovative tactics. Eight Mizoram indigenous girls were saved in 2016 after they were transported to Gujarat through Guwahati (Indian Express, 2016).

Meghalaya has the highest rate of child trafficking after Assam, and human trafficking has even reached the state's interior. A local lawmaker was implicated in a human trafficking investigation at the start of 2017. It was discovered that the other conspirators owned the guest home where these operations were conducted (The Shillong Times, 2017)¹⁰.

Most of the time, hotels and guesthouses serve as gathering spots for both clients and prostitutes. The state's primary sector, tourism, has contributed to the rapid growth in the number of hotels and guest homes. But the number of hotels and guest homes is growing at a rate that is out of step with the number of visitors.

The severity of human trafficking in the state is demonstrated by the recent instances of various service businesses participating in the flesh trade. Most of the youngsters were trafficked until recently to work as bonded laborers in tea shops and other businesses or in coal mining.

⁹ U.N. Off. on Drugs & Crime, Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime 132 (2013), https://www.unodc.org/documents/organized-crime/UNODC_CCPCJ_EG.4_2013/CYBERCRIME_STUDY_210213.pdf.

¹⁰ Julius Confesses to His Crime, Shillong Times (Jan. 12, 2017), <https://www.theshillongtimes.com/2017/01/12/julius-confesses-to-his-crime/>

GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE:

The legal elements of cross-border trafficking are a major focus of research from academic fields including criminal justice, international relations, and law. These studies frequently draw attention to the difficulties presented by international legislation and the lack of collaboration in prosecution.

Trafficking and defending victims. We used the 4Ps technique and categorized the included sources by kind of exploitation in order to analyze the regional differences in counter-trafficking programs and regulations¹¹.

As shown in Figure 1, initiatives or policies aimed at preventing human trafficking (58%) and safeguarding trafficking victims and survivors (45%) have been the subject of the bulk of evaluated research conducted globally. For example, these studies demonstrate that increasing awareness of the dangers of human trafficking and providing information on safe migration routes are effective ways to stop human trafficking. Furthermore, these studies show that promoting migrants' labor rights and protecting those at risk of forced labor may be achieved through the dissemination of information about labor migration in the countries of destination. To combat human trafficking, the few studies that concentrate on partnerships support the creation of information-sharing channels and bolster global cooperation. Additionally, Figure 2 shows that the most often researched forms of exploitation are child trafficking (15%), trafficking for forced labor (17%), and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation (19%)¹².

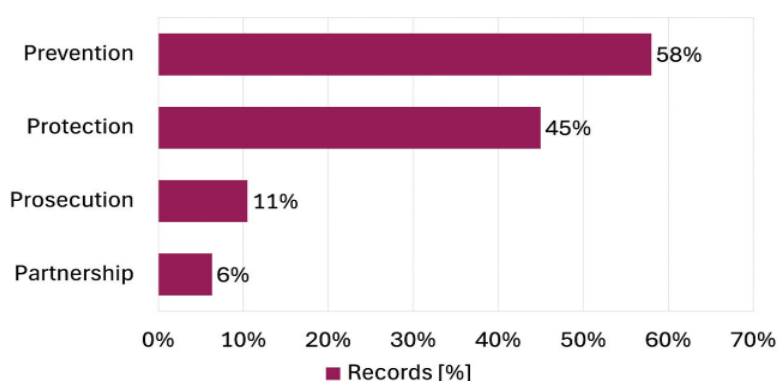


Figure 1: Global research by the 4Ps. Note: The Human Trafficking EGM's records index

¹¹ R. Srivastava, *Bonded Labor in India: Its Incidence and Pattern* (Int'l Lab. Org. 2005), <https://www.ilo.org>

¹² Int'l Lab. Org., *Children in Hazardous Work* (2011), <https://www.ilo.org>

served as the basis for creating this statistic. Prevention (138), protection (107), prosecution (25), and collaboration (15) comprise the raw number of records¹³. Since some records look at many Ps, the percentages add up to more than 100%. Source: Research by the authors.

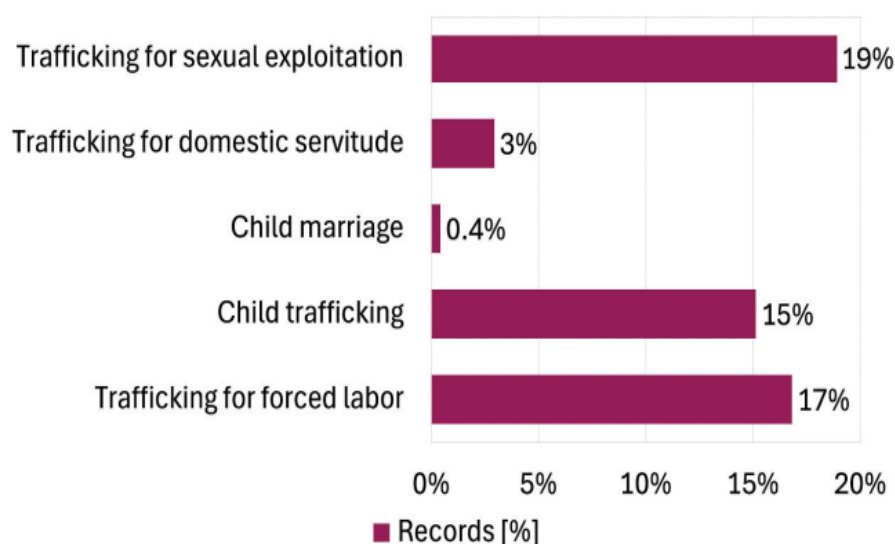


Figure 2: Regional-level research by exploitation kind.

RESCUE OPERATIONS:

In addition to immediate post-rescue actions, the Protocol offers broad principles for organizing and carrying out raids in "a productive, kid-friendly manner less stressful for the child"¹⁴. According to the Harvard FXB report, after raids on their workplaces, rescue efforts in Bihar and Rajasthan are mainly successful in physically removing a small number of youngsters from abusive work settings. However, missions are conducted irregularly by undertrained personnel, without the assistance of centralized intelligence systems, and frequently put children at further risk and stress. Significant gaps exist in the application and outline of policies pertaining to raid execution and preparation.

An official from the Department of Labor, members from the CWCs, a nearby a charitable organization, a medical professional, and a female law enforcing officer or volunteer are all required by the Protocol to be on rescue teams. These people need to be trained on trauma mitigation strategies, appropriate regulations, and their own duties. Nevertheless, research

¹³ Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective 2* (Cambridge Univ. Press 2010).

¹⁴ Ministry of Women & Child Dev., Gov't of India, *Annual Report 2016–2017* (2017).

participants stated that in practice, teams are frequently too small to handle the volume of children in need of rescue. Doctors, police officials, and female witnesses only sometimes participate. The AHTUs, whose primary responsibility is to organize rescue and post-rescue operations, are hardly involved in the process.

Rescue operations mainly depend on non-profit organizations since there is no explicit division of accountability among the many organizations mentioned in the Protocol. Even though some organizations, like Bachpan Bachao Andolan, have a great deal of experience with raids, key informant data indicates that this over-reliance results in ad hoc, under-resourced raids led by inexperienced or undersupported workers, which can and does cause additional trauma to children who are already at risk. NGOs occasionally carry out rescues independently, according to one respondent: "The majority of the times, assuming we refrain from immediate action, the child in question might end up transferred someplace else."

According to the Protocol, the identity of the saved children and the specifics of the rescue must be kept completely private never to be shared with the media or any other third parties¹⁵. However, there are often privacy violations involving events and information leaks prior to, during, and following raids. Ineffective rescue efforts might raise the possibility of employers taking revenge on children, according to respondents, who also said that employers are frequently informed of upcoming searches. Basic identity protection measures for kids are frequently overlooked. According to one government official, rescue team members actively seek for media attention for "the public to comprehend why this sort of activity is a felony and chargeable offence."

While proposals for longer-term housing are completed, children should be placed in "drop-in facilities or short-term homes under the supervision of the Social Welfare Department" after being rescued. As soon as they are rescued, they should be taken to the CWC, who acts as Guardian of the rescued child. who empowered with establishing the rehabilitation plan, the role played a s a precursor to longer-term rehabilitation and reintegration into a childhood that respects rights, immediate care and support are especially crucial¹⁶.

¹⁵ Ministry of Women & Child Dev., Gov't of India, *Ujjawala: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (2007).

¹⁶ Realities of Male Sex Workers and Society, *India Together*, <http://indiatogether.org/realities-of-male-sex-workers-society>

Treatment is frequently inadequate even though necessities like food and shelter are typically given right away after rescue. According to several NGO participants, rescued children are occasionally taken to police stations, which is an unsuitable and perhaps re-traumatizing setting. 45 out of 49 participants said that the mere absence of an interpreter who speaks the appropriate local languages hinders the treatment of children who are trafficked from other states. The effectiveness of service delivery and the possibility of subsequent criminal prosecution are both significantly impacted by this glaring shortcoming¹⁷.

Initiating criminal procedures as soon as possible after a rescue is a crucial step in reducing the demand for child labor that is exploitative. Officials from the labor department must submit a First Information Report (FIR) to begin an investigation and possible criminal prosecution. According to respondents FIR's are not always submitted, and there is uncertainty and conflict over who oversees this duty. The general opinion that follows is that employers are "rarely" or "never" arrested and are not likely to be found guilty. Only 55 incidents (1.09 percent) of child trafficking for any reason nationally led to convictions out of 5,026 cases that were investigated, according to the official data during 2015¹⁸.

REINTEGRATION:

After being saved, the kids have a difficult time readjusting to life in the real world. Although there is not a single, widely agreed-upon meaning for the phrase, "reintegration" is generally considered in the literature to refer to a comprehensive, long-term process. According to Surtees, it is:

A recuperation and social and economic integration process consists of settling in a secure and safe setting, having access to a decent quality of living, mental and physical health, chances for social, economic, and personal growth, and having social and emotional support. The main goal of India's current reintegration policy is to provide "economic rehabilitation for the family and educational rehabilitation for the child." However, as the Harvard FXB study shows, existing reintegration initiatives in Bihar and Rajasthan do not provide the basic needs and rights of trafficked children and their families, such as safety, a decent quality of living, health care, and education.

¹⁷ U.S. Dep't of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2008* (June 4, 2008).

¹⁸ Amnesty Int'l, *People Smuggling* (Mar. 23, 2009), <https://www.amnesty.org.au>.

Reintegration is viewed by Indian anti-trafficking professionals as a set, temporary procedure. According to 96% of those being interviewed, the cases of individual children are closed four months after rescue, with no further investigation or tracking of the repercussions of return¹⁹. Rarely are plans for the immediate and long-term reintegration of rescued children and their families created or carried out. Instead, current reintegration initiatives only include tracking down and promptly returning rescued children to their families, exposing them to the same systemic vulnerabilities that resulted in their initial trafficking.

In terms of housing, the CWC is required to provide rescued children with suitable home. To ascertain if it is safe to return the child to their family, the Protocol calls for a home verification report. If not, the CWC might suggest residential dormitories run by the government or nonprofit organizations, or alternative care based in families. Children are always returned to their families, except for situations in which the family cannot be found. According to the respondents, comprehensive family assessments that investigate the factors that led to the child's first trafficking as well as potential preventative measures for future trafficking never take place.

The practical challenges of home evaluation are partly to blame for this significant protection failure²⁰. Four-fifths of child laborers in India originate from low-caste households in isolated, difficult-to-reach rural areas, and trafficked children can occasionally come from migrant families that are already trying to make ends meet. As a result, CWCs who want to perform home visits face significant obstacles and need transportation, staffing, and training resources that are currently mostly unavailable. The person in charge of planning and financing the return of rescued children to their home state is not clearly identified. When making long-distance returns, as from Rajasthan to Bihar, groups of rescued children are transported by train to major regional railway hubs with the *ad-hoc* assistance of a government official or non-governmental organization employee. The family is instructed to come and pick up the child from the regional hub when they have been located.

There are also insufficient resources to help parents mentor and embrace returning children, as well as to promote a child's reintegration into the family. Reintegration is therefore typically

¹⁹ NODC & Government of India, *India, Country Assessment Report on Human Trafficking: Current Status of Victim Service Providers and Criminal Justice Actors on Anti Human Trafficking* (2013).

²⁰ Ministry of Women and Child Development, *UJJAWALA: Revised Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (New Delhi: Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2016).

boiled down to a straightforward return to the situation that existed before the kid was trafficked. In addition, there are few, inadequately supported, and inadequately monitored and evaluated alternative lodging choices. Given this fact, it is not shocking that there are frequent complaints of abuse, neglect, and re-trafficking in these settings.

The purpose of the NCLP schools is to assist rescued children make up lost years by offering them non-formal educational services²¹. Students at these "bridge schools" are given a very streamlined curriculum before being either reintegrated into a regular school or put back into self-employment. Additionally, NCLP schools are the primary means of delivering regular, mostly ad hoc health examinations and vocational training.

The study's findings indicate that once they return home, rescued youngsters do not always participate in bridging school programs. According to one CWC official, "only the child's parents have a role in school enrollment." Participants cited several obstacles to enrollment, chief among them being the district's dearth of participating schools, the inability of schools to provide previously trafficked children with the daily payment that was promised, and the child's outright reluctance to go. According to research, family support and mentoring are crucial for Indian students' attendance in school.

However, parents are not provided with the emotional, practical, and financial assistance that would allow them to carry out this role. Some reports claim that the NCLP is woefully underfunded, that it only covers around one-third of India's 676 districts, and that its teaching staff is often underpaid and underqualified²². Giving students the resources and learning abilities they need to pursue higher education requires a quality education. Additionally, it encourages families to participate in their children's education by acting as a self-reinforcing process. The converse occurs when there are not enough bridge schools.

The inadequate coordination between the two institutions makes it difficult for returning students to integrate into official schools, even if they are successfully enrolled in bridge schools. The fact that the Ministry of Education oversees formal education while the Ministry of Labour and Employment oversees bridge school programs contributes to this grave issue. One major problem in the context of reintegration is the lack of investment in strong teaching

²¹ Thomson Reuters Foundation and The Freedom Fund, *Putting Justice First: Legal Strategies to Combat Human Trafficking in India* (2014).

²² Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission and International Justice Mission, *Report on Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Mumbai* (2017).

facilities in bridging schools and in possibilities for a seamless transfer into formal education in the mainstream.

Through a lump sum compensation plan, the Indian reintegration program aims to help children's and their families' social and economic viability. In the case of *M C Mehta Vs State of Tamil Nadu*, the Supreme Court ruled that violating employers are required by law to provide INR 20,000 to a special benefit fund for each rescued kid. Additionally, it stipulated that the state must either give job to one adult member of the child's household or make an extra INR 5,000 contribution to the welfare fund.

Although all research participants agreed that rescued children should get these amounts, they also admitted that children seldom ever receive any recompense at all. This supports recent claims that the intended recipients of compensation are rarely reached. "There is no chance of financial help or compensation," an NGO spokesperson said. It is thought that a child's independence serves as recompense in and of itself. Crucially, respondents did not cite a lack of resources as the main justification for underpaying children.

They cited administrative and technological errors or noncompliance by employers. Clear, uniform rules on how cash transfers should operate are not provided by policy frameworks. Neither the Protocol nor the *M C Mehta* ruling specify how interstate coordination should be accomplished, where the welfare fund for receiving the funds should be established, or what type of access families would have to this money.

To reduce the likelihood that a kid would be re-trafficked for financial gain, families require organized and continuous support. According to the research, cash transfers work best to reduce child labor when combined with additional expenditures in after-school programs, health care, or educational facilities as part of a comprehensive, long-term plan to reduce poverty. The structural causes of child labor as a coping mechanism in homes are not well addressed by lump sum compensation.

Lastly, without specific governmental actions to guarantee the provision of appropriate and ongoing care, the urgent mental and physical health needs of rescued children are recognized as an afterthought. No more specific actions that address the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of these vulnerable people or their families were specified, even though research participants agreed that a counselor should be present with children as soon as they

are rescued.

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO COUNTER HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

The Sections 370 and 379 A of the Indian Penal Code (1860) deal with the problem of human trafficking. According to these sections of IPC, it bans trafficking of women and girls and has specified brutal punishments for the perpetrators. It declares that anybody who purchases or sells a person under the age of eighteen for the purposes of prostitution, sexual exploitation, or any other immoral activity faces a maximum sentence of ten years in jail and a fine.

A minor and a kid are the same thing, according to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015. Everyone under the age of eighteen is regarded as a kid under this Act. The youngster in question needs protection and care.

In addition to outlawing human trafficking, the 1949 Indian Constitution upholds other globally recognized human rights standards, including the rights to equality, freedom, life and personal liberty, and constitutional remedies. Another essential right of an Indian person is the prohibition against exploitation.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Immoral Trafficking in Persons and the Exploitation of Prostitution of Others was approved by the Indian government in 1950. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act (SITA), passed by the Indian government in 1956, was a direct result of this ratification. The Immoral Traffic Prevention statute (1986) was the result of amendments and changes made to the statute in 1986²³.

This Act's preamble states that its goals are to implement the Trafficking Convention and outlaw unethical human trafficking. These offenses include taking people for the purpose of prostitution, seducing them for prostitution, living off prostitution profits, holding someone in a brothel, seducing someone in custody, maintaining a brothel, or permitting a brothel to operate, and more. Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is another area of concentration for the Immoral Traffic (prevention) Amendment Bill (2006).

The Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Act (1989), most victims from human trafficking

²³ Ministry of Women & Child Dev., Gov't of India, *Ujjawala: Revised Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (2016).

are members of marginalized social groups. Traffickers prey on areas where victims lack basic literacy and social skills. In addition to providing women and young girls from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes with an extra layer of protection, this puts more pressure on the trafficker to demonstrate his lack of involvement in the problem²⁴.

Atrocities against members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are included under Section 3 of this legislation. It addresses specific forms of human trafficking, including forced labor and female sexual exploitation. Anyone found guilty of such an offense faces a minimum sentence of nine months in jail, with the possibility of a five-year sentence if the offense falls within section 3 of the Act.

International agreement, trafficking in persons International Civil and Political Rights, According in Articles 8(1) and (2), a person cannot be detained in bondage or slavery. Additionally, it is argued that the trade in domestic slavery and servitude ought to be outlawed.

Forced labor under the ILO Convention, this treaty essentially demands the outlawing of forced labor in all its content. Therefore, "any work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily" is the definition of forced labor.

International Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Covenant, every child and young person shall receive protection and aid without bias or discrimination based on caste, parentage, or any other circumstance, according to Article 10(3) of the Covenant on International Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). They ought to be shielded against social and financial exploitation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) of Article 4 states that, no one should be held in slavery or servitude. All kinds of slavery and the trade in servitude must be outlawed. International Convention to Suppress the Trafficking of White Slaves 1910's, this agreement made it illegal to purchase or lure a woman or girl away under the age of 21 for immoral reasons, even with her permission, regardless of whether other crimes may have been committed in other nations.

²⁴ P.M. Nair, *Human Trafficking: Dimensions, Challenges and Responsibilities* (Konark Publ'rs 2010).

1984 saw the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment by the UN. This treaty expressly states that compensation is also established under it if someone returns to their state with a clear and compelling reason that they are in risk of torture.

Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations The forty-one articles of this convention mandate that states parties prohibit, among other things, involvement in an organized group (Article 5), money laundering (Article 6), and corruption (Article 8). Additionally, states parties must implement policies for the prosecution of criminals (Articles 10 and 11) as well as the possession and seizure of, among other things, the money obtained from such offenses (Articles 12 to 14). For each of the three distinct subcategories of transnational organized crime that are the subject of each protocol, a number of requirements are outlined.

MODERN SLAVERY IN INDIA:

Poverty has been found to be the primary motivating reason for human trafficking. Discrimination based on caste, lack of resources, lack of human and social capital, social insecurity, gender discrimination, commodification of women, social exclusion, marginalization, ineffective and out-of-date state policies, lack of governance, the relationship between traffickers and the police, unemployment, the disintegration of the community support system, cheap child labor, child marriage and the preference for marriage, the allure of city life, corruption, employment trade, and migration policies Conflict and victims' ignorance are two further elements that contribute to human trafficking. Bribe trafficking in India is also said to be influenced by the declining sex ratio and the rising demand for women in places where women are underprivileged.

Other circumstances also play a role, both directly and indirectly, but all of these push factors compel the victim to continue being exploited, to become vulnerable, and to be a part of this contemporary kind of slavery for the duration of their life.

India has surpassed Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, and Syria to be named "the world's most dangerous country for women." It is accurate to say that violence and discrimination against women are deeply embedded in Indian culture. Because many individuals believe that having a girl kid is a curse, discrimination begins at birth. About 70,000 youngsters are used as bonded

laborers in private mines, while others are utilized as domestic servants after inheriting their parents' debt²⁵. Women are also being forced into prostitution, and infants are being taken for begging. Organ traffickers are even purchasing some of them. Because rural poverty is so common, the issue of people trafficking has gone overlooked until recently. Human trafficking is more likely to affect children from tribal areas, such as the Kuki people of Manipur and the Nagas of the Northeast, while it is also more common in Jharkhand state and the Anantapur parts of Andhra Pradesh state.

One of the greatest crimes in history is human trafficking. The victims may have physical and mental health injuries that last a lifetime as a result. The victims may have psychological effects as a result of the terror that the traffickers instill in them. The humanity of individuals participating has been erased by this type of contemporary slave trade. Individual interest and pleasure have suppressed the moral principles, ethos, and sense of belonging as members of the same human species. To keep them from becoming victims, those living below the poverty line need to be made aware of human trafficking and its repercussions. The majority of human trafficking victims are those who live below the poverty line, thus if the government assists the underprivileged segments of society and gives them access to quality education and work opportunities, human trafficking may be significantly reduced.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Strengthen and Increase the Inclusivity of Laws India's anti-trafficking legislation must be strengthened. They mostly concentrate on certain forms of trafficking now, but we must ensure that they address all of them, whether it be trafficking for organs, sex, labor, or anything else.
2. Assistance to All, Not Just Women and Children Women and children are frequently the center of discussions about assisting victims or stopping human trafficking. However, males can also be at risk, particularly if they lack access to quality education or employment possibilities. Therefore, we must ensure that men have equal opportunities to better their life via work and education.
3. Construct More Rehab Facilities Many victims of human trafficking experience severe trauma. They require a secure environment to heal both physically and emotionally. Since there

²⁵ Vimal Vidushy, Human Trafficking in India, 2 *Int'l J. Applied Rsch.* 201 (2016).

aren't enough of these centers now, the government ought to establish more rehabilitation centers so that victims may receive the care they need and start again.

4. Tighter Regulations of Foreign Migration Cross-border human trafficking is common. Individuals who move from one nation to another without enough protection or knowledge are more vulnerable to human trafficking. To ensure that individuals may migrate securely and that traffickers cannot exploit them, we thus need improved migration management systems. This will also assist in thwarting networks of organized international trafficking.

CONCLUSION:

The prevalence of human trafficking exposes intricate networks of physical abuse, child labor, and the exploitation of women and children in the flesh trade. It has spread to the nation's most remote regions, making it even harder to address the issue *Journal of North East India Studies*. Therefore, it is imperative that the abuses of human trafficking be addressed and stopped before they have a chance to spread. It is necessary to construct legal tools to strengthen political will in the battle against human trafficking. All facets of institutions, including the public, private, religious, and community sectors, must be included in such political engagement. The State Government should establish mechanisms to guarantee that policies are implemented in a methodical manner when formulating them. Large-scale awareness efforts (by NGOs, social organizations, the church, and the government) and the long-term development of educational opportunities are relevant.

Many children remain ignorant despite government efforts to provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14, which leads to their trafficking into urban households and sex markets for child labor, especially as domestic assistance. People have been compelled to travel both inside and outside of states like Nagaland in pursuit of better prospects due to the stark disparity in development between rural and urban areas, making them prime candidates for human trafficking.

Religious organizations play a vital role in the battle against human trafficking. Particularly in India's NER, religious organizations have a significant impact on society. Religious organizations must be mobilized and used as a platform to raise public awareness and encourage community involvement. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) has taken a commendable move in response to the growing national trend of child trafficking by phony

missionaries. In an interview with Vilasieu of NBCC, she stated that the organization has launched a campaign to raise awareness in churches around the state and has initiated a sensitization effort to combat human trafficking.

Therefore, there is an urgent need for both state and non-state actors to take up the multifaceted task of sensitizing the public and increasing awareness of the trafficking issue. They should also collaborate to combat the problem of human trafficking.