

REDUCING VULNERABILITY OF YOUNG WOMEN SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEX
TRAFFICKING IN KOLKATA, WEST BENGAL INDIA:
A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

BY

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A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to understand the vulnerability of young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India, and to identify effective strategies that prevent re-trafficking and exploitation. Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological framework was used to understand what factors influence young women survivors to be vulnerable to re-trafficking or re-exploitation, and to identify effective intervention approaches to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation of trafficked women. A case study design was used to understand the vulnerabilities of young women survivors of trafficking. Seven young women aged eighteen to twenty-five years were selected by purposive sampling from in and around Kolkata. In-depth interviews with survivors were triangulated with key informant interviews of NGO leaders and church leaders engaged in anti-trafficking efforts. Interview data was transcribed, translated, and coded in NVIVO, and analyzed to provide insight and answer the research questions.

The factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation include extreme poverty and hardship, a history of early marriage, a history of child labour, lack of safety in the home, lack of education and vocational skills, lack of access to sustainable livelihoods, living in a red-light district, and feeling pressured. In addition, factors like violence in the home, loss of a parent, having a parent in the sex trade, being sold by a parent or family member, and pressure from the family to earn an income by any means. Other community and societal factors add to the vulnerability of being trafficked for sexual exploitation.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on survivors and their families. Survivors experienced lack of food, loss of income, loss of jobs, increased debt bondage, and some were pushed back into engaging in prostitution and were sexually

exploited. Programmes need to be prepared for disasters and ready to support survivors in emergency situations.

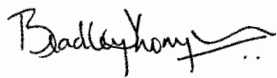
Interventions that survivors said benefited them include vocational training, access to livelihoods, counselling services, family counselling, prosecution of traffickers, community awareness activities to address worldviews and stigma, and efforts to ensure that survivors have access to justice and compensation. There is a need to strengthen access to jobs and post-integration counselling services, and to organise effective awareness programmes, address stigma and discrimination, sensitise law enforcement, and ensure access to compensation and prosecution of traffickers. There is also a need for ongoing counselling and support groups.

Churches and faith-based organizations are engaged in various interventions including building awareness, rescue efforts, vocational training, job placements, building faith, hope, and resilience among survivors, strengthening their identity and self-worth, and enabling supportive relationships. The organizations are engaged in both spiritual nurture and providing practical support.

Based on the synthesis of the findings from this study and grounded in established theory, the researcher proposed an integrated framework to reduce vulnerability of girls and young women survivors building on Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model. The framework articulated interventions across individual, relational, community and societal levels. The study highlighted the fact that survivors are vulnerable following the trauma experienced as a result of being trafficked and exploited. They require specific and individually tailored interventions across the various levels of the socio-ecological framework for effective reintegration. It is vital that stakeholders collaborate well to ensure that survivors are protected and thrive.

CERTIFICATION OF PROOFREADING

I, Bradley Thompson certify that this dissertation has undergone proofreading and editing by Prof. Marie Osborne, an authorized proofreader of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.



Signature of Researcher

March 13, 2024

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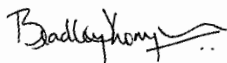
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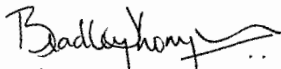
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my loving family whose unwavering support has been my anchor throughout this journey, and to the courageous survivors of human trafficking who participated in this research. Your resilience and strength inspire me beyond words. May this dissertation honor your experiences and contribute to a world where justice and freedom prevail for all!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam - For the greater glory of God

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution and Trafficking
EST	Ecological Systems Theory
IJM	International Justice Mission
NATC	National Anti-Trafficking Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

In May 1996, I began visiting the Government General Hospital in Chennai, India as part of fieldwork practice for my Social Work degree. The hospital was also one of the largest government medical training colleges and tertiary hospitals in the South. As a student research intern who was interested in HIV/AIDS research, I was posted at the Venereal Diseases Center. This center had an AIDS ward that provided inpatient care for men and women who had AIDS. As part of my work, I would interact with HIV/AIDS patients daily. One morning, I met a chirpy short young thirteen-year-old girl who told me her name was Sheela (name changed to protect the identity of the child). She seemed bubbly and happy, and was excited to talk to me about herself for some reason. She told me her life story, and this ended up shaping my resolve to serve vulnerable children as a mission.

Sheela told me she was nine years old when a relative told her poor family that they could get Sheela a nice job in Mumbai that would be of great support to the family. Sheela was sent off with the relative to Mumbai and she was sold to a brothel keeper in Kamatipura, one of the worst red-light districts in India. She was made to prostitute her young body to around ten to fifteen men a day. The nightmare continued day in and day

out until she was rescued by a huge government effort in 1996. By then Sheela was HIV positive and had three sexually transmitted diseases. She was processed by social workers, and, eventually, she was taken home to her family. Her family was not pleased to bring their 'prostitute' daughter back home because of the shame, and they rejected her. This made her vulnerable to being re-trafficked. Because Sheela was HIV positive, she was sent to the AIDS ward at the government hospital.

Sheela's story broke my heart. It was and is still hard to comprehend the trauma and pain of being sold as a slave to be exploited over and over again. Why are children denied their childhood to become the object of adults' greed and lust? What can we do to prevent such tragedies from happening again? What is the role of faith-based organisations in preventing trafficking for sexual exploitation? All these questions have remained with me over the years. This research stems from my interaction with Sheela and her ministry to me!

I continued to meet Sheela over the course of the next year when I visited the hospital. She told me that she became a Christian during her stay in Chennai. She enjoyed talking with me about her faith. Her joy and cheer despite her circumstances spread hope all around.

My encounter with Sheela and subsequent work with World Vision, focused on serving the most vulnerable children, made me realize how important it is to prevent trafficking and support well those who are rescued in order to prevent re-trafficking. I intend for my research to contribute to developing holistic strategies that will reduce the

vulnerability of children and women, and help prevent human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Background of the Problem

While trafficking is still an issue in Tamil Nadu (where Chennai city is located) and the neighboring southern states of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka, child sex trafficking is most significant in West Bengal, and most children who are trafficked end up in Mumbai, Delhi, or Kolkata red-light districts (Parks 2017, 3). West Bengal State is located in the east of India between the Bay of Bengal and the Himalayas (see Appendix A). West Bengal is the fourth largest state in the country and had an estimated population of over 104.2 million in 2023 (Population Census 2023). Its unique location bordering Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh as well as several Indian states including Orissa, Sikkim, and Jharkhand makes it a trafficking hub for children and minor girls (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 16). The main ethnic group in the state is the Bengali, and the main language spoken is Bengali. Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), the capital city of West Bengal, is the third largest city in India. The city is also known as the cultural capital of India and has been called the “City of Joy.” The city itself has a population of 5.2 million, with the population in the suburbs estimated to be about 14.7 million people in 2015. With 24,000 people living per square kilometer, it is one of the densest cities. The city is a bustling hotbed of economic activity, with estimates of the Kolkata metropolitan area’s economy ranging from 60 to 150 billion US dollars (Pokhrel 2019, 15).

Sonagachi, one of the largest red-light districts in India, is located in Kolkata West Bengal. It is infamous for being an epicenter of the prostitution of girls and young

women in West Bengal (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 16). Children and young girls are trafficked from various parts of West Bengal and even neighboring countries including Bangladesh and Nepal, and they are subject to slave-like conditions until they can pay back their so-called 'debts' to the brothel owners.

Trafficking in children for sexual exploitation is highly prevalent in West Bengal, and most children who are trafficked end up in Mumbai, Delhi, or Kolkata red-light districts (Parks 2017, 3). Families are tricked by offers of a job or marriage, and the children are sold off to these brothels. According to the United States Department of State:

Experts estimate millions of women and children are victims of sex trafficking in India. Traffickers use false promises of employment or arrange sham marriages within India or Gulf states and subject women and girls to sex trafficking. In addition to traditional red light districts, women and children increasingly endure sex trafficking in small hotels, vehicles, huts, and private residences. Traffickers increasingly use websites, mobile applications, and online money transfers to facilitate commercial sex (United States Department of State 2018, 222).

According to the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, twenty-eight percent of the total victims of all forms of trafficking identified are children (20% girls and 8% boys) (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2018, 1). Trafficking is a crime and a form of slavery in modern times that violates the fundamental rights of women and children. Trafficking is often done with the intention of sexual exploitation or economic gain, and it destroys the lives of those who have been trafficked (Oram et al. 2012, 1).

Globalization has created an increasing demand for cheap labor and young girls for the sex industry (Rajan 2013, 10). According to the government of India, three

million women and girls are involved in commercial sexual exploitation (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 1). Illiteracy, poverty and the poor socio-economic status of women are often factors that make young women and girls vulnerable to trafficking (Sarkar 2014, 483). Disasters and situations like the COVID-19 pandemic can increase the vulnerability of already vulnerable children and families (World Vision International 2020, 3). Local recruiters or procurers are often known relatives, friends, or community members who are trusted by the family of the child. With the offer of a lucrative job in the city or a marriage without dowry, the families of the minor girls are willing to send their children off rather than risk starvation (Yadav and Ansari 2015, 227).

Children trafficked for sexual exploitation face significant negative consequences to their health and well-being. Traffickers use abuse and torture to ‘break’ the young children so that they will do what they are told (Rajan 2013, 97). Children are raped, starved, or beaten badly until they submit themselves to see and entertain customers. Minor girls are often kept locked up in dark rooms and live in slave-like conditions while the brothel keepers profit from selling their virginity and their bodies over and over again. The victims are made to believe that they were purchased with a lot of money and are in debt and need to work for a long time to pay off the debts (Rajan 2013, 98).

Zimmerman and Kiss, in their paper on human trafficking and health, talk about the experience of survivors. They observe that:

Survivors experienced multiple forms of abuse, numerous sector-specific occupational hazards, and dangerous living conditions and suffered a range of poor health consequences. Among trafficking survivors in Southeast Asia, nearly half (48%) reported physical or sexual abuse, and 22% sustained severe injuries, including lost limbs, and reported symptoms indicative of depression and anxiety disorders (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 2).

The abuse and violence they suffer often make it difficult to live normal lives even if they are rescued and rehabilitated (Shelley 2010, 73). Traffickers, facilitators, and brothel-keepers form a nexus to facilitate the process of trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 29). Traffickers manipulate and control their victims through violence, drug addiction, isolation, and mental abuse, as well as threats of violence against family members of the children (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 27).

Trafficked minors are often exploited in dangerous ways, including being coerced to engage in high-risk sexual activities such as sex without condoms or gang rape (Rafferty 2020, 191). Trafficked women frequently show symptoms like headaches, fatigue, vaginal discharges, pelvic pain, traumatic injuries, burns (Rahman et al. 2014), and other infections (Zimmerman et al. 2009, 1032). Psychological trauma is also a major issue observed in trafficking victims, including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression (Zimmerman et al. 2009, 1032). Long-term mental health issues are quite common in those who have been trafficked (Zarocostas 2019, 905). Both the immediate and the long-term impacts on the well-being of individuals trafficked are significant.

Any holistic intervention needs to consider and address these factors and processes in order to be effective. Dealing with the effects of trafficking on survivors requires patient and concerted efforts by professionals and other caring individuals across various sectors. While rescue efforts are critical and effective in stopping the harm being

done to a woman or child who is exploited (Crawford 2017, 273), they need to be combined with long-term strategies focused on prevention and rehabilitation.

Some survivors are re-trafficked or get back to prostitution following their rescue and rehabilitation. Sometimes children who are rescued get re-trafficked due to the lack of basic care or shelter. Evidence shows that those who have been trafficked as minors are often vulnerable to re-trafficking in adult life (Jobe 2010, 13). In some cases, re-trafficking happens within a year of the girl being rescued, and most of those who are re-trafficked are subjected again to sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 32). In India, rates of re-trafficking were estimated in one study to be 25.8 percent among women trafficked for sexual exploitation; of this figure, 8.4 percent had been trafficked on three or more occasions (Jobe 2010, 15). Re-trafficking is particularly prevalent in the context of India where girls who have been rescued are at a high risk of being re-trafficked or ending up in exploitative circumstances (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 171). It is hard to find more recent data on re-trafficking and this reinforces the need to study the issue of re-trafficking further.

Statement of the Problem

The study explores the question: According to the selected respondents, what are effective ways of reducing the vulnerability of young women survivors of child sex trafficking in order to prevent re-trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India?

While government efforts have been focused on rescuing and rehabilitating minors engaged in prostitution, there are significant gaps in understanding effective ways to reduce the vulnerability of young women survivors of trafficking and to prevent their

re-trafficking and exploitation. Understanding how families and children become vulnerable, identifying the factors that enable trafficking, and exploring successful interventions to reduce vulnerability can strengthen programs that seek to protect survivors. A better understanding of the vulnerability factors will enable stakeholders to build community, family, and individual resilience to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation.

The research questions that guide the study are:

1. What are the factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation in Kolkata, West Bengal?
2. How has the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath impacted the vulnerability of young women survivors to re-trafficking and exploitation?
3. What intervention practices are effective in preventing the re-trafficking and exploitation of young women survivors in Kolkata, West Bengal?
4. What are faith-based non-governmental organisations doing to contribute to the support for young women survivors to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation?
5. What improvements need to be made to programs for young women survivors in Kolkata, West Bengal, and for further scholastic research directions?

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand the vulnerability of young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India, and to identify effective interventions to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation.

As young women survivors are the main respondents of this research, they will be the direct beneficiaries of the research. The findings will be discussed with the leadership of World Vision India and World Vision International's Global Child Protection and Participation team to help them understand the need to scale up trafficking prevention efforts and initiate holistic programs for girls and young women survivors of trafficking. The findings will also be shared with the NGO leaders and church pastors involved in the study with a view of strengthening effectiveness of their program interventions.

Research Objectives

The study aims to understand the vulnerability young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India, and to identify effective strategies to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To describe factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation;
2. To understand the impact of COVID-19 and its aftermath on the vulnerability of young women survivors;
3. To understand and describe intervention practices that are effective in preventing the re-trafficking and sexual exploitation of young women survivors;
4. To describe what faith-based non-governmental organisations are doing to contribute to the support of young women survivors and to prevent re-trafficking;
5. To provide recommendations for improvements to programs for young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal and for further scholastic research directions.

The study will propose a framework that will enable organizations working to support survivors of trafficking in Kolkata, India to effectively reduce their vulnerability and improve outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

The research will focus on understanding the vulnerability elements that influence factors within the context of an ecological model that result in child sex trafficking and exploitation. It will focus on reducing vulnerability of young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, based on an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework, and will identify strategies to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation of previously-trafficked women. The researcher had considered using Ghosh and Kar's Push and Pull Factors framework (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97), but found that the ecological systems theory was more holistic since it addresses the multi-dimensional factors that make children and women vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation. The ecological systems theory was developed by the developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1977, and it discusses how individuals interact with their environments and how individual's choices are shaped by spheres of social influence around them (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 513). Bronfenbrenner's theory states that the development of an individual is shaped by widening spheres of influence ranging from immediate to broad social influences.

The theory articulates five systems of influence ranging from the immediate microsystem to broader macro- and chronosystems. In the context of trafficking, this will be applied to how each of these systems impacts a vulnerable child or young woman. The

ecological framework can provide insight into the vulnerability factors for children at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels.

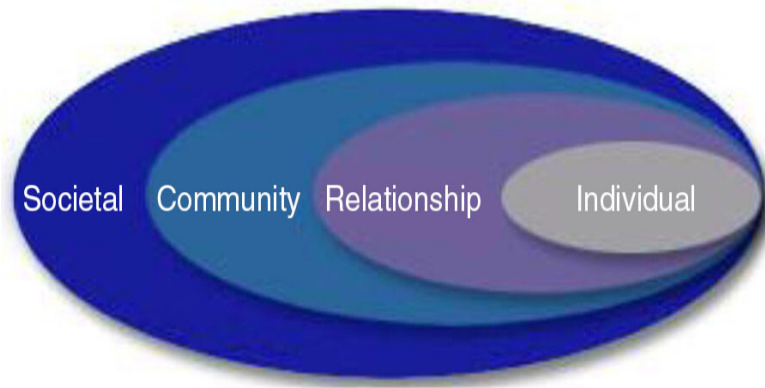


Figure 1. Various Levels of the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

The individual level focuses on personal history or biological factors that contribute to becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. The relationship level focuses on close relationships that may contribute to the child being vulnerable. The community level describes the factors such as work environments, schools, and local neighborhoods that contribute to vulnerability. The societal level includes societal factors that create an environment where vulnerability is increased, because of policies on health, education, and economic issues that contribute to inequalities between groups that can lead to vulnerability.

Clayton, Krugman, and Simon, in their research on human trafficking in the US, adapted Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework to explain risk factors that impact trafficking (Clayton, Krugman, and Simon 2013,79). While the context of West Bengal may be different, some of the individual and intrapersonal factors may be comparable in terms of their impact, while differing in terms of type and magnitude. The researcher also

looked at the vulnerability factors in the context of Kolkata and West Bengal and describes them as part of this research.

In summary, the research study will use the ecological framework to review vulnerability factors. Interviews were conducted both with women continuing in prostitution and with others who chose to leave prostitution and have been reintegrated. This provided the researcher with adequate data to answer the research questions.

Conceptual Research Design Framework and Process

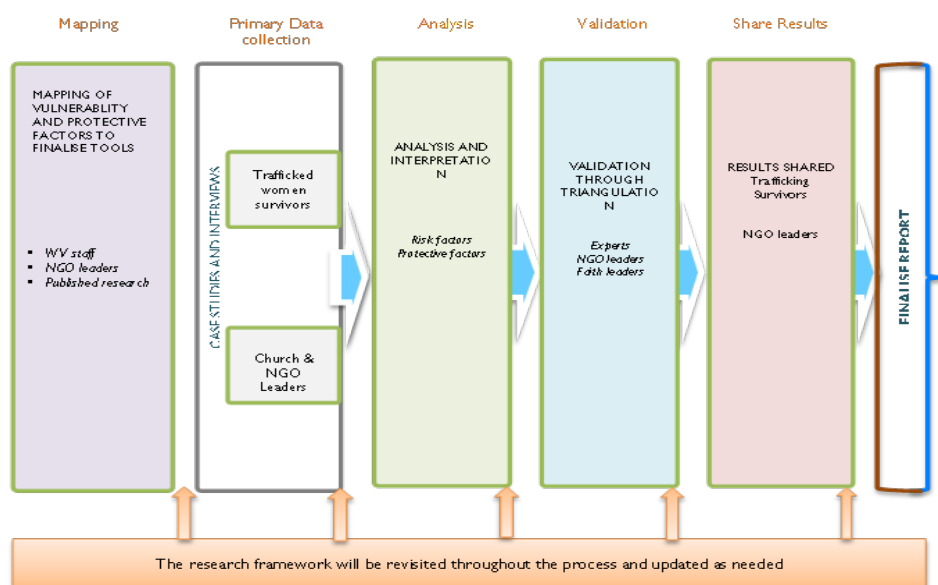


Figure 2. Conceptual Research Design Framework and Process

Figure 2 outlines the research design framework and process. Case Study design was used to understand the vulnerabilities of young women survivors of trafficking. The study focused on young women survivors from in and around the Kolkata locations formerly served by World Vision. The research examined their experiences, including their journey into being trafficked, with a focus on factors that made them vulnerable, their rescue, rehabilitation, and current experiences.

Brief Description of the Research Design

Based on a review of methodology options to answer the research questions, it became clear that a case study approach with survivors triangulated with Key Informant Interviews of NGO leaders and faith leaders engaged in anti-trafficking efforts would provide the rich data needed to answer the research questions. Hence the present study followed a case study approach employing in-depth interviews with young women aged eighteen to twenty-five years. The case study approach was used to understand the process of trafficking and identify vulnerability factors in the lives of the young women survivors who were trafficked as children. The in-depth review and analysis of individual cases helped the researcher understand complex cultural issues and drivers that are involved in the process of trafficking, rescue, and rehabilitation. A case study interview schedule guided the process of the case studies. The perspectives of the young women on how to reduce vulnerability to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation, and what services children and young women need was explored in depth through interviews.

The case study design facilitated a thorough investigation of individuals, groups, and phenomena as they occur in real-life. Gilham defines a case as a “unit of human activity embedded in the real world that can only be studied and understood in context which exists in the here and now that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw” (Gillham 2000, 1). Case studies provide insight into complex social phenomena and in-depth understanding of specific cases. According to Gerring, “A case study may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where

the purpose of that study is—at least in part—to shed light on a larger class of cases (a population)” (Gerring 2007, 19).

Using the case study approach helped the researcher gain a good understanding into the complexities of the lives of young women survivors of trafficking and also provided deep insight into the issues they face. The study included seven in-depth case studies of young women aged eighteen to twenty-five who were trafficked as children and who were living in Kolkata. The case study respondents were selected to ensure that key themes were well covered. The research also included detailed interviews with four team leaders and staff in faith-based NGOs serving survivors of trafficking in the local community in Kolkata. Chapter III will further explain the details of the research design.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because it provides insight into vulnerabilities of young women survivors of trafficking and can enable anti-trafficking organizations working in and around Kolkata to strengthen their programmes for survivors and address the drivers of re-trafficking and exploitation. Government and civil society organizations will be able to strengthen their programs to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen resilience. The organizations who are respondents of the study will be the direct beneficiaries of the research. The research improves understanding of how children become vulnerable, and its exploration of successful interventions to reduce vulnerability can strengthen programs that seek to protect survivors. In a review of the literature around trafficking, the researcher found several studies focused on rescue and rehabilitation of children, but a limited number of evidence-based studies on understanding effective ways to prevent

re-trafficking. Faith perspectives around support to survivors and the prevention of re-trafficking in the context of East India have also not been researched sufficiently, and this research adds to the body of knowledge.

Assumptions of the Study

The main assumptions of the study include the following:

1. It is assumed that this study will provide an opportunity for deeper concerted engagement of key stakeholders and provide insight into prevention, care and support efforts.
2. Another assumption is that the study will enable the employment of strategic and tactical interventions to prevent trafficking and exploitation by addressing the vulnerabilities of survivors. A deeper understanding of the risk factors will enable civil society organizations to strengthen prevention, rescue, care and support interventions.
3. Working in the field of development and among vulnerable populations has become a challenge for several Christian organizations like World Vision. In October 2022, World Vision India's license to receive foreign funds was suspended by the government until April 2023. The project was working with a skeleton staff with little programming because of the suspension until April 2023. Subsequently, the government did not approve a renewal of World Vision's foreign funding, and on 19th May 2023 the project was closed. This was a setback for the researcher, but the crisis did not limit access to local partner organizations and women whom World Vision served, since permission had been obtained from

World Vision India's National Director and contact had been established with key NGO partners and community volunteers who supported the research process.

Definition of Terms

Child Sex Trafficking refers to “the trafficking of minors for the purpose of commercial sex acts. Child sex trafficking occurs when a person under the legal adult age is induced to engage in commercial sex. Unlike other forms of trafficking, there is no need to show that a minor has been forced, coerced, or defrauded into engaging in commercial sex. If a minor has been induced to perform commercial sex in any way, that minor is considered a victim of human trafficking” (Salett and Nasr 2017, 7).

Effectiveness of interventions in the context of trafficking is about the success of interventions for survivors in preventing re-trafficking and enabling survivors to thrive in their lives.

Rescued are Children trafficked for exploitation and who were held in slavery by traffickers and brothel owners but were set free from their captors by the police and/or anti-trafficking organizations.

Re-trafficking refers to a situation in which a person has been trafficked on one occasion as set forth in the definition provided in the United Nations Palermo Protocol; has then exited that trafficking situation by any means; and has then later re-entered another trafficking situation (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 25).

Re- integration has been defined by Surtees as “the process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience. It may be best

understood as a process that trafficked persons navigate as they recover and move on from trafficking exploitation” (Surtees 2022, 3).

Vulnerability has been defined by the United Nations as “a condition resulting from how individuals negatively experience the complex interaction of social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors that create the context for their communities.” However, in the context of trafficking in persons, this research will refer to vulnerability as “those inherent, environmental, or contextual factors that increase the susceptibility of an individual or group to being trafficked” (UNODC 2008, 13).

Vulnerable Children are those children whose quality of life and ability to fulfil their potential is most affected by extreme deprivation and violation of their rights (World Vision International 2020, 1). These children often live in catastrophic situations and relationships characterized by violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, exclusion, and discrimination.

Victim is an adult or child who is compelled into service. Human trafficking occurs when a trafficker exploits a victim’s vulnerability for a profit. Often used while someone is still in the experience of trafficking or to prevent the person from being criminally charged for something they did or experienced while being trafficked.

Young Women Survivors are women survivors in the age group of 18 and 25 years. According to Higley, “Young adulthood is a unique developmental period that occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years, during which there are key developmental tasks that allow the young adult to participate in self-exploration and identity formation” (Higley 2019, 2). The researcher has defined young women survivors as women who

have survived an experience of human trafficking. The term survivor is often used as a term of empowerment to note that an individual has overcome or is in the process of overcoming a trauma. The age group is from eighteen to twenty-five years to ensure that the survivors can share experiences of trafficking and exiting trafficking situations, as well as their experience as survivors.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The research employed a case study approach using the responses of the selected young women to explore effective strategies for reducing the vulnerabilities of young women survivors of child sexual trafficking. Seven case studies of young women aged eighteen to twenty-five years served by World Vision's trafficking prevention project located in the city of Kolkata in West Bengal were selected through matched comparison purposive sampling to address the research questions in-depth. In addition to the responses of the selected young women, the researcher also explored the perspectives of faith-based non-governmental organisations serving the local community regarding the strategies that they are employing on how to reduce the vulnerabilities of this particular demographic. The findings of the study provide insight into work on trafficking in India and other resource-poor settings in South and Southeast Asia.

Outline of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter II of this study discusses the literature on the trafficking of children and women for sexual exploitation globally and in India. It also explores the literature on vulnerability, its causes, and its impacts on trafficking and re-trafficking. The chapter will

also explore the faith dimension and the role that faith-based organizations play in reducing child vulnerabilities to prevent trafficking. Chapter III provides an overview of the research methods and tools used for data collection. Chapter IV contains the presentation, analysis, and presentation of data. Finally, Chapter V discusses the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Overview

The study aims to understand the vulnerability young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India, and to identify effective interventions to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation. This chapter provides a review of related literature and studies that revolve around the research questions. The first section deals with the extent of the problem understanding vulnerability to trafficking globally and in India. The second section explores the factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model. The third section deals with the issue of re-trafficking with a focus on understanding key factors and drivers. The fourth section identifies various approaches and intervention practices for rescue and reintegration, and the prevention of re-trafficking of girls and young women. The fifth section deals with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the vulnerability of girls and young women to trafficking. The sixth section discusses Christian faith-based non-governmental organisations' contributions to the prevention of children being re-trafficked for sexual exploitation. The last section of the chapter includes a brief description of the case study approach as a methodology for understanding trafficking prevention and a summary.

The Extent of the Problem

Human trafficking is a major global problem rooted in greed, corruption and poor legal systems. Trafficking is also described as modern slavery when men, women, and children are bought and sold against their will for purposes which include sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, and organ trading (Pande 2016, 25). It has resulted in the exploitation of millions of vulnerable men, women, and children worldwide. Trafficking usually occurs with the intention of sexual exploitation or economic gain, and it significantly impacts the lives of those who have been trafficked (Deb et al. 2005, 113). Children's rights in particular are grossly violated by trafficking and sexual exploitation (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 84). Trafficking has also been called a 'new security threat' because of the violation of rights of individuals, especially those most vulnerable (Pande 2016, 18).

The global estimate of those trafficked for sexual exploitation is around 4.5 million (International Justice Mission 2018, 2). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that 72% of those trafficked are women and girls, while 21% are men and 7% are boys (UNODC 2018, 10). In India, a majority (76%) of those trafficked are women and girls, and they are trafficked primarily for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Kumaraswamy 2018, 22). Labour migration places both men and women at risk and it is estimated that over half of the world's 215 million young workers work in hazardous conditions including prostitution and begging (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 3). Trafficking estimates are quite wide ranging due to a lack of consistency in the methodologies of arriving at the estimates.

Definition of Human Trafficking

The UN Protocol on Trafficking in Persons defines human trafficking and child trafficking clearly as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. . . . Article 3, (c) states the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered trafficking in persons even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) (United Nations 2000, 2).

There are three aspects to this definition – the actions involved in trafficking, the means used by traffickers, and the purpose of the trafficking. The definition is clear that in the case of children, any action related to trafficking is sufficient to define it as trafficking. The means used is immaterial, so even if the child should consent, it is defined as trafficking since the child is below the legal age of consent (Todres and Angela 2019, 27). This clear definition helps governments and other organisations recognise and respond to trafficking when it happens.

The Global Context

The global market catalysed trafficking as we know it today. Globalization created an increasing demand for cheap labour and young girls for the sex industry (Rajan 2013, 10). The sex-trade business has become more organised and well-coordinated because of globalisation. Globalisation has altered the world and how it

works on economic, cultural, political, and social fronts. Travel has increased and cross-border trade has led to the movement of goods and money across the world. Globalisation has also impacted third-world countries economically due to free markets and liberalisation. This has provided a platform for vulnerable women and children to be recruited, transported, sold, and exploited across the world (Pande 2016, 26).

Technology has significantly impacted the process of trafficking and the sexual exploitation of girls and young women. With globalization and increased access to technology and the internet, online crimes are growing. The internet is used to promote the trafficking of women and children through recruitment, selling, and buying of girls and young women. Child pornography and its reach are facilitated by the internet and the use of technology (Murray 2019, 17). Access to fast, low-cost internet with the possibility of anonymous communications is being exploited by traffickers (Shelley 2010, 41). Criminals operate on hidden places in the web that are called the “deep web” or the “dark web;” these are internet sites that are encrypted and difficult to get into unless given access. A lot of recruitment, sale, and purchase of girls and young women happen on these sites (Murray 2019, 32).

The US Senate Subcommittee on Investigations has attributed an 846% increase in child sex trafficking over a period of five years to the growing use of the internet to sell children for sex (United States Subcommittee on Investigations 2016, 1). Webpages and job site postings are increasingly becoming a medium to recruit minors into being trafficked. Online grooming is becoming increasingly prevalent (Murray 2019, 17). The sale and purchase of girls and women for sexual exploitation is also increasingly being

done with phones or the use of internet social media platforms (Murray 2019, 20). This makes it difficult for those working to prevent trafficking to identify and prevent trafficking and sexual exploitation since it is no longer as visible as it used to be. The high-reward and low-risk nature of trafficking from the perpetrators' side makes it a lucrative criminal option (Kiss et al. 2019, 10). This creates a significant challenge for governments, law-enforcers, non-governmental and faith-based organisations to prevent trafficking and respond effectively to trafficking victims. According to Lutya and Lanier, human trafficking for sexual exploitation needs to be understood in an integrated way and they explain that it occurs when various factors like economic factors, demand for young girls and women, the victimization of vulnerable girls, and criminal decision-making come together to facilitate trafficking (Lutya and Lanier 2012, 567).

The Global Trafficking in Persons Report produced by UNODC publishes annual trafficking data and, interestingly, reported that the number of detected trafficking victims for sexual exploitation fell globally in 2021 (UNODC 2022, 3). Could this be because travel restrictions have changed the nature of trafficking and sexual exploitation and it is therefore increasingly hidden from law enforcement? The UNODC report postulates that this phenomenon could be because of "lower institutional capacity to detect victims, fewer opportunities for traffickers to operate due to COVID-19 preventive restrictions, and some trafficking forms moving to more hidden and less likely to be detected locations" (UNODC 2022, 3). This may be particularly true of sex trafficking where, because of COVID-19 protective measures, the women and girl children have been pushed to hidden and more unsafe locations (UNODC 2022, 3).

Trafficking of Women and Girls for Sexual Exploitation in India

Trafficking in India is usually for commercial sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, or—in smaller proportions—for begging, organ removal, camel jockeying, and other illegal activities (Ghosh 2009, 719). According to the government of India, 3 million women and girls are involved in commercial sexual exploitation (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 16). The state of Andhra Pradesh is the largest source of young women and girls being trafficked. This is followed by other states including Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Odisha, and Maharashtra (Pande 2016, 31).

The National Crime Records Bureau in India reports that trafficking in girls has increased 14 times more over the last decade and that over 76% of those trafficked are women and girls (Kumaraswamy 2018, 22). According to Kumaraswamy, a girl is reported missing every eight minutes in India (Kumaraswamy 2018, 22). Ninety percent of trafficking in India happens between states, and only ten percent occurs internationally, primarily to Bangkok, South Africa, and Dubai (Pande 2016, 31). The US Department of State Report on Trafficking published in 2018 estimates that millions of children and women are trafficked for sexual exploitation (United States Department of State 2018, 222).

Though trafficking is widely prevalent in India, it is not a new problem and has been common since ancient times (Pande 2016, 20). The next section discusses slavery and exploitation in ancient India and worldviews that promote exploitation.

Slavery and Exploitation: A Historical Perspective

Trafficking and exploitation of women and girls have been around for a long time in India. Current mindsets of exploitation and corruption, and an often seen apathetic attitude towards trafficking, have their roots in ancient culture and practices. Ancient Indian texts discuss slavery and how to manage slaves. Manu and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* provides descriptions of various types of slaves (*dasas*), ranging from those captured by war to those who were born to someone who was already a slave and inherited as property (Pande 2016, 20). A majority of the *dasas* were people who were underprivileged and often deceived into slavery by their masters. Pande argues that food deprivation was a significant factor that led people to become enslaved and actually is a trend that continues in modern day slavery (Pande 2016, 20).

In ancient India, women were called *dasas*, and while they were employed for domestic services, they were also used to service their masters sexually. Often young virgins were used as gifts to honor kings (Pande 2016, 21). Another practice of exploitation was the devadasi system, where young virgins were consecrated to gods and had to live on temple premises and do basic chores in the temple. Kings, nobles, and other rich men would donate these young girls to the temple as a gesture of their devotion. These girls were not allowed to marry and they were also exploited sexually by temple priests and rich temple benefactors (Pande 2016, 21). These girls were victims of trafficking, and this practice continues to the present day, even though the devadasi system is illegal (Pande 2016, 22). Over time, several of these practices were formally rejected and banned by law, but some of these oppressive systems and worldviews have

persisted. Additionally other individual, relational, community and societal factors have continued to make children vulnerable to trafficking. The following section explores this in detail.

Theoretical Framework for Understanding Vulnerability to Trafficking: The Ecological Systems Theory

The ecological systems theory was developed by the psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1977. The theory is based on developmental psychology and provides a good view of how individuals interact with their environments (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 513). Bronfenbrenner's theory says that the development of an individual is shaped by widening spheres of influence ranging from immediate to broad social influences. The theory articulates five systems of influence ranging from the immediate microsystem to broader macro- and chronosystems. In the context of trafficking, how each of these systems impacts a vulnerable child or young woman is as follows:

a) Microsystem: The microsystem is the immediate environment that an individual directly interacts with, such as family, school, and peers (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 515). In the context of trafficking, this involves the child's relationship with their parents, siblings, and peers. Clayton et al identified individual risk factors in the context of United States and these include a history of child maltreatment, homelessness, running away, a history of foster care or juvenile home care, stigma, and discrimination (Clayton, Krugman, and Simon 2013, 79). In the Indian context, Ghosh and Kar found that illiteracy, starvation, being discriminated against, and domestic violence were key individual risk factors (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97).

b) Mesosystem: The mesosystem encompasses the interrelations among the different microsystems in a person's life (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 515). In terms of trafficking, the major risk factors include dysfunction in the family and family conflict.

c) Exosystem: The exosystem represents the broader social settings that indirectly affect the individual, such as a parent's workplace or neighbourhood institutions (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 237). Exosystem risk factors impacting trafficking include peer pressure, social isolation, involvement in gangs, lack of access to education, and poorly resourced communities (Clayton, Krugman, and Simon 2013, 79).

d) Macrosystem: The macrosystem encompasses the overarching societal structures, like cultural values, socioeconomic conditions, and political systems (Bronfenbrenner 1994, 40). The macrosystem-related trafficking risk factors include lack of resources to support child protection, lack of access to social protection services, sexualisation of children, and lack of awareness about sex trafficking (Clayton, Krugman, and Simon 2013, 79).

e) Chronosystem: The chronosystem was later added to the model and includes the dimension of time as it relates to a person's environments. It encompasses both significant life transitions and the sociohistorical contexts that impact an individual (Bronfenbrenner 1994, 40). Over time, changes can occur in the individual or environment, and this can increase or reduce their risk and vulnerabilities to trafficking.

Factors that Lead to Vulnerability and the Trafficking of Girls and Young Women for Sexual Exploitation

Vulnerability is generally linked to individual characteristics which, in specific contexts, will increase the risk of the person to be trafficked (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 2). In Figure 3, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons define vulnerability has a result of multiple factors—personal factors like age, gender, disability and ethnicity, or sexual orientation; situational factors which are temporary challenges which may negatively impact a person's life for a period of time and can include destitution, lack of employment, illegal status and others; and contextual factors which include external factors like social norms, conflicts, corruption, and discriminatory laws, among others (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 2). These factors interact to make a child or individual vulnerable to trafficking.

The ecological systems theory discusses how individuals interact with their environments and how individuals' choices are shaped by spheres of social influence around them (Bronfenbrenner 1977, 513). Bronfenbrenner's theory says that the development of an individual is shaped by widening spheres of influence ranging from immediate to broad social influences. In the context of trafficking, understanding how each of these systems impacts a vulnerable child or young woman is important. The ecological framework provides insight into the risk factors for children at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. For the current study, the researcher used this adapted framework focused on individual, relationship, community, and societal

levels to describe vulnerability factors, identify effective interventions across each level, identify gaps, and propose solutions for a way forward.

The individual level focuses on personal history or biological factors that contribute to becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. The relationship level focuses on close relationships that may contribute to the child experiencing violence. The community level is about factors such as work environments, schools, and local neighborhoods that contribute to violence. The societal level includes societal factors that create an environment where violence is encouraged. Societal factors include policies on health, education, and economic issues that contribute to inequalities between groups which can lead to violence.

Figure 3 illustrates Clayton, Krugman, and Simon's adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework to explain risk factors that impact human trafficking in the US (Clayton, Krugman, and Simon 2013, 79).

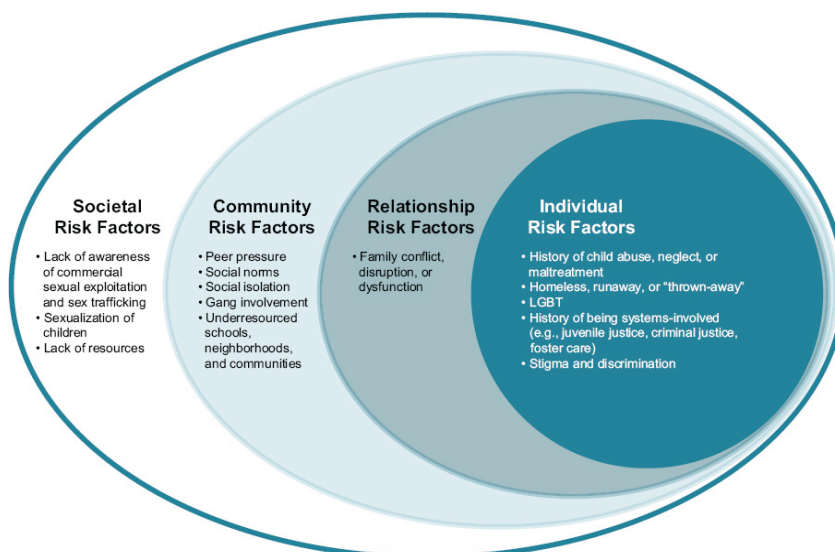


Figure 3. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model Adapted to Illustrate the Possible Risk Factors for Sex Trafficking of Minors

Push and Pull Factors

Ghosh and Kar, in their article on trafficking in women and children in West Bengal, write about the push and pull factors that result in children being trafficked (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). Push factors are those factors that drive individuals into being trafficked and Pull factors are those factor that draw or lure individuals into being trafficked (see Figure 4 below). Push factors are factors experienced by the child and family that push them into situations or conditions which then prompt them to make wrong decisions, thus increasing their vulnerability to being trafficked. These include extreme poverty, illiteracy, lack of access to basic services, starvation, failure of crops, natural disasters, discrimination, and domestic violence (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). Poverty is a major push factor in trafficking, enabling the pushing of girls and young women into being trafficked for sexual exploitation (Sarkar 2014, 483). Additionally, globalization is a contributory factor and has created an increasing demand for cheap labour and young girls for the sex industry (Rajan 2013, 10). Local recruiters or procurers are often known relatives, friends, or community members whom the family of the child trusts. With the offer of a lucrative job in the city or a marriage without dowry, the families of the girls are willing to send their children off rather than risk starvation (Yadav and Ansari 2015, 227). Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu note that while poverty and the feminisation of poverty are emphasised by many studies and reports, poverty alone does not force people into trafficking. Rather, a combination of poverty plus other risk factors like disasters or illness place girls at greater risk for trafficking (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 20).

Push factors can also include war, the collapse of social systems, or forced migration across borders (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 20). Homeless or runaway youth are also highly vulnerable to be trafficked for sexual exploitation (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 23). In many cases, domestic violence drives girls to want to leave their homes in search of a better place, and they instead end up in a worse situation in a brothel as a slave. In other cases, the mothers of the children are involved in prostitution and sell their daughters to procurers (Deb et al. 2005, 118).

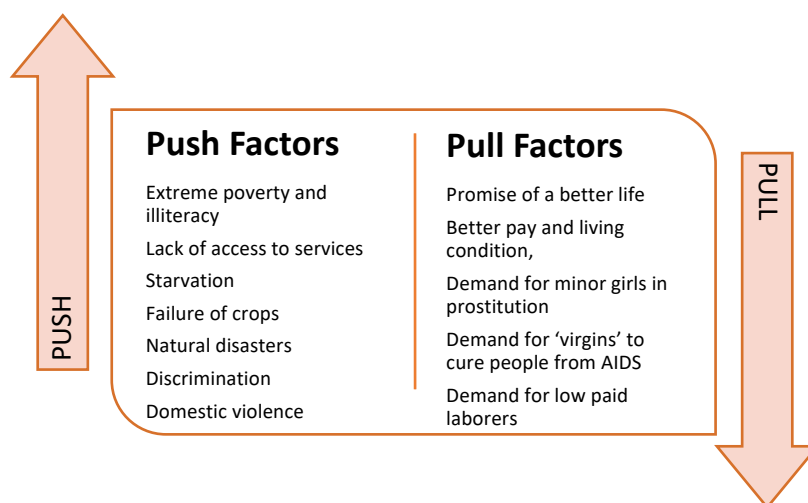


Figure 4. Push and Pull Factors that Influence Girls and Young Women to be Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97)

Pull factors, on the other hand, are factors that pull young women and children into being exploited. These include the promise of a better life in the big city, better pay and living conditions, the demand for girls in prostitution, the demand for virgins that are believed to cure people from AIDS, and the demand for low-paid laborers (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). The victims of trafficking are recruited through various methods including the promise of a job, offers of marriage or even through kidnapping (Pande 2016, 32).

Push factors are also called “supply side” and pull factors are “demand side.” If either one of these factors is absent, then trafficking cannot be sustained. The more women and children are available, the greater the increase in demand, as the cost for purchase of sexual services goes down, while maintaining profits to the traffickers (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 21).

Push factors in the context of West Bengal and Kolkata are often associated with economic factors and violence experienced by girl children in the home. Pull factors include factors promising a better life and future—for example, the promise of a well-paying job or a secure marriage (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97).

There are additional factors that enable trafficking for sexual exploitation. Poor law enforcement and legal systems also contribute to trafficking. Traffickers are rarely convicted and imprisoned, and this makes it an attractive, well-paying activity for criminal organisations. Corrupt police officials are often on the payroll of criminal organisations that engage in trafficking (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). According to Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu and Herrfon, gender is a major risk factor in commercial sex exploitation (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 95). While men and boys are also trafficked for labour, and may be sexually exploited in the process, the majority of those trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation are women and girls (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 3). Men are the biggest consumers of commercial sex (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 95). While the exploitation of women and girls is prevalent everywhere, it is most pronounced in contexts where they are denied basic rights, including access to education and health services (Shelley 2010, 17).

Child marriage is another factor that enables trafficking in young children.

Families who are poor are encouraged to get their daughter married off, especially to someone who is willing to marry her without a dowry. Sometimes parents are paid off in the course of the marriage arrangements to keep them happy. The girl is then transported to Kolkata, Delhi or Mumbai and sold, often never to be seen again by her family (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 98).

In his research on trafficking in Andhra Pradesh, Naik says that the social determinants of trafficking include “poverty, female gender, lack of policy and enforcement, age, migration, displacement and conflict, ethnicity, culture, ignorance of trafficking methods, and caste status. Protective determinants that mitigate trafficking include formal education, citizenship, maternal education, higher caste status, and birth order” (Naik 2018, 78). Any trafficking response needs to take all the push and pull factors into consideration to be effective. Prevention needs to be at the forefront of any response alongside other efforts to help victims of trafficking achieve rehabilitation and restoration.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has used a social-ecological model to understand violence and the effects of prevention strategies (Michau et al. 2015, 2). The model looks at the individual, relationship, community, and societal factors that are at play in how sexual violence happens and how it affects individuals. It also helps illuminate what puts individuals at risk and what protects individuals from experiencing violence. The model depicts how these factors are interrelated and impact each other. It

therefore helps us to understand these factors and gives insight into what needs to be done to prevent violence and sustain prevention efforts (Michau et al. 2015, 2).

The Need for An Effective Response to Trafficking

Global Response Needs and Challenges

Zimmerman and Kiss argue that it is important that a public health approach be used to effect prevention of trafficking for exploitation (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 4). They suggest that addressing the structural determinants should be at the center of prevention efforts. This kind of approach takes into consideration the multiple factors that contribute to the determinants of trafficking and health outcomes, and public health approaches focused on addressing causes and issues systemically can be used to prevent trafficking for exploitation or minimize the risks associated. They call for a public health policy and framework to understand the determinants of exploitation and address it (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 6). Prevention strategies also need to be put into place pre-departure (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 7). These strategies range from raising awareness of vulnerable families and girls about the risks of being trafficked and public awareness to identifying and preventing children from being trafficked (Murray 2019, 66). Velazco identifies prevention strategies that address needs of vulnerable children holistically across different levels including individual, family, national, and international levels. They include individual awareness and resilience, support to vulnerable families, social security and child protection desks at the community levels, and laws at national and international levels which provide a support framework to prevent trafficking (Velazco 2017, 217). Strengthening protection mechanisms with community leaders and local

NGOs or FBOs is crucial to ensure that children are protected and rescued as soon as possible (Kiss et al. 2019, 87).

While rescue efforts are critical and effective in stopping the harm being done to a woman or child who is exploited (Crawford 2017, 273), they need to be combined with long-term strategies focused on prevention and rehabilitation. If not done properly, rescue efforts can lead to harm for the children and families being rescued. Rescue efforts have been criticized due to the lack of holistic care services for the children being rescued. Sometimes children who are rescued get re-trafficked due to the lack of basic care or shelter. Gray says that while rescue is important, it needs to be combined with prevention and rehabilitation interventions to ensure that anti-trafficking efforts are successful. The agency and rights of those trafficked also need to be considered for these efforts to be effective (Gray 2017, 163).

According to Sahariah, a researcher at the Policy and Evidence Center at Modern Slavery and Human Rights in Birmingham:

In the context of South Asia, economic empowerment and livelihood opportunities remain the priority, so global programming must look at how approaches to survivor engagement programmes can also tackle the issue of economic empowerment simultaneously. Participants of the focus group discussion complained that despite their empowerment and high level of engagement for survivors' causes, they struggle to find stable income-generating opportunities (Sahariah 2022, 7).

Trafficked victims need immediate, short-term, and long-term interventions and services to help them be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society (Deb et al. 2005, 113). Immediate needs include shelter, food, access to medical help, and protection from the traffickers. Short-term needs include psychological care and mental health support.

Longer-term needs include employment support, housing, and ongoing health care services (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 26). Safe housing is a critical need for trafficking survivors. Often this is overlooked, making them vulnerable to being exploited further. While temporary shelter is provided in rehabilitation centers, this can be re-traumatizing in some cases (Doran, Jenkins, and Mahoney 2014, 133).

Additionally, children who are sexually exploited often suffer chronic and severe traumatization and they require comprehensive services regardless of the age at which they access healthcare services (Corbett 2017, 124). Open channels need to be provided for victims' voices and survivors to provide feedback in order to support prevention and rehabilitation services (Chetry and Pande 2019, 136). Establishing a continuum of care is necessary to prevent re-trafficking of former victims (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 171). Holistic rehabilitation services that take into consideration restoration of the whole person should be promoted.

Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg in their study of survivors in Nepal, say that the primary factor associated with re-trafficking is the stigma the women face when they return home. They advocate for establishing services to restore identity and dignity to the women along with the provision of access to livelihoods (Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg 2015, 8).

Anti-trafficking Response in India

While India is a signatory to and has ratified two key international anti-trafficking instruments, i.e., the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2005, and the Protocol

to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (Palermo Protocol), there are significant gaps in prevention of trafficking and rehabilitation of trafficked women and children (HAQ: Centre for Child Rights and CACT 2016, 4).

The constitution of India asserts the right of children to be protected from trafficking through its article 23. However, based on the data released to the Parliament of India in June 2014, between 2011 and 2014, 325,000 children were reported missing. In other words, there have been 100,000 missing children each year (ARZ 2016, xiii). The sad truth is that only a small fraction of missing children is traced each year (ARZ 2016, xiii). According to Section 21 of the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act (ITPA), standard operating procedures have been defined following the rescue of a child from commercial sexual exploitation. It clearly states that, after victims are rescued, they need to be sent to a government or non-government shelter home. Victims also need to be provided with medico-legal aid to ensure that evidence is collected and that affected children are treated. Counseling services also need to be provided if required. The SOP also recommends trauma counselling, job training, and reintegration in partnership with non-governmental organizations (ARZ 2016, 89).

The Government of West Bengal developed a program for the rehabilitation of sex workers called the Mukti Alo (Ray of Freedom) scheme. The scheme provides Rs. 2500 (30 USD) to rescued victims for up to nine months. The scheme also provides options for funding long-term institutional care coordinated by the Ministry of Women Development in West Bengal. The scheme also funds vocational training (Block Printing

and Spice Grinding) for survivors. However, this is provided for only twenty-five women every year (ARZ 2016, 109). There is a lack of information on how this intervention assists with reintegration and is effective in deterring re-trafficking.

The Indian government's Ministry of Women and Child Development initiated a "National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children" in 1998 (Iyer 2016, 9). The plan included the formation of a Central Advisory Committee to coordinate prevention, rescue, and rehabilitation efforts with Anti-Trafficking Units. Though some efforts have been made to establish Anti-Trafficking Units (AHTUs) and protocols have been developed to combat trafficking, much remains to be achieved in order to make an impact in reducing the vulnerability of children and young women to being exploited (HAQ: Centre for Child Rights and CACT 2016, 4). Section 33 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses Act, 2012, directs compensatory payment for the child for trauma caused or for immediate rehabilitation (ARZ 2016, 110).

According to the recent US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, India was classified as Tier 2 and the government of India does not meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking in the country. According to the US Department of State:

The Government of India does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period, considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, if any, on its anti-trafficking capacity; therefore, India remained on Tier 2. India's states and union territories had primary responsibility for anti-trafficking efforts, with policy oversight from the central government. These efforts included investigating more human trafficking cases, collaborating with foreign governments on several trafficking cases, and convicting more traffickers for bonded labor. The National Commission for Women (NCW) launched a new anti-trafficking unit to build the

capacity of Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs). The government approved a new program to support state and territory expansion of protection services for child victims of crime, including trafficking. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas (United States Department of State 2023).

This is not different from the 2022 Trafficking in Persons report. The 2022 report indicated that India “does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so” (United States Department of State 2022, 279). Clearly, from a macro perspective, the Indian government’s response to trafficking needs to be strengthened. The US Department of State report noted that India needs to take comprehensive steps to address trafficking in the country (United States Department of State 2022, 285).

Strengthening investigations and prosecutions and developing government shelters with high-level quality of care are critical, as well as ensuring protection programmes. Specific schemes targeting trafficked women and children are necessary. Often government schemes to compensate and rehabilitate survivors do not reach them because of poor implementation. According to the US report:

In September 2022, a special court in West Bengal awarded 170,000 INR (\$2,060) to sex trafficking victims in compensation. West Bengal reportedly provided 100 million INR (\$1.21 million) to state legal services to disburse as compensation to victims of trafficking and other crimes in July and August 2022. State and district legal offices did not regularly inform trafficking victims they were eligible to receive compensation; when victims did pursue this benefit, payments were often delayed due to lack of state funds (United States Department of State 2023).

Rescue efforts in India performed by well-meaning organisations have tended to undermine the rights and agency of those trafficked. Without active engagement and empowerment of the trafficked women and girls, rescue efforts have limited success. An

empowering approach taking into consideration the agency of the trafficking survivors with strong prevention efforts will address the roots of trafficking and exploitation.

Systemic changes in practice need to be made at the national, state, and district levels to protect children. There are significant gaps in understanding, and a gap in successful interventions for reducing vulnerabilities of children and families in locations where there is a high prevalence of trafficking (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54).

Efforts related to prevention, protection, rehabilitation, and other legal interventions need to consider the increasing vulnerabilities of children. The empowerment and protection of victims need to be at the forefront to be successful. While government efforts have been focused on rescuing and rehabilitating minors engaged in prostitution, not much has been invested in preventing vulnerable children and families from succumbing to the lure of a lucrative job or marriage offer (Mishra 2015, 171). Several organisations have been investing in rescue and rehabilitation of children and women who are trafficked, but prevention efforts are fairly limited and not holistic or comprehensive enough, not being based on a thorough analysis of the push and pull factors to stem the tide of minors being trafficked from vulnerable communities (Mishra 2015, 273).

Communities also need to be empowered to address the root causes of trafficking. Community protection mechanisms need to be established or strengthened in areas that are vulnerable to trafficking. Training for community members to identify and report cases of trafficking is vital.

The Re-trafficking of Girls and Young Women

The Problem of Re-trafficking

Re-trafficking is often described as a survivor entering back into a trafficking situation to be exploited again (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 4). Several terms are used in literature interchangeably to refer to re-trafficking—these include re-exploitation, re-victimization and relapse (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 5). The re-trafficking of rescued girls and young women is quite prevalent in several countries, especially in places with high levels of poverty, gender discrimination, and exclusion because of stigma (UNODC 2018, 7). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines re-trafficking as follows:

Re-trafficking shall mean a situation in which a person has been trafficked on one occasion as set forth in the definition provided in the United Nations Palermo Protocol; has then exited that trafficking situation by any means; and has then later re-entered another trafficking situation, again as stated in the United Nations definition (Jobe 2010, 7).

There are very few research studies related to re-trafficking, and global evidence related to re-trafficking is quite limited (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 4). Additionally, data on re-trafficking is very limited compared to trafficking in generally (Jobe 2010, 15). Survivors often avoid getting involved in research studies since they simply want to move on (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 2). More data and research are required to understand the extent and process of re-trafficking (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 30).

There are also several challenges related to the definition of re-trafficking, including definitions about exiting a trafficking situation. Often organizations differ on

the definition of what it means to exit from trafficking. According to the International Office of Migration's definition (which the researcher has adopted for this study):

. . . exit from trafficking is considered to have taken place where any significant escape from a trafficking situation has taken place. This includes situations where trafficked persons have escaped trafficking situations temporarily due to the intervention of law enforcement agencies or NGOs in an official capacity but have not achieved longer-term exit from trafficking situations (Jobe 2010, 18).

In 2010, the International Office of Migration commissioned a paper on the causes and consequences of re-trafficking related to all forms of trafficking. This report estimated that in India, the rate of re-trafficking was 25.8 percent among women trafficked for sexual exploitation; of this figure, 8.4 percent had been trafficked on three or more occasions (Jobe 2010, 15). In other countries, estimates on the rates of re-trafficking globally were as high as 50% (Jobe 2010, 15). A study of survivors in Cambodia showed that 23% experienced sex or labor re-exploitation. The study showed that there were some pathways that contributed to re-exploitation and this included poverty, not having a child, the need to send money to family, having high debts, low education, and experiencing violence (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 17). Voluntary re-trafficking is quite high among survivors of sex trafficking with rates ranging from three to thirty-four percent (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54).

Crawford discusses the fact that some women may make the choice of going back to prostitution because of the fact that they are able to earn a significantly higher income. But she argues that no woman needs to be in a position to make that choice, and, as Christians we are called to provide sustainable and realistic alternatives (Crawford 2012, 42). Survivors need to be equipped with skills that are valuable and can bring in

sustainable income. They need to be offered a menu of options of which one or two may suit their interest and ability (Crawford 2012, 49). Business As Mission (BAM) type projects which focus on wealth creation for Kingdom purposes can help survivors access sustainable income (Lausanne Movement and BAM Global 2017).

Evidence shows that those who have been trafficked as minors are often vulnerable to re-trafficking in adult life (Jobe 2010, 7). Re-trafficking is particularly prevalent in the context of India where girls who have been rescued are at a higher risk of being re-trafficked or ending up in exploitative circumstances (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 171). Women trafficked for sexual exploitation who are rescued and return to their communities do not stay for long (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54). In some cases, re-trafficking happens within a year of the girl being rescued and most of those who were re-trafficked were for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 32). Jobe further explains:

Trafficked persons are highly vulnerable to re-trafficking immediately after having exited a trafficking situation and en route to assistance. Victims of trafficking are frequently re-trafficked within two years or less of having exited a trafficking situation. Where re-trafficking occurs, it is not uncommon for it to be to a different destination or for a different purpose of exploitation on each occasion (Jobe 2010, 7).

Some studies show that victims of trafficking who got out of trafficked situations by police raids or through payment of debts return to their former situation (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54).

The causes of re-trafficking are varied. A study of trafficking in the UK indicated that there are several factors that make women vulnerable to being re-trafficked. These include economic, social, and personal circumstances (Independent Anti-Slavery

Commissioner 2021, 14). A study in New York City found that re-trafficked victims were more likely to have a history of being undocumented, to have experienced childhood sexual abuse or physical abuse, and to have lived with a non-parent family member (Chen et al. 2023, 11501). A study in Nepal by Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg showed that stigma was a primary cause of re-trafficking. The constant criticism, shaming, and rejection push survivors back into situations of exploitation (Dahal, Joshi, Swahnberg 2015, 1).

Often the significant violence and trauma the children and young women are faced with makes it difficult to reintegrate into their families and community. The poor economic conditions the women lived with before trafficking often play a factor again when they are re-trafficked. Research shows that if economic issues are not addressed, then the possibility of re-trafficking is high because of social exclusion and economic difficulties (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54).

Due to the lack of proper services, rescued girls are often re-trafficked and return to being sexually exploited. This is compounded by the fact that there are few opportunities for gaining a job or sustaining a livelihood. Poor literacy levels and lack of skills can limit rescued women from earning a living. This often makes them vulnerable to being re-trafficked (Jobe 2010, 7).

Rescued girls and young women may also face high levels of stigma and discrimination resulting in being unable to reintegrate into society (Jobe 2010, 7) The stigma related to trafficking is a significant factor, especially when the trafficking is for

sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 15). Stigma can seriously affect rehabilitation and reintegration. (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 55).

Survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation also face a lot of hardships. Many are in a vulnerable state and need support. Vulnerability due to a lack of effective support services for rescued girls and young women is thus another major reason for re-trafficking (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 2).

The young women are unable to mentally, socially, and physically cope with their circumstances, and gravitate towards being re-trafficked due to familiarity with the trafficker and trauma bonding. When trafficking survivors do not receive adequate medical services, counselling, and livelihood opportunities, they become vulnerable to being re-trafficked (United States Department of State 2020, 303). Adams argues that a focus on addressing trafficking as a crime in the US context takes away the priority to address victims' or survivors' rights, and limits access to services making them more vulnerable to re-trafficking (Adams 2011, 201). A study in Cambodia found that there are multiple factors that are associated with re-trafficking, and these include:

... poverty, debt, low education, and social isolation from friends, family, and the community. Poverty is a necessary condition but is not sufficient for explaining re-exploitation on its own. Conditions contributing to the absence of re-exploitation include not having debt, not sending remittances to family, being married with children, and having social support from family, friends and/or the community (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 1).

Protective Factors to Prevent Re-Trafficking

Identifying protective factors is crucial to ensuring successful rehabilitation. The Cambodian study found that being married and having a child were protective factors

against re-exploitation. Other protective factors included not having debt, being single and having adequate social support (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 18). Additional factors that have been identified are access to “good employment, mental health support, legal support, counselling, education, language and life skills training” (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 22). Survivors need to be “socially included and economically empowered” to reduce the risk of re-trafficking (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 3).

Approaches and Intervention Practices in Preventing Re-trafficking of Girls and Young Women

The Need and Gaps in Current Interventions

Traditional responses to trafficking have had little impact since the global evidence is that young women and girls are continuing to be abused for sexual exploitation (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 249). Meshkovska, Bos, and Seigal argue that to ensure re-integration of trafficked individuals, it is important to define what is a successful outcome. They define re-trafficking as a failure of the re-integration process (Meshkovska, Bos, and Siegel 2021, 155). According to the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, effective interventions for children are still lacking in many contexts. The Inter-agency report states:

A specific challenge is the lack of sustainable solutions for child victims—including long-term assistance, rehabilitation, and protection. Child protection systems remain under-resourced, and there is an acute lack of legal guardians and alternative care arrangements. Children are often placed in accommodation which is not specialised or appropriate for their needs, where they risk further traumatisation and re-victimisation (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2018, 2).

Efforts to prevent re-trafficking need to ensure that vulnerability is reduced and there are options without which there can be potentially harmful consequences (UNODC 2008, 68). Strategies to support survivors need to be specific and tailored to the needs of individual survivors. Often support services are inadequate and protective factors need to be strengthened to prevent re-trafficking (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 30).

The prevention of re-trafficking requires multiple strategies which address the causes of trafficking in the first place, provide adequate support services to rescued girls and young women, and strengthen government and community mechanisms to care for and protect them from exploitation (Jobe 2010, 7). Re-integration requires economic stability, institutional support including access to legal services, and social support through rich relationships (Meshkovska, Bos, and Siegel 2021, 166). Hence, addressing re-trafficking successfully requires concerted holistic interventions across local, national, regional, and global levels (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 249).

The drivers of human trafficking also need to be addressed in a holistic manner to stop ongoing trafficking and exploitation of children (Gray 2017, 164). Velazco argues that trafficked and exploited children need holistic care focused on family needs, economic needs, government and social service needs, educational needs, and legal and advocacy needs (Velazco 2017, 211). Educational needs include formal education, non-formal education, and informal education for survivors to be able to be integrated in the long term (Dedace 2017, 382).

Addressing labor migration and ensuring that the rights of individuals are protected and people have access to basic services are all vital (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 1). The Bachpan Bachao Andolan led by Nobel Laurette Kailash Satyarthi has been leading advocacy efforts to hold governments and civil society accountable (UNICEF 2015, 87). Plan International calls for strengthened protection mechanisms at both source and destination sites (Kiss et al. 2019, 87). Corbett, in her research on the effects of trafficking, found that experiences of abuse, neglect, and instability at the household level contributed to making girls vulnerable to future sexual exploitation. Lack of love or poor self-esteem with low access to family care or social services made children more vulnerable. She argues that it is important to enable access to culturally appropriate interventions or vocational training options to help young girls meet basic love and self-esteem needs (Corbett 2017, 129).

Crawford discusses traumatic bonding where the trafficked victim develops a bond with the trafficker or pimp and does not want to come out of the trafficking situation (Crawford 2017b, 273). This is also termed the Stockholm syndrome, where the abused develops a bond with the abuser and allows them to control, manipulate, and abuse. Often women who make a 'choice' to go into prostitution are compelled by trauma bonding (Crawford 2017b, 273). Victims often need trauma counselling and healing to restore their identity and dignity. Though it may seem like the children and women are making a choice to continue in prostitution, it is often because of economic, cultural, and relationship issues that they feel that they cannot leave (Crawford 2017b, 273).

Using the Ecological Systems Model as a Framework to Strengthen Interventions and Address Vulnerability to Re-trafficking

Working with children who are rescued is not easy, and there are no quick fixes with guarantees of success (Crawford 2017b, 273). However, it is clear that addressing the issue of reintegration requires a holistic and well-coordinated approach. Several theorists and practitioners have postulated frameworks for effective rescue and reintegration. This section deals with some of the frameworks that have sought to address prevention of re-trafficking and reintegration by addressing the various socio-ecological dimensions. These include Sanchez and Pacquiaio's ecological approach towards child trafficking (Sanchez and Pacquiaio 2018, 98), the ICAT framework to reduce vulnerability of survivors to re-trafficking (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 7), Pandey, Tewari and Bhowmick's framework for rehabilitation and reintegration (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 47), Mak et al.'s pathway of change approach (Mak et al. 2023, 559), Surtees's framework for successful reintegration (Surtees 2022, 3), and the International Justice Mission's Assessment of Survivor Outcomes tool (International Justice Mission 2018, 8) to help case managers ensure that the survivor is ready to move out of sheltered care. The various frameworks and approaches are outlined below.

Sanchez and Pacquiaio describe the various services which are critical to ensure the care of children who have been trafficked. Figure 5 below lists the various services required at various levels (Sanchez and Pacquiaio 2018, 98). Applying Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach to working with children rescued from sex trafficking, Sanchez and

Pacquiao discuss interventions required for effective re-integration. According to them, viewing domestic minor sex trafficking through an ecological lens assists in the understanding of the multiple complex interactions between victims, their relationships, and environments that influence their health (Sanchez and Pacquiao 2018, 98).

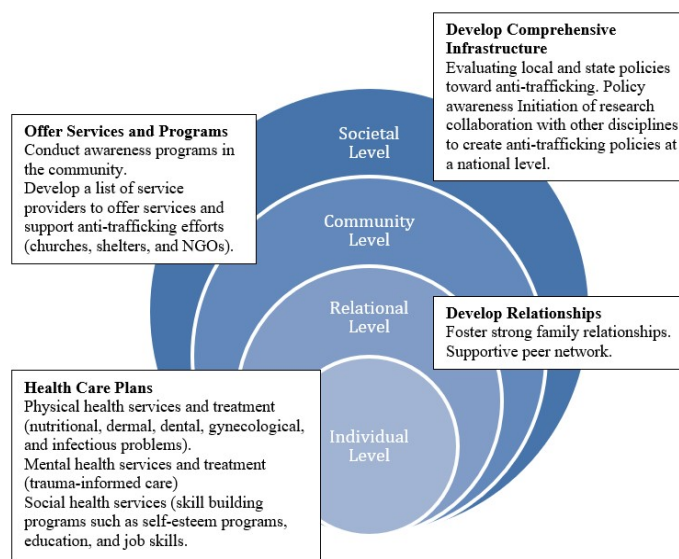


Figure 5. Ecological Approach toward Intervention and Care of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (Sanchez and Pacquiao 2018, 98)

The Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons have developed a simplified model to understanding and addressing vulnerability factors of trafficking (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 7).

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL	EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS VULNERABILITY FACTORS
INDIVIDUAL	Personal: Include victims and survivors and those most vulnerable to trafficking in designing anti-trafficking strategies and policies aiming at reducing risks to trafficking
	Situational: Address the vulnerability which certain situations such as unemployment, domestic violence and abuse create for individuals, to reduce the risk to trafficking
	Contextual: Identify laws, policies, practices and social norms that discriminate against certain people and increase vulnerability.
COMMUNITY	Personal: Identify communities who are most at risk of trafficking due to personal vulnerabilities (age, gender, ethnicity, disability etc.) and create the conditions in the communities that reduce risk to trafficking.
	Situational: Protect communities experiencing situational vulnerabilities such as unemployment, displacement etc. that would increase the risk of trafficking.
	Contextual: Ensure access to services where local protection services discriminate the community; Provide educational and income generation, programmes in support of disadvantaged communities. Address social norms that create an enabling environment for trafficking.
SYSTEM	Personal: Ensure equal opportunities and equity in access to social and health services, education, finance, employment and justice.
	Situational: Ensure that migration, labour market and security policies and practices do not create a conducive environment for trafficking.
	Contextual: Broad public policies and strengthening of social norms that enhance tolerance, equality, inclusive societies, justice, peace and good governance.

Figure 6. Examples of Interventions to Address Vulnerability Factors Applying the Socio-ecological Model (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 7)

In Figure 6 above, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group shares examples of interventions to address the various vulnerability factors based on the ecological model (Inter-Agency Coordination against Trafficking in Persons 2022, 7).

Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick present a slightly different framework to deal (see Figure 7) with rehabilitation and reintegration of the victims of sex trafficking. It builds on Brofenbrenner's ecological systems model, but specifically addresses economic and socio-cultural issues in addition to individual, familial, and institutional aspects. The framework addresses the various factors ranging from economic, socio-cultural, individual or familial, and institutional factors (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 47).

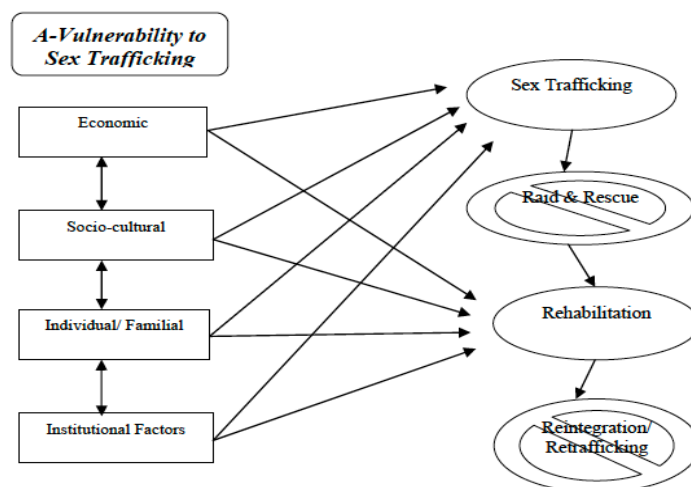


Figure 7. Addressing Rehabilitation and Reintegration of the Victims of Sex Trafficking (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 47)

Re-integration of Trafficking Survivors

Mak et al. describe a pathway of care with stages which survivors need to go through post-trafficking for effective rehabilitation (Mak et al. 2023, 559). The conceptual model outlines stages on the pathway of care for human trafficking survivors. This includes four specific stages of post-trafficking interventions for effectiveness: (1) identification, (2) immediate stabilization, (3) recovery, and (4) reintegration.

Empowerment, autonomy, and agency are potential key mechanisms for survivors to lead independent lives by supporting their decision making and desires for the future. These mechanisms might be triggered through skills training and individually tailored support and mentoring. Models that engage survivors who are further on the recovery journey to act as peer providers might help newly identified survivors through their healing journey (Mak et al. 2023, 559).

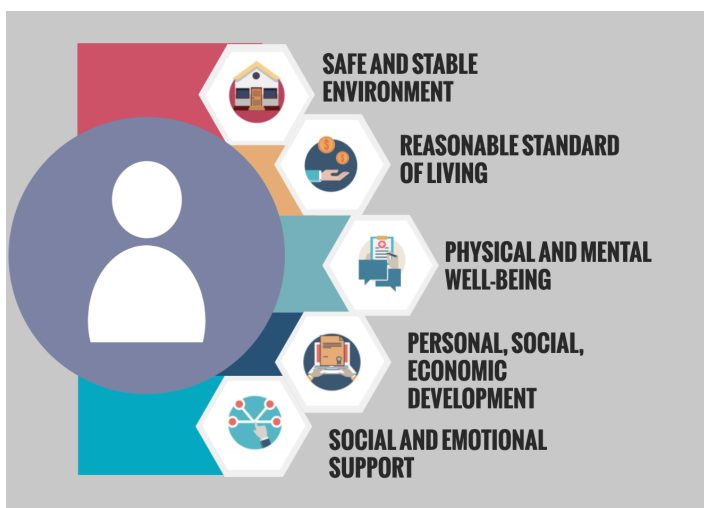


Figure 8. Different Components of Successful Reintegration (Surtees 2022, 3)

Surtees in her research work on responding to survivors of trafficking in Asia describes reintegration (figure 8 above) as:

The process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience. Successful reintegration is often comprised of different components including living in a safe and secure environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical well-being, opportunities for personal, social and economic development, and access to social and emotional support. There are specific considerations, which may, cumulatively, indicate that a trafficked person has successfully reintegrated (Surtees 2017, 14).

Surtees discusses the stages of re-integration from the perspective of reducing vulnerabilities that pre-existed so that survivors can be effectively reintegrated. She articulates the need to address three aspects, namely, a) pre-trafficking vulnerabilities, b) impact of trafficking and c) vulnerabilities after trafficking (Surtees 2022, 3). Surtees says that vulnerability and resilience before trafficking need to be taken into consideration when working out solutions (Surtees 2022, 3).

Levels and Stages of Reintegration

Using the ecological systems framework, Surtees also discusses levels of reintegration: individual, family, community and structural environment (Surtees 2022, 5). Surtees says that reintegration is a long-term process and discusses the three stages of reintegration (Surtees 2022, 9). These include crisis, transition, and reintegration and inclusion. The crisis intervention stage lasts between zero to six months (but could sometimes be longer, especially in the case of children) and is focused on addressing immediate trauma, security issues, providing medical care, and mental health care services. The second stage is the transition stage which lasts from seven months to twelve months. In the transition stage, the focus is to deal with education needs and relationships with family or parents. The third stage is the reintegration and inclusion stage, which typically ranges from thirteen to thirty-six months. The focus of interventions at this stage is to support the survivor with a sustainable job, ensure support from family, and to provide a safe place to live and a healthy social support system. It is important to ensure that there is flexibility in how each individual case plan is developed to ensure individual needs are addressed (Surtees 2022, 10). Sometimes a longer time frame may be necessary due to complex needs of some survivors.

Benham and Forbes note that while it is important to get girls out of environments that are unsafe, aftercare should recognize that families are the best place for children (Benham and Forbes 2017, 315). They recommend that assessments focused on the child's well-being and the role of the family in the abuse be made, to ensure whether staying with the family would be dangerous for the child before deciding whether the

child needs to be sent to a shelter for aftercare. They suggest that even if the family is an unsafe place to stay, other means of care like foster homes are preferable (Benham and Forbes 2017, 315).

Benham and Forbes recommend that shelter homes play a temporary role (not permanent) in providing a safe space for healing and restoration for rescued children (Benham and Forbes 2017, 315). The end goal is to ensure that children are back and safe in their families and communities. Velazco says that part of the process of helping trafficked children heal is to help restore the losses they faced—loss in terms of family, loss of trust and security, loss of faith, hope and dreams, loss of personal integrity and loss of self-worth and specialness (Velazco 2017, 220).

The International Justice Mission developed an Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) tool to measure progress towards positive outcomes for survivors recovering from various forms of violence and exploitation. The tools cover dimensions of safety, legal protection, mental well-being, economic empowerment, social support and physical well-being (International Justice Mission 2018, 8). The ASO tool was validated in 2015 with three mixed-method validation exercises in a total of sixteen International Justice Mission field offices, with twelve of the sixteen field offices conducting in-person interviews with four to eight survivors using the tool. Both internal and external validity and reliability were assessed and found to be good (International Justice Mission 2018, 12). The domains of wellbeing give a clear picture of the wide-range interventions that need to be in place to ensure positive outcomes for survivors.

Most of the research studies mentioned above clearly indicate that it is important to address the individual and contextual issues surrounding survivors to be able to successfully reintegrate them back into their communities. A failure to address issues of survivors can result in re-trafficking and re-exploitation.

COVID-19 and Its Impact on Vulnerability and Trafficking in India: Lessons for Disaster-Preparedness Efforts

The global pandemic, along with its secondary impacts resulting from lockdowns and disruption of day-to-day life, affected the lives of billions worldwide in its impact on health, livelihoods, and social well-being, including making girls and young women in poor households vulnerable to trafficking. It is important to learn how the global pandemic affected the vulnerability of children to trafficking and its impact on anti-trafficking efforts. This will help organizations to better understand and address trafficking issues and response gaps in the face of future local and global disasters.

Though the message early on during the pandemic was that older persons were more affected by the disease, it was clear that the secondary effects on the lives of children and young people was significant (OECD 2020, 2). The impact of COVID was felt in several development sectors such as food security, incomes, and protection (Akseer et al. 2020, 1). A partnership of humanitarian aid organizations focused on children and young people, Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, predicts that COVID-19 will significantly affect the health and well-being of communities and nations well beyond the pandemic timeframe (Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action 2020, 6). It is also evident that gender-based violence services

decreased over time from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Disruptions were observed in maternal and child healthcare services that may have had significant effects on the health of pregnant mothers and newborns (UNFPA 2020, 1).

It was also clear that the effects on millions of vulnerable children living in difficult circumstances were severe. Refugees, asylum seekers, displaced individuals, homeless children, children of migrant workers, children with disabilities, and those living with chronic health conditions were most at risk of being severely impacted (Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action 2020, 6). In any location affected by conflict and resulting displacements, children are extremely vulnerable. Because governments shifted their focus to responding to COVID, children in already challenging situations were left behind because of lack of access to important health, nutrition, and protective services (Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action 2020, 6). Children who were already in vulnerable situations became increasingly impacted by the crisis (OECD 2020, 3).

The global crisis unfolded in several countries with rising morbidity and mortality and growing economic and social impacts resulting from the varying responses to the pandemic. The secondary impacts on whole countries, communities, and vulnerable families were quite significant.

COVID-19 and Child Vulnerability

Childhood is a vulnerable stage in life. Children must depend on caring adults to nurture and provide for their basic needs, which places them in a position of vulnerability. Young children do not have much of a choice in terms of who cares for

them. Children need to depend on others to decide for them and this is a key source of their vulnerability (Bagattini 2019, 1). While childhood in itself is a vulnerable phase, some children are considered more vulnerable because of the situations they face. These children encounter violence, deprivation, or exploitation, resulting in challenges that deeply affect their growth and development, and, in the case of some, eventually result in their early deaths (UNICEF 2006, 35). Most vulnerable children are in extremely difficult circumstances and their physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual development is highly threatened. Many of these children, especially girls, experience untold struggles and challenges that affect their growth and development (UNICEF 2015, 11). World Vision has defined ‘most vulnerable children’ as follows:

Most vulnerable children are those children whose quality of life and ability to fulfil their potential is most affected by extreme deprivation, and violation of their rights. These children often live in catastrophic situations and relationships characterized by violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, exclusion, and discrimination (World Vision Australia 2017, 1).

Vulnerability is seen as a scale and not a state of being; that is, children become increasingly vulnerable until they are the most vulnerable children in communities.

Children who fall into one of these broad categories are often poor, and their basic survival is threatened (World Vision International 2020, 1). Furthermore, most vulnerable children also are often excluded and invisible. In situations of conflict, children usually face a severe crisis since they are deeply traumatized by conflict. They are largely defenseless and are often the primary casualties in any war. The trauma that children undergo is often unimaginable, whether emotionally, psychologically, sexually, or physically. Children are sacrificed on the altar of human greed and violence. Children

suffer malnutrition, disease, exposure, exploitation, abuse, and neglect (UNICEF 2015). Conflicts all over the world in places like Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Myanmar, and several other countries have resulted in untold suffering for children. The pandemic exacerbated the issues the children faced.

Globally, it was estimated in August 2020 that more than 149.5 million people required humanitarian assistance. This included about 76.5 million children, about 41.5 million of whom needed health assistance and 42 million who needed basic water and sanitation services. COVID-19 has made this situation worse! (World Vision International 2020, 3). Indeed, the global pandemic and resulting lockdown had a significant impact on the lives of children in both industrialised and developing countries. The effects of the lockdown and quarantine of whole cities at a time impacted the education of children significantly (Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart 2020, 1). Children with special needs were negatively impacted. Adolescent girls and young women living in conditions of discrimination were also at high risk of experiencing gender-based violence and burdens to take care of the family affected by COVID-19 (Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action 2020, 6).

Impact of COVID-19 on Access to Health Care for Children

Children need good nutrition for their growth and development. Nutrition impacts their long-term health and economic outcomes (OECD 2020, 7). Akseer et al. report that gains made in child health and nutrition over the last few decades were likely to be pushed back because of COVID-19. The pandemic is continuing to erode years of progress made in the health and nutrition sectors (Akseer et al. 2020, 1). While the impact

of COVID is on childhood wasting rates, the long-term effects will influence future maternal and childhood undernutrition overall because of the impact of poverty and access to nutritious food (Akseer et al. 2020, 1).

In a report titled “COVID-19 Aftershocks” published in May 2020, World Vision International states that while health systems try to cope with COVID-19 prevention and treatment, basic access to health services will be impacted severely. The report estimates that in the developing world over twenty-six million are at risk of being exposed to killer childhood diseases. This is a result of an estimated 30% reduction in routine immunization coverage of Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DPT3). The report also goes on to estimate that five million additional children could suffer severe malnutrition. Additionally, around 100,000 children may die from malaria because of lack of access to prevention or treatment services (World Vision International 2020, 3). The health effects of the pandemic on children were secondary, but quite significant. Getting the public health care systems back to pre-COVID levels will take significant effort, time and resources.

Impact of COVID-19 on Education

Education is a protective factor for girls and young women, as girls who are educated are less likely to marry early and more likely to lead healthy and productive lives (Wodon et al. 2018, 5). In July 2020, UNESCO estimated that over 1.6 billion learners were affected by the pandemic, which is about ninety-one percent of total learners worldwide (Dreesen et al. 2020, 1). This was the first time in recent history that so many children did not have access to school and learning at the same time across the

globe (UNICEF: Office of Research-Innocenti 2020, 35). Research has also shown that COVID will continue to affect academic performance of students in high school because of school closures and disruption. Though teachers made efforts to mitigate the impact of the disruption, they were of the opinion that student performance in the future will be affected (Sintema 2020, 1). Though countries responded quickly to ensure that children continue their education using channels like TV, radio, and the internet, it was clear that access to education in resource-poor settings was a significant challenge (Thevenon and Adema 2020, 1).

Governments and organisations involved in education were not prepared for the transition to online learning. In one study by UNICEF, only sixty-eight percent of countries could continue education activities during lockdowns (Dreesen et al. 2020, 2). In many of the countries studied, only 65% of households have access to electricity. In some countries (e.g., Ivory Coast, Lesotho, and Mauritania), only 10% of households had access to electricity, and this greatly limited any effort to continue education through radio or TV or digital methods. The digital divide created an education gap that will be felt long term, creating a greater divide between children in well-to-do settings and children who are disadvantaged (Thevenon and Adema 2020, 2). Bridging the digital divide to address the education gap will be a major challenge in the coming years.

Impact of COVID-19 on Child Protection and Violence Against Children

Violence against children is a significant issue putting millions of children at risk for their survival and development. World Vision International defines violence against

children as including all forms of physical, sexual, and mental violence; neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation; harm or abuse, including commercial sexual exploitation; trafficking; child labour, and other harmful practices such as female genital mutilation or cutting and child marriage. Child protection is the prevention of and response to violence against children (World Vision International 2020, 6).

Cooke et al., in a 2019 report titled “Small Cracks, Big Gaps,” stated that 1.7 billion children globally experience different forms of violence—physical, emotional and sexual—in their homes, communities, schools, and institutions. Online bullying and sexual exploitation are other growing forms of violence against children (Cooke et al. 2019, 2). COVID-19 has also resulted in increased child protection concerns. Reports on violence against children clearly indicate that there were increased occurrences and reports of all types of violence against children—including physical and sexual abuse. World Vision International reported that up to 85 million children could have been exposed to physical, sexual, or emotional violence over three months as a result of the lockdowns (World Vision International 2020, 6).

While both boys and girls faced violence at all ages, UNFPA warned that the risks and how they experience violence varies with gender (UNFPA 2020, 1). Girls are more vulnerable to rape, trafficking, genital mutilation, and child marriage, while boys are more vulnerable to child labour and physical violence (World Vision International 2020, 6). COVID-19 increased the risk of violence targeting women and girls because of existing gender inequalities in the same way that the Ebola outbreak and its impact on livelihoods in West Africa resulted in increased sexual exploitation of women and

children (UNFPA 2020, 7). The UN Family Planning Association's (UNFPA) technical note on the impact of COVID-19 on gender-based violence estimates that the pandemic affected women and girls negatively in two ways. The first was by reducing access to prevention and protection services, and the second was by increasing the incidence of violence due to lockdowns (UNFPA 2020, 7). Other key predictions found in the UNFPA technical note published in April 2020 were: "If the lockdown continues for 6 months, 31 million additional gender-based violence cases can be expected. For every 3 months the lockdown continues, an additional 15 million additional cases of gender-based violence are expected" (UNFPA 2020, 7).

A recent national study led by World Vision in Bangladesh estimates that violence against children increased by 42% and the child protection help-lines received about 40% more calls than usual (World Vision International 2020, 4). As livelihoods collapsed and the economic impacts deepened, it was estimated that millions more children were at risk for child marriage as families looked for other forms of income or stability.

UNFPA estimated that at least 13 million child marriages were likely to occur within the next two years (UNFPA 2020, 2). The challenge was worse when local child protection systems were overwhelmed or incapacitated because of the pandemic. Even before COVID-19, these local government child protection mechanisms were weak and struggling because of a lack of policies and infrastructure due to low resourcing (World Vision International 2020, 6). COVID-19 pushed back years of progress made in setting up child protection systems and processes at the community level. When basic capacities

of communities and local organisations are stretched, the protection mechanisms are unlikely to function effectively, resulting in increased violence against children.

COVID-19 and Trafficking in Girls and Young Women

Trafficking involves the buying and selling of women and girls for commercial sexual exploitation (Pande 2016, 25). The prediction was that COVID-19 will make many children more vulnerable to trafficking and online sexual abuse. European Police predicted that with the possibility of a recession worldwide, there would be an increase in labor and demand for sexual exploitation leading to trafficking (Europol 2020, 7).

Technology has significantly impacted the process of trafficking and the sexual exploitation of girls and young women. Child pornography and its reach is facilitated by the internet and the use of technology (Murray 2019, 17). In April 2020, COVID-19 led to the closing of schools across 188 countries, affecting about 90% of the world's students (Safe to Learn 2020, 2). With lockdowns and the closing of international borders, travelling sex offenders had less physical access to children; however, children were more at risk of violence in the home. Online sexual exploitation of children was and still is a higher risk since they spent more time online (Wongsamuth and Blomberg 2020, 13). Young children were accessing online games, social media, and video chat programmes more than ever to be able to connect to online learning as well as stay in touch with family and friends (Safe to Learn 2020, 2). Studies show that children between three and thirteen years of were at a higher risk of online sexual exploitation (End Violence Against Children 2019, 1). Strengthening child protection needed to

include strategies to address online safety for children and establishing processes to deal swiftly with cases of online abuse.

Impact of COVID-19 on Livelihoods and Income

Child poverty is exacerbated when there are economic downturns since it is strongly related to parental employment status (Thevenon and Adema 2020, 3). COVID-19 resulted in several millions losing jobs. Lockdowns meant that many lost their source of income, at least during the shutdowns, especially where options to work from home were not available. UNICEF estimated that 5 to 10 percent of GDP in industrialised nations would be lost in 2020 (Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart 2020, 1). Inflation was also a major issue to be factored in since prices of essential commodities like food are on the increase (Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart 2020, 1). Although in some countries unemployment subsidies were provided, these were not long term. When parents have low education levels, then finding jobs becomes more challenging (Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart 2020, 4). Holistic responses or cash-based interventions to help reduce vulnerability at the household levels were important to address livelihood issues.

Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health, and Psychosocial and Spiritual Well-Being

Psychologists have observed that children of all ages faced stress because of COVID-19 and the resulting lockdowns, and they needed support from parents and caregivers (UNICEF: Office of Research-Innocenti 2020). Being locked down in their homes creates a psychological burden for children. Lack of outdoor activities, the inability to meet friends at school, and poor eating or sleeping habits can significantly

disrupt the lifestyles of children, causing stress, boredom, and frustration. The impact on the child is compounded when there is domestic violence or child abuse in the home (Ghosh et al. 2020, 226). Children quarantined in institutions or hospitals suffer even more since they are away from their parents and families (Ghosh et al. 2020, 229). Migrants, internally displaced children, and children living in orphanages are particularly at risk for mental health issues at this time. A lack of food, shelter, and access to water and hygiene puts incredible pressure on the families and children. In some countries, children of illegal migrants did not have access to COVID-19 prevention and care services. This made them extremely vulnerable to exploitation (Ghosh et al. 2020, 229). Interventions targeting families and children in disaster situations need to include psychosocial interventions that help them cope with the stressors positively.

Intervention Strategies to Protect Vulnerable Children

Child protection services like helplines and special interventions need to be initiated to respond to children facing violence in the home. Child protection services need to be treated as essential services even during lockdowns. In situations where parents or caregivers die, children need to be placed in alternative care. Access to the internet needs to be managed carefully, and children and young people empowered to be safe online.

Learning from Gaps and Opportunities in the Context of COVID-19

COVID-19 and the resulting responses by governments significantly affected already vulnerable populations. Women and girls in vulnerable situations faced greater

challenges in terms of increased poverty, deaths of spouses or caregivers, loss of income, migration, and starvation. There is still a need to better understand how COVID-19 or any major disaster affects trafficking efforts and to put strategies in place to mitigate their impact on poor households and victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. These interventions can include strengthening prevention and reintegration.

The challenge in the context of COVID-19 was lack of access to funding and the inability to provide services face-to-face because of lockdowns. This severely limited service delivery even though some organizations initiated mobile phone services (UNFPA 2020, 4). According to one frontline worker in Malawi:

In our frontline work, we see gender inequality characterized by high levels of violence against women and girls, increased cases of child marriage, and harmful cultural and traditional practices which disadvantage girls and women. Coupled with limited awareness on what trafficking in persons really is, the problem is booming, and girls and women are bearing the brunt of it. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened this already dire situation (UNFPA 2020, 4).

In a recent report on issues of vulnerable children and the need to develop responses to reduce the effects of the pandemic and its aftermath, World Vision International called for access to food—and even food delivery—for homes of children to reduce the exposure of children to violence, exploitation, and abuse (Kabore, Wong, and Munzara 2020, 15). UNFPA called for a thorough review of the effects of the pandemic on victims and survivors of trafficking and for development of plans to mitigate those impacts (UNFPA 2020, 4). During major disasters, it is important to identify victims and ensure they have access to protection and rehabilitation services.

To be better prepared for disaster, there is also a need to build awareness and to create systems for identifying suspected abuse. Helplines need to be put in place so that

abuse or risks can be reported. During the pandemic, UNFPA recommended that stakeholders be oriented and trained in understanding the impact of the pandemic on trafficking and how to respond effectively (UNFPA 2020, 4). This will include training technology companies that provide web services, police, and criminal justice staff so they can identify and respond to abuse and exploitation effectively.

Learning from the pandemic, it is important to continue to prioritize child protection and rescue efforts as essential services during major disasters. Police, community leaders, and volunteers need to be able continue to coordinate helpline services and address complaints (UNFPA 2020, 4). Additionally, NGO and faith leaders also need to be aware and receive training about online exploitation and trafficking and how to report when they suspect something. Healthcare staff often interact with victims of trafficking (Zarocostas 2019, 2). Health workers need to be trained to recognize indicators of trafficking and report it to the authorities.

In disaster responses, cash transfers have been proven to protect households from the impact of disasters and support asset creation (Kabore, Wong, and Munzara 2020, 15). Cash transfers to targeted households can help households meet basic needs and reduce their vulnerability.

Considering the severe consequences the pandemic has had on vulnerable families and children, it is important for governments, NGOs, and faith communities to come together and raise the alarm to catalyze a response in order to ramp up protection, rescue, and rehabilitation efforts in the face of the potential for major disasters in the future. Access to basic food, cash, shelter, and protection services during major disasters will

reduce the vulnerability of families to exploitation and abuse. Stakeholders need to collaborate with each other to ensure that victims and survivors have access to these basic services.

Learning from the pandemic and ensuing response, stakeholders must be better prepared for future disasters to ensure vulnerable children and women are protected. Key interventions focused on responding to the needs of children, families and communities to reduce vulnerability to trafficking must include the following elements:

1. **Provision of Alternate Care:** Children affected by disasters may need alternate care if parents or caregivers are infected or die because of the illness. Short-term foster care for these children and longer-term arrangements need to be made, while working closely with community organisations and extended family (MacLeod 2000, 18). Organisations like World Vision support social protection and foster care mechanisms to ensure that children have safe care and support (MacLeod 2000, 18).
2. **Social Protection and Safety Nets:** Targeted safety nets to ensure food security to the most vulnerable households will be very important to reduce the risk of malnutrition in children (Akseer et al. 2020, 1). Social safety net interventions, along with tax breaks and deferring payment of loans, will help. Cash-based interventions can help reduce the impact on households as well (Akseer et al. 2020, 1).
3. **Advocacy to End Violence Against Children and Strengthen Child Protection:** Given that disasters often increase violence against children, it is important that compassionate ministries continue to advocate for governments, civil society, churches, and other faith-based organisations to address violence against children as

they respond to disasters (World Vision International 2020, 6). Advocacy efforts should call for adherence to minimum child protection standards including the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action's technical note on the protection of children (Better Care Network, The Alliance for Child Protection, and UNICEF 2020, 1). It will also be important to hold governments accountable to expand investments that are focused on addressing child protection.

4. Empowering Children Online: Many compassionate ministries used the internet and phone calls to stay connected with the children they work with during the pandemic (Dreesen et al. 2020, 6). This was a good practice and needs to be institutionalised. Compassionate ministries need to make efforts to empower children to keep them safe online. It is also important that children know where to look for help and support when needed (UNICEF: Office of Research-Innocenti 2020, 3). Parents, caregivers, and teachers need to build the capacity of children to ensure that they understand the risks of the internet and are safe when they interact with others online.

Christian Faith-Based Non-Governmental Organisations' Contribution to Anti-trafficking Efforts

Faith-based approaches to anti-trafficking have historically been effective, with pioneers like William Wilberforce and Amy Carmichael making a significant impact on society in their day. However, there is a need to rethink how to address trafficking in effective ways (Crawford 2014, 1). While Christians are often at the forefront of responding compassionately to the needs of those suffering and in need, it is important to

ensure that responses are evidence based and provide high-quality care (Reimer 2017, 304).

A Biblical Perspective on Addressing the Needs of the Most Vulnerable

Human trafficking is not just a modern-day problem. We see Joseph in the book of Genesis being sold to be trafficked by his brothers. The Israelites lived in slavery in Egypt for 400 years. Trafficking has been around for a long time and has continued to grow as populations increase. Both the Old and New Testament capture the heart of God for the oppressed, and he calls his people to treat others with justice and righteousness. Scripture is full of examples of societies and cultures in which vulnerable women and children were exploited and how God responds towards these vulnerable groups. God's heart of compassion for the most vulnerable is demonstrated throughout the pages of Scripture. The Bible is clear in terms of God's direction to his people to care for the orphaned and vulnerable children. Fretheim discusses children in the book of Genesis and says that "Children are created in the image of God, promised to barren ones, loved and enjoyed, vulnerable to violence, threatened with death, and engulfed in destructive events" (Fretheim 2008, 9). There are many accounts of children being endangered and vulnerable in the book of Genesis alone. God does not perpetrate the violence, but children suffer severely in the wake of God using human agents to exact judgement (Fretheim 2008, 9).

One particular story that strongly illustrates God's concern for a vulnerable child is from Genesis chapter 21. The story of Ishmael is particularly eye-opening and makes

one wonder about God's choice of Isaac over Ishmael, especially since in that day it meant Ishmael would be sent away from his family. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that although Abraham abandons Ishmael, God does not. God becomes deeply involved in the life of Ishmael, saves his life, and blesses him. God promises, "And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation" (Genesis 17:20, NIV). God hears the voice of the boy and sends an angel to rescue him. God comes to Ishmael and helps him. The scripture says that "God was with the boy;" his presence and blessing were on the child. God in this story reaches out to Hagar, Ishmael's mother, who was also suffering after being sent away from Abraham's household. God cares for her and speaks to her, promising her that he will protect and bless her. God uses Hagar as a human agent to help the vulnerable child Ishmael. Fretheim makes the point that God still uses "available creaturely agents" to act and that he "does not do these acts alone." God is also at work in the lives of children in neglected parts of the world and cares for the good of vulnerable children. Fretheim says that the story of Ishmael "may reflect the development of Israel's special concern about orphans" and other vulnerable children (Fretheim 2008, 14).

God is positively biased towards the marginalised, especially children, and calls on families and the community of faith to take care of them (e.g. Psalm 68:5-6; Psalm 82:3-4 and Psalm 146:9). According to Walter Brueggemann, the passion of God and the human obligation are to respond beyond our immediate community. He says, "The Old Testament to a large extent is preoccupied with 'widows, orphans and sojourners' almost

as a mantra, to which the category of ‘the poor’ is sometimes added” (Brueggemann 2008, 417).

It is also important to recognise that children, especially those most vulnerable, have an important place in God’s heart and in his kingdom. In the New Testament, we see several passages in the Gospels that show Jesus’ care for children and the position he accorded them. When people brought children to Jesus to have him touch them (e.g., Mark 10:13; Luke 18:15: ‘little children’ and ‘babies’ respectively), they showed their faith that he would want to do this, and it was rewarded. The Bible says, “He took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them” (Mark 10:16; Luke 18:16, NIV). So, children were not only included rather than excluded in the ministry of Jesus, but also treated compassionately. The fact is that God is already at work in a child and is active (Copsey 2005, 26). Jesus says in Mark 10:14, “To such as these (little children) belongs the kingdom of God” simply because these children needed it. Jesus said in Mathew 18:5 that when we receive a child, we receive him.

In the epistles, the people of God are instructed to care for the poor and the needy. James in his letter goes on to say that, “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27, NIV). Although caring for orphans is not new to the people of faith in the Bible, it was a significant and integral part of the early Christian community.

The Christian response to trafficked and exploited children today is critical to our mission. Trafficked and exploited children need more than mere words to demonstrate

the love of God. It is also important that we recognise that we have a special responsibility for children who are exploited. Brueggemann says that “Beyond the benignity of much faith, we reckon with a God capable of ferocious, tenacious caring. In the image of God we are summoned to the same ferociousness and tenacity” (Brueggemann 2008, 417).

Hence, there is an urgent need for a concerted effort for churches and Christian organisations to work together to nurture and protect children who are most vulnerable and to engage with them effectively and consistently. It is also vital for the church to strengthen its response to children who are sexually exploited so that they too will experience the love and grace of Jesus. God’s unambiguous mandate is in the favour of vulnerable children and it shouts for urgent action across the pages of Scriptures. There is a strong obligation to respond not only to children from our family and own community, but also others in need- if we truly follow God’s passion.

Addressing Worldviews that Enable Trafficking and Exploitation

For a holistic response it is also important for churches and Christian organizations to confront worldviews and recognize their impact on the vulnerability of children. In addition to prevention and rehabilitation interventions, the church needs to engage in addressing worldviews that are destructive and hold whole communities in bondage. For example, in the case of trafficking for sexual exploitation, one often struggles to understand how parents or relatives can sell their children or how a society can devalue its most vulnerable. In his book on transformational development, Bryant Myers discusses the issues of worldviews and how they continue to promote a cultural

mindset that keeps communities and individuals in a system of poverty and exploitation (Myers 2011, 15). In India, the disempowering idea of karma and the caste system that perpetuates poverty make people vulnerable. When the poor or exploited try to come out of their situation, their worldview tells them that they are not fulfilling their karma or purpose. Darrow Miller says that communities and individuals are sometimes entangled in the web of lies which are a part of Satan's deceptive schemes (Miller and Guthrie 2001, 75). Physical poverty or exploitative systems are rooted in a poverty of mind. These underlying worldviews need to be addressed alongside efforts to deal with trafficking.

An article by Thom Wolfe makes a strong argument for the fact that worldview and culture matters in the progress of a nation (Wolfe 2007, 3). He argues that worldviews influence every dimension of life and move a nation forward or backward. He discusses the proposal of Mahatma Phule who is known as the father of social revolution in India, who called people to follow truth, equality and freedom. Phule was highly critical of India's highly caste-based social construct and proposed a different cultural orientation with mentors, asserting that Indians need to be "lifted from" themselves and not "left to" themselves (Wolfe 2007, 10). India's worldview of karma and fate keeps people in bondage and poverty (Zacharias 2012, 127). The sense of fatalism that is so common in India contributes to the poverty and exploitative systems that continue to hurt the poor and most vulnerable children. When whole communities and families are looked down on and those suffering are seen as fulfilling their karma, this mindset impacts how children are viewed and how their development is facilitated.

Children from lower castes have little access to health or education services compared to the upper castes, and when they are sold, trafficked, and exploited, very few people seem to care.

Faith-Based Approaches to Prevention of Trafficking and Reducing Vulnerabilities of Survivors

Crawford discusses prevention strategies from a holistic perspective that includes awareness raising, vulnerability reduction, and residential care. Building on experience working with NGOs to stop trafficking for sexual exploitation, she calls for prevention strategies of NGOs to be focused, effective, and rights based (Crawford 2017, 172). Churches can also play a role in safeguarding refugees, migrant workers, and other vulnerable children from being exploited and trafficked by ensuring access to basic care and protection services (Miles 2017, 107). Churches and Christian organisations have a role in addressing these worldviews and mindsets that promote a low view of women and have perpetuated trafficking of women and girls. Hence, a Christian response to trafficking and sexual exploitation in India should deal with underlying worldviews of communities, so that children can be protected from trafficking and cared for after they are rescued.

Addressing the Spiritual Needs of Survivors of Trafficking

Judith Ennew, in discussing spiritual needs of trafficked children, asserts that spirituality is more than the practice of religion. Drawing from the psychologist Coles, she says that the spiritual dimension is about “meaning in life, moral and ethical in relationships and attitudes to social justice” (Ennew 2017, 230). Kathryn Copsey states

that children have various hungers when they come into this world, and these hungers need to be met if the child is to become a whole and healthy individual. Working with children who are most vulnerable particularly has challenges for spiritual nurture.

Kathryn Copsey also discusses the need to repair the damaged spirituality of children who are in extremely difficult circumstances. Copsey advocates a child-centered attitude to listen to children, help children participate, and respond to children through prayer support (Copsey 2005). Separation and abuse damage a child deeply. Copsey argues that children need enough support to develop in healthy directions. They need to be understood from within their own perspective of the relationships they build. And they need to express themselves, be accepted and respected (Copsey 2005). Jesus treated most vulnerable people with compassion and respect. It is important that trafficked children and young women be treated the same way as they go through the process of healing and restoration (Ennew 2017, 230).

Miles et al., in their research on Cambodian trafficking survivors, associate spirituality with resilience of trafficking survivors (Miles et al. 2020, 33). Gray identifies elements of resilience and proposes nine constructs of resilience that emerge from his analysis (Gray 2012, 14). The nine constructs are “perseverance, adaptability, self-preservation, interconnectedness, hope for the future, buoyancy, introspection, steadiness, and social awareness” (Miles et al. 2020, 33). Miles et al. find that in the context of Cambodian survivors, all the nine aspects of resilience are linked to the spirituality of the survivors. They propose that reintegration programs use a resilience framework in the context of trafficking to support survivors spiritually (Miles et al. 2020, 33). Based on the

Cambodian study, Miles et al. report that survivors benefit from spirituality and faith. The researchers report:

Some described specific ways in which their attitudes were changed, where they were less ashamed, less concerned about what others thought of them, where they were able to control their feelings more, where they could be more patient with others, less aggressive and violent. Some described how they didn't feel the need to lie, where they were willing to accept that they had made a mistake, where they were more confident of themselves and more trusting of others. Some described they were no longer afraid of death. For Buddhists, they described how their faith led to praying for their family and giving alms. For Christians, they described how their faith led to loving and respecting others and not discriminating against them (Miles et al. 2020, 33).

Spiritual nurture alongside psychosocial services impacts survivors positively.

Psychosocial services along with social inclusion and economic empowerment are critical to preventing re-trafficking (Rafferty 2021, 1). A community-based approach using a trauma-focused behaviour counselling strategy was found to provide effective intervention for reintegration by Hagar Cambodia supported by World Vision (Reimer 2017, 309). Demonstrating Christ's compassion can be excellent and meaningful to the vulnerable children, families, and communities we work with.

Strengthening the Response: Where Do We Go from Here?

Christian organisations and churches need to continue to work both among themselves and externally with other stakeholders to combat trafficking across all levels – from individual to societal levels. While several sincere and well-meaning Christians have responded to God's call since the early 2000s, many have not been able to sustain their focus on the issues of trafficking due to a variety of reasons including funding

challenges or burnout (Crawford 2017, 172). Sustained and coordinated practical efforts combined with prayer mobilization are important.

Faith-based efforts to combat trafficking have been growing over the past decade. Many organizations have “made commitments, established networks, developed tools and guidance to help eradicate human trafficking” (United States Department of State 2020, 24). More broadly, in 2014, several religious leaders including the Pope gathered together to commit to fight trafficking (United States Department of State 2020, 25).

Christian organizations and churches have a strong prophetic role to play in addressing trafficking, i.e., to be a prophetic voice for justice and change (Abraham 2014, 2). In India, there are several Christian organizations like International Justice Mission, Justice Ventures International, Exodus Cry, Freeset, and World Vision India, among others, that have been involved in prevention, rescue, and restoration of children and young girls who have been trafficked. These organizations and NGOs have been advocating for victims of human trafficking and implementing interventions to prevent trafficking and to rehabilitate those who have been victimized.

Advocating for Trafficked Women and Girls

Christian Organizations like the International Justice Mission have been at the forefront of advocacy for transformation in this area. The church has a strong voice and there is a greater opportunity to speak up for victims of trafficking in India (Abraham 2014, 2). IJM has been deliberately engaging churches in reflecting on God’s call to reach the vulnerable and also make congregations aware of the injustice around them. IJM encourages churches to form ‘Justice Learning Communities’ who will study the

biblical mandate to do justice and reach out to work in their society to bring about the reality of God's justice through 'Justice Task Forces' (Martin 2014, 44). However, the need is great—there is a need for the church in India to be equipped and engaged in addressing the issue of human trafficking and to minister to children who have been exploited, bringing healing and restoration to broken lives.

Additionally, ensuring the rights of individuals who are victims of human trafficking is critical. Raising awareness about their plight and ensuring that they have access to basic services and rehabilitation is a real need. Corbett states that it is important to spread awareness of the complexities of the sexual exploitation of children and advocate on their behalf (Corbett 2017, 133). Survivors of sex trafficking should be provided with opportunities to come together and be empowered to become advocates.

Growing the Evidence Base for Prevention of Re-trafficking in India

Research on prevention of trafficking and re-trafficking in India is quite limited. Naik argues that there has been limited research on sex trafficking in India based on primary data (Naik 2018, 9). There is also little evidence regarding factors that place girls in trafficking-prone areas at risk of trafficking, especially from a community-based perspective (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 16). There are gaps in understanding and implementing successful interventions for preventing trafficking and re-trafficking for sexual exploitation in West Bengal, India. This research focused on collecting primary data from young women who had been trafficked and rescued in order to understand vulnerability to trafficking at the individual, family, and community levels,

and to address issues of re-trafficking. This will enable governments, civil society organizations, and community groups to strengthen their responses dealing with prevention, rescue, and rehabilitation of children and young women. The research findings is also applied in the context of Christian churches and organizations to develop holistic approaches and interventions to prevent trafficking and minister to the needs of those rescued from trafficking.

The Case Study Approach as a Methodology to Understand Trafficking Prevention and Support to Survivors

Gillham defines a case as a “unit of human activity embedded in the real world that can only be studied and understood in context which exists in the here and now and that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw” (Gillham 2000, 1). According to Gerring, “A case study may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is—at least in part—to shed light on a larger class of cases (a population)” (Gerring 2007, 18). The case study design involves the in-depth and detailed investigation of a particular individual, group, or phenomenon within its real-life context. As a qualitative research method, it can help provide an understanding of complex social phenomena and explore the details of specific cases (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 37).

Case study research may be focused on one or more cases. Case studies are highly focused on a single unit and have boundaries that are clearly defined. Cases may be individuals, families, communities or even countries. Case studies are exploratory; they help generate new conceptualizations and are highly useful to define or generate

hypotheses (Gerring 2007, 18). The case study method provides a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the case under investigation by examining multiple sources of evidence and considering various perspectives (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 37).

Case study analysis usually focuses on a small number of cases which can provide insight into an issue or causal relationship of the problem under study (Gerring 2007, 18). A case study sample is the selection of cases for study and analysis. The sample in a case study usually ranges from a single case up to about twelve cases. Single case studies are also practiced in research (Gerring 2007, 19). The goal of a qualitative case study is not to generalise the results to the whole population, but to understand in depth and to explore the issues to be researched (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 37). Hence, a small number of cases can provide sufficient data for analysis.

Critics of case studies usually point out that case studies are not representative of populations. Case studies therefore are usually considered weaker with respect to ‘external validity’ when compared with surveys.

Summary

Trafficking is a major global problem, and prevention efforts so far have been insufficient to address the growing prevalence. The literature review covered the following key themes in line with the research questions:

The first theme covered was the extent of the problem of trafficking globally and in India, especially focused on causes for trafficking.

The second theme was focused on the theoretical framework for the research based on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of development and understanding

vulnerability to trafficking. The theory articulates how levels of influence ranging from the immediate individual to relational, community, and structural levels impact a vulnerable child or young woman, affecting their risk of trafficking and re-trafficking. Several factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation were examined. This included push-and-pull factors that need to be reassessed considering the impact of the global pandemic.

Third, the issue of re-trafficking of girls and young women was covered, with a focus on understanding key factors and drivers based on research. It was clear that there are significant challenges faced by survivors, and some are pushed back into being trafficked. There are also several gaps in literature on how to stem the tide of those being re-trafficked or re-exploited.

Fourth, intervention practices for effective reintegration for the prevention of re-trafficking of girls and young women was discussed in detail. While the Indian government has responded to the need to step up prevention and reintegration efforts, the problem is still huge and requires a holistic and well-coordinated response to achieve success. There are significant gaps, and it is evident that prevention and reintegration efforts need to holistically address vulnerability factors affecting women and girls.

Fifth, the chapter explored the impact of COVID-19 on the vulnerability of girls and young women to trafficking. In the context of the aftermath of the global pandemic which has made more children vulnerable, a concerted and holistic effort of key stakeholders is required to strengthen prevention efforts.

Finally, Christian faith-based, non-governmental organisations' contribution to prevention of children from being re-trafficked for sexual exploitation was reviewed in detail. Trafficking is an affront to the image of God and the dignity that God bestows on people. Churches and Christian organisations can continue to play a critical role in reducing trafficking and its impact on women and girls. Recognising that the global pandemic has made many households vulnerable due to lack of access to jobs and other basic social protection services, it is vital that Christian faith-based organisations leverage existing collaboration platforms, share data and lessons emerging from the frontline, and put in place interventions that will ensure that prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, and advocacy services are strengthened across the country.

This chapter on the review of precedent literature and studies provides insight into the current research. The next chapter discusses the approach to the research, its methodology, tools, and methods to elicit and analyse information.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Research Methodology

The present study followed a qualitative approach using the case study design to learn from the lived experiences of young women in the age group of eighteen to twenty-five years who were trafficked as children. Qualitative research, according to Anas and Ishaq, is a “systematic scientific method of inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative description to inform the researcher’s understanding of social or cultural phenomena” (Anas 2022). Qualitative research is about the nature of phenomena and is useful for understanding why something is happening in culture and society. It uses data collection methods like participant observation, interviews, and focus group discussions (Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger 2020, 2). Because the nature of qualitative research is to seek to understand the meaning of what is going on, qualitative methods of data gathering are “essentially descriptive and inferential in character” (Gillham 2000, 1).

Case Study Design

The multiple case study design was used to examine the lived experiences of the young women survivors and understand their experiences, circumstances, vulnerabilities and needs. Robert Yin describes the case study design “as an empirical inquiry which investigates a real-life phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin 2003, 13). Gerring

defines a case as a “spatially delimited phenomenon (a unit) observed at a single point in time or over some period of time.” As mentioned, case study research can use a single case or multiple cases (Gerring 2007, 19). Case studies can investigate specific research questions while collecting a wide range of evidence in a case setting or context (Gillham 2000, 1). Case studies are used to deliberately address contextual considerations since they are important to the phenomenon that occurs. In the case of trafficking and support to survivors, the context of their living environment is critical and case study design helped answer the research questions.

In this study, multiple cases were used to better understand the vulnerability, trafficking, re-trafficking and condition of survivors in Kolkata. The multiple case study design has an advantage when compared to single case study designs, as evidence from multiple cases can be more convincing and can make the research more robust (Yin 2003, 46). Multiple case studies can also provide an opportunity to gain insight into key processes, causes and outcomes (Miles, Huberman, and Saldhana 2014, 30). To gain understanding into vulnerability factors that result in re-trafficking, the researcher decided to select young women who were trafficked as children, were rescued and fully re-integrated and others who were trafficked, rescued and later re-trafficked as children. The next section describes the case selection approach in detail.

Selection of Respondents

Miles, Huberman and Saldhana say that qualitative study samples are usually purposive because of the need to focus on the unique context of the cases. Sampling can sometimes evolve as the data gathering begins because of what the researcher observes

during the field work process, and this be done to understand similarities and make comparisons between one group and another (Miles, Huberman, and Saldhana 2014, 31).

It is generally challenging to engage survivors of sex trafficking to elicit data. They often do not trust others, including even their friends (Docarmo, Vanntheary, and Channtha 2021, 6). Participants for the research were selected through purposive sampling. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample where participants are selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 97). A matched comparison purposive sampling approach was used with cases selected from those who were trafficked and reintegrated fully, and those who were re-trafficked again (Patton 2014, 267). The researcher gained access to potential respondents through former World Vision staff and volunteers. Former World Vision India staff reached out to women and the research assistant contacted each person individually by phone to obtain their consent. Many participants in the study told us they did not even speak about their trafficking experiences with friends or family. When the researcher explained the purpose of the study, eight of the respondents gave consent. Participation in the study was voluntary and respondents were told that they could chose not to answer any questions or stop the interview if they wanted to.

Sampling Criteria

According to Merriam and Tisdell, participants for the research study represent the target group to be researched, and sampling for the research needs to be done from the target group for the case studies (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 97). In the context of this research study, this involved eliciting responses from young women aged eighteen to

twenty-five years who were trafficked as children in order to understand their experience of trafficking, rescue, rehabilitation, and access to services. Understanding their perspectives helped answer the key research questions.

According to Gerring, case study analysis usually focuses on a small number of cases which can provide insight into an issue or the problem under study (Gerring 2007, 18). Case study samples are small and usually range from a single case up to about 12 cases. Single case studies are also practiced in research (Gerring 2007, 19). Since the goal of a qualitative case study is not to recognize the results to the whole population (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 37), a small number of cases can provide sufficient data for analysis.

According to Patton, the researcher is best positioned to determine the number of cases required for the study. Sample size depends on various factors such as the purpose of the inquiry, what will be useful and credible, and what can be done based on available resources (Patton 2002, 244). The validity and insights from a qualitative study has more to do with the “information richness of the cases selected and observational/analytical ability of the researcher than with sample size” (Patton 2002, 244). Hence the choice of the number of study participants depends on the adequacy to respond to the purpose and research questions.

The following selection criteria were used: The first criterion was age of the participant. Participants included persons eighteen to twenty-five years old who were trafficked as children. According to Higley, “Young adulthood is a unique developmental period that occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years, during which there are key

developmental tasks that allow the young adult to participate in self-exploration and identity formation” (Higley 2019, 2). The researcher defined young women survivors as women who were trafficked as children and had participated in any government or non-governmental organisation’s intervention to rescue and rehabilitate them. The age group is from eighteen to twenty-five years to ensure that the survivors can share experiences of trafficking and their experience as survivors. The second criterion was gender. Participants were all female survivors of trafficking. The third criterion was the experience of trafficking. Females who were trafficked as children were selected. Furthermore, for the purpose of comparison, some females who were re-trafficked as children and who are currently in prostitution as adults were also included.

The fourth criterion for the selection of the respondents was each participant’s result on the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Test. The participants’ mental and emotional well-being were assessed using the PTSD checklist and, based on their well-being, they were selected to participate in the study. The PTSD checklist is a self-reporting rating to diagnose PTSD, though it is not meant to be used as a stand-alone tool for diagnosis. The questionnaire has seventeen questions related to mental and emotional well-being, and the participants were asked to rate where they are on the scale from one to five, with one being ‘not at all’ and five being ‘extremely.’ The scale is based on the DSM 5 diagnostic manual and identifies whether individuals suffer from or are vulnerable to PTSD (Weathers et al. 2013). Exclusion criteria included those who did not live in and around Kolkata for more than 2 years and women who were still struggling with trauma from the trafficking experience.

The sample for this case study involved seven cases of young women between the ages of eighteen to twenty-five years who were trafficked as children. Based on the proposal defense panel's recommendation to include women who have been re-trafficked as participants to ensure richer insight into re-trafficking, the researcher selected four women who were successfully rehabilitated and four women who were re-trafficked as children. However, since one of the selected participants showed high PTSD scores, it was determined that interviewing her could potentially be psychologically harmful to her. The interview was stopped, and she was referred to counseling services.

Among the final list of seven participants, three were trafficked, rescued and rehabilitated successfully; the other four were re-trafficked following rehabilitation or intervention, and as adults made a choice to go back to prostitution, or feel that they have little choice but to remain in prostitution for survival. For the purpose of the study, the researcher decided to use the term survivor for all the participants, based on the principle that each of them are in various phases of survivorship from their child trafficking experience. The term survivor is often used as a term of empowerment to note that an individual has overcome or is in the process of overcoming a trauma.

Criteria for Selection of NGO Leaders and Pastors

For the interviews with church leaders and NGO leaders, four church leaders and four NGO leaders were selected using purposive sampling. The church leaders and NGO leaders were chosen based on the criteria of them being present in Kolkata and being engaged in anti-trafficking efforts for at least five years or more. This ensured that they are familiar with the situation of trafficking and have been engaged in prevention efforts

and in supporting trafficking survivors. The churches and NGOs were among those the former World Vision project had collaborated with. The research assistant and a former World Vision staff member provided the contact details of the churches and NGOs involved in trafficking. Of the ten who were contacted, eight (four NGO leaders and four church pastors) were willing to participate in the research and were included.

Data Gathering Instruments

A semi-structured interviewing process was followed using open-ended questions to be able to explore or enquire further, based on key themes shared by the participants. The interviews were conducted by the researcher, supported by the research assistant and they were recorded on a Sony recording device. The interviews were translated and transcribed by the research assistant for further analysis. The seven participants were interviewed at least twice each until the researcher felt that all the research questions were sufficiently addressed. Sufficiency was gauged based on whether all the research questions had been explored in-depth. NVIVO, a computer software program that allows researchers to manage, analyse, and visualize qualitative data was used for the analysis of the qualitative data gathered.

Semi-structured interviews were used for the case studies. For case studies, face-to-face interviewing results in rich data, especially a semi-structured interview. The flexibility of a semi-structured interview makes it an excellent tool to gather information based on a structure but providing adequate flexibility to delve deeper into issues that emerge as part of the interview (Gillham 2000, 2).

Researcher's Journal

The researcher also kept a journal with notes to document the steps of the data collection process and think through emerging insights and conclusions reached. According to Annink, the process of taking notes can help researchers reflect on issues arising during the various phases of data collection (Annink 2016, 1). Keeping journal records helps a researcher document ideas and reasoning as the research and data collection progresses (Silverman 2005, 249). The researcher journaled and made notes during each step of the data collection and analysis process. Prior to data collection, the researcher wrote down the key ideas and assumptions. During the interviews, the researcher made notes about the interview techniques, type and flow of questions, and also taking notes on how the participants responded to the questions, their body language, emotions, and any interruptions. This helped the researcher improve how the interviews were conducted. The researcher also took notes on what additional insights were emerging that needed to be probed further. After the interviews, the researcher made notes on the similarities and differences between cases and emerging insights.

In-depth interviews were conducted to understand how they were trafficked, as well as their perspectives on what made them vulnerable. The case studies also explored vulnerability factors, including actors that enabled the child to be trafficked. In-depth (one-on-one) interviews were conducted with the women in separate sessions with each one. One-on-one interviews were also conducted with faith-based organization staff and church partners.

The research objectives helped guide the selection of research approaches and data collection methodologies. This research study used case studies to elicit data. Results were triangulated with additional interviews and with key informants from churches and NGO leaders.

Field Procedures

Figure 9 below depicts the flow of the research procedures. The researcher obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research (see Appendix B).

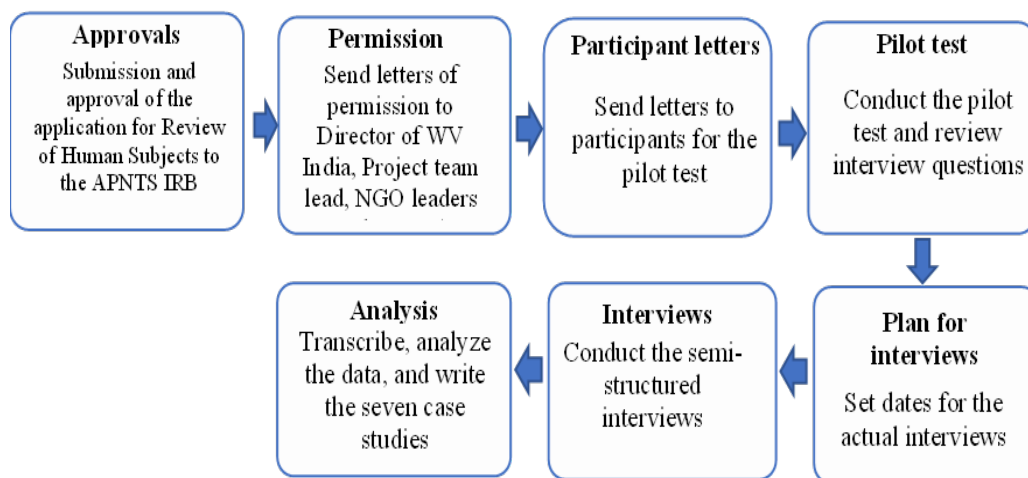


Figure 9. Primary Data Collection and Analysis Process for the Study, Data Collection, and Recording

Permissions were obtained to conduct the research. For the letters of permission, see Appendix C – Letter from the APNTS Program Director of Holistic Child Development; Appendix D – Letter to World Vision India and Their Response; and Appendix E – the Letter to the NGO Leaders and Church Pastors. Each participant in the study was asked for informed consent (Appendices F and G) and written consent obtained before their participation in the study. A PTSD checklist was used to ascertain

eligibility for the case study participants (Appendix H). Interviews were conducted using interview schedules (See Appendix I for the Interview Schedule for Trafficking Survivors and Appendix J for Interview Schedule with NGO Leaders and Church Pastors).

A local female research assistant was hired for the whole data collection process. The research assistant selected is a social work graduate with 13 years of experience in working with trafficked women. She is also trained in conducting trauma-focused therapy for trafficked children and adults. The research assistant signed a confidentiality commitment (see Appendix K). Having a female research assistant who is qualified helped build rapport and trust and allowed the women to open up to deep and sensitive issues about their experiences of being trafficked and how they currently live.

The case study participants were called by telephone and the research assistant explained the nature of the study and invited them to participate. At the beginning of the interview, an informed consent form was presented to them. Each point on the form was discussed and questions answered. The participants were assured that they could choose not to answer any question if they felt uncomfortable, or even stop the interview. Following this a PTSD checklist was used to ensure that the case study participants were eligible to be interviewed (see Appendix H for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for DSM-5).

Case study interviews were conducted by the researcher with the research assistant translating from English to Bengali and back. Data was recorded on interview schedules and a recorder was used during case study interviews. The recorded interviews were transcribed following the interviews and translated into English. The research

assistant helped the researcher collect the data and the data was transcribed into English by the research assistant. The Key Informant Interviews with the NGO and church leaders were conducted by the researcher in English since all the informants are fluent in English.

Pilot Testing

A pilot test of the tools was conducted using interviews with two survivors and an NGO leader and Church pastor (see Appendix I and Appendix J). The researcher contacted these professionals to review the research methodology and data collection tools. The following areas were tested as part of the process: the research design, development of instruments, data collection techniques, and characteristics of the sample. The researcher conducted the pilot study to test the concepts, methods, and tools used for the data collection. The pilot study helped identify potential issues and challenges that might arise, and the researcher addressed them. All instruments used in the gathering of data were pilot tested. After completing the pilot test, the researcher set the dates for the actual interviews with the research participants. When all data had been gathered, the transcription, analysis, and presentation of the data was carried out.

The researcher originally wanted to use International Justice Mission's ASO tool to assess survivor outcomes. The Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) tool was developed and validated by the International Justice Mission (IJM) to assess survivor outcomes and access to services (International Justice Mission 2018). The researcher decided against using the tool following the pilot study, because the tool is meant to be used to assess the impact of survivor interventions. At the proposal defense, the panel had

recommended that the researcher include women who have been re-trafficked in the sample to understand the issue of re-trafficking and vulnerabilities of survivors being re-trafficked better. Hence, four women who were re-trafficked as children were included in the sample. The ASO tool was deemed no longer appropriate since the re-trafficked women were in exploitative situations during the study. It did not seem appropriate to use the tool for women who were in situations of exploitation unless it was being used as an intake tool to determine a baseline (International Justice Mission 2018).

Data Collection and Recording

Qualitative data derived from the recorded interviews of the seven young women survivors and key informant interviews was transcribed and analysed using NVIVO. NVIVO has been recognized as an effective tool to manage and analyse qualitative data (Smyth 2006, 10).

The in-depth interviews and analysis of individual cases helped the researcher understand complex cultural issues and drivers that are involved in the process of trafficking. The perspectives of these young women on how to prevent trafficking and what services children and young women need were explored in depth through the interviews. The researcher, with the support of the research assistant, interviewed them for sixty to ninety minutes each, to understand the factors that made them vulnerable to being trafficked. The research questions were used as a framework to gather qualitative data. The case study interview guide was developed specifically for the research.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with church leaders and NGO leaders to gather information related to ecological factors that influence trafficking, vulnerability, key interventions, and perspectives on re-trafficking (see Appendix I).

Researcher's Reflexivity

Reflexivity is about a researcher acknowledging, being aware of, and accounting for their own role in the research. It is also about recognizing a researcher's background, assumptions, or preconceptions which might influence the research process, including the data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger 2020, 6). Reflexivity can impact different research contexts ranging from qualitative to quantitative and participatory action research. However, reflexivity is especially significant in qualitative research where the researcher's presence, perspective, and interpretations play a key role. The researcher uses reflexive methods to think about and reflect on observations and insights using research notes, field logbooks, memos, and checklists (Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger 2020, 6). The researcher made use of a field logbook and notes to capture issues of reflexivity throughout the process.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations of the study were informed consent, dealing with disparities in power, inducements for research participants, and confidentiality.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all interviewees. Former World Vision staff reached out to the research participants. The research assistant spoke to them over the

phone, introducing them to the study and inviting them to participate. A research overview and summary were provided. The case study participants and key informant interviewees were informed about the study- its purpose, objectives, how the case study participants would be engaged in the study, and how the information would be used. The participants were told that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The identities of the case study participants were kept anonymous. To protect their privacy, pseudonyms were used in the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data. The key informant leaders and pastors were also informed of the study and their consent was obtained. The data from the interviews was stored safely in password-protected data cards and laptops. Only the researcher and assistant had access to the data during translation, analysis, and interpretation. After the dissertation is completed, the digital data will be stored on a secure computer and research notebooks and other hard copies of materials will be stored under lock and key in the researcher's office. The data will be stored for three years and then destroyed.

Disparities in Power

The researcher-interviewee disparity in power can influence how the participants consent to the study and how they respond to the interviews. The researcher presented himself as a learner rather than a teacher or specialist. The researcher hired a female research assistant who is familiar with the local context and was able to communicate effectively with the case study interviewees. This helped reduce the power disparity. Additionally, since the World Vision project was no longer operating, there was no issue

of power disparity. There was no apparent power disparity with the NGO leaders or church pastors.

Inducement for Research Participants

Inducements to encourage research participation is an important issue to be considered as part of the ethical process to avoid the participants feeling coerced. The researcher collaborated with former World Vision staff (the project closed in June 2023 due to government suspension of World Vision India's foreign account) to reach the research participants. To ensure that the case study participants had finances to travel and to compensate for time off work Rs.500 (approximately 6.5 USD) was paid to the participants for each interview. NGO leaders and the church pastors were given a thank you gift of a pen set costing around Rs.800 (approximately 10 USD) after the interviews. This did not constitute inducement since both the case study participants and leaders were not informed of the payment or gift prior to the interviews.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process. The researcher informed the case study research participants of the importance of confidentiality and how the researcher would ensure confidentiality. The names of the case study participants have been changed in the research publications to ensure anonymity. The NGO leaders and church pastors (except one NGO leader) were comfortable with their names and the names of their NGOs being shared.

Support and Referrals

A PTSD checklist was used to screen case study participants. The research assistant is a certified trauma counsellor with thirteen years of experience in working with trafficked survivors and administered the PTSD checklist. If a participant had a high PTSD score, the interviewing was stopped, and the participant referred to counselling services. One of the young women selected for the case study showed high PTSD scores and the interviewing was stopped. The participant was counselled by the research assistant and referred to an aftercare organisation for further counselling, care, and support. A list of professionals for consultation in case of need for guidance (Appendix L) and referral service providers (Appendix M) was prepared to refer participants to trauma counseling and therapy services if they needed it.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing was conducted using transcribed notes from the case study interviews, key informant interviews and the researchers notes. NVIVO was used to record and code all data. Thematic analysis was performed, and emerging themes were recorded and further analyzed using NVIVO.

Validity and Credibility

Validity and credibility are important to ensure that research is of high quality. Validity has to do with the extent the study actually measures what it claims to measure. Credibility has to do with the truth (Silverman 2005, 212).

According to Patton (2014, 653), the credibility of qualitative inquiry depends on four inquiry elements: quality field work ensuring quality data, systematic analysis of data, the credibility of the inquirer, and a philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry. For this study, the researcher ensured that the four inquiry elements were present. The researcher also used triangulation of methods, data source triangulation, member check, and peer examination to ensure validity and credibility.

Triangulation

Triangulation enhances credibility of the qualitative inquiry (Patton 2014, 661). In the case of this research data, source triangulation and methodological triangulation methods were used to ensure credibility. Data source triangulation involves checking the consistency of the data across different data sources (Patton 2014, 676). Case study participants and key informant interviewees (NGO leaders and church pastors) were interviewed to provide data from their perspectives. Triangulation of data sources across different qualitative methods helps in checking the consistency of information using interviews, observations, and documents (Patton 2014, 662). For this research, the researcher used case study in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, journal notes, and observation. This helped enhance the credibility of the data.

Member Check

Member checking further enhances the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. It contributes to the depth and accuracy of research findings (Miles, Huberman, and Saldhana 2014, 309). Key findings were shared with two of the case study

participants involved in the study to cross check if the researcher had understood them well. Feedback from the participants was used to validate the data.

Peer Examination

Peer examination and feedback on the data and field notes help assure that the researcher is on the right track in terms of understanding and interpreting the data. Having a peer examine the data helps to detect any errors or misleading conclusions (Miles, Huberman, and Saldhana 2014, 298). The researcher shared the case study data and emerging findings with a peer researcher for review and feedback. One of the case study transcripts was shared with a practitioner who has completed her PhD to ensure that the data and emerging findings were of high quality. Following the analysis and interpretation, the approach, findings, and conceptual framework were shared with the same peer for her review and feedback. The feedback affirmed that the analysis process was of high quality and that the integration and findings were meaningful and provided rich insight for field practice.

Reliability

Reliability has to do with whether the results seen can be replicated if the same methods are used (Silverman 2005, 244). It also has to do with the consistency of the research finding over time or in varied contexts and the extent to which the study findings can be replicated (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 250). In this research study, reliability was strengthened using triangulation employing multiple sources of data, peer examination and maintaining a chain of evidence through documentation.

Limitations

The limitations of the study concerns limitations of design or the process followed that may affect the interpretation of findings. This includes the overall research methodology followed. Case study methodology is effective in identifying and exploring issues. Given the qualitative nature of the inquiry focused on former World Vision clients and survivors from Kolkata, the findings are limited to understanding the issue of trafficking and prevention in the context of anti-trafficking in Kolkata.

Another limitation was related to the translation of the data from Bengali to English. Idioms, metaphors, and local cultural sayings are sometimes difficult to translate into English, and this was challenging, but the research assistant who was also the translator understood the context well and translated the meaning effectively. Furthermore, the researcher is not a speaker of the local language and had to rely on the research assistant to support the translation process. To minimize mistranslation, the researcher selected an assistant with strong bilingual skills and oriented the assistant about the need to be careful in correct translation. A former World Vision staff member who is a native speaker was asked to review one of the case transcripts to check for accuracy in translation. This helped with assuring the accuracy of the transcription and translation process.

Summary

Chapter III focused on the research methodology employed in the study. This included the research approach followed, the selection of participants, data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations. The research design employed was qualitative in

nature and a case study research design was used. The elements of the research design including sample selection criteria, method, data collection procedures, and instruments used have been discussed in depth. The chapter also discussed how the data was reviewed and analyzed. Efforts to ensure the validity, reliability, and credibility of the study were also discussed.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter discusses the research findings from the case study interviews, key informant interviews of NGO leaders and church pastors, journal notes, and observations. The main aim of this chapter is to move towards understanding the vulnerabilities of young women survivors and exploring methods that have been effective in reducing vulnerability and enabling positive outcomes for them. The analysis was done in multiple stages. The interviews were recorded in audio format, transcribed verbatim, and translated. The data was then uploaded into NVIVO software for coding and identifying emerging categories of themes and sub-themes. These were then reviewed along with quotations from the respondents and highlighted. Key informant interviews were analyzed based on the themes emerging from the survivor respondents. Additional themes that were relevant and important from the key informants and which were related to themes expressed by the young women survivors were also highlighted. Themes were coded and organized according to the various levels in Bronfenbrenner's framework to help answer the research questions. The analysis was supported by an NVIVO expert and the analysis process and interpretation were shared with a peer debriefer and research assistant, both of whom have worked in the field of anti-trafficking in India for more than a decade, for validation and to ensure reliability of the emerging findings.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The respondent summary provides an overview of age, gender, marital status, household members, location, job, and trafficking status. The names of the respondents have been revised to protect their privacy. The respondents are from Kolkata, West Bengal, and have been supported by anti-trafficking organizations in Kolkata at various points in their journey of being trafficked, rescued, and reintegrated or re-trafficked. Eight young women survivors between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years were selected for the case study by purposive sampling. Four were trafficked and rehabilitated successfully and four were re-trafficked and exploited after intervention. One of the young women survivors who was rehabilitated was not able to proceed with the interviews because of a high PTSD score (obtained at the start of the in-depth interview). The final list of cases were seven young women survivors: three who were successfully rehabilitated and four who were re-trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Table 1. Overview of the Demographics of Case Study Respondents

Case Code	Name*	Age	Current Location	Marital Status	Educational level	Lives with	Livelihood	Status
C-1	Alia	25	Mullickpur, Baruiপুর	Single	Never been to school	Friend	Destiny staff	Reintegrated
C-2	Nazmi	25	Golpark, Kolkata	Single	5 th Standard	Hostel	Destiny staff	Reintegrated
C-3	Shetal	25	Dumdum, Kolkata	Married	10 th Standard	Husband and child	Cook, Vest making	Reintegrated
C-4	Sharufa	22	Baruiপুর	Married, Separated	8 th Standard	Mother	Engaged in Prostitution	Re-trafficked
C-5	Payel	19	Canning	Single	Never been to school	Daughter	Engaged in Prostitution	Re-trafficked
C-6	Reema	19	Sonagachi	Married	5 th Standard	Grand mother	Engaged in Prostitution	Re-trafficked
C-7	Subi	24	Sonagachi	Married	4 th Standard	Husband	Engaged in Prostitution	Re-trafficked

*Name changed to protect confidentiality of participants

Table 1 provides an overview of the demographics of the Case Study respondents.

The ages of the survivors range from nineteen years to twenty-five years of age. All the

survivors have lived in and around Kolkata city and have been served by NGOs and churches in Kolkata. Three of the survivors were single, and four are married, with one of the married survivors being separated. The educational status of the survivors is wide ranging—from two who never attended school at all to one of them even completing 10th standard (high school). One of the survivors lives in a women's hostel and one shares a room with a friend. The others live with their family members. C-1, C-2, and C-3 have been rehabilitated and reintegrated back into their communities, whereas C-4, C-5, C-6, and C-7 have been re-trafficked and are currently engaged in prostitution.

Survivors' Case Profile: Case Studies

This section provides summary case narratives of the young women survivors, their journeys, and experiences of their childhood, being trafficked as children, being rescued, and their current circumstances. The narratives are based on in-depth interviews with the survivors and reflect their journey, challenges, and aspirations from their perspective. The stories also discuss their early childhood experiences, vulnerabilities to trafficking, the process of trafficking, their rescue, rehabilitation, post-rehabilitation, support received from organizations, challenges faced during the pandemic, and their current situation. The following are the case studies: Case one: Alia, Case Two: Nazmi, Case Three: Shetal, Case four: Sharufa, Case five: Payal, Case six: Reema, Case seven: Subi.

Case Study One: Alia

Alia is a single 25-year-old young woman living in a rented house in Baruipur. Alia currently lives with her friend in a rented apartment and works at Destiny Reflections, Kolkata, a social enterprise focused on rehabilitation and restoration of trafficked survivors.

She was trafficked in December 2011 and taken to Canning for a week to prepare her to be made compliant and sold to a brothel. During this time, she was drugged and abused. Alia was rescued by a police raid in coordination with International Justice Mission and placed in Sukanya shelter home. She stayed at Sukanya home for two months and in February 2012 she was transferred to Mahima India's Shelter Home, where she continued to stay and receive support until April 2016. Upon being released, she went to stay with her mother. After about four months, she moved in with her friend in a rented flat. She lived there for six months and in February of 2017, she requested Mahima Shelter home to allow her to stay in their adult facility for some time. Alia stayed there for a year and in May 2018 she moved out to live independently again. According to her, she has been successfully reintegrated into society.

When Alia came for the interview, she was well dressed and carried herself with dignity. She seemed nervous initially, but settled down quickly after being offered coffee and a snack prior to starting the interview. Even when the researcher was asking questions related to the PTSD checklist, she started sharing her story before any question was asked.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Alia grew up in a home that was filled with domestic violence. Her father used to drink a lot and physically abused her mother regularly. Though her father used to beat the mother, he would not be allowed by the mother to beat the children. Alia's father died when she was five years old. This was followed by the death of her older brother due to an illness. To be able to feed the children, Alia's mother started working as a domestic helper in houses nearby. To supplement their mother's income, Alia and her sister had to drop out of school and started working as domestic helpers in the neighborhood. For a period of time, she lived with the family she was working for as a domestic helper. She was not paid a salary, and was physically and emotionally tortured by her employers. Zimmerman and Kiss found that labour migration places girls and women at risk and it is estimated that over half of the world's 215 million young workers work in hazardous conditions (Zimmerman and Kiss 2017, 3).

When Alia was fourteen years old, her sister told her about a relative offering them a job in Delhi to work with a family as a domestic worker and a nanny for a salary of Rs.7000 and Rs. 5000 respectively. Alia's sister convinced her to come along for the job. The relative came and met them and took them to Canning in West Bengal, where they stayed at a place for a week. Alia realized that the place was unsafe since there were women in prostitution staying in the same place and people were abusing drugs. She was drugged and sexually abused each night. But she only remembered waking up each morning feeling drowsy. She recalled, "When I woke up in the morning, my whole body used to ache. I think they used to mix something in my food. My sister was in another

place and was not with me during that time. I felt they mixed something in my food, because I found it very difficult to wake up in the morning and wanted to sleep throughout.”

After about a week, she was with the group as they were on their way to Delhi, but by a turn of events, the group was intercepted by the police, and she was rescued with support from the International Justice Mission (IJM). She was placed in a government run shelter home called Sukanya and later transferred to Mahima India, a Christian NGO-run shelter home in Kolkata. Alia fondly remembers her time with Mahima, where she received tuition to study reading and writing, mental health care, psychosocial support, and vocational training. She received medical care whenever she was sick.

After a year with Mahima Shelter home, she was able to get a job with a freedom business called Sari Bari where she was employed until 2019. She then joined Destiny Foundation at the end of 2019 as a worker. Alia expressed that survivors of trafficking are very vulnerable even when they leave the shelter homes, and that they need to have a secure job with the opportunity of saving some money to be able to support themselves well. This is especially important when survivors are unable or unwilling to return to live with their families due to shame, fear of stigma and discrimination, or fear of being trafficked again. She also said that it was important to ensure that the survivors with jobs are paid adequately. Her own experience of getting a rented house, transportation, and managing her food expenses with her small salary from her first job was challenging. While shelter homes are critical and they play an important role in providing a safe space for healing and restoration of rescued children, the children and women need to be placed

back into their communities (Benham and Forbes 2017, 315). After they leave the shelter home, they need to find permanent safe shelter and jobs to sustain themselves.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

When asked about COVID and its impact, Alia said she faced a lot of challenges after losing her job during the prolonged lockdowns enforced by the state government. Even food was a problem, and she was thankful that a local Sikh temple helped by handing out cooked food every day. She said, “The main issue was that there was no money or any source of income. We didn't have enough food, and we had to go through a lot of struggles.” Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart highlight this fact when discussing challenges that economically poor families face due to the impact of loss of jobs and rising prices (Cornia, Jolly, and Stewart 2020, 1). This was clearly what Alia faced too. Alia mentioned that the temple provided dry food rations and gave her support for house rent. This support was helpful at the time.

Effective Intervention Practices in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Alia also spoke about the need for follow up after survivors leave the shelter homes. It is critical to ensure continued social support to survivors. This, she said, prevents stigma in the community and also encourages survivors to continue in spite of the challenges they face. She mentioned, “If you (NGOs) don’t visit them, then the neighbors will say that we have really come from a bad place (brothel). So, it’s important to support the girls . . . you are like a shield for them.” Benham and Forbes also affirm that it is important to continue to monitor and support child survivors, after they return to

their homes and communities (Benham and Forbes 2017, 317). Though Benham and Forbes specify children need on-going support, it is clear that survivors like Alia feel that ongoing long-term monitoring and support to survivors like her will add value.

Alia felt that to ensure their rehabilitation and restoration, survivors need to be taught to manage finances and live independently. She also mentioned that it was important to bring survivors together for workshops and training to give them a sense of belonging. She wanted to be able to meet with other survivors and share her challenges and successes. She felt that continuing mental health services and counselling is also important since the trauma they experienced needs to be dealt with. Meshkovsha, Bos and Seigal also highlight the fact that successful reintegration will require social support through rich relationships (Meshkovska, Bos, and Siegel 2021, 166).

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

Alia mentioned that Mahima India was crucial in her rehabilitation process. Mahima India's approach to rehabilitation involved provision of holistic support, including integrating spiritual components to their curriculum. Alia described that her faith provided her the strength to navigate the challenges in life. International Justice Mission was also actively engaged in her rescue and provision of support during the COVID lockdown period. IJM has implemented interventions for survivors in India and several other countries focused on rescue and aftercare. Their case management approach and focus on survivor outcomes has helped in setting a standard of care (International Justice Mission 2018, 8). Alia said that even after leaving the shelter home, she was in touch with staff who supported her in times of challenge.

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

When asked what survivors need the most, Alia responded, “Your support,” meaning that support from NGOs and individuals made a big difference. She said that it is important for survivors to be in a safe and structured environment where they can continue their education and receive vocational training. She mentioned that counseling and life skills education also made a big difference. She said that through these interventions survivors will be able to overcome their trauma and move on. Surtees talks about the importance of reintegration and that plans need to take into consideration a survivor’s individual progress and sometimes continue long after the generic timeframe (Surtees 2022, 10).

Alia also felt that prevention of trafficking in the first place is also critical. She added that her own niece (sister’s daughter) is in a vulnerable situation because her sister is engaged in trafficking, but she added that she was not able to intervene or do anything to help her niece. She explained, “Now my sister is in a joint family, living with her in-laws. I feel a little scared when I see her children, because I feel that they are not safe from my sister. I want to keep them safe.” Alia also felt it was important to have anti-trafficking centers in every village to educate people about trafficking and its negative impact. She felt they can also be a place for survivors to be engaged and support each other and other vulnerable children. She said, “Our work is to explain to them just like how Jesus explained everything – what to do and how to do it. We must keep trying! We will not give up . . . we can spread awareness. And they will learn.” Alia felt passionately about reaching out to her own niece and other children from the villages who are in a

vulnerable situation. She saw a gap and wants to be able to educate vulnerable girls and families “like Jesus did.”

Alia’s dream is to start her own sewing business and have a safe and secure life. She also expressed that she wanted to continue to support her family and help them and her community to protect other children from being trafficked or exploited.

Case Study Two: Nazmi

Nazmi was a 25-year-old young woman living in Kolkata in a hostel for working women. Nazmi was trafficked in April 2010 to a place called Haldia in West Bengal. She was in the brothel for two weeks and rescued in a raid coordinated by the International Justice Mission and the police in May 2010. She was placed in Mahima India’s Shelter Home the next day, and she stayed in the home till April 2015. She then moved into Ashray home for survivors run by Kolkata Christian Fellowship. After Ashray home closed down, Nazmi moved into another short stay home run by Destiny Reflection, followed by a hostel for students and working women, where she continues to live now.

Her appearance seemed more masculine than feminine with her short boy’s haircut and rough demeanor. Nazmi looked nervous and wore a T-Shirt with jeans. Growing up, Nazmi lived with her parents and siblings in a village outside Kolkata. Nazmi had completed her fifth standard at school, and she is currently employed at Destiny Reflections and lives in a hostel in Kolkata. Nazmi describes herself as having been successfully rehabilitated.

She had seven sisters and a brother. Nazmi said she was quite naughty growing up. She would not attend classes during school days. “I would never stay at home. I was

busy running around all over the village, you know, getting fruits from the neighborhood trees. And so I used to go around doing all of this and I hardly stayed at home.”

When she was about twelve years old, Nazmi and her sister were trafficked together and sold to a brothel in West Bengal. International Justice Mission with the support of local police rescued her along with other girls. She was placed in the Mahima India Shelter home.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Nazmi’s family was very poor. Her father had a physical disability and walked with a limp. This meant he could not find a job. Her mother used to take up odd jobs to support the family. She shared that her childhood was very difficult and her family faced a lot of hardship. She said she did not want to talk much about it. It seemed like the memories were too painful and she wanted to move on to the next question.

Nazmi and her sister were invited by two boys for a movie and when they went for the movie, they were given some puffed rice to eat. After eating the puffed rice they lost consciousness. When she woke up, Nazmi was in a brothel and forced to provide sexual services to customers. This is similar to Rajan’s observations about how young children are often deceived and trafficked for exploitation (Rajan 2013, 98). Because she was very small and still a child she was hidden in the terrace or bathroom to avoid police raids. After about two weeks, Nazmi was rescued during a police raid supported by International Justice Mission. She was then sent to the Mahima India home for trafficked girls. Nazmi stayed in the home for about five years.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

Nazmi said that she was able to save a lot of money when she was employed at Ruhaman Designs. Her savings came in handy during the COVID lockdowns. She not only had enough to take care of herself but was also able to send money to her family to help her mother. Nazmi reiterated from her experience that having a job at a safe place meant everything to her. It was clear that she derived a sense of her identity and security from her job. Being someone who was careful with her money and with good saving habits, she was able to manage much better than many other survivors.

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation

After Nazmi's rescue, she was placed in the Mahima India's shelter home, where she stayed for five years. She was provided with medical and legal aid immediately after the rescue, and later with mental health support. She also received home schooling which helped her gain literacy. In addition, Nazmi received vocational training in Ruhamah Designs, a freedom business, and she got a job there later as well. She said that with her job she was able to save some money and support her family back in the village as well. Nazmi was very emphatic that survivors need to be helped to find good jobs so that they become independent and are able to stand on their own feet.

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

Right from her rescue supported by IJM to her placement at the Mahima shelter home, Nazmi was supported by faith-based non-governmental organisations. From her perspective, she felt that getting a job made all the difference in her life, and she is still

grateful for the kind of support she received. The establishment of economic stability is crucial to successful reintegration (Meshkovska, Bos, and Siegel 2021, 166).

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

Nazmi said that some of her peers have returned to prostitution, and this was something she could not comprehend and was upset about. Clearly, she felt that this was an area that still needs to be addressed, although she ascribed it to the girls' own choices. She says of one of her former friends who was with her at the shelter home:

I saw it with my own eyes.... She goes there to do this work [prostitution]. . . . She told me not to tell anyone. She has a daughter. I told her, 'If you do this work, then your daughter will also learn the same thing. Why are you doing this?' She said, 'No, this is my income.' The thing is that she has seen a lot of cash money in her hands and that is why she is doing all of this.

Nazmi felt that money was the main motivator for girls getting back into situations of exploitation, which is why she kept getting back to the point that having a secure job was everything. Of those who have returned to situations of exploitation she said, "They have seen so much money there that they cannot leave [prostitution]."

Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick also make the same observation in their report that some survivors are re-trafficked because of economic pressures and financial needs (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54).

Nazmi also spoke of the importance of agency and the need for individuals to make choices and stick to them despite the hardships. She refers to resilience to push forward without falling back. She said:

It's their individual choice. I was in Mahima home, and if I wanted to, I could have gone back to the same place [brothel]. I know that that place is not good. To be able to stand on your own feet, to be able to speak up and, when somebody

asks where you are working, I am able to say that I'm standing on my own feet, and I earn a living for myself.

Nazmi said that survivors need to get stable jobs and be independent. All the interventions need to lead towards that outcome. She said, "I am not that gullible anymore. Now I am more aware and cautious. I think before doing anything."

Nazmi was happy with her current situation. She feels that the fact that she is working and contributing has made a big difference. She is able to support her family back home and her family often praises her. She said that her neighbours and community members often say she is supportive of her family and she feels that the appreciation she experiences motivates her to do even better.

Case Study Three: Shetal

Shetal was a 25-year-old living in Dumdum, Kolkata. Shetal now lives with her husband and 3-year-old baby girl. Shetal was around twelve years old when she was trafficked and forced into prostitution. She was trafficked in the month of January 2013 and was forced to service customers for two and a half months in a private brothel in Thakurpukur, West Bengal. She was rescued after two months in March 2013 in a raid coordinated by the International Justice Mission and the police. She was initially placed in Sanlaap Shelter Home where she stayed for seven months. Then, in November 2013, she was transferred to Mahima Shelter home to receive holistic support. She continued to stay in Mahima till she went back home in November 2018.

Shetal had completed her 10th standard and was employed as a cook and did part-time jobs to earn an income. She had to leave her job as a full-time chef during COVID

when her child was born. Shetal went through rehabilitation at the Mahima India home and she says that she is successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Growing up as a child, Shetal lived with her parents. Shetal recollected her childhood and said it was comparatively good even though her family had regular financial problems. Her father could not work, and her mother could not find a job, either. Her parents usually argued a lot, and her dad used to physically beat her mother often. Domestic violence is a major factor that pushes vulnerable children out of their home to take risks (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). In spite of the financial situation and the violence at home, she was able to go to school and enjoyed going to school and studying. Shetal said she had a lot of friends growing up.

Shetal was about ten years old when her father passed away. The poverty and financial challenges became worse. After her father died, Shetal's mother relocated to Kolkata along with Shetal and her younger sister to find a job as a domestic helper. Shetal looked for work and was directed to meet a lady in the neighbourhood who she was told would be able to help her. Shetal went to her home and discussed the work. She had asked for some water, and once she drank it, she lost consciousness. When she woke up, she realised the house was locked and there was no escaping. Even at the age of twelve, she was forced to provide sexual services to men who came to the house. She was warned that if she tried to escape, her sister who was just eight years old would be kidnapped and made to do sex work in her place.

Shetal felt trapped and she had no choice. She felt she had to protect her sister and agreed to work for the lady. The lady knew that Shetal and her mother were in a desperate situation, and she was exploited. Eventually, Shetal was allowed to go home once or twice a week, but she was constantly watched by men from the place so that she would not escape. Shetal's mother thought she was only doing domestic work at the house. Shetal ended up living with the lady and other women in prostitution and had to service customers. She said, "I used to think that now that I was there, I would never be able to get out." Rajan observed that forced servitude and sexual exploitation is a major challenge faced by young girls who are trafficked (Rajan 2013, 97).

Shetal was rescued after two and a half months of being in the lady's house. A raid supported by International Justice Mission and the police was successful, and she was rescued and placed in Mahima India Shelter home. Shetal got married in 2018 but her marriage has been far from happy. Her husband is addicted to alcohol and often beats her.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

Shetal mentioned that she struggled financially during the COVID lockdowns. Her mother too faced financial difficulties. She said that IJM stepped in and helped her mother to get groceries from time to time. Shetal was pregnant with her child during COVID and she said she found it difficult to access medical care. IJM provided her with Rs. 4000 (50USD), which she said was really helpful to her at the time. They also provided months' worth of groceries. She also remarked that the local health center

provided her with food rations for her baby on a weekly basis. Additionally, her mother-in-law provided some support.

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Shetal fondly remembered her stay at the Shelter home. She received support from International Justice Mission and was still being supported financially when she had a need. Shetal was able to complete her high school (year ten). Being a good student, she was able to learn to use computers and learnt sewing as well. She also said she had dance lessons, which she enjoyed. Shetal also was provided with mental health services including counselling and psycho-social support. Shetal also joined spoken English classes organised by Mahima in partnership with Crossroads Church Cincinnati. She was also trained in embroidery at Ruhamah Designs. Ruhamah is the business wing of Justice and Care. Even when she was in Mahima she worked with Ruhamah Designs. After completing her high school, she got a job as a chef in a café where another Mahima resident worked as well. When talking to her about effective interventions, she responded:

Education is very important. We need to focus on completing education. Everybody has a dream, so whatever she desires, she needs to strive for that. She might think that because she was trafficked, she will not be able to do anything in life. These negative thoughts are always in their head. But when I think about it, I never thought that I would be able to restart my education or that I would get any training or that I would get a job. These girls also need a lot of counseling during that time. Explaining these things to them is very critical. The staff should continuously talk to them. And help them to do what they want to so that they can fulfill their dreams.

Shetal felt assured because of the support she received from Mahima and IJM. She shared that she was involved as a spokesperson and won awards which recognized her contribution to the prevention of trafficking. Shetal also felt the faith she gained in her journey of rehabilitation is giving her the hope and strength she needs today. She shared:

I pray to my Lord about everything. I tell him, 'You take care of me!' Before I do anything, he knows what am I going to be doing. . . . Today, in my married life, my husband is not good, but I must stay with him until my daughter grows up. That doesn't mean I will tolerate everything. I must remain strong. No matter what happens, the Lord is making me strong. I will not take any wrong steps, no matter what, because I must keep in mind that I have a daughter and I must take full responsibility for her. . . . Yes, if my Lord was not there with me, a lot of things could have gone wrong. I might not have been rescued that day. I might have not been able to come out from there. I wouldn't have spent nine years in Mahima or five years in this marriage.

Surtees discusses resilience as a key factor in successful re-integration (Surtees 2022, 3). Faith and hope help make survivors more resilient and gives them a purpose to move forward in spite of the challenges they face. Shetal seemed quite resilient and often referred to the fact that she will do what it takes for her daughter to succeed.

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

She said, "You have to guide yourself . . . that is what I know. I have that understanding. There are things that went wrong in my life. You must have it in you that you will not trust people easily. I am strong now because I received that support from Mahima and IJM." Shetal said that even after her marriage, she still continued to receive support from Mahima and IJM. After her baby was born, staff from Mahima gave her money to help with expenses.

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

Shetal said that poverty is the main reason traffickers take advantage of girls in the village she came from. Often girls get married off as children and end up in brothels. She feels that if organisations can set up vocational training centers in villages, then the girls will be able to find local jobs and not have to leave their villages. She said that awareness programmes were crucial so that communities are made aware of issues like trafficking. She said that awareness will help parents be more cautious with their children.

She also felt that it was important to help survivors focus on academics and vocational training to fulfil their dreams and secure a stable future. She said that when girls leave the shelter homes, they immediately fall in love and get married. She felt that this was not good. She said, “There is a time for everything, and you need to wait for the right time and opportunity for it to happen.”

Shetal felt that survivors are often stigmatised and face rejection in their community. Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg make the same observation (Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg 2015, 8). Even if they find a good job and try to earn a proper living, they carry the stigma of having been a trafficked woman. She feels a safe place to work is crucial. She spoke about the importance of a place where survivors can showcase their creativity, even if only a boutique, café, or restaurant, and that this could make a big difference. Shetal said that it was important to strengthen vocational training or education interventions so that survivors can pursue their dreams. She also felt that follow-up after rehabilitation was crucial so that the safety of survivors is ensured. She feels bad that

many of her peers left the home but with no regular follow up. Even the thought that “there is a trusted person who cares for me” can make a big difference, she said. Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron say that long term and ongoing support services are important for survivors (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 26).

Shetal said that her biggest inspiration is her 3-year-old daughter, who she feels gives her the strength to move on in spite of all the challenges she experiences. Her desire is to work hard to give her daughter a good life. She said, “I have to get a better job, because I have to think about my daughter’s future and think about her education. I realize that I must be strong for her. I hope for the better. I wish to be better than what my current situation is.”

Shetal’s desire is to start her own café and make specialized food items and drinks. She said she wants to run her café with excellence. Velazco says that restoration of losses including hope is very important for reintegration (Velazco 2017, 220). Shetal is full of hope for the future!

Case Study Four: Sharufa

Sharufa was 19-year-old young woman from Canning, near Kolkata, and she currently lives with her mother and her brother who live and work in Mumbai. Sharufa was trafficked in October 2019 and rescued in February 2020 after being trafficked and forced into prostitution for about four months. She was rescued by Delhi police and placed overnight in a short-stay home in Meerut. She later was transferred to Nobodigonto Shelter Home, where she stayed for eight months, and was sent back home in October 2020. Sharufa had completed eighth standard and was married but separated.

Sharufa said that she was trafficked and re-trafficked as a child, and was engaged in prostitution at the time of the study.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Sharufa lost her father when she was very young, about three years old. She was sent to live with her grandmother since her mother could not take care of her. Her mother worked and sent the grandmother money on a monthly basis to take care of Sharufa. But Sharufa had a very difficult time at her grandmother's place. She was regularly beaten very badly. When she was only seven years old, she was made to do household work and help with cooking for a large family. She did not attend school regularly because of this. Even though she did not attend school, she was able to complete her class four. Later, her mother saw her condition and took her to live with her. She was then able to complete class eight. Poverty and illiteracy are major vulnerability factors for trafficking (Sarkar 2014, 483), and those were the key factors in the case of Sharufu's trafficking as well.

Sharufa shared her story of trafficking. She said she had an argument one morning with her mother and felt extremely low emotionally. She did not go to school that day but went to a railway station and sat down on a bench. Two girls approached her and asked her why she was not in school. They gave her something to eat but she refused. One of the girls gave her a shawl to wipe her face with and as soon as she did that, she lost consciousness. When she woke up she was in a closed room. She had been sold to a brothel in Meerut! When she refused to comply, she was beaten, tortured, and forced to do sex work.

After some time, Sharufa met a customer who spoke her mother tongue, Bengali. He managed to reach her mother, and eventually she was rescued by the police. She was then placed in the Nobodigonto Shelter home for about eight months. Following her rescue, Sharufa received support from World Vision India. She became a spokesperson against human trafficking. However, she faced a lot of stigma and discrimination after her rescue and return back to her home. Dahal Joshi, and Swahnberg, report that stigma and discrimination often push survivors back into being exploited (Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg 2015, 8). In spite of the stigma, Sharufa's involvement as a spokesperson in the Girl Power Group helped her regain her value and identity. Being part of the Girl Power Group also gave her meaning and a sense of pride. She felt that people in her village looked up to her. She shared, "If anything happens in the village, then they come to me to for help. I feel very proud. That is because of World Vision, the people from my village who initially hated me now come to me seeking help. This makes me very, very happy that these people talk to me with respect."

Though Sharufa functioned as a spokesperson for a while, it was evident from our conversation that she was re-trafficked and currently operating as a flying sex worker. She said that her boyfriend took her to a place and took pornographic pictures of her and started blackmailing her. The financial problems in the house further compelled her to continue as a sex worker to help meet the financial needs of the family.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

During COVID, Sharufa was in the shelter home, and she returned after the lockdowns. When she returned home, things were quite difficult. Her family was

struggling financially. She recalls that World Vision India provided her with cash as well as food rations. Sharufa's situation, like that of many of the other survivors, became worse at the time of the pandemic, and she had to depend on non-governmental organisations like World Vision to help them manage basics like food and rental expenses. Even though there was support available, the fact that she faced this hardship immediately after coming from the shelter home could have been a trigger factor in her being re-trafficked for sexual exploitation. At some point, because of the financial and social pressure, Sharufa was pushed back into prostitution, and this time she said she was fully aware of her choice. Crawford however says that often women who make a 'choice' to get into prostitution are compelled by economic pressure, or in some cases trauma bonding where the victim is manipulated or pressured to go back into the sex trade (Crawford 2017b, 273).

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Reflecting on her own situation, Sharufa shared that jobs are important, and if survivors did not have sufficient income, they turned back to prostitution. The literature also makes this very clear. Having a stable paying job is a protective factor and helps women reintegrate successfully (Sanchez and Pacquiao 2018, 98).

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

Sharufa was supported by World Vision after she returned from the government shelter home. She even became a Girl Power Group leader, and, along with her peers, helped stop a few child marriages. She also interacted with government officials and

spoke on stage testifying about the ills of trafficking. She even filed a case against an advocate who sexually abused her when she approached him to help apply for victim's compensation.

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

While Sharufa was supported after her rescue, her vulnerability to being trafficked again rose from the fact that her family did not have financial stability. She herself did not have a good job or a proper source of income. She was vulnerable to being exploited and currently is operating as a sex worker, although she does not explicitly say that. She referred to the fact that her boyfriend threatened to expose pornographic pictures of her if she did not listen to him. It was clear she was in an exploitative relationship. Sharufa's experience is aligned with Jobe's study on re-trafficking which reports that, because of financial pressure, girls who were rescued go back to prostitution (Jobe 2010, 13). According to Sharufa, job placements are critical after rehabilitation, but that did not happen in her case.

Case Study Five: Payal

Payal is a survivor living in with her three-year-old daughter in Baraipur near Kolkata. Payal, who is now twenty-two years old, was trafficked as a child, rescued, and re-trafficked for sexual exploitation. Payal was trafficked by her own aunt in October 2019. She was kept in a brothel and was exploited for five months. After rescue by the police, she was placed in Sanlaap Shelter Home in March 2020. Payal stayed at the shelter home for three and a half months and was sent home in July 2020. Payal seemed

hesitant to provide specific information on when she was re-trafficked when asked, but said that she was manipulated to get into prostitution again sometime after she returned home.

Payal said that she had never been to school, was single, and currently lived with her daughter in a red-light district. Payal said she was engaged in prostitution at the time of the interviews.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

While Payal comes from a broken home and was an extremely vulnerable child. When she was about three years old, her parents separated. Her mother separated because she decided to continue to earn her living as a woman in prostitution. Her father wanted to take Payal with him, but her mother did not allow him to take her. This made life very difficult for Payal growing up. Her mother did not send her to school. Eventually her mother gave birth to other children while working in the sex trade. Payal wanted to go and live with her father, but he had remarried and her grandmother did not want Payal to come and stay with the father's family. Payal said, "My life has been ruined by my mother." Montgomery observes that it is not uncommon for mothers involved in prostitution bring their daughters into it (Montgomery 2014, 169). In Payal's case, her aunt was instrumental in luring her.

Payal's aunt, who was also a sex worker, tricked Payal when she visited her and made her engage in sex with a customer. Following that experience Payal was convinced that she was also destined to be a sex worker and so continued. Payal stayed with her aunt and entertained customers for four months. She was rescued during a police raid and

placed in Sanlaap Shelter Home for girls. She was in the home for three and a half months. During her stay at the home, she was taught a few skills like sewing and block printing. Payal realized that she was pregnant when she was in the home.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

During COVID, Payal was supported by a friend who helped her get to the hospital to have her baby after her restoration post-rescue. Payal mentioned that her landlady was also helpful during that time, but it was really a tough time. She said her friend was very helpful and supported her a lot. Child Line also supported her with groceries for a year.

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

After Payal went back home, Child Line representatives would follow up with her over the phone. She was also supported for about a year by Child Line providing her with groceries. Payal mentioned that World Vision also supported her during this time. World Vision offered to help her get a micro-finance loan to start up a small business, but Payal declined the offer because she lacked the confidence to manage a business. Pandey, Tewari and Bhowmick say that if economic issues are not addressed, then the possibility of re-trafficking is high because of social exclusion and economic difficulties (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54). This was true in Payal's case.

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

World Vision India provided Payal with support after her rescue by training her and guiding her. But Payal was unable to utilise the offer to take up a micro-finance loan. Payal did not receive any of the psycho-social support or crucial counselling services that could have made a difference for her.

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

Payal shared that to support survivors' post-integration, it is important to have conversations with them. She feels it is important for NGO workers and survivors to come together and work out how they can be supported better. She said, "They need to discuss and work out together what can be done—what are the areas for improvement, what can be done to improve the condition of each girl, because all the girls are not same here."

Payal also felt that it was important for parents to be vigilant towards their children. Parents need to be taught parenting skills so that they can support their children. She felt that if there is no supervision or support, they could be trafficked again. Payal also felt that the girls who must support their families financially need to have access to job opportunities in a safe place. Reflecting on her own experience, Payal said that organisations need to help build awareness about trafficking and the need to protect children. She said, "We need to build awareness amongst the children . . . irrespective of their background, every child needs to be saved."

It is unfortunate that Payal is still in the sex trade and her child is in an equally vulnerable state. She blames her mother for her experience and current situation, and she

has not been able to get out herself either. Payal says she wants to work for her daughter and her future. She knows that she has to do something for her daughter, but the truth is that her daughter will be vulnerable unless she gets out of the sex trade. She said, “I have to try. If I don't try, nothing will happen. I have to keep my mind strong and keep trying.” Despite her challenges, Payal dreams of a brighter future for her child. She knows what is needed but does not have the physical or spiritual resources to get there.

Case Study Six: Reema

Reema is a 19-year-old survivor of child sex trafficking. Reema lives with her paternal grandmother and nephew in Kolkata's biggest red light area. The researcher remembers meeting Reema during a preliminary visit in 2018 when visiting World Vision's anti-trafficking project interventions. Reema was participating in a tuition center event for adolescents, and she stood out because she was very bright and asked questions when he visited. It was a bit disheartening to see her in this condition during the interview. Reema had just come back from the hospital after her third miscarriage and looked very thin and tired. She also was HIV positive and very frail.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Reema was born in Mumbai in 2004, but her parents moved to Kolkata and she lived there with her parents. When she was two and a half years old, her father separated from her mother. When her brother was born, Reema's mother left her with her father, took her newborn son, and moved out of the house. When she was four years old, Reema lost her dad. She was then placed in a hostel for girls where she lived for about five years.

Reema studied till grade five but dropped out after. She eloped with a boy from school, got married, and miscarried within a year. Reema then started working as a dancer and performed at special events.

Reema experienced a lot of physical violence in the house growing up. Her grandmother was very abusive, both verbally and physically. Reema's experience is aligned with Montgomery's assertion that in many cases, domestic violence drives minor girls to want to leave their home to find a better place, and instead they end up in a worse situation in a brothel as a slave (Montgomery 2014, 169). In Reema's case, she would be taunted by her grandmother to get out and become a sex worker. Eventually, in 2019, when she was about 15 years old, her aunt introduced her to prostitution. She would force Reema to sleep with customers even against her wishes. Reema seemed to imply that this was her fate and she had no choice because she has to take care of the family financially.

Reema stated that she was always worried about her nephew and for his future. She said she feels responsible for him because her sister, the boy's mother, was a drug addict and would often go missing. She feels that in order to take care of him and her grandmother, the only option she has is to work as a woman in prostitution. She said, "Sometimes I am under so much pressure. If I don't go to work, they will have no food to eat."

Reema said she wanted to put her nephew in a hostel where he will be safe. He now goes to a local NGO-run play center in the area where he receives academic support and gets a meal at the end of the day. Her constant focus was on her nephew, saying she is doing what she was doing to take care of him.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

Reema said that COVID and the lockdown were particularly difficult for her and her family. She said the people in her area found it very difficult. Her grandmother would literally go begging for food. Reema eventually went away to another brothel area in Medinipur. One of her aunts was a brothel manager, and she helped Reema's grandmother during the lockdown. Reema said that in spite of the lockdown, the brothels in Medinipur were busy and she made some money working there for three months. This helped her tide through the rest of the COVID lockdowns when she got back home. A World Vision International Report states that girls were more vulnerable to rape, trafficking, genital mutilation, and child marriage during COVID because of their already vulnerable situation (World Vision International 2020, 6). This was definitely the case with Reema. Her already vulnerable state was made more vulnerable by the pandemic.

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Reema received support from World Vision and Deepika Welfare Society, but was caught up in the web of re-trafficking and sexual exploitation because of the context she was in. Her family were encouraging her to get into the sex trade to earn an income, and the added responsibility of supporting her family financially increased her vulnerability. Reema shared that she felt obligated to support her family, and sex work was the only option she had. She travelled to other places providing sexual services as a flying sex worker. She also worked in the brothels of Sonagachi. Reema said that survivors need regular counselling and support from the time they enter the shelter home

until they are ready to leave. She said, “If they get proper help, why will they come here?”

She also added if the girls are trained properly and get a job, they can sustain their family. She said a salary of Rs.10,000 per month would be enough for the girls to support themselves and to take care of their family. She also felt it was important that survivors have access to people they can call when they need help.

Contributions of Faith-based Non-governmental Organisations

When World Vision started its work in Sonagachi, Reema joined the educational programme. This was before she got into prostitution. She left after a few months because she got upset with one of the volunteers, who she claimed spoke rudely with her during an event in front of the other students. Later, she was supported by Deepika Welfare Society, a church based organization where she received educational support and counselling. Reema said she heard about Jesus during her time in Deepika.

Improvements that Need to be Made to Programs for Young Women Survivors

Reema felt that if trafficking were to be stopped, the traffickers and the madams who manage the brothels must be stopped and prosecuted. She said, “They have to be put in a prison and we should not allow them to get out.” Reema felt that girls need to have a safe space where they can be protected. She said that rescued girls should be given the opportunity to focus on their education and learn life skills. She feels that girls should be put in hostels where they can be safe (given that her home was not a safe place for her). She felt that very poor families need food aid and support in times of need. She added

that if livelihoods of poor people are protected, then children can also be safe! Access to sustainable livelihood options was critical to ensuring that re-trafficking does not happen (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 14). Reema said that she will continue to be in prostitution because she has to take care of her nephew and give him a stable future. Reema said that she will leave prostitution when she is able to fulfill her dreams for her nephew. She will work hard for him!

Case Study Seven: Subi

Subi is twenty-four years old and lives in a red-light Kolkata with her husband and his family. Subi studied up to fourth standard and then dropped out of school. She eloped and got married the first time in 2014, when she was only fourteen years old. Her husband was a violent man, and she suffered much abuse. She ran away from her husband and, misguided, landed at the red-light district in 2015. She was intercepted and rescued by DMSC, an organization working in the area, and was sent back to live with her mother. Subi was re-trafficked after about a year and has been engaged in prostitution in the Sonagachi red-light district since 2017.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and Trafficking

Subi faced a lot of hardship throughout her childhood. She did not have enough food to eat and would often have only one meal a day. Subi lived with her mother and three brothers. Her parents separated because of her father's alcoholism and violent behavior. She lived with her maternal grandmother for seven years. After that, she worked as a domestic helper. She said, "We sometimes managed to get one meal a day

only. We had to endure a lot of pain. Even as a child, I started working in a house, as a domestic helper.”

With her mother and brothers’ savings, they managed to purchase a small plot of land and build a house. Subi was able to then go to school when she was not working. But their financial problems continued since her brothers’ jobs were not stable and their income irregular.

Subi married early and did not have the support of her family. Her husband was also abusive and violent. She was often kicked out of her home. She said, “At 16, I eloped and got married. Then nobody in the family accepted the marriage, because he was not a good boy. Nobody spoke to us. But my husband started getting drunk and beating me. He would break things in the house. He would throw me out of the house at odd hours in the night.” Domestic violence is a key factor that pushes women into being trafficked (Montgomery 2014, 169).

Eventually she got fed up and decided it was better to do sex work, and so travelled to Sonagachi. She said:

I decided [to go] because during that time, nobody was taking responsibility for me. My family wouldn’t accept me. My husband wouldn’t accept me. So, for whatever reason, I left from there. I will organize my life; if I can stand on my own feet, I will leave the trade and do something myself. We won’t have this for the rest of our lives, not our youth, not even this work. I came here keeping this in mind.

An NGO in Sonagachi – the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) intercepted her since it was obvious she was still a child, rescued her, and sent her back home when she went to the red light the first time. Subi then went to live with her uncle and his family. Even though there was an intervention, Subi did not receive any further

support from any organization. Reflecting about it she said, “If I had received some vocational training, then maybe I would not have returned to the sex trade.”

She said that she also needed help from people, including her family, but there was no one to support her. When she turned eighteen, Subi decided that it was better to go do sex work. She said, “During that time nobody took responsibility for me. My family did not accept me. My husband did not accept me.” It was clear that her family did not support her or perhaps were not able to support her. She said this compelled her to go into prostitution. She felt that if she made money then she could save and move to a better place. She also said that if her uncle had supported her, she may not have come back to Sonagachi. Instead, she was ridiculed by her uncle, and eventually she could not handle it and left to went back. Subi said of her decision,

I decided that I needed to go back because no one accepted me. I couldn't spend the rest of my life on the streets. I heard that there was Sonagachi . . . that there was work there. I thought that if there was work there and money, I would go and make money.

Jobe observes that sometimes children who are rescued get re-trafficked due to the lack of basic care or shelter, and that evidence shows that those who have been trafficked as minors are often vulnerable to re-trafficking in adult life (Jobe 2010, 13). In some situations, re-trafficking happens within a year of the girl being rescued, and most of those who are re-trafficked return for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 32). In Subi's case this was all true.

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

Subi faced many challenges during the pandemic. She did not have any support. She could also not access any support from anyone. Eventually, she got married during the lockdown, and her husband's family provided the couple with the support needed to tide over the financial challenges she faced.

Intervention Practices Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking and Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Subi feels that girls need to be made aware of what's happening around them. Subi believes that building awareness will help prevent trafficking. She also feels that training and job placement can help; she did not receive these opportunities and it pushed her into being exploited. She said, "My wisdom tells me that I should not stay in this place anymore. If there are any NGOs where I can work, then I will start working there."

Subi wanted to leave the red-light area because she felt that it is not good for her son to grow up there. She said, "I don't have a future here because if he (son) grows up here, he will learn all the wrong things. So, because of that, I want to leave this place and go away."

Her dream is for a better future for her child, and so she wants to move out of prostitution. She notes, "If someone is still in the trade, I will say to them, save enough money and leave this trade. People will be by your side when you are still young. When your youth is gone, then everybody will leave your side."

Subi felt that she does not have any options but to continue in prostitution. Her husband does not work but completely depends on her income. "To be honest, nobody is

there to support me or to help me. So, because of this, I have to be courageous enough so that I can take care of things myself. I must do everything on my own.” This is consistent with Crawford’s paper on sexual exploitation where she says that, though it may seem like the children and women are making a choice to continue in prostitution, it is often because of economic, cultural and relationship issues that they feel that they can’t leave (Crawford 2017b, 273). Subi said that she dreams of a better future, but sees no way out at this time!

The Voice of Church and NGO Leaders

Subi The following section consists of the information gathered in key informant interviews of church leaders and NGO leaders in Kolkata involved in ministry to trafficked women and children. Their responses help to better understand the questions being researched and triangulate data from survivors.

Church Leader Key Informant Interviews

All the ministers are senior leaders and involved in serving the most vulnerable for as much as forty years to just the last three years. Even though the original sampling criterion was that the pastors needed to have been involved in ministry to trafficked women and children for over five years, the researcher decided to include Pastor Anand Peacock as a key informant due to his church’s significant involvement in ministering to women and children in Sonagachi in over the past three years. The Baptist Church’s impact and presence in Sonagachi is quite strong, and the researcher felt that as a key

informant, Pastor Anand could provide important insight into the key issues and motivations as a church.

Table 2. Overview of the Church Leaders Engaged in Anti-Trafficking Ministries in Kolkata

KII Code	Name	Role	Ministry	Denomination	Involved in
CP-1	Rev. Patrick Joseph	Senior Pastor	Kolkata AG Church	Assemblies of God	- Supporting prevention and reintegration
CP-2	Rev. Anand Peacock	Senior Pastor	Circular Baptist Church	Baptist Church	- Emergency relief for sex workers - Reintegration of survivors
CP-3	Rev. Nilav Kolay	Senior Pastor	Kolkata Christian Fellowship	Independent Church	- Reintegration of survivors - Pastoral care for survivors and NGO workers
CP-4	Rev. Sathyanandan	Pastor (retired)	Mukthi Network	Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship	- Outreach to sex workers and their children, - Reintegration of survivors

CP-1 is Pastor Patrick Joseph, who is the Senior Pastor for Kolkata Assemblies of God Church located in the heart of Kolkata. The church is known for its holistic approach to mission, which includes a school, hospital, and compassionate ministries targeting the most vulnerable. Pastor Patrick is a member of the governing body of Deepika ministries, which serves vulnerable women and children in Sonagachi, Asia's largest red-light district. The ministry provides education to girls and women in Sonagachi and manages a shelter home for girls rescued from trafficking and children of sex workers. Survivors also are welcomed in the church for fellowship and spiritual support.

CP-2 is Reverend Anand Peacock, Pastor of Circular Road Baptist Church. The great missionary William Carey used to preach in the church, and Pastor Anand even

gave us a tour of the main sanctuary and pointed us to the chair that William Carey used to sit in before ministering to the congregation. The church got engaged in ministry to trafficked women and girls and sex workers in the year 2020 when they initiated an emergency food aid program during the pandemic. The ministry currently offers vocational training and alternative employment to sex workers through skills training and helping them set up businesses of their own. Pastor Anand reported that several women have left the profession following the church's intervention. The church is also a sanctuary for women who would like to come in for fellowship and counselling.

CP-3 is Pastor Nilav Kolay, the Senior Pastor of Kolkata Christian Fellowship. He provides pastoral care for frontline workers. Pastor Kolay provides spiritual guidance and support to both NGO workers and survivors. The church had in the past provided oversight to a congregation for survivors called 'Freedom Church' and also 'Ashray' a short-stay home for adult survivors.

CP- 4 is Brother Sathyanandan, who is a senior lay minister with the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship in India. Brother Sathyanandan has over 40 years of ministerial experience working among the sex workers in Kolkata and has served as Chaplain for International Justice Mission during that time. He is currently based in Chennai and actively oversees a ministry among sex workers in Kalighat, Kolkata. The ministry manages tuition centers for children of sex workers and supports women in prostitution to exit the profession. He also oversees a small worshiping group in the heart of the red-light slum in the area.

Table 3. Non-Governmental Organization Leaders Overview

KII Code	Name	Role	Organization	Involved in
NL-1	Adharii Daiko	Regional Supervisor, West Bengal	Freedom Firm	- Rescue - Provide holistic care and support for survivors
NL-2	Ambika Pandey	Director	Deepika Welfare Society	- Work in Sonagachi providing education, life skills, and vocational training
NL-3	NL-3a* (assisted by NL-3b*)	Director (and Associate Director)	Mahima India	- Shelter home for trafficking survivors and at-risk children
NL-4	Priya Bhagat	Operational Manager	KD (they requested to used the abbreviation)	Freedom business

*Respondents requested not to be named

NL-1 Adhari Daiko manages Freedom Firm in West Bengal. Freedom Firm was started in 2006 with a focus on rescuing girls from trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Freedom Firm engages in rehabilitation and reintegration of girls and young women rescued from trafficking. They provide survivors with counselling and mental health services, schooling, life skills education, and vocational training.

NL-2 Ambika Pandey directs Deepika Welfare Society, a non-governmental organization which started in 2001 and is focused on empowering children and women who are victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Deepika Welfare Society works in Sonagachi providing education, life-skills, and vocational training for children and women to enable them to be rehabilitated and reintegrated. They also work with children

of sex workers and, through their shelter home, provide a safe environment for growth, education, and development to break the generational cycle of exploitation.

NL-3 – The respondent NL-3a requested that she be joined for the interview with NL3b. They both requested that their names not be mentioned in published documents. Mahima India is focused on the rehabilitation of trafficked girl children rescued from human trafficking. Mahima India, which started in 2010, runs two shelter homes focused on rehabilitation and reintegration for minors under eighteen. They also have a short-stay home for adult women. They have two homes for minor boys and girls of sex workers to prevent them from engaging in the trade. Mahima works to provide rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors into the community.

NL-4 Priya Bhagat was the operational manager of KD, a shelter home working with rescued girls to enable their healing, rehabilitation and reintegration. KD provides counselling services, life skills education, and vocational training for girls. KD was started under Offspring Project, an Australian Charity. They also have a halfway house providing residence for adult survivors who have no safe shelter option. They are now setting up a second training and work unit in Kalighat red light area, focusing efforts on children at risk and supporting them with vocational training and employment.

Cross Case and Informant Examinations

This section is focused on examining the case studies to help describe the context and answer the research questions raised. The emerging themes and findings are triangulated with the data from key informants and the precedent literature. The section also looks at similarities and differences in experiences and perspectives to provide a rich

insight into the lived experiences of the respondents which identify unifying themes and insights.

Demographic Profile and Background

Location

All the survivors said they were born and grew up in and around Kolkata or neighboring districts of West Bengal. Some of them live in neighboring districts but come into Kolkata for work or intervention services. CP-1, CP-2 and CP-4 were all emphatic that the issue of trafficking is widespread and growing. The same sentiment was echoed by the NGO leaders NL-1, NL-2, NL-3, and NL-4 as well. The modus operandi of traffickers has changed but the problem is growing. They particularly shared that red-light areas are no longer the preferred locations for traffickers of children. Schools are being targeted and children are trafficked to ‘normal’ living areas and houses in the city.

Education

C-1 and C-5 said they had never been to school; C-7 had completed 4th standard; C-2 and C-6 had completed 5th standard; and C-3 and C-4 reported that they had completed 10th and 8th standard respectively. All of the respondents were trafficked when they were in primary or secondary school. Ghosh and Kar mention a lack of education as one of the push factors for trafficking of girls for sexual exploitation (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). NL-1 shared that children in the primary school age groups are most vulnerable to being trafficked. Because of economic challenges and large families, children become more vulnerable and young primary age children are easy targets.

Economic Condition

All the young survivors experienced severe poverty and deprivation growing up. This meant that some had to drop out of school and take up jobs at a very young age. Poverty is a major factor in trafficking, enabling the pushing of girls and young women into being trafficked for sexual exploitation (Sarkar 2014, 483). Additionally, globalization is a contributory factor and has created an increasing demand for cheap labour and young girls for the sex industry (Rajan 2013, 10).

Early Childhood

Five of the respondents (C-1, C-2, C-4, C-5, and C-7) shared that their early childhood was very difficult. C-1 spoke about being a domestic worker and abused as a child. She said, “When I was five years old, I worked in someone’s house. I was tortured there. They used to get me to do all the work. And late at night, after finishing all the work, they would ask to massage them with oil until 2:00 in the morning. I then had to get up at 4:00 A.M.”

In spite of the poverty which all the young survivors experienced growing up, two of them actually reported good memories growing up. C-3 reported that she had a happy childhood in spite of the challenges her family faced. She said, “My childhood was nice. I used to play around. It passed by well with my father, my paternal grandmother, the whole family, my younger brothers and sisters all around me.” C-6 also shared that she enjoyed her childhood, “As a child, I was very happy. My father was alive then. My mother was also there. Even when she left with uncle, she would come to see me, so I

was all right. After that, when my father passed away, I went off to the hostel, and I had a lot of fun.”

Trafficking Experiences of the Young Women Survivors

The respondents shared their experiences of trafficking during the in-depth interviews. Only C-2 said that she did not feel comfortable sharing about her experience and the researcher moved on to the next question. This section highlights key themes from the sharing of the survivors about their experiences, beginning from how they were deceived, kidnapped, and sold into situations of exploitation. The respondents have also shared how traffickers abused them to ensure compliance.

Lack of Comprehension: C-3 said she was too young to comprehend the issue of being exploited. She said she was too young to understand what was happening to her. When her traffickers asked her to provide sexual services to clients for money so that she could help her family, she agreed, not know what she was agreeing to, She said:

I was too young at that moment to understand what was going on because they kind of were trying to negotiate with me. They would say, “You can provide money to your mother and sister.” So, all I could understand at that moment was that I was going to get money for work, and that I could just give the money to my mother and sister so that they could survive. I didn’t have any understanding, and so I agreed to work.

The young girls of primary school age are often unaware of the dangers of trafficking and exploitation. The lack of education and awareness makes them more vulnerable. The girls are deceived very easily and thus trapped. This lack of awareness by the community in general and the child in particular results in children succumbing to

various trafficking recruitment methods including the promise of a job, offers of marriage, or even through kidnapping (Pande 2016, 32).

Deception: Most of the young women survivors said they were lied to or tricked into being trafficked and exploited. C-1 was told she would be given a job as a maid in Delhi, but was instead sent to a brothel in Canning, where she was later rescued. C-2 was tricked into going to the movies by two boys and was trafficked and sold to a brothel. C-3 was also offered a job as a domestic helper and forced into sex work. C-5 said that many girls are being tricked into trafficking and sexual exploitation. She shared that Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media tools are being used to trap girls into falling in love with young men who are traffickers. They fall in love and get married, only to be sold to a brothel by their boyfriend or husband. The victims of trafficking are lied to and deceived into thinking that they will find jobs or a good married life (Pande 2016, 32). C-3 said that she was lured and then stayed in the situation because she felt she had to take care of her family earning money through prostitution. C-3 said, “At first, they did not talk about the money. When they started abusing me, they tried to trick me. They knew that I had my mother and my sister at home, and using that information, they started pressuring me and told me that if I didn’t work for them, they would kidnap my sister and exploit her. I told them that I would do what they said.”

Threat and Compulsion: Children are also threatened and compelled into sexual exploitation. C-3 was threatened that her five-year-old sister would be kidnapped and brought to the brothel if she did not provide sexual services to customers. Some of the children said that they were tricked and forced to provide sexual services. C-1 was

injected with drugs and trafficked. C-2 was given something to eat, and so she fell unconscious and was exploited. C-3 said she came to Calcutta looking for a job and the people who found her forced her into doing prostitution. She was told that she would get a job as a domestic maid. Eventually, she was taken and actually held against her will and was abused on the first day. When she realized she was trapped and forced to provide sexual services to customers, she decided to continue the work. C-4 was also kidnapped by two girls who approached her on her way to school at the railway station. They gave her something to eat which caused her to pass out. When she woke up, she was in a locked room in a brothel. These findings are consistent with the literature where several studies indicated that girls are tortured and forced into compliance to serve customers (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, and Heffron 2018, 27).

Family Involvement in Trafficking: Four of the survivors (C-1, C-2, C5, and C-6) were trafficked by their family members. C-1 said her sister was involved in trafficking her and this affected her deeply. She explained:

See, if some outsider does something bad, then it doesn't take much time for a person to forget; he forgets. When someone from the home does it, it is very difficult to forget! My sister was also involved in trafficking me. . . . When I see her face, I get scared. It shocked me that it was my own sister who did this to me and not an outsider. I feel that my sister has ruined my life.

C-2 also said that her sister was involved in her trafficking. C-5 said that her aunt sold her. She could not understand the fact that her own aunt sold her to be trafficked. She said that she lost all hope at that point. C-6 also said that her aunt forced her into prostitution. She said that when she visited her aunt during the Holi festival, her aunt forced her to sleep with one of the older boys in her locality. C-5 said that girls are

vulnerable to being trafficked because there is a lack of education and because of poverty. She said, “Many children are put into the trade by their own parents.”

This is consistent with Montgomery’s observation that mothers or family members who are engaged in prostitution are sometimes found selling their own daughters to traffickers (Montgomery 2014, 169). C-1, C-3, C-5, and C-6 recounted that the betrayal was difficult to handle emotionally. C-2 shared that she still cannot stand the sight of her sister when she sees her even today.

Abuse and exploitation: After being trafficked, children are usually abused physically and sexually to make them comply with the demands being made by the traffickers or brothel keepers. Traffickers use abuse and torture to ‘break’ the young children so that they will do what they are told (Rajan 2013, 97). All of the respondents said they were threatened, beaten, and verbally abused when they were trafficked. C-4 said, “They used to torture me a lot. I couldn’t wake up from sleep and they used to pour water on me. They took me during winter. If I couldn’t wake up in the morning, they used to pour water on me. They used to curse me. They beat me with a stick.” C-6 said of her paternal aunt who used her for prostitution, “She hit me badly once. Very badly. . . . I had to go to the hospital because of the beating.” C-6 further added that she was expected to service customers even when she had her periods. If she did not, her aunt beat her badly. C-6 also shared about her friend whose mother forced her to sleep with men. She said, “She would strip her naked and beat her. They both would sleep with customers in the same room at night. I think, God what kind of mother is she! Why did you give birth, just to kill your daughter?” Trafficked children are raped, starved, or beaten badly until

they submit themselves to entertain customers. The children are made to live in slave-like conditions while the brothel keepers profit from selling their virginity (Rajan 2013, 98).

The abuse and violence they suffer often make it difficult to live normal lives even if they are rescued and rehabilitated (Shelley 2010, 73). It was clear from the interviews that the trauma experienced, even if it was for a brief period, deeply impacted the survivors.

Zimmerman says that trafficking victims often suffer from PTSD, anxiety, and depression (Zimmerman et al. 2009, 1032). Long-term mental health issues are quite common in those who were trafficked (Zarocostas 2019, 905). Trauma counselling, emotional healing, and long-term mental health care are a key need and must be an essential part of recovery and reintegration. C-1 and C-3 said that they need ongoing counselling and support.

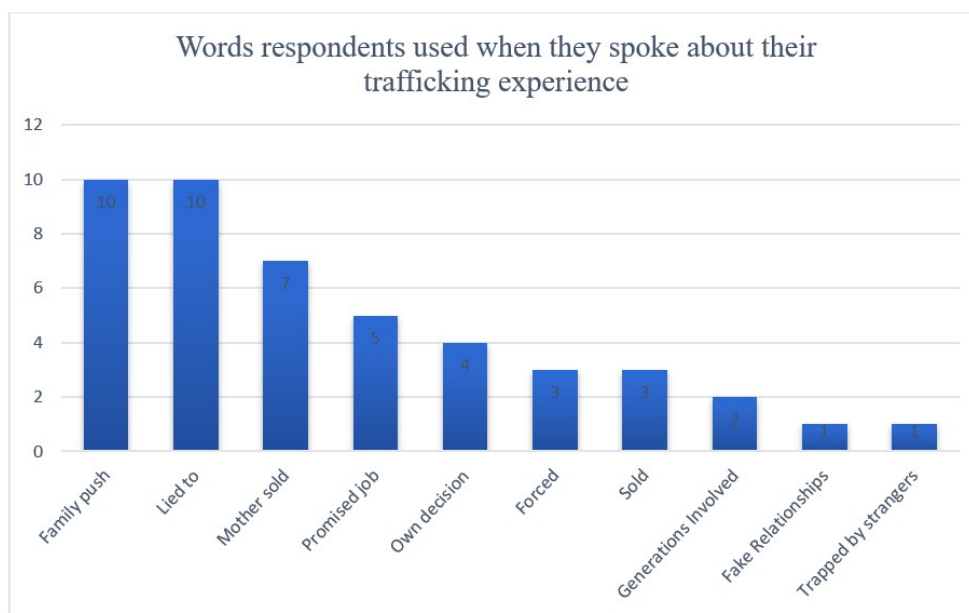


Figure 10. Words Respondents Used When They Spoke about Their Trafficking Experience

Figure 10 presents a wordcount of how young girls were trafficked for sexual exploitation in Kolkata, West Bengal, as reported by the case study respondents. This includes the experiences of the survivors themselves and what they shared about their entry into trafficking. The words highlighted in the figure here include both trafficking entry pathways and other factors as articulated by the survivors.

Experiencing Rescue: According to Locke, when young girls are trafficked into red-light districts in Kolkata, they do not have the option of leaving unless rescued (Locke 2010, 77). C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, and C-5 were rescued by the police with support from local NGOs. C-6 and C-7 had NGOs intervene in the red-light area where they were made to offer sexual services, and the NGOs took them out of the trafficking situation. International Justice Mission played a significant role in the rescue of C-1, C-2, and C-3. C-1 and C-3 were first taken to Sukanya Shelter Home run by the government and NGO-run Sanlaap Shelter Home respectively. They were later transferred to Mahima India's Shelter Home for survivors for better care and protection. C-2 was directly placed in Mahima post-rescue. C-2 said of the experience, "Then one day at around one or two in the afternoon, there was a raid. They were all around the place. Half of the girls managed to escape. I saw my sister run away. I was later taken to the police station where I was kept overnight and later taken to the Mahima Shelter Home."

C-4 said that the police came looking specifically for her since her mother got the news that she was at the brothel and reported it to the police. When the police arrived, the brothel owners ran away. The police then asked her if she was forced to stay in the brothel. When she said that she was sold and kept against her will, she was rescued. C- 7

said the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee at Sonagachi red light area noticed her in the place and met with her. They called her guardian and handed her over to the guardian since C-7 was only about seventeen years old. She also looked quite small for her age, and that helped.

C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5 recounted their rescue events with gratefulness. They were very young and suffered a lot at the hands of their traffickers. C-6 and C-7 felt that they had a choice and because they had family in the sex industry already, they did not go through some of the torture the other girls faced.

Experiences and Challenges Post-Rescue: All the respondents shared that after their rescue and interventions to reintegrate them, they faced significant challenges when they went back to their homes and communities. They faced stigma, discrimination, and economic challenges. The literature is clear that survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation face a lot of hardships (Docarmo, Vanntheory, and Channtha 2021, 2), which is why effective services need to be put in place. If they do not have access to the right support and services, rescued children are pushed back into being exploited or trafficked. The key issues experienced by the respondents are described below. Docarmo, Vanntheory, and Channtha (2021) in their research in Cambodia reported that they observed multiple factors which led to survivors being re-trafficked and re-exploited, and these include “poverty, debt, low education, and social isolation from friends, family, and the community” (Docarmo, Vanntheory, and Channtha 2021, 1). This is consistent with the key findings from this research study. Additionally, this study found that stigma and

discrimination, survivors making a choice to go back, and the need to support family were key themes.

Factors that Led to Vulnerability and the Trafficking of Girls and Young Women for Sexual Exploitation

To understand what leads to survivors being re-trafficking for sexual exploitation, Surtees says that it is important to know what factors led to their trafficking in the first place. These vulnerability factors, if not understood and addressed, will result in them being subject to re-trafficking (Surtees 2022, 3). Several factors work together to make children vulnerable to being trafficked. Ghosh and Kar discuss factors which push children into situations of vulnerability that prompt them to make wrong decisions, making them extremely vulnerable to being trafficked. These include extreme poverty, illiteracy, lack of access to basic services, starvation, failure of crops, natural disasters, discrimination, and domestic violence (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). Push factors in the context of West Bengal and Kolkata are often associated with economic factors and violence experienced by girl children in the home (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). Understanding and reducing the vulnerabilities that existed before the trafficking is critical in order for survivors to be effectively reintegrated and to prevent re-trafficking (Surtees 2022, 3).

According to Ghosh and Kar (2008), pull factors are factors that pull young women and children into being exploited. These include the promise of a better life in the big city, better pay and living conditions, the demand for girls in prostitution, the demand for virgins that are believed to cure people from AIDS, and the demand for low-paid

labourers (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). It is evident from the findings of this study that the promise of a well-paying job and a better life through early marriage were the main pull factors.

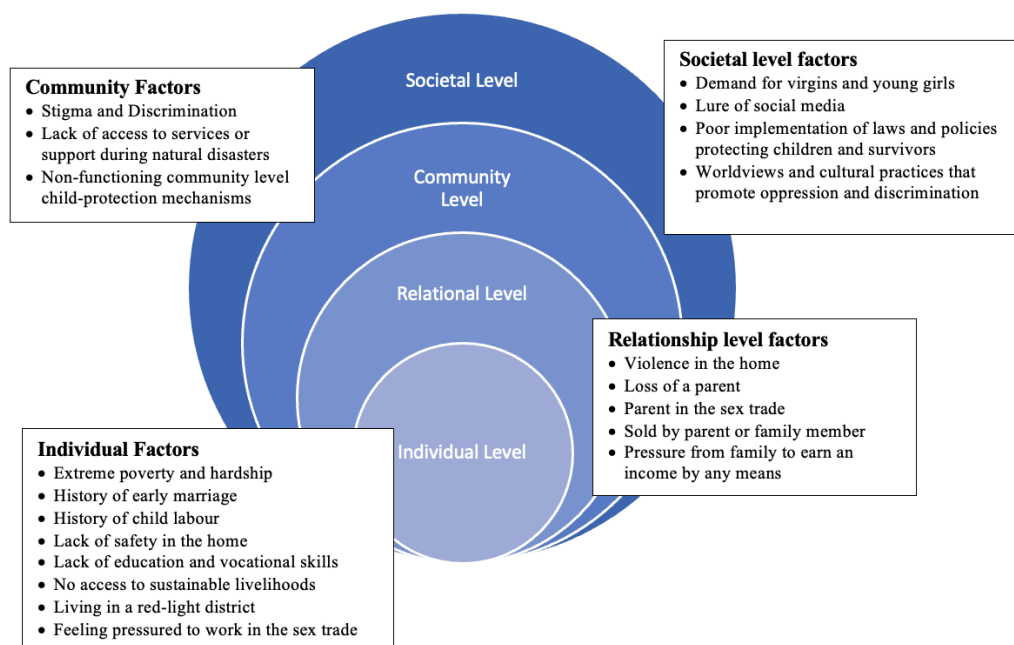


Figure 11. Vulnerability Factors for Trafficking of Girls and Young Women

Figure 11 describes the vulnerability factors of the trafficking of children and young women across various levels including individual, relationship, community, and societal factors based on the data collected.

Table 4. Vulnerability Factors for Trafficking of Children and Young Women

Ecological Systems Level	Vulnerability Factors Codes	Examples Quotes from Respondents
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing poverty and hardship 	C-7: “When we were young, we had to face a lot of hardships. We sometimes would manage to get one meal only in a day. We had to endure a lot of pain.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of early marriage 	C-5: "I was part of World Vision as well as Deepika Centre. I used to study there. When I was in class six, I ran away with a boy and got married to him. For 6 months I was with him and in 2019, I started doing this work."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of Child Labour 	C-1: "And when I was five years old, she sent me off to someone's house to work as a domestic help."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of safety in the home 	C-1: "My sister, she was sleeping in the house one day, and she was raped by a boy from the locality."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of education and vocational skills 	C-1: "And I used to tell her all the time that she was not eligible to work yet. Nowadays, getting a job at 18 or 19 years of age is also very difficult. I see my friend who recently lost her job. And it has already been nine months and she hasn't found a job yet. She has studied till class 8 and is more knowledgeable than me. And she hasn't found a job yet."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No access to sustainable livelihoods 	C-1: "Then another problem is if you get a job but the salary is very low. Girls leave because of that." C-6: If the father and the mother can be supported with job placements, then the parents will be able to protect their children better
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living in a red-light district 	C-5: "After that, I returned to Sonagachi, and I started working as a dancer. Then I started going to events. Then slowly went and joined this trade."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Choosing' to return to exploitative situations 	C-7: "After being sent home, I stayed with my family for eight to nine months. And then I had to come back here to the red-light area."

Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violence in the home 	<p>C-1: “When we used to sit down to have our food, my father used to snatch our food away. He would not let us have our food. He would kick our food and we used to run away from him.”</p> <p>C-7: “Father used to torture my mother after drinking alcohol. He would slit her skin with a blade and put salt and pepper on the cuts”</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of a parent 	<p>C-6: “When I was four years old in 2008, my father died. Then my paternal aunt sent me off to the hostel. When I was 8-9 years old, I lived there, studied there, learned to dance.”</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent in the sex trade 	<p>C-5: “My mother was in the sex trade in Baruipur. I lived there with my mother. That's where I grew up.”</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sold by parent or family member 	<p>C-5: “The first thing to say about the problem is that ... I got sold by my mother Then after I was sold, I lost all hope of surviving.”</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure from family to earn an income by any means 	<p>C-1: “You know D_ she used to work at Sari Bari, but she couldn't manage because her father was alcoholic. She was not able to manage the house with so little money. So she went back to the sex trade.”</p>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stigma and discrimination 	<p>C-4: “I mean, I thought I was a criminal. Even my family members thought I was a criminal. Even the village knew that—they used to hate me.”</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to services and support during natural disasters 	<p>NL-2: Due to this cyclone, the whole of the Sundarbans got affected very badly. And their livelihood was completely shattered. Traffickers took this opportunity to trap the children...to trap the girls.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-functioning community level child protection mechanisms 	<p>NL-1: “Survivors were more vulnerable because of their previous trauma. Child marriage increased during this time.”</p>

Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for virgins and young girls 	C-5: “Kidnapping happens a lot. Traffickers think, ‘If I can kidnap a girl child, I can make a lot of profit <i>(because of the demand)</i> .”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lure of social media 	C-5: “This Facebook, WhatsApp—these apps help them meet with boys and they fall in love. They will fall in love with someone on Facebook, and then they will run away...”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor implementation of laws and policies protecting children and survivors 	NL-1: “Because there are a lot of issues in making a formal complaint and to claim victim compensation....it’s a legal battle...there are so many hurdles.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldviews and cultural practices that promote oppression and discrimination 	NL-3: “Because if she goes back to her locality, no one will respect her. People will not treat her like a human being because of stigma.”

At the individual level, vulnerability factors include extreme poverty and hardship, a history of early marriage or child labour, feeling unsafe at home, lack of education and vocational skills, lack of access to sustainable livelihoods, living in a red-light district, and feeling pressured to work in the sex trade; these push and pull girls and young women into being re-trafficked.

Extreme Poverty and Hardship

All of the young survivors shared that they faced a lot of hardship growing up. This was in part due to their family’s economic condition. C-1, C-2, C-3, C-5, and C-7 reported significant lack even to the point of having no food to eat at times. C-2 and C-3 said their father could not get work, and this affected the family peace, causing regular quarrels between the parents. C-5 also spoke about the poverty she experienced as a child. There were times she had no food to eat and had to go to bed without eating. She

said, “Moreover, in my childhood, I did not get something as basic as fermented rice. We would survive on water most of the days. We would sometimes get vegetables from here and there and I grew up like that.” C-7 also spoke about times during her childhood where they would have to go to bed hungry. Often managing one meal a day was a problem. All the respondents felt that the poverty they experienced made them vulnerable. C-7 said finally, “Poverty is the root cause of it all.”

CP-1, CP-2, CP-3, and CP-4 were emphatic that the poorer sections were targeted for trafficking. CP-1 said young girls are more vulnerable than older women because there is a big demand for young girls. NL-1 said, “But if the girls don’t have anything to eat, what should they do? They know that they have to go and work, domestic work.”

NL-2 challenged the idea that poverty was the root cause for trafficking. She said that if poverty is the cause, then, “all poor people should end up in prostitution.” She was alluding to an important point, i.e., that there are multiple factors that increase the risk of a child being trafficked for exploitation in West Bengal. She mentioned homelessness and being low-caste and marginalized as important factors that push girls into being trafficked.

Sarkar said that poverty was a critical factor pushing children into being trafficked for exploitation (Sarkar 2014, 483). Addressing poverty issues is critical to prevent re-trafficking.

History of Early Marriage

Early marriage is often seen as a way out of poverty and violence. However, the marriage often does not last, and the children are pushed into further vulnerability. With

the offer of a lucrative job in the city or a marriage without dowry, the families of the girls are willing to send their children off rather than risk starvation (Yadav and Ansari 2015, 227). C-6 and C-7 reported early marriage. C-6 got married to a friend's brother the same day she met him. Within the same year she conceived and had a miscarriage. Her marriage eventually broke up, and she went to work as a dancer and ended up in prostitution. C-7 said she eloped and got married when she was sixteen years old. Her family was angry and rejected her. She was made an outcaste. When her new husband started beating her, she had nowhere to go for support, as her family had wanted nothing to do with her. Globally, early marriage is a significant issue impacting millions of girls worldwide (UNFPA 2020, 2). Ghosh and Kar, in discussing early marriage, noted that families who are poor are encouraged to get their daughter married off, especially to someone who is willing to marry her without a dowry. Sometimes parents are paid off in the course of the marriage arrangements to keep them happy. The girl is then transported to Kolkata, Delhi, or Mumbai and sold, often never to be seen again by her family (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 98).

History of Child Labor

Impoverished families often send their children to work early (Rajan 2013, 10). Child labor is a major problem and makes girl children vulnerable to sexual exploitation (Yadav and Ansari 2015, 227). C-1 said, "When I was five years old, my mother used to work as a domestic helper in homes. When our father passed away, we all had to start working even though we were children." C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, and C-7 worked as domestic maids at a very young age. This made them vulnerable to physical and sexual

exploitation. C- 3 said, “I went to that house all by myself. When I went there, the elderly lady told me that I had to sweep and swab, wash the utensils, and then she asked me to stay. When I asked her for some water and I drank it, I couldn’t remember anything after that.” C-3 was drugged and sexually exploited.

Feeling Unsafe at Home

Children often face physical and sexual abuse when they are faced with extreme poverty and deprivation. The lack of safety in the home pushes parents to marry off their daughters early or send them away for work (Locke 2010, 48). C-1 spoke of herself and her sisters experiencing rape which made her feel very unsafe. She recalled:

My sister, she was sleeping in the house one day and she was raped by a boy from the locality. So my mother sent her off to someone’s house to stay. My mother thought that she would be safe there and away from all this abuse. And my older sister had a similar experience. Because of that, my mother got her married off early. And when I was five years old, she sent me off to someone’s house to work as a domestic helper too, thinking that I would be safe, but then something similar happened with me too.

When the home environment itself is not safe, then both the parents and the children try to make sure they get out of there at the earliest possible opportunity. This makes them take risks that end up with the children getting trafficked.

Lack of Education or Vocational Skills

Illiteracy and the lack of education or vocational training makes girls and young women vulnerable. Jobe (2010) said that poor literacy levels and lack of skills limit rescued women from earning a living and makes them vulnerable to being re-trafficked. Getting access to jobs becomes a major challenge and girls are lured with fake jobs.

When survivors struggle to find jobs and feel they need to earn an income by any means, they succumb to the pressure of traffickers or they themselves decide to engage in prostitution.

No Access to Sustainable Livelihoods

The lack of access to sustainable livelihoods pushes children into seeking jobs outside their village communities. NL-4 said that a lot of girls from villages are deceived with offers of jobs in cities, and this leads them to be trafficked and exploited. The US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons report highlights this as a major challenge in India. Traffickers lure young girls using promises of well-paying jobs and then traffic them for sexual exploitation (United States Department of State 2018, 222).

Living in a Red-light District

Living in a red-light district is a major vulnerability factor (Locke 2010, 73). All four of the young survivors who were re-trafficked as children for sexual exploitation had either parents or caregivers who were living in or near red-light districts. C-5 said that her mother was engaged in prostitution, separated from her father, and lived in a red-light district. C-5 said that it was her aunt who sold her. She said, "Where I am at this moment, is because of my paternal aunt who brought me here. I went to visit her, but she put me in the trade."

'Choosing' to Return to Exploitative Situations

C-1 said that she was aware of many girls who had early marriages when they fell in love, but the boys would then sell them into prostitution. She said that from her

estimate, “Out of ten, there are seven girls who go back, and three girls are left who are safe.” She added, “I have seen this among other survivors who I am in touch with. I know some of my friends who have gone back; there are girls from Mahima who have gone back.” C-1 also said that those who have been rehabilitated and are re-trafficked and later make a choice to go back feel guilty for what they are doing. So she said that they do all this work secretly and will not share with anyone. In some cases, the survivors said they felt compelled to go back into situations of exploitation because of financial reasons, and they had to take care of their family.

C-4, C-5, C-6, and C-7 were re-trafficked as children and have made a choice or by compulsion are continuing in the sex trade. Women trafficked for sexual exploitation who are rescued and return to their communities often do not stay for long (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 54). In some cases, re-trafficking happens within a year of the girl being rescued, and most of those who were re-trafficked were for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 32).

C- 6 said that she was a part of World Vision’s program for vulnerable children as well as the Deepika Centre. She said she used to study at the special tuition center for children. However, she did not continue for long. She said that, when she was in class six and about thirteen years old, she eloped and got married. Later she left him and went back to being trafficked and exploited. Interventions need to consider the level of re-trafficking in their context and address the gaps in services and support for survivors.

At the relational level, violence in the home, loss of a parent, a parent in the sex trade, being sold by a parent or family member, and pressure to take care of the family were key factors observed.

Violence in the Home

All the young women survivors reported experiencing or observing domestic violence growing up. This primarily focused on the father being abusive to the mother or to the children themselves. C1, C-2, C-3, C-5, and C-7 spoke about observing or experiencing violence from a drunken father. C-1 recounted her experience of violence in her home:

When I was with my mother, my father used to drink and torture us a lot. He used to beat up my mother and we used to hide and pray that he would not come and beat us. But our mother would save us from his beatings. When we would sit down to have our food, my father used to snatch our food away. He would not let us have our food. He would kick our food and we used to run away from him.

The survivors recounted their childhood being negatively impacted by the violence they experienced. Alcoholism seemed to be accompanied by violence in every case. Generally, the primary target of the violence was the mother of the child. This was particularly pronounced in the cases of C-1, C-3, and C-7. C-7 said, “My father used to torture my mother after drinking alcohol. He used to slit open her skin and put salt and chili powder on it. He used to beat her up. Because of this, my mother left him.”

Older siblings also left the home early because of violence in the home. C-1’s older sister left the home to find domestic work, but her primary reason according to C-1 was to get away from the violence. Deb et al., state that domestic violence drives girls to

want to leave their homes to find a better place, and they instead often end up in a worse situation in a brothel as a slave (Deb et al. 2005, 118).

C-3 said she often witnessed her mother being beaten up by her father, who was an alcoholic. This was because of financial issues, she said. C-4's father died early and she was sent to live with her grandmother for about six years. She said of her experience with her grandmother and uncle, "My mother sent a monthly allowance to my grandmother to take care of me, but my grandmother would torture me. She used to make me cook for ten to fifteen people, and wash dishes. . . I was about seven years old ...they used to torture me a lot." C-6 also said that she was often beaten at home. "They would talk rudely to me. They would beat me with brooms, shoes, and ladles. They said, 'You, die, why aren't you dead?'"

Verbal abuse was also quite prevalent in their homes. C3, C-4, and C-6 shared that they faced frequent verbal abuse from their mother or grandmother. This often involved berating them, insulting them, calling them names, or even calling them 'prostitutes' and telling them to go and 'prostitute themselves.' Corbett, in her research on the effects of trafficking, found that experiences of abuse, neglect, and instability at the household level contributes to making girls vulnerable to future sexual exploitation (Corbett 2017, 129).

Loss of a Parent

The loss of a parent seemed to have significantly impacted some of the respondents. C-1 lost her father at a young age and C-6 lost both her parents at a young age, "First of all, when I was born in 2004, my mother took my brother with her and then

left us when I was two or two and a half years old. When I was four years old in 2008, my father died. Then my paternal aunt sent me off to the hostel. When I was eight to nine years old, I lived there, studied there, learned to dance.” C-5 shared that her parents were separated early and later passed away when she was in primary school.

Parent in the Sex Trade

The respondents C-4, C-5, C-6, and C-7—which is all of the survivors who were re-trafficked as children and are currently engaged in prostitution- had family members in the sex trade, either parents or other relatives. This made them extremely vulnerable as children. C-5 said that her mother was engaged in prostitution, and she was trying to get her [mother] out of it. She said, “I asked her not to [engage in prostitution] so many times; I told her I would pay all her expenses.” While some women in prostitution are protective of their children (Locke 2010, 48), other mothers who are involved in prostitution sell their daughters to procurers (Deb et al. 2005, 118). This was experienced by C-5, and she said that it was hard for her to deal with it. She said she felt betrayed. Children of mothers in prostitution are also in an extremely vulnerable position. Going back to their homes following rescue and reintegration efforts is not the best solution.

Sold by Parent or Family Member

Daughters of women in prostitution are extremely vulnerable to being trafficked and sold for sexual exploitation. These girls are familiar with the brothel systems and how sex can be used as a means of making money (Locke 2010, 48). C-7 shared a story about an acquaintance living near her. “An aunt of mine lives off the earning of her own

daughter who is in the trade. . . . You know her, S___, who has a cut on her cheek. Her own daughter is Sa___. It was her mother who put her in the trade.” In this type of situation, reintegration will have to be thought through differently. Going back to the home and community then is more dangerous for the child or women. Hence, alternate arrangements need to be made based on the individuals context.

Pressure to Take Care of the Family

C-6 shared that she is in the sex trade so that she is able to take care of her family, especially her nephew who is eight years old now. She works in the brothels that are for the ‘Agra Walis.’ She sends him to a local NGO-run study and day care so that he has a good life. She further added that she wants him to lead a good and respectable life and that she wants him to go to school and complete his education. She shared that she would continue to care for him and make sure all his needs are taken care of until he is eighteen years of age, and after that, her nephew will be independent enough to take care of himself. She also added “Now, if I want to, I want to get out of this sex work. . . . If I insist, I can get out right now. But that’s not possible; the responsibility of my nephew is on me.” C- 6 said that is why she is allowing herself to continue to live in an exploitative situation.

You know why I am still in this ‘line’ (sex trade) After two days . . . just saying, I am alive today, but what if I die tomorrow? I want to save for my nephew. In his future, no one will say to him, “You have nothing!” I will not give anyone that opportunity to tell him, “You have no one,” because as long as his aunt is there, no one can lay a finger on him!

C- 2, speaking of her former friends who have returned to prostitution, recounted:

I have told one of the girls, Pinky _____. I saw it with my own eyes. You know what she said? She told me she works in an office. I asked her which office it was. She didn't tell me anything, just kept saying that she works in an office. So, I told her to take me to her office. Sealdah or Bowbazar, some place, she goes there to do this work. I almost fainted seeing that.

She also added, "I have seen Sh_____ do this work. Many girls from Mahima have gone back to the trade." Jobe says of this issue that poor literacy levels and lack of skills can limit rescued women from earning a living. This often makes them vulnerable to being re-trafficked (Jobe 2010, 7). C-6 attributed her own experience of being re-trafficked to the fact that she did not know any other way to take care of her family. She said she did not have any skills which could bring her the money she needed. She said she was aware of what she was getting into.

After that, I gradually returned to working as a dancer. Then I started going to events. Then I went and joined this sex trade. I would get a thousand rupees for dancing each night. A thousand rupees seemed a lot to me at the time—it was my first income. One day, the person I went with hit me. . . . I was later taken to Siliguri for this work . . . for sex work. After going there, the police caught them. I then returned, and then I went to work in Medinipur.

C- 4 said that in her opinion, at least eight out of ten girls are re-trafficked and go back into situations of exploitation for various reasons. C- 5 said, "This is especially true for children who are poor . . . those who don't have food to eat. They are lured and kidnapped. C- 6 said that it was the money and the need to take care of her family that keeps her in prostitution. Ensuring that survivors have access to sustainable livelihoods and income is a major factor in addressing the issue of re-trafficking.

At a community level - stigma and discrimination, lack of access to services or support during natural disasters and non-functioning child protection mechanisms are key factors.

Stigma and Discrimination

Survivors who return back to their homes and communities face stigma and discrimination. All of the respondents said that they were insulted and called names by both family members and neighbors. C-1, C-5, C-6, and C-7 said that it was not easy to be back home. They were also stigmatized by family members and the neighborhood. They felt isolated and unwelcome. Jobe says that rescued girls and young women may also face high levels of stigma and discrimination, resulting in being unable to reintegrate into society (Jobe 2010, 7). C-7 said that after she got back home, she could not stay. She says that is why she felt forced to return to being exploited. “Where there was no peace and happiness, where there was no acceptance by my parents, where could I have gone then? So I came here. I won’t lie.” She also spoke of her uncle who mistreated her. “If he had behaved properly with me, then I think I could have been in a good place.” C-7 explained, “I decided to leave home because nobody was willing to take care of me. . . . So, I thought I would organize my life, and stand on my own feet. . . . I came here keeping this in mind.”

C-1 recalled that when she went back home, her old friends shunned her and did not talk to her. She was even shouted at by a former close friend saying that her family did not want her to talk to her. On the question of what she faced when she returned home, C- 1 said, “I felt very bad and guilty when people were pointing a finger at me. I

felt like committing suicide. I wanted to end my life. A lot of things crossed my mind.”

C- 1 also commented that the way police treat them is important. She observed that when police visit the home of a survivor for inquiries, they need to be sensitive; otherwise, the community starts stigmatizing them.

C-4 wanted to enroll in school when she returned to her home, but she was not allowed to. The school would not admit her. She said, “The people in the village more or less knew that I was trafficked. They taunted and teased me and said bad things when they saw me on the street. I also felt bad.”

C-4, C-5, C-6, and C-7 reported that they were discriminated against, and this was also a factor in them being re-trafficked. The stigma related to trafficking is clearly a key contributory factor identified in re-trafficking, especially when the trafficking is for sexual exploitation (Jobe 2010, 15). A study in Nepal by Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg shows that stigma is a primary cause of re-trafficking. The constant criticism, shaming, and rejection push survivors back into situations of exploitation (Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg 2015, 8). Any intervention for reintegration should address stigma and discrimination issues with the survivor’s immediate family and community. The whole community and larger society in Kolkata and West Bengal need to be conscientized about the issue of trafficking and the abuse of girl children to strengthen prevention efforts.

Lack of Access to Services During Natural Disasters

Natural disasters are a key factor in trafficking of girls and women for sexual exploitation because the already poverty-stricken families’ livelihoods are impacted by the disasters (Santhya, Jejeebhoy, and Basu 2014, 20). NL-2 and NL-3 said that natural

disasters result in an increase of girls being trafficked. NL-2 said after the tropical cyclone Aila, she saw many children were trafficked. She explained, “Due to this cyclone, the whole of the Sundarbans got affected very badly. And their livelihood was completely shattered. Traffickers took this opportunity to trap the children...to trap the girls. And they are always offering jobs. ‘You come with us, we will give you job with a good salary.’ And people send their children.” NL-1 added that there are vulnerable geographic locations where, because of natural calamities, people lose their livelihoods and homes. He said this was particularly common in the South 24 Parganas and Basanti districts. He added that when children lose their parents, they become more vulnerable. There is still a need to better understand the impact of COVID-19 and other major disasters on trafficking efforts and to put strategies in place to mitigate their impact on poor households and victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Police, community leaders, and volunteers need to be able to continue coordinating helpline services and addressing complaints (UNFPA 2020, 4). Learning from the pandemic and other major disasters, it is important to continue to prioritize child protection and rescue efforts as essential services during these events.

Non-functioning Community Level Child Protection Mechanisms

Child protection at the community level is important to prevent re-trafficking. These often are not operational or are non-existent in the first place. It is a fact globally that local government child-protection mechanisms are weak and struggling because of a lack of policies and infrastructure due to low resourcing (World Vision International

2020, 6). In the context of Kolkata and West Bengal, NL-1 reflected on the pandemic, “Child marriage increased during this time and child protection mechanisms failed.”

Societal-level factors include the following: demand for virgins and young girls, the lure of social media, poor implementation of laws and policies protecting children and survivors, and worldviews and cultural practices that promote oppression and discrimination.

Demand for Virgins and Young Girls

NL-2 said that the demand for young girls is another factor for trafficking in children. She asserted, “I mean, the entire thing is happening because of the demand. And there is a demand for new young faces—new virgins.” This demand of men for virgin girls is often because of superstition or misconception that they get stronger or can be cured of sexually-transmitted infections. Ghosh and Kar report that the demand for virgins is because people believe that having sex with them will cure people from AIDS (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). NL-4 states that demand from men and boys is an issue that needs to be addressed. If the demand is reduced, then trafficking can be reduced, she asserted.

Lure of Social Media

NL-3 shared that some of the young girls are lured by social media. They spend a lot of time on social media and want to live a high lifestyle they believe they are entitled to. She said:

I think the lifestyle they are seeing on social media is one of the reasons. They are exposed to this lifestyle. They are seeing the advertisements. They are all now on social media. Each one has their own Instagram handles, they have their Facebook

accounts, and now they are addicted to Facebook reels. They make reels and feel that they will become YouTube stars or reel stars—and they think will get a lot of money doing that. They want to get famous. It is a trap.

Social media also is an avenue for recruitment into being trafficked and is often used for transactions between pimps and customers. Young children access online games, social media, and video chat programmes more than ever to be able to connect to online learning as well as stay in touch with family and friends (Safe to Learn 2020, 2). Studies show that children between three and thirteen years of age are at a higher risk of online sexual exploitation (End Violence Against Children 2019, 1). Strengthening child protection needs to include strategies to address online safety for children and establishing processes to deal with cases of online abuse swiftly.

Poor Implementation of Laws and Policies Protecting Children and Survivors

This is a key factor at a societal level that must be dealt with to protect children, rescue those trafficked, and ensure justice for those victimized. NL-1 said “Prevention needs to be ensured from every side. . . . If the system does not work well, if law enforcement does not cooperate or if communities do not support us, . . . we will fail.” Ghosh and Kar (2008) observe that poor law enforcement and legal systems also contribute to trafficking. When traffickers are rarely convicted and imprisoned, trafficking becomes an attractive well-paying activity for criminal organisations, and corrupt police officials end up on the payroll of criminal organisations that indulge in trafficking (Ghosh and Kar 2008, 97). Ensuring that laws and policies are implemented is an advocacy issue that must be addressed.

feet. Other recurring words include ‘girls’ (and their vulnerability), their experience as ‘survivors,’ the importance of ‘money,’ ‘family,’ and ‘support,’ among others.

Church Pastors’ Perspectives on Re-trafficking

Church leaders including CP-1, CP-2, and CP-3 felt that the ability to make easy money and pressure from family or peers pushed survivors into being re-trafficked or into exploitation. CP-3 said, “Yes, sadly, I think yes, it has happened, and we know personally some of the girls who have gone back. [It] may not be in the red-light area, but I think more in the whole escort services, that I think are more well-paying.”

CP-4 felt that it was the spiritual circumstances that keep victims bound to being exploited, especially in the context where he worked; temple prostitution was the norm, and it was hard for girls to get out or even move forward. CP-4 said, “In my experience, about 80% of the women go back into sex work post rescue.” CP-4’s words were sobering. Any effort to address prevention and reintegration by churches and Christian organizations must also include prayer and intercession.

NGO Leaders’ Views on Re-trafficking

NL-1 said it was important to differentiate between children who were trafficked and adults who are trafficked or sometimes choose to get into the sex trade. Often the line is blurry since even those adults who make a choice to go into commercial sexual exploitation are pressured, threatened, or manipulated for someone else’s gain. He observed that often the adults return into the sex trade because they lack job skills and feel that they are not suitable for other work. The children, on the other hand, are re-

trafficked because they are not protected. NL-3 also shared that sometimes when the survivors leave their shelter home, they go back to situations of exploitation due to the financial pressures and the fact that they lack skills to work and earn. She said that sometimes the families themselves tell the children not to come home.

The NGO leaders had very diverse estimates of what proportion of trafficking survivors are re-trafficked. NL-1 said re-trafficking was very high, whereas NL-2 said it was quite low, perhaps 2 out of 50 survivors being re-trafficked. NL-4 said that at least 50% of the survivors are re-trafficked. This latter figure is closer to estimates by the survivors themselves. According to the literature, one study claims that the percentage is about 25.8% (Jobe 2010, 15). Clearly this is an area that requires further inquiry.

NL-4 said that family support was critical for reintegration. She declared:

Family support, I think, is a huge thing. Like family, [if] there's someone, they know that they have someone, and if they have a partner who they can trust, [even if] they haven't married, but they're dating them, and they can trust them, and they know the future lies with them. So they know that 'I have someone to take care of me if I leave this place.' . . . Whereas, if someone is lonely and they feel like, 'I have no one,' it is very easy to get back into it.

Impact of COVID-19 and Its Aftermath on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

All except one of the respondents (C-2) said that they were impacted significantly by the lockdowns. Europol's report on COVID and its impact on trafficking of children predicted that there would be a significant impact on work and that the demand for sexual exploitation would increase leading to trafficking (Europol 2020, 7).

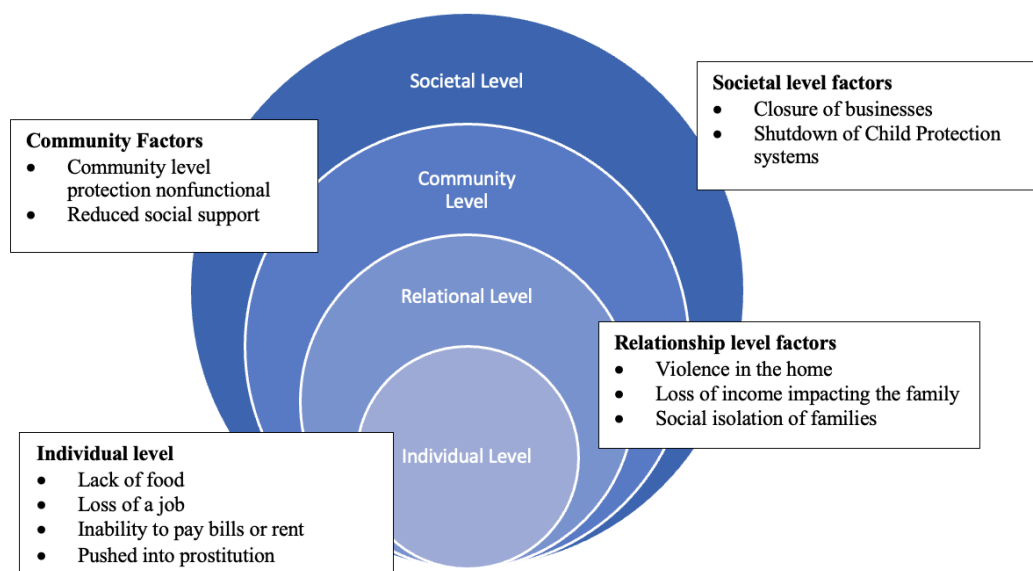


Figure 13. Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors of Trafficking

Figure 13 describes the impact of COVID-19 on the vulnerability of young women survivors of trafficking across various levels including individual, relationship, community, and societal factors.

Table 5. Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerability of Children and Young Women

Ecological Systems Level	COVID-19 impact codes	Examples of quotes from respondents
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of food 	<p>C-1: "The problem was to get food for ourselves. We didn't have anything to eat in our house."</p> <p>C-5: "We had problems regarding food. It seemed that we would die. There was no rice. Wherever they used to give tickets, he used to go there and bring rice."</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of jobs 	<p>C-1: "First of all, we lost our jobs and we had a lot of trouble"</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to pay bills or rent 	<p>C-5: "Our family was not able to eat properly or wear proper clothes"</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress and mental health issues 	<p>C-6: "For 24 hours we were stuck inside. We had to only see customers at night, and we had been inside the four walls."</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pushed into prostitution 	C-6: “But we would see the girls standing; you see nothing like that now... they have empty stomachs to feed. They know that this is their only work...”
Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violence in the home 	NL-4: “Many girls and women reported domestic violence at home.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of income impacting the family 	C-1: “The main crisis was because they didn’t have any source of income.”
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community level protection non-functional 	NL-1: “Survivors were more vulnerable because of their previous trauma. Child marriage increased during this time.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced social support 	C-7: “I decided because no one accepted me; what else could I do other than coming to the trade?”
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure of businesses 	C-5: “Our family was not able to eat properly or wear proper clothes. The truth is that after I came here, I could do as I want and eat as I wished.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shutdown of Child protection systems 	NL-1: “Child protection mechanisms failed because people could not gather socially to interact.”

At an individual level, the impacts of the pandemic included lack of food, loss of a job, stress and mental health issues, and inability to pay bills or rent.

Lack of Food: The lack of food because of income loss created a lot of challenges for survivors. C-1 said her main problem at the time was to get food. She did not have anything to eat in the house. She remarks on that time, “During this time, there was a Punjabi who was distributing food near the Gurudwara. It was lentils, rice, and potatoes. So, we would stand in a line, and after standing for two hours, we got something to eat. We stood in the sun for so long that I fell sick.” During disaster situations, it is important to ensure that vulnerable families and survivors have access to food and basic items.

Loss of Jobs: C-1 said that she lost her job and had a lot of financial challenges. Though she was promised a job by IJM, she was not offered one. She said that because of

the loss of income, she couldn't manage the day-to-day running of her home. She was not able to pay her rent and there was no food. They did manage at times to get free groceries handed out by NGOs. She recalled, "The staff from IJM connected with us after COVID. They came to give us rations. They also gave us some money to help set up my mother's house."

C-2 had a different experience during COVID. She had a good job at Ruhamah Designs earlier and she said that she was able to save money. With the money she had saved, she was about to take care of herself and her family. C-2 also shared that she received two months of rice and lentils, which she shared with some of the older women in the hostel she was staying in. C-3 also spoke about how she had a difficult time during COVID but said that staff from IJM followed up and helped her with food rations. C-4 said that she went through a challenging time as well, but that she received help from World Vision. She was upset that World Vision had shut down its project. She mentioned that she had received financial support and food rations during and after COVID as well.

Pushed into Prostitution: The survivors who were re-trafficked and were in the sex trade shared a different perspective. C-5, C-6, and C-7 were in agreement that they had struggled during COVID, and eventually resorted to risky behavior in order to earn money, in spite of the possibility of contracting COVID. C- 5 said COVID pushed her further into the sex trade. She reported, "Our family was not able to eat properly or wear proper clothes. The truth is that after I came here, I could do as I wanted and eat as I wished." She added that, during the lockdown, one of her male friends helped her by paying her rent, getting her food, and also supporting her delivery. C- 6 mentioned:

We had problems regarding food. It seemed that we would die. There was no rice. Wherever they used to give coupons, we used to go there and bring rice. God's blessing was so good that, wherever I went, I got a coupon, so we were ok. . . . I was out for three months, so my aunt and grandma used to go and bring. . . . We had a lot of problems at first when there was a lockdown, but later it got better.

C-6 also said that girls in her locality engaged in prostitution in spite of the risks.

She said many of the girls were infected during that time. C-6 said she was locked in a brothel with nowhere to go. She said that survivors were compelled to take risks: "They had empty stomachs to feed. They knew that this was their only work. It wouldn't work if they didn't do it."

At the relationship level, violence in the home was a key issue for families. NL-4 said that she heard of many girls reporting an increase of violence from their parents or partners. Domestic violence is a major factor for trafficking in the first place. With the increase of violence faced by survivors, their vulnerability increased.

Loss of income impacting the family was also another key factor reported during the pandemic. The lack of food coupled with the inability to pay rent and meet basic needs influenced survivors and their families significantly.

At the Community Level, child protection groups became non-functional during the pandemic, and this resulted in increased vulnerabilities for girl children and survivors. NL-1 reported that survivors were more vulnerable because of their previous trauma, and child marriage increased.

Reduced social support was another key factor during the pandemic. While this was the experience for most people all over, it was a major risk factor for survivors. CL-2

said she received no support during the lockdown period, but afterwards she received support and help.

At the Societal Level, closure of businesses and shutdown of child protection systems were major vulnerability factors for trafficking.

Closure of Businesses: Many businesses had to shut down for several months and all the survivors lost their jobs and income during the time. There were no social welfare or protection systems to support extremely vulnerable groups like survivors of trafficking. This caused significant challenges for the young women survivors.

Shutdown of Child Protection Systems: Due to restrictions, several public services were significantly hindered. Child protection systems were also very limited since the focus of the government was on ensuring social isolation to combat the pandemic. This resulted in significant delays in services for survivors.

NGOs leaders all agreed that COVID caused a lot of challenges for trafficking survivors. NL-2 said that the income of survivors was limited due to the lockdowns. She also said that for those engaged in sex work, the situation was terrible since they were getting further into debt bondage. The NGOs actively engaged in provision of food rations to survivors, even those who were sex workers in the red-light districts. NL-2 said, “Thankfully, we were allowed to distribute dry rations and cooked food. Even during the strict lockdown, we got the permission from the police and the local councilor gave the recommendation letter and all that. We provided food rations, toiletries, whatever was needed, we gave.”

Intervention Practices that are Effective in Preventing the Re-trafficking of Young Women Survivors

Interventions to better support and reintegrate survivors are critical in order to strengthen them, reduce their vulnerability, and prevent re-trafficking.

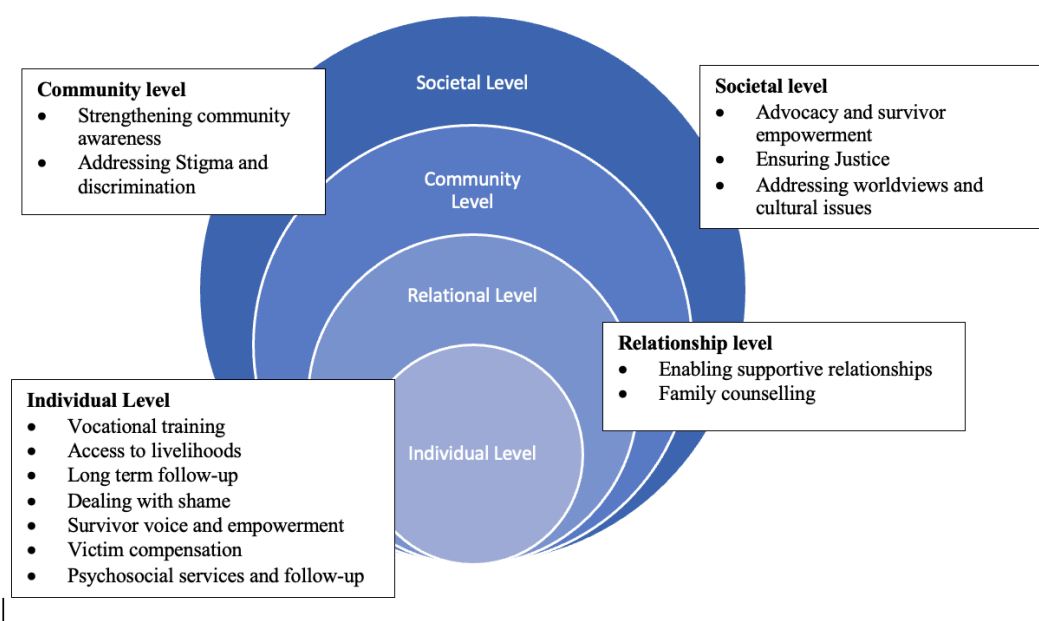


Figure 14. Interventions to Support Survivors and Prevent Re-trafficking of Children and Young Women

Figure 14 describes the interventions to support survivors of trafficking across various levels including individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. These interventions are highlighted in Table 6 and discussed in the section below.

Table 6. Interventions to Support Survivors and Prevent Re-trafficking of Children and Young Women

Ecological Systems Level	Interventions codes	Examples from respondents
Individual	Education	C-3: "I had never imagined that I would be able to start my studies again. I learned to dance, completed computer training, and learned sewing. I never thought I would study again and that I would complete my class 10 board examination."
	Vocational training	C-4: "Post-COVID, when I came back home, I received a lot of help. I received beautician and tailoring training."
	Access to livelihoods	C-2: "The most important thing is to help them get a job and to keep in touch with them even after they have gone back home" C-6: "When girls who go back to their families from the shelter homes, if they are given sewing machines or they are given jobs, then they will not get back to the sex trade."
	Dealing with Shame	C-3: "My education and my experience will allow me to hold my head up and tell people about myself and where I work. My identity can't be destroyed by 2 or 3 filthy men who did something with me!"
	Psychosocial services and long-term follow-up	C-1: "If you (NGO staff) don't visit them, then the neighbors will start believing that we have really come from a bad place." NL-2: "After survivors leave the shelter home and go back to their communities, it would be good to get to meet them on a regular basis or even have a retreat with them"
	Survivor voice and empowerment	C-3: "It is important to empower survivors and give them a voice"
	Victim Compensation	C-1: "They are doing all of this because they have to survive."

Relational	Supportive relationships	C-1: “Only because I am with my friend am I doing well.” C-3: “The safest person and greatest support is my mother. I can be myself with my mother. I also have friends I can trust.”
	Family counselling	C-7: “My family would not accept me. My husband' rejected me. So I left...”
Community	Strengthening awareness at the community level	C-4: “I bring people, including my family, to attend these meetings.”
	Addressing worldviews at the community level	C-1: “Our work is to explain to them. Like how Jesus explained everything—what to do, how to do. We have to explain to them. We have to keep trying. We will not give up. Because only after putting in an effort can we win...we can spread awareness. And they will learn.”
	Addressing community level Stigma and discrimination	C-4: “When I went back home, I was stigmatized—they said, ‘She did this,’ and ‘She did that.’”
Societal	Addressing worldviews and culture	CP-1: “We need to change how people look at this social evil. That is important. The mind needs to be transformed by the gospel.”
	Ensuring justice	C-5: “The women who traffic young girls within the age group of 0 to 18 should be caught and punished. They should be prosecuted and put in jail or sent somewhere far off. [Authorities] have to be vigilant where these women operate and how they are trafficking these children.”
	Advocacy and survivor empowerment	C-4: “When people try to intimidate me I tell them I am a leader of the Girl Power Group.”

When discussing what interventions are effective, C-1, C-2, and C-3 said that it is important to provide individual and tailored care to survivors. They also discussed the post-rescue phase as being very crucial. Vulnerability due to a lack of effective support services for rescued girls and young women is another major reason for re-trafficking. The young women are unable to mentally, socially, and physically cope with their circumstances, and gravitate towards being re-trafficked due to their familiarity with the trafficker and trauma bonding. Jobe says that the prevention of re-trafficking requires multiple strategies, including addressing the causes of trafficking in the first place, strengthening support services to rescued girls and young women, and strengthening government and community mechanisms to care for and protect the rescued girls and women from exploitation (Jobe 2010, 7). When trafficking survivors do not receive adequate medical services, food, counselling, and livelihood opportunities, they become vulnerable to being re-trafficked (United States Department of State 2020, 303). Survivors need to be “socially included and economically empowered” to reduce the risk of re-trafficking (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 3). Strategies to support survivors need to be specific and focused, tailored to the needs of individual survivors. Support services are often inadequate, and protective factors need to be strengthened to prevent re-trafficking (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner 2021, 30).

The recovery process can be very challenging to survivors. C-1 described her recovery process and shared that it was not easy. She recalled:

I was in Sukanya shelter home for one year. It was not good there. Girls there used to hit other girls. They torture the new girls there. IJM had given me clothes, and these girls snatched them away from me. The food was also not good. During our time, nothing was right, but now I hear that things have improved. I told the

IJM aunties I didn't want to stay there. I told them to help me move out to another shelter home and that I did not want to stay there.

At the individual level, the interventions most needed to support survivors according to the respondents are education, vocational training, access to livelihoods, long-term follow-up, dealing with shame, enabling survivor voices and empowerment, and victim compensation.

Education: C-3 said that from her perspective, education is very important and that it is vital that organizations work towards helping survivors complete their education. Everybody has a dream, so whatever she desires, she needs to strive for that. C-3 said "I learned to dance, completed computer training, and learned sewing. And I never thought I would study again and that I would complete my class ten board examination." While C-1 and C-2 did not complete school, they still see the value of learning. As part of the curriculum at the shelter home, they learnt English, arithmetic, and vocational education for their career. They recognized that this was really helpful. On the other hand, although C-4, C-6, and C-7 felt education helped them too, they did not feel it gave them the opportunity to earn a living wage, and so they felt pressured to earn through engaging in prostitution.

In contrast, although C-1 had never been to school, she felt that what she learnt in the shelter home is now helping her earn a living, and she does not need to go back to prostitution. However, C-5 never went to school and felt she had no other option than to engage in prostitution. Under what circumstances educational status has a bearing on re-trafficking and re-exploitation is definitely a theme to be studied further.

Vocational Training: All of the respondents said that getting a job was critical to being reintegrated. This was also consistent with the review of precedent literature as one of the most important factors for reintegration (Pandey, Tewari, and Bhowmick 2013, 47; Surtees 2017, 14). Even those who were re-trafficked and are in situations of exploitation said that vocational training is a major key to restoration and reintegration. C-6 said that girls who come out of the shelter homes should be provided support in terms of vocational training. This is very important for them to get a job and earn a living. Even parents of trafficked survivors, especially parents of rescued children, need to be supported with job placements. NL-2 shared that vocational training and access to livelihoods is very important. She also shared that the exit phase from a shelter home is very important and needs to be managed carefully.

C-1 said that it is important that girls should not be sent away from the shelter home before they are able to stand on their own feet. She observed that there are cases where, as soon as girls from the shelter are sent back home, they revert to prostitution. She felt that, in her case, she was able to get a job because of intervention from the Mahima home. That was the reason why she is now independent and can earn a living. C-2 also took great pride in her job as an employee at Destiny Reflections. Being a trainer and supervisor at Ruhamah Designs gave her a sense of meaning. She said, “Now I work on the sewing machine, I mean, the electric sewing machine. I work in Destiny now.” C-3 also stated that it is important not just to train survivors but to help them land jobs or set up businesses. She said, “The first thing that I would say for these new girls is that they are usually worried, and they would be crying; we would help soothe them. Sometimes

these girls would come from Delhi, or Pune and sometimes they would come from Nepal. So our first step would be to extend our hand of friendship towards them. We were so much better off in the shelter home. I can never forget the time that I spent there.”

Access to livelihoods was another major intervention that was highlighted by the survivors. Several studies also reiterate this fact. C-2 said, reflecting on her economic situation:

The salary that I am getting is sufficient for me. I am able to take care of my family as well. I send money to my mother. While working in Destiny, I could not save. Previously, while in Ruhamah, I was able to save a lot of money and make some gold jewelry as well. That helped me manage during the lockdown. Now I will start saving again like I did before. If any sudden emergency comes, I will sell off my mobile and sell off my gold jewelry.

C-1 recalled that after she left the Mahima shelter home, she got a job at Sari Bari, a freedom business focused on sewing and handicraft making. She said, “The biggest support was that I had found a job. I don’t know what would have happened if I hadn’t gotten this job.” C-3 gleefully said, “I work as a cook in someone’s house, so yesterday I made something—chili chicken, rice, chicken Manchurian—I cooked all of this for them.” C-3 shared, “My advice to other survivors is that, if they are studying, then they need to pursue their education. If they are working, they need to focus on work. Don’t rush and fall in love. Or, for that matter, don’t rush and get married early!”

Dealing with Shame: C-3 said, “My education and my experience will allow me to hold my head up high—without shame. . . . I cannot blame myself because I did not do any of it out of my own free will. I was forced to do it. So, why should I take this blame?” On the contrary, C-6 and C-7 said that if the child or young woman is living in

the context where their family is in the sex trade, then it is inevitable that the children get into it as well. C- 7 said, when asked about her future:

My wisdom tells me that I don't want to stay in this place anymore. If there is any NGO where I can work, then I will start working there. If someone is still in the trade, I will say, "Save enough money and leave this trade. People will be by your side as long as your youth is still there. When your youth is gone, then everybody will leave your side. You get ready, prepare everything, and move out. Start a small business or get some work. You have to do it."

NL-3 emphasized that a lack of self-esteem can propel survivors back into exploitative situations. The trauma experienced when the children are trafficked and the subsequent torture and exploitation scars their identity and self-worth. The constant verbal and physical abuse also affect their personhood. She said that emotional healing sometimes requires a lifetime, but it is a journey for the survivor and requires support from individuals and organizations. Rafferty says that psychosocial services, along with social inclusion and economic empowerment, are critical to preventing re-trafficking (Rafferty 2021, 1). Psychosocial services can help survivors deal with issues of guilt and shame.

Survivor Voice and Empowerment: C-3 also expressed how important it is to empower survivors and give them a voice. She was actively involved as a spokesperson and travelled to Mumbai, Chennai, and even Kathmandu to speak. She also received an award for her courage. C-4 said that she was also engaged in speaking up as part of a Girl Power Group in her village. She said she was able to stop a child marriage and had intervened. When people tried to intimidate and taunt her about her past, she said that she was a leader now with World Vision supporting the Girl Power Group. "There was a case of child marriage in my village. I was able to stop that from happening." She added:

What has happened to me should not happen to others. I tell parents, “She is not yet eighteen and you are trying to get her married. She will be tortured, both physically and otherwise, by her husband, by her in-laws. And do you know, that by getting her married before eighteen years of age, a case can be filed against you?” They said to me, “How do you know so much?” I told them, “Wait, how do I know this much? I have got a certificate from World Vision.” I had the World Vision card. All this while they did not know that I was associated with World Vision. I said World Vision is an NGO and I am one of the leaders in the child protection department.

C-4 said that being part of the Girl Power Group gave her a sense of identity and respect. She added, “Because of World Vision, the people who initially hated me now come to me seeking help. This makes me very, very happy that these people talk to me with respect. Initially, they used to taunt me, but now they say that whatever has happened was her past and it is human nature to make mistakes. Now she is engaged in a very good work.”

NL-1 spoke about Girl Power Groups which empower young girls and survivors to be champions of child protection. He also spoke about the need for faith engagement and the involvement of church pastors to spread awareness.

Engaging and empowering survivors is a key factor in successful reintegration (Locke 2010,100). It was evident from the case interviews and key informants that this was an area that needs to be strengthened.

Ensuring Victim Compensation: NL-1 said that it is also important to ensure that each trafficked victim gets the compensation promised by law. Currently, it takes a very long time, and even when compensation is awarded, they often are not paid (United States Department of State 2023). Section 357A of the Code for Criminal Procedure has created a provision for State Compensations schemes for human trafficking victims along

with the Ujjwala scheme (ARZ 2016). Access to compensation can make a big difference in the lives of the survivors and it can give them a head-start towards financial sustainability.

Psychosocial services and ongoing follow-up, C-4 said that counseling is important for survivors of trafficking. She said that it was important for survivors to have access to regular services where the girls can feel listened to, supported, and cared for. She also added that if the girls can get financial support, then they will not need to go back into exploitative situations. C-3 said ongoing support was critical for survivors. She said that after her baby was born, she received a cradle and clothes for her child. She said that IJM sent her a month's rations to support her and this really helped her when she had her baby. Even the support group she was part of gave her some money. Rafferty says that psychosocial services, along with social inclusion and economic empowerment, are critical to preventing re-trafficking (Rafferty 2021, 1). Scaling up support groups in communities where girls are trafficked from will help them reintegrate better.

At the relational level, enabling supportive relationships and family counselling are important interventions.

Enabling Supportive Relationships: C-3 shared that the safest person and greatest support is her mother. She said she can be herself with her mother. C-3 also said she has a good circle of friends whom she can trust. Supportive relationships are critical to successful reintegration (Surtees 2022, 3). This is particularly important in the transition and reintegration stages. C-1 and C-2 also spoke about how their friends are supportive and helpful. C-1 commented on how she developed close relationships with her

counsellor and other staff at Mahima and would keep in touch when she was down and needed encouragement. These relationships, though informal, are very vital to building emotional strength and resilience.

Family counselling was also identified as an important intervention to ensure that parents and spouses are able to support survivors. When trafficking survivors do not receive adequate counselling services, they become vulnerable to being re-trafficked (United States Department of State 2020, 303). Alongside counseling for the survivors, their families also need to be supported.

At the community level, the respondents mentioned strengthening community awareness and addressing stigma and discrimination as key priorities for interventions. C-3 felt that survivors are often stigmatised and face rejection in their community. Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg make the same observation (Dahal, Joshi, and Swahnberg 2015, 8). Even if they find a good job and try to earn a proper living, they often carry the stigma of having been a trafficked woman. Unless community awareness interventions successfully address the barriers that cause stigma, survivors continue to face challenges.

At the societal level, it is important to recognize the broader socio-political environment that propels trafficking in young girls and women. Corruption in law enforcement, the involvement of political leaders in owning brothels by proxy, and the myth that the abuse of virgin girls enhance vitality are deeper societal issues that need to be addressed along with efforts to bring justice to survivors.

Advocacy and Survivor Empowerment: Advocacy and survivor empowerment are important to address at a societal level. Corbett states that it is important to spread

awareness of the complexities of the sexual exploitation of children and to advocate on their behalf (Corbett 2017, 133). Survivors of sex trafficking should be provided with opportunities to come together and be empowered to become advocates. This includes working alongside survivors and empowering them to be agents of change. C-7 told of a time she intervened and sent her brother's wife back home. She stopped her from getting into the sex trade by promising that she would send money for the family. She said, "I told her, 'I have come through this hell. . . . You have kids. You go back home. I will give you money.' So I sent her back home after talking her out of it. I don't want someone else to ruin their life the way I have ruined mine."

Ensuring Justice: Working towards obtaining justice for survivors is important. Working with church congregations and groups to make them aware of the injustice around them is crucial if a difference is to be made. Congregations and groups should come together to ensure that the biblical mandate to do justice is met. When asked about what needs to be done to stop trafficking, C- 6 said that traffickers of girl children need to be prosecuted and imprisoned. It is true that people need to see the reality of God's justice demonstrated in the lives of survivors (Martin 2014, 44).

Role of Faith-Based Non-Governmental Organisations and their Impact

Faith-based organizations and churches were actively involved in the rescue, rehabilitation, and support of most of the respondents. Christian organizations have been at the forefront of anti-trafficking efforts (Crawford 2014, 1). This was also the experience of the respondents. International Justice Mission, Mahima India, World

Vision, Deepika, and Sari Bari were some of the faith-based organizations which were actively involved in a range of interventions including rescue, recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

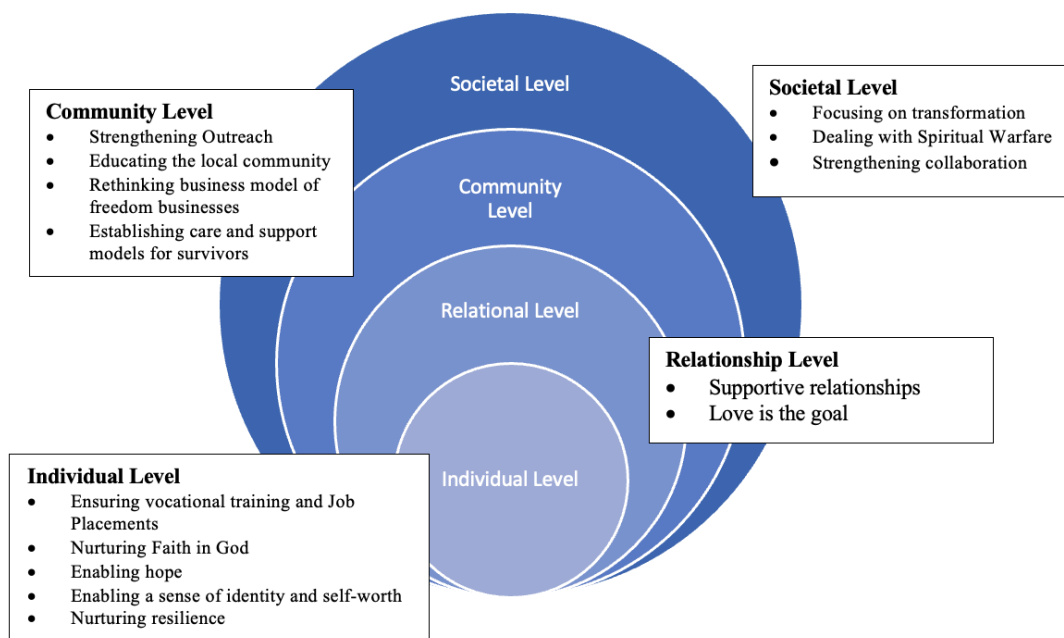


Figure 15. Role of Christian Faith-Based Organisations in Anti-trafficking Efforts

Figure 15 describes the role of Christian faith-based organisations in anti-trafficking across various levels including individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. Table 7 highlights the key roles with examples as expressed in the respondents' own words. The section below discusses the role of faith-based organisations.

Table 7. Role of Christian Faith-Based Organisations for Trafficking of Children and Young Women

Ecological Systems Level	Key role codes	Examples of quotes from respondents
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring vocational training and job placements 	CP-2: "In six months, many of them gave up the trade. Got jobs. They got calls from outside. Some left the community and went back to their towns, and they have full-time jobs now."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurturing faith in God 	C-1: "Also I get hope from God. I know he has a plan for me." C-3: "I pray to my Lord about everything. You take care of me, I'm going. You take care of me. I'm doing this work. Before I do anything, he knows what am I going to be doing. Whatever I do, good or bad. he knows what I will be doing."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling hope 	C-3: "I will make a food stall where I will cook. It won't be too big. It will be small, like those food carts. My pushcart will be stationed in one place. There will be lighting. There will be flowerpots - these tiny ones, with a tiny table and chairs, small earthen pots with paintings on them; on one side I will make tea, and there will be girls working."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity and self-worth 	NL-3: "Only when they realize their self-worth and dignity will they be able to make decisions to change their lives."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurturing Resilience 	C-1: "I keep trying all the time. Like, I will be able to do it if I try. That is the reason why I keep trying all the time. I don't give up easily."
Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive relationships 	C-1: "Then you people supported us. IJM helped us with our house rent." C-3: "Mahima staff members helped me during the pregnancy."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love is the goal 	CP-3: "I want to clarify that we are not doing it to convert them. That is the last of our concerns. Why we are doing this is because we want them to understand there is a safe space for them."

Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen Outreach 	CP-1: “The churches need to strengthen outreach. But even when the church is a small-sized church, if the pastor has a vision, he will develop a support team somewhere.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educating the local community 	CP-1: “I think we should start with awareness first because I think in India, particularly in our culture, we have not spoken about some issues that are there. So, awareness and education has been very, very important.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rethink business models of freedom business 	CP-3: “So, I think that could be one of the challenges that we are creating business models that are completely running on sentiments rather than on profit and sentiments will only work for a decade or something.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish models for ongoing care and support 	CP-3: “So, when we did the freedom church it was nothing like any other church; it was one noisy chaotic church. But we kept it noisy and chaotic because the kids need to understand that that is how God accepts them.”
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeing transformation 	CP-2: “So, our whole focus has been to give them a message of hope. And every single week we go and pray with them. It reinstates that message of hope.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with Spiritual Warfare 	CP-4: “Working in Kalighat is not easy. Workers often get spiritually attacked with depression or sickness. Even blood sacrifices and occultic activities go on there at the temple. This is cult prostitution where people practice prostitution as worship.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen collaboration 	CP-3: “IJM began to connect us with a lot of these like-minded organizations. So, we became like the church that was really involved in social issues and justice.”

At the individual level, faith-based organisations have a key role in ensuring vocational training and job placements, nurturing faith in God, enabling hope, enabling a sense of identity and self-worth, and nurturing resilience.

Ensuring Vocational Training and Job Placements

CP-1, CP-2, and CP-3 discussed the need for skills training and job placements. They stressed that these are important to ensure that survivors are reintegrated into society. They all felt that it is vital to ensure that the survivors are able to sustain themselves. They also spoke about the need for ongoing support for survivors even after they get jobs. CP-1 said, “Love, care, and acceptance is not a one-time thing. At the time of rescue, at the time of coming out, helping them to rehabilitate, or working with them, this has to be an ongoing thing. NL-1 and NL-3 also affirmed that skills building and training are critical.

Nurturing Faith

Churches and faith-based organizations play an important role in nurturing faith that can help build resilience for survivors (Glenn Miles et al. 2020, 1). All three reintegrated survivors also expressed faith that they have confidence that God is with them and helping them. C-3 said, “For some reason I have moved away from Christ. I don’t get to read the Bible, neither do I get to go to the church. Maybe because of that, I have so many issues going on in life right now. . . . But I pray to the Lord before going to sleep. ‘Lord please take care of me.’ I’m compelled to do it. I have nothing else to do. But I know that my Lord is there.” C- 3 declared, “I know it was God’s plan that he came into my life. Whatever I do henceforth, I must think about it many times before I execute it. So, I try and submit myself to him as much as I can. If I make a mistake, I know He is

there. If I do something right, I know He's still there. I don't need to explain it to anybody."

Faith is a key factor but often unrecognized by secular efforts to rehabilitate survivors of human trafficking (Glenn Miles et al. 2020, 1). This was the experience of the respondents who have successfully reintegrated. Facilitating reflection and prayer sessions can help build faith and hope for survivors.

Enabling Hope

All the young women who were reintegrated expressed a strong sense of hope. C-3 expressed a sense of purpose and hope for the future. She said, "I will make a food stall where I will cook. It won't be too big. It will be small, like those food carts. My pushcart will be stationed in one place. There will be lighting. There will be flowerpots—these tiny ones, with tiny table and chairs, small earthen pots with paintings on them; on one side I will make tea, and there will be girls working."

C-1 said that she is hopeful for her future. She expressed the desire to open a tailoring shop and earn money. She expressed her desire to be a businesswoman. She said that she has courage and resilience. "I keep trying all the time. Like, I will be able to do it if I try. That is the reason why I keep trying all the time. I don't give up easily." When C-1 had financial problems, she had a friend who supported her through her difficulties. She said this really helped her. CI added that IJM used to support them a lot, but now the IJM project has shut down, and they had to manage themselves.

C-2 felt that survivors have a choice to live a strong and independent life or they can turn back to the sex trade. She said, "See. It's their individual choice. I was in

Mahima home. If I wanted to, I could have gone back to the same place. I know that that place is not good. To be able to stand on your own feet, to be able to speak up, and when somebody asks where are you working, I am able to say that I'm standing on my own feet and I earn a living for myself." She continued, "The most important thing is to help them get a job and to keep in touch with them even after they have gone back home."

Enabling a sense of identity and self-worth: C-2 says that nowadays people speak positively about her. She said, "I receive praise and encouragement for how I am leading my life. I am on my own feet, I have an income, and I am supporting myself as well as my family. Nobody can raise a finger at me." Hope is a key factor in resilience of survivors which helps them overcome challenges and difficulties (Glenn Miles et al. 2020, 14). Contrasting the expression of positive hope that C-1, C-2 and C-3 shared, for C-4, C-5, C-6, and C-7, their only expression of hope was that one day when they have sufficient money they will leave working as prostitutes. They did not express any hope of an alternate positive future as clearly as the survivors who were successfully reintegrated. NL-3 also shared that the attitude of the survivors makes a big difference. When the survivors have strong self-esteem and they consider themselves valuable, they are determined to do something positive with their lives. NL-4 said that emotional stability was important for survivors. The life-skills training they provide in the shelter homes assist in providing the emotional stability to face the future. Miles et al., in their research on the role of spirituality in enabling reintegration, discuss the fact that resilience which includes hope and faith is important (Miles et al. 2020, 5).

Nurturing resilience throughout the intervention process is important. C-3 said that her experience and the support she received through Mahima has helped her. She said is resilient and will continue to work hard for herself and her child. She also asserted that she had become stronger and, in spite of the pain she goes through, she will stand strong for her child. She said:

I was the victim of circumstances during my childhood, and now also as an adult, I have made a bad choice with my marriage. Yes, it was my mistake and I married him despite knowing everything [about his habits]. But I think it is not necessary that everyone gets the right person in life. I can change what is bad into good. But I have realized that he will not change. I will have to leave him where he is. I have told him that if he leaves me today, it will not affect me. I have seen worse days than this. I have seen the court, police right in front of my eyes. . . . My daughter is my strength. Whether he stays with me or not doesn't matter anymore.

At the relational level, enabling supportive relationships and being focused on love are key themes that were shared by the respondents.

Love is the Goal, Not Conversion

CP-3 said that it was important to understand that the church is meant to reach out and care for those in need. Demonstrating Gods love is the goal and not conversion. She remarked, "I want to clarify that we are not doing it to convert them. That is the last of our concerns. Why we are doing this is because we want them to understand there is a safe space for them." When speaking about the importance of spirituality and restoration, NL-1 reiterated that it was important to incorporate spirituality into trafficking prevention and reintegration efforts. NL-3 said that spirituality plays a very important role in transformation, based on her experience. She shared that, after rescue, the girls go through a denial phase and need a lot of love and care. "They slowly open up and join the

prayers. The girls experience transformation as they get into the daily routine in the shelter homes. Some believe in the word of hope and there is quite a transformation when they find hope, dignity, and love. They start to respect themselves.”

At a community level, faith-based organisations have played a key role in supporting survivors. This can be developed further by strengthening outreach, educating the local community, rethinking freedom businesses, and establishing ongoing care and support models for survivors.

Strengthen Outreach

All the church pastors were actively involved in supporting trafficked girls and young women including sex workers in the red-light districts. CP-1 said that they reached out to communities as a church, and they served people irrespective of religion, caste, or creed. They distributed cooked meals at various centers. They also provided food rations with hygiene kits and essential supplies. CP-2 said that he was motivated by the International Justice Mission staff to get involved in responding to the women during the lock-down. Since the church was located close to the red-light area, they decided to get involved and provide emergency cooked food aid to the women in Sonagachi. CP-2 said it was heart-breaking to find out that the women were starving, and they rushed in to help. CP-3 said that their ministry during COVID was very effective. He said that several of the women they had helped returned to their villages and are doing other jobs now. He added that the food rations and other relief items distributed made the women feel supported, that they were cared for.

CP-1, CP-2, and CP-3 felt that the church as a whole needs to strengthen their outreach to trafficked victims and sex workers. CP-1 stressed, “The church’s outreach has to be maximized. But for a church that is a small-sized church, for that pastor, he might have a vision, but he may not have a support team. But I think if the vision is there, he will develop a support team somewhere.” CP-2 recollected how he organized a program for sex workers at the church after the COVID lockdowns following the outreaches in Sonagachi. He said that more than sixty women came, played games, ate food, and prayed. He was amazed by the response. He declared, “If the church is open and wants to reach out, then they will come.” CP-3 said that International Justice Mission played a crucial role in motivating churches to become engaged in holistic ministry to trafficked victims and sex workers. He explained, “IJM began to connect us with a lot of these like-minded organizations. So, we became like the church that got really involved in social issues and justice.” C-1 and C-2 both said that IJM helped them tide over COVID. C-1 recalled, “The staff from IJM connected with us after COVID. They came to give us food rations. They also gave us some money to help set up my mother’s house, which had broken during the Amphan cyclone and money to pay off our house rent that was due.” C-2 added that IJM helped her after the lockdowns. They provided rice, lentils, and other grocery items.

Educating the Local Community

CP-1, CP-2 and CP-3 all felt that awareness is crucial to address prevention of trafficking. CP-1 said, “I think to start with, you know, to understand that this is a real evil issue that exists, I think we should start with awareness first... to prevent it because I

think in India, particularly in our culture, we have not spoken about some issues that are there. So, awareness has been very, very important.”

Rethink Business Model of Freedom Businesses

CP-2 was critical of NGOs, saying that they exploit the women and do not pay them living wages. He claimed that this is often why women go back into the sex trade. Jobe says that lack of skills can limit rescued women from earning a proper living and that this often makes them vulnerable to being re-trafficked (Jobe 2010, 7). CP-3 said that most livelihood projects are focused on sewing and making jewelry, and those jobs do not pay well. He said that it was important for NGOs to think differently and actually get into job placements or manufacturing where the salaries and income are good. He stated, “So, I think that could be one of the challenges—that we are creating business models that are completely running on sentiments rather than on profit, and sentiments will only work for a decade or something.”

Establish Context-based Care and Support Models for Survivors

CP-3 said that their church started a fellowship for survivors exclusively and it had a very positive response and impact on survivors. He said that since the service targeted survivors and ministered specifically to them, they received it well. The services, he said, were different.

So when we did the freedom church it was nothing like any other church; it was one noisy chaotic church. But we kept it noisy and chaotic because the kids need to understand that that is how God accepts them.... We didn't dilute the message. We didn't dilute the teachings of the Bible. We stuck to it. We used object lessons, we used video series, and we used skit method—whatever was needed to explain the message to them. Now we are doing a regular church ... in the same

area where we did freedom church, and some of the older girls are now coming to the regular church.

The concept of Freedom Church was unique in that only CP-3 spoke about it. He also said that the freedom church has now stopped meeting, although some of the women have joined the larger main congregation. All the other church leaders spoke about survivors or women in prostitution joining their church gatherings on Sundays. While gatherings for survivors may meet their special needs and serve as a support group, they are not easy to sustain and may prevent integration and inclusion.

At a societal level, faith-based organisations play a key role in focusing on transformation, dealing with spiritual warfare, and strengthening collaboration to ensure that survivors are supported and cared for.

Focus on Transformation

Churches and faith-based organisation can address worldviews that enable trafficking. CP-1 stressed that it was critical for congregations to understand the impact of trafficking and change the way they respond. He said, “And the way they will look at this social evil is important because of the mind being transformed by the gospel.” CP-3 pointed out that it is important to transform the mind of the survivors. He said that survivors need to be taught how to manage their lives, and “become self-sufficient, stable, mature citizens of the public community.” NL-2 asserted that a transformed mind is key to positive change. NL-3 also emphasized that change happens only when survivors have a changed mindset. “Only when they realize their self-worth and dignity, will they be able to make decisions to change their lives.” CP-1 commented that his

church believes in holistic mission. “Our teaching is holistic in terms of the heart of God for mankind. God loves those who are exploited. . . . We must discuss issues of social justice.” CP-2 said, “We are focused on people, not resources and money. Our focus is changing lives. And lives have been transformed. The motivation for us then is seeing lives change.” CP- 2 added, “Our whole focus has been to give them a message of hope. And every single week we go and pray with them. It reinstates that message of hope.” NL-3 shared that the interventions with rescued survivors are like seeds, and when they see the changes in the lives of the girls and women later, the staff are encouraged.

Dealing with Spiritual Warfare

CP-1 and CP-4 brought up the issue of spiritual warfare. CP-1 said that it was important to understand spiritual warfare. He emphasized:

Whenever you set out to do something that is good and right and pleasing in the sight of God, or . . . fulfilling God’s purpose, you always have this spiritual battle because the enemy does not want you to advance the kingdom of God. . . . But we find out about the disruption and lies from the enemy. . . . I think the whole area of . . . deception is so important. One of the ways in which spiritual attack happens is. . . through deception and it needs to be addressed.

CP-4 was even more emphatic about recognizing that this was not a run-of-the-mill welfare program. He explained, “Working in Kalighat is not easy. Workers often get spiritually attacked with depression or sickness. Even blood sacrifices and occultic activities go on there at the temple. This is cult prostitution where people practice prostitution as worship.” Dealing with spiritual warfare requires active prayer and discernment. Integration of prayer in the work of anti-trafficking needs to be part of a faith-based response (Laufer 2017, 257).

Strengthen Collaboration

NL-1 shared that collaboration and coordination between the various government and non-governmental actors is very important. NL-1 also shared that prevention is everyone's business. CP-4 spoke too about the need to rethink how we address the spiritual aspects of trafficking and prostitution together. There is a need for sustained collaboration and prayer, together with fasting and discernment, that will help overcome the challenges faced.

Strengthening the faith-based response

CP-1, CP-2, CP-3, and CP-4 all said that more needs to be done to address issues of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Kolkata and West Bengal. All the key informants agreed that trafficking is on the rise in West Bengal and Kolkata, and the way children were trafficked and the process of trafficking has changed over the years. NL-2 said the destination for children who were trafficked has changed and traffickers are using various methods to lure both rural and urban youngsters into being trafficked and exploited. NL-3 shared that in the past most of the girls who were trafficked were poor, uneducated girls from rural areas. However, nowadays she was seeing girls from urban areas being trafficked. NL-4 agreed that trafficking is still happening, but she said that trafficking of minor girls to red-light areas has reduced. She added that now girls are trafficked and brothels operate in residential flats and buildings. CP-1 said that more churches need to reach out to the women in Songagachi and other red-light districts. He affirmed that the women need to be reintegrated back into society; that should be the focus for both NGOs and churches. CP-1 also said that prayer and counselling for spiritual breakthrough are

vital. CP-4 mentioned that education is the key to successfully addressing the generational cycles of poverty and sex work. He also added that it was important to maintain a strong relationship with the women and have a long-term commitment to the projects implemented. NL-2 shared that after the survivors leave the shelter home and go back to their communities, it would be good to meet with them on a regular basis or even have a retreat with them. This was also what C-1 and C-3 shared as a need from the survivor perspective.

Summary

Chapter IV described the outcomes from the analysis and interpretation process and presents a synthesis of the findings from the study. NVIVO was used to support the qualitative analysis based on the case study interviews. Findings from interviews with key informants including church pastors and NGO leaders were analyzed to triangulate data from the case studies. Bronfenbrenner's adapted framework was used to present the findings based on analysis of the interview data and answering the research questions. In the next chapter, a synthesis of the results will be shared with a conceptual framework focused on reducing the vulnerability of survivors to re-trafficking and re-exploitation.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the research case study on reducing vulnerability of girls and young women survivors to re-trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal India. A case study design was used with multiple case studies of young women in the age group of eighteen to twenty-five years, triangulated with information from key informant interviews with church pastors and NGO leaders. In this chapter, the researcher presents conclusions emerging from the findings and shares recommendations to organisations working in the field of anti-human trafficking. Additionally, the researcher also presents specific recommendations to church pastors and NGO leaders to effectively reduce the vulnerability of survivors they serve. The researcher then recommends areas for further study in ensuring the well-being of survivors so that they are empowered and thrive.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand the vulnerability of young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal, India and identify effective strategies to prevent re-trafficking and exploitation.

Specifically, this study set out to accomplish the following:

1. Describe factors that lead to vulnerability and the trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation;
2. Explore the impact of COVID-19 and its aftermath on the vulnerability of young women survivors;
3. Explore and describe intervention practices that are effective in preventing the re-trafficking and sexual exploitation of young women survivors;
4. Describe what faith-based, non-governmental organisations have been doing to contribute to the support of young women survivors and to prevent re-trafficking.
5. Provide recommendations for improvements to programs for young women survivors of child sex trafficking in Kolkata, West Bengal and for further scholastic research directions.

Summary of Findings

This study used the case study design to generate data to answer the research questions. Analysis of the findings based on the socio-ecological model generated themes which articulate the processes and interventions to reduce vulnerability of survivors of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Factors that Lead to Vulnerability and the Re-trafficking of Girls and Young Women for Sexual Exploitation

Factors that lead to vulnerability of trafficking before and after the trafficking experience are not vastly different. According to the survivors, factors like extreme poverty and hardship, early marriage, loss of parents or separation, lack of access to jobs,

domestic violence, low education, natural disasters, living in a red-light area, sickness or disability, lack of safety or rape, having parents involved in the sex trade, child labour, demand for virgins, the lure of social media, and being deceived by false job offers push or pull girls into being trafficked. These factors continue to be underlying factors that enable re-trafficking. In addition to these factors, survivors face the added pressure of stigma and discrimination, verbal and physical abuse, the lure of money, or the pressure to provide for their family. All these factors lead to survivors being vulnerable to re-trafficking and re-exploitation.

Any successful intervention would need to address the above-mentioned factors in a holistic way across various levels including individual, relationship, community, and society, or at a macro level.

The Impact of COVID-19 and Its Aftermath on the Vulnerability of Young Women Survivors

It was evident that the pandemic had a severe impact on survivors and their families. It is crucial that anti-trafficking and reintegration programmes consider the fact that natural and man-made disasters are inevitable, and there is a need to ensure that survivors are resilient and support is available in such disasters, even after the reintegration phase. Survivors experienced lack of food, loss of income, loss of jobs, and increased debt bondage, and some were pushed back into prostitution and were sexually exploited. Survivors also experienced domestic violence and were isolated.

Post-integration services are a necessity to ensure that the survivors have access to emergency care and support. All of the survivors who participated in the current study

said that they were supported by NGOs like the International Justice Mission or churches or other faith-based organisations. However, although the interventions were available at some time during the lockdowns, they were not immediately accessible to all. This can be strengthened.

Intervention Practices that are Effective in Preventing the Re-trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Young Women Survivors

Intervention practices that are currently in place which some of the survivor respondents said benefited them include vocational training, access to livelihoods, counselling services, family counselling, prosecution of traffickers, community awareness activities to address worldviews and stigma, and efforts to ensure that survivors have access to justice and compensation. However, not all the women who participated in the study had access to all these interventions. Those who did seem to be better off than those who did not receive these interventions.

The women also expressed the need to strengthen access to jobs, the need for post-integration counselling services, effective awareness programmes in the community addressing stigma and discrimination, sensitised law enforcement, ensured access to compensation for all the survivors, and ensured prosecution of traffickers. The women and key informants also expressed the need for ongoing counselling and investment in support groups.

What Faith-based, Non-governmental Organisations Have Been Doing to Contribute to the Support of Young Women Survivors and to Prevent Re-trafficking

It was evident from the data that churches and faith-based organisations were actively engaged in helping and supporting survivors. The respondents all acknowledged that they were helped and supported by organisations like IJM, Mahima India, World Vision India, Deepika Society, Sari Bari, and others. It is a testament to what God is doing through His faithful in the midst of a dark situation.

Churches and faith-based organisations are engaged in various interventions including building awareness, rescue efforts, vocational training, job placements, building faith, hope, and resilience among survivors, strengthening their identity and self-worth, and enabling supportive relationships. The organisations are engaged in both spiritual nurture and providing practical support.

Conclusions

The study has highlighted key issues related to the vulnerability of girls and young women survivors to being re-trafficked and re-exploited. In general, the study clearly highlights the fact that survivors are in an extremely vulnerable stage following the trauma faced as a result of being trafficked and exploited. They require specific and individually tailored interventions across the various levels of the socio-ecological framework ranging from the individual level to relationship level to community level and societal level. While organisations are focused on rescue efforts, and immediate care and safe shelter were being provided to rescued victims, the quality of care varied widely

between government homes and organisations like Mahima Shelter home. Children whose homes were in red light areas and whose parents were involved in the sex trade were at high risk. Three of the women who were re-trafficked as children and were engaged in prostitution at the time of the case study interviews had family who were either living in a red-light area or mothers /caregivers engaged in the sex trade. The importance of vocational training and job placements were also a key protective factor for survivors. Vocational training needs to go beyond simply teaching sewing or beautician courses and focus on building skills for sustainable employment for survivors. Additionally, training alone is insufficient, and job placements and ongoing training are vital to ensure survivors successfully reintegrate and thrive. The church and Christian faith-based organisations have a role in addressing worldview issues that enable trafficking in communities. Prayer and prayer movements are essential to address the spiritual and systemic issues that perpetuate child trafficking and exploitation of women.

The following conceptual framework was developed in light of the findings of the research study. The framework articulates specific factors and interventions that can help reduce the vulnerability of survivors to re-trafficking and re-exploitation.

Conceptual Framework for Reducing Vulnerability of Survivors of Child Sex Trafficking to Being Re-trafficked and Re-exploited

Based on the synthesis of the findings from this study, and grounded in established theory, the researcher has proposed an integrated framework for the prevention of re-trafficking. The framework builds on Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model and integrates what needs to be addressed at the various phases post-rescue.

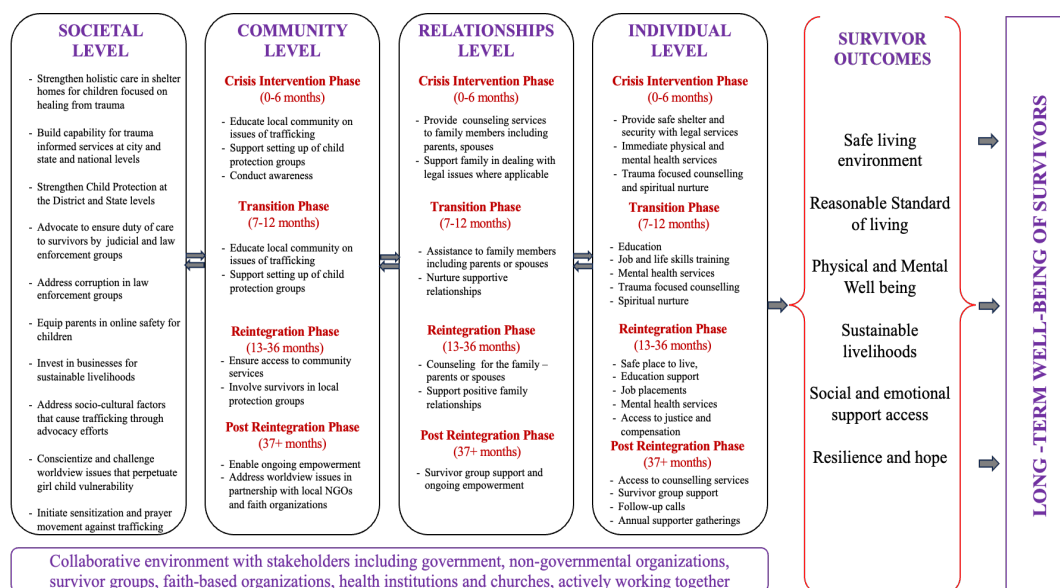


Figure 16. Proposed Conceptual Framework for Reducing Vulnerability of Survivors of Child Sex Trafficking to Prevent Re-trafficking and Exploitation, Based on Socio-Ecological Theory

The conceptual framework above brings together key insights from this study and uses Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1994) to highlight key interventions that may reduce the vulnerability of survivors and prevent re-trafficking and exploitation. The framework postulates that the end goal is the long-term well-being of survivors of trafficking. Outcomes that need to be worked towards include a safe living environment, a reasonable standard of living, physical and mental well-being, a sustainable livelihood, social and emotional support, and resilience and hope.

Using the socio-ecological framework, it is evident from the findings that the following are critical elements in long-term successful reintegration of girls and young women survivors of human trafficking:

1. *Developing resilient individuals* who have access to support, sustainable livelihoods, shelter and health services.

2. *Developing caring and supportive families* who understand, love, and accept the girls and young women in homes which are safe (without verbal or physical violence) and supportive.
3. *Developing safe communities* which provide a protective environment with services for survivors and vulnerable girls.
4. *Developing a just and caring social environment* where the rights of the most vulnerable are respected, where law enforcement and the judiciary are survivor-friendly, and where there is access to compensation and basic health services for survivors.

Reducing the vulnerability of survivors requires that interventions be planned across individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. These interventions also need to take into consideration the post-rescue timeframe adapted from Surtees (Surtees 2022, 9), including the initial crisis intervention phase usually lasting up to six months, the transition phase lasting from the seventh month to the twelfth month, and the reintegration phase lasting from thirteenth month to thirty-six months. The researcher proposes a fourth phase that is, a post-reintegration phase—for on-going follow-up and support of survivors. Surtees points out that the time frame gives a general indication of the time required for each phase, but that it needs to be tailored to individual needs and contexts (Surtees 2022, 9).

Trafficking should be looked at end-to-end, and survivor interventions should not stop at rescue or reintegration—ongoing follow-up is a key issue. Resilience should be a core factor, with spiritual dimensions addressing faith and hope; and it is important to

incorporate spiritual well-being and hope. Sustainable well-being is also a central issue to be addressed. Vocational training need to result in job placements.

At the Individual Level

At the individual level, survivors need care and support. What this looks like will differ based on which phase they are in. The timeframe is only indicative, and some make take more or less time to get from one phase to the next. Case management plans must be made for each individual based on their individual needs. They include:

- **Crisis Intervention Phase (0-6 months):** During the crisis intervention phase, interventions for survivors should include the provision of safe shelter and security, along with legal services. Survivors also must receive immediate physical and mental health services and trauma-focused counselling.
- **Transition Phase (7-12 months):** In the transition phase, survivors should receive education, job and life skills training, mental health services, and trauma-focused counselling.
- **Reintegration Phase (13-36 months):** The key interventions during the re-integration phase are the provision of a safe place to live in the long term, with ongoing support in education, job placements, mental health services, and access to justice. Children and women who have family members in the sex trade or have their homes in a red-light district are extremely vulnerable when they need to go back. They would require long-term shelter in a safe location and ongoing support until they have access to sustainable livelihoods and income.

- **Post-Reintegration Phase (37+ months):** During the post-integration phase, survivors need continued access to counselling services, survivor group support, and regular follow-up meetings and calls.

At the Relationship Level

Survivors need a safe and loving home environment to help them overcome the trauma and challenges associated with having been trafficked.

- **Crisis Intervention Phase:** At the relationship level, the following services are important: Families of the survivors, including parents and spouses, need to be counselled to ensure effective reintegration. Families will also require help to guard against stigma and discrimination. They need to understand that the survivor is not to blame but rather is the victim of a crime. The family also should be supported with legal services.
- **Transition:** During the transition phase, family members should be given access to assistance and support to prepare for reintegration of the survivor. A healthy family environment needs to be fostered.
- **Reintegration:** During the reintegration phase, the family may require ongoing access to counselling services. Parents or spouses need support to cope with challenges. An ongoing positive environment needs to be maintained in the home, and families must be supported for this.
- **Post-Reintegration:** Following integration, survivor peer support groups can help the survivor become more resilient.

At the Community Level

At this level, communities need to be mobilized to support protection efforts and create an environment which enables survivors to thrive. This includes:

- **Crisis Intervention Phase:** At the community level during the crisis intervention phase, it may be important to educate the local community. Police inquiries need to be conducted discretely and sensitively, recognizing that the potential for stigma and discrimination is high. It is also important to support setting up of child protection groups. Awareness programmes may also be helpful depending on the context and need.
- **Transition Phase:** It is important to continue educating the local community on issues of trafficking. Awareness programmes may also be helpful depending on the context and need. Child protection groups can be set up with the intention of preventing further trafficking and sensitizing the community to trafficking.
- **Reintegration:** It is important to ensure access to community services and enable engagement of survivors in their local protection groups.
- **Post-Reintegration Phase:** At the community level, this can focus on strengthening awareness and protection groups, in addition to ensuring support for survivors. Local churches, in partnership with local NGOs and faith organisations, can be engaged in addressing worldview issues that drive trafficking.

Societal Level

At the societal level, it is important to build awareness about the issue of trafficking and re-trafficking. The law enforcement and judiciary need to be trained to

provide a supportive environment for survivors. A healthy social environment needs to be the focus of interventions at a structural and cultural level. Ongoing socio-cultural issues and factors need to be addressed to promote a healthy social environment. Churches and faith-based organisations should address worldviews that perpetuate girl child vulnerability and cultural norms that oppress women and children. Efforts to strengthen child protection at the district and state levels need to be encouraged. State-run shelter homes must be monitored and supported. Capability for trauma-informed care needs to be strengthened. Efforts should be made to invest in sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable communities and families. Faith-based organisations and churches need to invest in prayer at the community level as well as exploring a city-wide prayer movement against trafficking, since exploitation of girls and women is unacceptable. As James says, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). The fatherless and widows were the most vulnerable in the days of the early church. Today the most vulnerable include trafficked and exploited girls and women.

Recommendations of the Study

The recommendations of the research study also encompass the fifth research question, focused on the interventions that need to be strengthened to prevent re-trafficking among survivors. The first set of recommendations is focused on government and non-governmental organisations, including survivor groups, child protection groups, women’s empowerment organisations, law enforcement, the judiciary, and social work and research institutions engaged in the field of human trafficking in general. The next

set is focused on recommendation for church pastors and leaders engaged in or seeking to engage in addressing human trafficking prevention and support to survivors. The final set of recommendations is directed to Christian faith-based non-governmental organisations working on prevention, rescue, and reintegration of survivors.

Recommendations to Individuals, Government, Civil Society Groups, and Supporter Organisations Responding to Human Trafficking in India

This set of recommendations is based on the findings and conclusions of the study in reducing the vulnerability of girls and young women survivors to re-trafficking. The recommendations are primarily for individuals and groups in general who are involved in addressing human trafficking in Kolkata and West Bengal.

Addressing Factors that Lead to Vulnerability

- Enable healing from trauma through psychosocial and counselling services for survivors. The trafficking experience is highly traumatic for anyone, especially children. Ensure that adequate trauma-based counselling services are provided through the rescue, transition, and reintegration phases. Access to trauma-based counselling and psychosocial support services should be made available as long as the survivor needs it.
- Ensure vocational training and job placement support for survivors. Vocational training focused on marketable skills, along with helping survivors find jobs which pay a living wage, is necessary to ensure survivor reintegration is successful.

- Organise get-togethers and retreats for survivors after they leave the shelter or care homes. The get-togethers and retreats can serve as a means of encouragement and on-going support
- Encourage formation of support groups or collectives where survivors can come together, learn, and support each other. Invest in empowering survivors who are willing to be spokespersons and engaged in anti-trafficking efforts.
- Support families of survivors throughout the rescue, transition, and reintegration process. Often families go through trauma themselves and face stigma and discrimination from the community. Provision of family counselling and support services can go a long way in helping survivors.
- Set up protection units in villages with high risk of trafficking. Child protection units and girl power groups can be nurtured and empowered to ensure awareness and monitoring. Child protection groups involving key community leaders, police, child welfare organisations, and survivors can make a significant difference in reducing trafficking.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: Lessons learned from the Global Pandemic

- Invest in disaster preparedness plans for vulnerable communities to ensure that a response can be immediately initiated to support vulnerable families and groups when there is an emergency.
- Ensure follow-up and support communications for survivors, especially during disasters. Establishing channels of communications and monitoring can help support survivors.

- Continue practical support to meet basic needs. Survivors need practical support in times of disaster, like food and basic essentials.
- Strengthen prevention efforts in disaster situations to prevent trafficking. Establishing protection monitoring during disaster situations can help reduce the likelihood of trafficking in vulnerable communities.

Intervention Practices that are Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking

- Strengthen and invest more in freedom businesses. Freedom businesses provide a safe place to work for survivors. However, it is important to ensure that the business is profitable and sustainable, and meets the needs of buyers.
- Strengthen follow-up after the reintegration phase. Survivors need ongoing support even after they leave the shelter homes. Monthly calls and annual get-togethers or retreats can aid in successful reintegration.
- Continue educational support for survivors who want to complete their higher education or vocational training. This can help them get better paying jobs and become financially independent.
- Implement mid-way short stay homes for adult survivors who are transitioning from shelter homes into the community. When girls turn eighteen, they are sent back to their homes. Sometimes the home and community environments are unsafe. In such cases, the survivors need access to short-stay homes where they can transition safely.
- Sensitise law enforcement agencies to be survivor friendly. Survivors often face stigma and abuse from law enforcement personnel. Sensitization programmes can

be focused on helping them understand the challenges trafficked girls face and also educate personnel on the legal aspects and rights of survivors.

- Increase public awareness to conscientize and sensitise community and society about the evil of trafficking and its negative impact on children and women.
- Ensure prosecution and prison sentences for traffickers so that survivors get the justice they deserve and as a deterrent for other people involved in trafficking.

Role of Faith-based Organisations

- Strengthen efforts to address worldview issues that perpetuate trafficking, and make efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination by engaging local congregations in responding to trafficking.
- Enable care and support of trafficking survivors by providing spiritual nurture and helping them build resilience.

Recommendations for Church Pastors

Churches congregations have a critical role in supporting survivors of human trafficking, especially girls and young women. The church can be a place for healing and restoration for girls and women affected by trauma and in need of love, hope, and blessing. The following are recommendations for church pastors and leaders who seek to make a difference for the kingdom of God in Kolkata and West Bengal. The church can nurture a healing community which protects children and young women and speaks up with and for them to advocate for justice.

Addressing Factors that Lead to Vulnerability

- Equip and nurture the ministry of counselling and healing prayer for survivors and others in need of healing and restoration. Survivors and their families often need trauma-informed counseling. Combined with listening prayer, it will help survivors overcome their trauma.
- Nurture support groups for those who are hurting in the church. Support groups for survivors of human trafficking may or may not be exclusive but can help the survivors. The support groups for survivors will also enable empowerment and give survivors a voice.
- Ensure continued access to legal, medical, health and psycho-social services after the women leave the shelter homes. This will help reduce vulnerability and prevent re-trafficking.
- Placing survivors in good jobs in a safe working environment is also important if we want to reduce re-trafficking. Many of the women find it very hard to find jobs. Consequently, skills training is insufficient if job placements are not done. NGOs can liaise with companies who are willing to hire survivors and place them in suitable jobs.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: Impact of COVID-19 and Its Aftermath

- Develop disaster preparedness plans to support survivors in emergency situations effectively. This includes enabling access to protection services.

- Support in addressing immediate needs to survivors including provision of food rations, psychosocial care, medical, and other health needs.

Intervention Practices that are Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking

- Engage in supporting practical rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors in collaboration with specialist NGOs. This includes supporting education and vocational training in church-managed schools or through special alternate educational approaches.
- Provide pastoral care to survivors and those working with them. Equip more leaders to provide care and counselling services.
- Address stigma and discrimination, and promote acceptance nurturing a healing community.

Role of Faith-based Organisations

- Address worldviews in the congregation and local community on issues impacting girl child vulnerability.
- Nurture a healing environment for all including survivors of human trafficking. Build on lessons learnt from 'Freedom Church' and allow space for survivors to come in and be restored.

Recommendations to Non-Governmental Organisations

Addressing Factors that Lead to Vulnerability

- Provide continuing education and learning support for survivors who would like to pursue education. This will enable growth and help survivors find better jobs.

- Vocational Training that can result in better income requires more higher academic competencies and this is a drawback for most of the survivors. Investing in education for children at risk at an early age can help them gain access to better jobs.
- Set up short stay homes for survivors who are over the age of 18 and are from extremely vulnerable circumstances, especially if their family is involved in the sex trade. The girls may not be ready to go back home, and if they are sent back, they are most likely to either be trafficked again or end up in brothels since they feel they have no other option.
- After returning to their homes and communities, survivors need support. This seems to be neglected now. Ongoing counselling services, visits, retreats, and annual survivor gatherings can help encourage and support survivors for successful reintegration.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: Impact of COVID-19 and Its Aftermath

- Prepare to support survivors and their families in case of natural or man-made disasters. It is important to set up an emergency fund to support survivors in meeting emergency needs in disaster situations with food and access to healthcare services.

Intervention Practices that are Effective in Preventing Re-trafficking

- Rethink the approach to vocational training and livelihoods. While sewing, beauty therapy, and handicraft-making have been the main skills provided to young girls

and women, the skills rarely help in terms of acquiring a sustainable job and good income. It is important to think through local circumstances and identify a set of skills which can provide survivors with good jobs. Additional job placements are critical.

- Reintegration efforts should include special interventions at the family and community levels to reduce stigma and discrimination. When survivors are children, then it is important to partner with local development NGOs and help parents have access to secure livelihoods.
- Sensitize and build awareness through behavioral change communication, workshops, and training on issues related to online safety and cyber crime to protect survivors from being re-trafficked.
- Invest in training, encouraging, equipping, and empowering survivors to share their voice and lead anti-trafficking efforts.
- Sensitize and work with men and boys to reduce demand in order to stop the trafficking of girls for exploitation. Men and boys need to be made aware of the horrors of trafficking and need to come alongside organisations involved in anti-trafficking.
- Strengthen collaboration between government, other NGOs, and faith-based organizations in anti-trafficking efforts. This is an area that is desperately needed. Sharing of service information (confidentially and within legal limits) can help address survivor needs better.

Role of Faith-based Organisations: Partnering for Effective Service Delivery

- Partner with churches and faith-based organisations to provide high quality care and support for survivors. While there is already collaboration between government, law enforcement, and NGOs, this can be strengthened so that survivors have seamless access to services.
- Work with churches and faith-based organisations to pray for the survivors and nurture healing. This can include organizing prayer gatherings for spiritual strength and encouragement. It is also important to recognize that not everyone will be ready to accept Christian nurture. So, if survivors are of other faiths and express a desire to be supported spiritually, provide avenues for them to access support according to their faith and conscience.

Recommendations for Further Research

The researcher has identified the following themes for future research to help strengthen prevention of re-trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation.

1. How can child protection interventions be strengthened at the community level to ensure primary prevention of trafficking for sexual exploitation?
2. What role does domestic violence in the home play in enabling trafficking and exploitation of girls? How can this be prevented? What protection mechanisms need to be in place at the community level to minimize vulnerability?
3. How can lawmakers, law enforcement agencies, and the judiciary be adequately sensitized to provide trauma-informed services?

4. How can freedom businesses be sustainable and profitable enough to pay good wages to survivors? How can churches and faith-based organisations be engaged in Business as Ministry (BAM) initiatives to support survivors of trafficking?
5. What is the role of prayer and the healing ministry in the lives of survivors? How should they be ministered to spiritually to heal them from trauma? How can hope and resilience be built in the context of multi-ethnic and varied religious communities in Kolkata and West Bengal?
6. How can survivors be empowered better and support each other practically? What interventions can help with this?
7. How can organisations better strengthen social protection mechanisms and support survivors during disaster situations?

APPENDIX A

LOCATION MAP OF WEST BENGAL IN INDIA



The highlighted yellow colour represents the state of West Bengal
(Location map available from MapsofIndia.com)

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL NOTIFICATION



DEPARTMENT
of RESEARCH

Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary
Ortigas Avenue Extension, Kaytikling
Taytay 1920, Rizal, Philippines

NOTIFICATION OF REVIEW APPROVAL

September 04, 2023
Thompson, Bradley
bgmthompson@gmail.com

**Protocol Title: “REDUCING VULNERABILITY OF YOUNG WOMEN
SURVIVORS RESCUED FROM CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING IN KOLKATA,
WEST BENGAL, INDIA.”**

Protocol#: AR-024
IRB Review Date: August 26, 2023
Effective Date: September 04, 2023
Expiration Date: September 04, 2024
Review Type: Expedited Review
Review Action: Approved

The IRB made the following determinations:

- Requirement for documentation of informed consent: Written informed consent
- Other Documentations: All necessary attachments submitted
- Risk Determination: No greater than minimal risk

Please contact me at cingsian.thawn@apnts.edu.ph if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Miss Cing Sian Thawn
Director of Research
Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary

APPENDIX C

LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF PHD IN HOLISTIC CHILD DEVELOPMENT OF ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, MANILA, PHILIPPINES

Date

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to certify that Bradley Thompson is a PhD candidate at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in Manila, Philippines, pursuing a doctorate in Holistic Child Development. APNTS is recognized by the Commission on Higher Education, Republic of the Philippines, and is further accredited by the Asia Theological Association and the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia. Information about APNTS is located on our website: <https://www.apnts.edu.ph/>. A brochure about the Holistic Child Development program can be located here: <https://www.apnts.edu.ph/download/holistic-child-development/>.

As part of his program degree requirements, Bradley must design and conduct a primary research study. The purpose of his proposed research is to explore strategies for prevention of trafficking of women and girls for exploitation. His committee reviewed his research methodology to ensure the highest ethical standards for research conducted with human participants. Bradley will need to successfully defend his research proposal and be ready to implement his study.

His research will be beneficial to the communities of Kolkata, India, in discovering the issues related to prevention of trafficking. The knowledge generated by his research study will serve as an important resource to civil society organisations, faith-based organisations, academic institutions, and government officials in creating programs targeting prevention.

This certification is issued on ____ upon his request for whatever purposes it may serve.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Nativity Petallar

APPENDIX D

EMAIL TEXT TO WORLD VISION INDIA AND THEIR RESPONSE

From: Bellamkonda Durga Madhav <Madhav_Bellamkonda@wvi.org>
Date: Tuesday, 21 March 2023 at 2:56 PM
To: Bradley Thompson <bradley_thompson@wvi.org>
Cc: Jomon Baby <Jomon_baby@wvi.org>, Anjana Purkayastha <Anjana_Purkayastha@wvi.org>
Subject: Re: Research on Trafficking Prevention - Requesting your approval to go ahead with data collection

Dear Bradley

Thanks for your mail and noted the contents. I have no objection for you to continue and complete your research. Please coordinate with Jomon for on field support.

Best Regards

Madhav Bellamkonda
 CEO & National Director
World Vision India

Skype: bdmadhav1 M: +91 9966544443| Desk: +91 44 2480
 7090 | madhav_bellamkonda@wvi.org | worldvision.in
 World Vision India #16 VOC Main Road, Kodambakkam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600 024

From: Bradley Thompson <bradley_thompson@wvi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 3:28:19 AM
To: Bellamkonda Durga Madhav <Madhav_Bellamkonda@wvi.org>
Cc: Jomon Baby <Jomon_baby@wvi.org>; Anjana Purkayastha <Anjana_Purkayastha@wvi.org>
Subject: Research on Trafficking Prevention - Requesting your approval to go ahead with data collection

Greetings Madhav,

I trust you are doing well. We have been praying for WV India and the process to gain the government's approval to continue the work in India using foreign funds. I hope and pray things work out soon!

I wanted to reach out to you for your clearance to move forward with my research in Kolkata on strengthening the prevention of trafficking of young women. Since your

initial approval to proceed with the research last February, I have completed most of my academic requirements and need to start the research data collection process soon. I have attached my draft proposal summary for your perusal.

I hope to complete the ethics review and my proposal defense in April and initiate data collection end of April through till end May 2023.

However, I fully understand that the circumstances have changed since your approval last year and the current context may be a challenge and hence wanted to clarify the following -

1. Travel to Kolkata: I hope to complete my data collection by June. This means I would need travel to Kolkata in April and stay on till the end of May. All logistics-associated costs will be borne by me directly.
2. Costs: WV India will NOT need to bear any costs for my trip or incidentals during my data collection process.
3. Support from the Project: The only assistance I will need from the Kolkata project is to provide access to the project site and introduce me to the seven young women and their families who I will be talking to for the case studies. If there are any travel and associated costs for this, I will pay for it.
4. Data collection process: I will need to do case study interviews and focus group discussions. I plan to hire a local translator to help with this. Again, the project will not need to spend any time or money for this.
5. Ethics review: I understand that WV India's ethics review board will need to review my proposal and approve it. I have reached out to Anjana and Siva to kindly help me with this.

Please note that I have been working on this topic for the past few years and at this stage of the research process, I don't have any alternatives since my entire research is based on WV India's intervention location in Kolkata. If there are any other issues I need to think through and adapt, please let me know.

I would appreciate your kind response and approval to proceed. Thank you very much.

Kind regards,
 Bradley Thompson
 Senior Director - Sponsorship Capability and Ministry Integration
 World Vision International

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO NGO LEADERS AND CHURCH PASTORS

Greetings _____ ,

I am Bradley Thompson from Chennai, India. I am writing to you to inform you about my PhD research project on the prevention of trafficking of young women and invite you to participate. I am currently doing a PhD programme in Holistic Child Development with the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Manila Philippines.

The PhD programme consists of significant course work plus a research project. For the research project, my aim is to explore the vulnerabilities young women and girls are facing in communities we serve, with a view to construct a holistic and faith-based response model for effective prevention interventions. My desire is that my research work will add value to anti-trafficking efforts globally from a faith-based perspective.

As I know you are involved with survivors of sex trafficking, I would like to interview you to understand your approach and perspective to prevention.

Would you please explore the ways to assist me in this research study? I am willing to meet with you to discuss the research project. Thank you for your kind support.

Thanks!

Yours sincerely,

Bradley Thompson

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM FOR TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

I, _____ voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

- I have been invited to participate in a research study and understand this research project is for Bradley Thompson's dissertation study. Bradley is a student at the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, pursuing a PhD in Holistic Child Development. This project will fulfil his final program requirements.
- The purpose of the study is to identify effective ways of preventing the trafficking of girl children for sexual exploitation in selected communities served by World Vision in West Bengal, India.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that I will be asked to participate in the study and respond to questions about my experience of being trafficked and my subsequent rehabilitation. I will not need to share any experiences I do not want to talk about.
- I also understand that this project should take about four weeks to complete.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview could be used in a number of ways, including: 1) inviting churches to collaborate with local NGOs and be part of prevention of trafficking; 2) planning other research projects, and creating services; 3) writing articles for academic journals; 4) presenting information at academic and public meetings; and 5) writing grants to expand efforts and address important issues. I will never be identified as the person who spoke the recorded words
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that I or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities; they will discuss this with me first, but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years.

- I understand that, under freedom of information legalisation, I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above. I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

If I ever have any questions about this study, I am encouraged to contact the researcher, Bradley Thompson, by email at bgmthompson@gmail.com

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Printed Name

Research Team Member's Signature

Date

Research Team Member's Printed Name

APPENDIX G**CONSENT FORM FOR NGO LEADERS AND CHURCH PASTORS**

Name of participant:

Date:

I have been told and understood the description of the doctoral dissertation research project of Bradley Thompson and have had the opportunity to ask and receive answers to any questions I have regarding the research and the use of the information to be gathered. And I have been informed that the interview will be audio-taped for the data analysis.

I am willing to participate in the interview and agree, with the understanding that the information of this study will be used in the doctoral dissertation.

Signature of the Participant

APPENDIX H

THE POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER CHECKLIST FOR DSM-5 (PCL-5)

Instructions: Below is a list of problems that people sometimes have in response to a very stressful experience. Please read each problem carefully, and then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

In the past month, how much were you bothered by:	Not at all	A little bit	Mod-erately	Quite a bit	Extreme-ly
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0	1	2	3	4
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0	1	2	3	4
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0	1	2	3	4
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4

9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world (for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)?	0	1	2	3	4
10. Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it?	0	1	2	3	4
11. Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame?	0	1	2	3	4
12. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?	0	1	2	3	4
13. Feeling distant or cut off from other people?	0	1	2	3	4
14. Trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)?	0	1	2	3	4
15. Irritable behaviour, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?	0	1	2	3	4
16. Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm?	0	1	2	3	4
17. Being “superalert” or watchful or on guard?	0	1	2	3	4
18. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?	0	1	2	3	4
19. Having difficulty concentrating?	0	1	2	3	4
20. Trouble falling or staying asleep?	0	1	2	3	4

PTSD checklist for DSM-5 is adapted from (Weathers et al. 2013) Scoring.

The interpretation of the PCL-5 should be made by a clinician. The

PCL-5 can be scored in different ways: using a total symptom severity score, calculating DSM-5 symptom cluster severity scores, or as a diagnostic tool. For the purpose of using the PCL-5 for ongoing progress measurement in this study, the researcher has elected to calculate the total symptom severity score.

A total symptom severity score (range of 0-80) can be obtained by calculating the sum of the scores for the 20 items. Preliminary validation work is sufficient to make initial cut-point suggestions, but this information may be subject to change. A PCL-5 cut-off point of 33 appears to be a reasonable value to propose until further psychometric work is available. This cut-off point has been determined based on the significant body of research supporting the PCL for DSM-IV (the previous version, identifying DSM-IV symptoms). Evidence for the PCL for DSM-IV suggests that a 5-10 point change represents reliable change and a 10-20 point change represents clinically significant change. Change scores for PCL-5 are not yet available, although it is expected that reliable and clinically meaningful changes will be in a similar range (“Post Traumatic Stress Disorder | PCL-5 - Greenspace Mental Health Knowledge Base” n.d.”).

Score	PTSD Severity
0-32	Below Clinical threshold
33-80	Above clinical threshold

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

Place:
Date and Time:
Name of Participant:
Age of participant:
Location (original):
Location (current): Where do you reside in Kolkata?
Ethnicity:
Education:
Marital Status:
Known disability:

Thematic Area 1: Family and Childhood Experience:

- Can you tell us about your childhood and family?
- What kind of relation did you have with your parents, siblings and extended family living with you?
- How would you describe your school life? When did you leave school?
- What was it like with your friends?
- What challenges did you face growing up?

Thematic Area 2: Vulnerability and Trafficking:

- Are some children or young women more vulnerable than others? Why?
- If you feel comfortable, can you share about how you were trafficked? What happened?
- When did you exit the exploitative situation? Can you describe what happened?
- How was your recovery process supported?
- What services/resources/people helped you in your recovery? Medical, Social, Educational, Counselling services, Vocational training etc.

Thematic Area 3: Support to Survivors:

- What kind of support did you receive post rehabilitation?
- What additional support would have been helpful?
- What are the key issues that reintegration services need to consider when enabling the reintegration of a survivor?
- What recommendations do you have for effective and lasting recovery and reintegration?

Thematic Area 4: Impact of COVID-19:

- How was it for you and your family during the pandemic?
- What were some of the challenges that you faced?
- How did you overcome these challenges?

- What kind of support did you receive during this time?

Reflection Questions:

- What are your recommendations to better help combat trafficking at the grass roots level?
- What suggestions or lessons you learnt would you like to share with other victims/survivors?
- What inspires you? What keeps you going forward?

Thank you very much for your time!

নারী পাচার থেকে সারভাইভারের জন্য সাক্ষাৎকার গাইড

স্থান:
তারিখ এবং সময়:
অংশগ্রহণকারীর নাম:
অংশগ্রহণকারীর বয়স:
অবস্থান (মূল):
অবস্থান (বর্তমান): কলকাতায় কোথায় থাকেন?
জাতিসত্তা:
শিক্ষা:
বৈবাহিক অবস্থা:
পরিচিত অক্ষমতা:

বিষয়ভিত্তিক বিষয় 1: পরিবার এবং শৈশব অভিজ্ঞতা:

- আপনার শৈশব ও পরিবার সম্পর্কে কিছু বলবেন?
- আপনার সাথে বসবাসকারী আপনার বাবা-মা, ভাইবোন এবং বর্ধিত পরিবারের সাথে আপনার কী ধরনের সম্পর্ক ছিল?
- আপনার স্কুল জীবনকে আপনি কীভাবে বর্ণনা করবেন? আপনি কখন স্কুল ছেড়েছেন?
- আপনার বন্ধুদের সাথে আপনার সম্পর্ক কেমন ছিল?
- বেড়ে ওঠার সময় কী কী সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হয়েছেন?

বিষয়ভিত্তিক বিষয় 2: দুর্বলতা এবং পাচার:

- কিছু শিশু বা যুবতী কি অন্যদের চেয়ে বেশি দুর্বল? কেন?
- আপনি যদি স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য বোধ করেন তবে আপনি কীভাবে পাচার হয়েছিলেন সে সম্পর্কে একটু বলতে পারবেন? কী হয়েছিল?
- শোষণমূলক অবস্থা থেকে বেরিয়ে এলেন কবে? আপনি কি বর্ণনা করতে পারেন কি ঘটেছিল?
- আপনার পুনরুদ্ধার প্রক্রিয়া কীভাবে সমর্থিত হয়েছিল?
- কোন পরিষেবা / সংস্থান/লোকেরা আপনাকে আপনার পুনরুদ্ধারে সহায়তা করেছে? চিকিৎসা, সামাজিক, শিক্ষামূলক, কাউন্সেলিং সেবা, বৃত্তিমূলক প্রশিক্ষণ ইত্যাদি.

বিষয়ভিত্তিক বিষয় 3: সারভাইভারের সহায়তা:

- পুনর্বাসনের পরে আপনি কী ধরনের শাহায্য পেয়েছিলেন?
- বাড়তি কোন শাহায্য পেলে উপকার হতো?
- সারভাইভারের পুনঃসংহতকরণ সক্ষম করার সময় পুনরেকত্রীকরণ পরিষেবাগুলিকে কী কী বিষয় বিবেচনা করতে হবে?
- কার্যকর এবং দীর্ঘস্থায়ী পুনরুদ্ধার এবং পুনরায় সংহতকরণের জন্য আপনার কী সুপারিশ রয়েছে?

বিষয়ভিত্তিক বিষয় 4: কোভিড-১৯ এর প্রভাব:

- মহামারী চলাকালীন আপনার এবং আপনার পরিবারের জন্য কেমন ছিল?
- আপনি কী কী সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হয়েছিলেন?
- কীভাবে কাটিয়ে উঠলেন এই সমস্যাগুলি?
- এই সময়ে আপনি কী ধরনের শাহায্য পেয়েছেন?

প্রতিফলন প্রশ্ন:

- তৃণমূল পর্যায়ে পাচার রোধে আরও ভালভাবে সহায়তা করার জন্য আপনার সুপারিশগুলি কী?
- আপনি যে পরামর্শ বা পাঠগুলি শিখেছেন তা অন্যান্য ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত / সারভাইভারের সাথে ভাগ করে নিতে চান?
- কী আপনাকে অনুপ্রাণিত করে? আপনাকে কী এগিয়ে যেতে সাহায্য করে?

আপনার সময় জন্য আপনাকে অনেক ধন্যবাদ!

APPENDIX J

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR NGO LEADERS AND CHURCH PASTORS

In-depth interview themes:

Place:	
Date and time:	
Name of participant:	
Age:	
Gender:	
Education:	
Organization:	
Ares of work of the organization:	
Role:	
Years of experience:	

Perspective on Trafficking in Kolkata:

What is the extent of the problem in Kolkata?	
What changes have been observed in the trends when it comes to trafficking?	
What reasons could have lead to these changes?	
Comment:	

Vulnerability and Trafficking:

What puts children at risk of trafficking?		
Are some children at higher risk than others?		
Have you or your organization been involved in rescue operations?		
If yes, kindly share your experiences.		
What support does your organization provide to survivors:	During rescue	
	Post rescue	
	During rehabilitation	
	Post rehabilitation	
Comments:		

Prevention of Trafficking:

What measures can be taken to prevent trafficking in children?	By the Government	
	By the NGOs	
	By Law enforcement agencies	
	Others	
What advice do you have for parents and caregivers in keeping the youth safe?		
How can children be empowered to prevent being trafficked?		
Comments:		

Impact of COVID-19:

How did the pandemic affect trafficking and rescues?	
What difficulties were faced in contacting the young women during the pandemic and lockdown?	
Were there women who went back to the trade due to the pandemic and the resulting financial burdens?	
What support did you provide to these women?	
Have you lost touch with any survivors during this period?	
What kind of support were you able to provide to the survivors and their families during the pandemic?	
Comments:	

Support for Survivors:

What support do the survivors need immediately after being rescued?		
What support do you provide during or immediately post rescue?	Medical support	
	Mental health support	
	Shelter	
	Livelihood support	
	Spiritual support	

	Others	
What support do the survivors need after they are rehabilitated?		
What support do you provide post rehabilitation?	Medical support	
	Mental health support	
	Shelter	
	Livelihood support	
	Spiritual support	
	Others	
What challenges do you encounter after the survivors have undergone rehabilitation?		
How do you address these challenges?		
Comments:		

Reflection:

What steps should be taken to put an end to human trafficking?	
Which anti-trafficking programs and laws have been most effective?	
Which programs and legal frameworks have hindered the fight against trafficking?	
How do worldviews impact the issue of trafficking in the context of Kolkata and West Bengal?	
What can the church do to address these worldviews?	
What motivates you to keep working in the field you are in?	
What successes have you observed in the fight against trafficking in the city/nation?	
Comments:	

APPENDIX K**CONFIDENTIALITY COMMITMENT FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Date:

Boundaries for Research Assistant:

The research assistant is expected to maintain modesty in talk and walk with the participants. You are expected to maintain confidentiality, such as not revealing the names and identities of participants, location, and contact information. You should not disclose the stories and discussions of the project to others. You are expected to maintain integrity and honesty in dealing with the research documents and records, keeping them in a secure place.

Please know: we have to treat each other with love by ensuring confidentiality and privacy. If you agree with the above statements, please sign and date this form and return it to the researcher, Bradley Thompson. You may keep a copy of the form for yourself.

Research Assistant Signature Date

Research Assistant Printed Name

Signature of Researcher Date

APPENDIX L

CONTACT LIST OF PROFESSIONALS

The researcher contacted the following professionals to review the research methodology and data collection tools. The purpose of contacting these professionals was to see that the methodology and its tools are appropriate.

Name	Credentials
Dr. Anjana Purkayastha	Former Senior Director, World Vision India
Dr. Subramania S.P.	Former Manager, Strategy and Research, World Vision India

APPENDIX M

LIST OF REFFERAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS FOR SURVIVORS

S. No	Name of the Psychologist/ Psychiatrist/ Counsellor	Address	Contact No./Email
1.	Ms Rajasree Dey Roy, Mahima India	Rosy Land, Flat C-4, 33/31 Nafar Chandra Das Road, Behala, Kolkata 700034	Mobile: +91-9874979248 Landline: 033-2496-1526 info@mahimaindia.net
2.	Dr Jay R. Ram, Mental Health Foundation	6, Andul Raj Road, Opposite Banushree Cinema Hall, Near Hazra Crossing, Kalighat, Kolkata 700026	Mobile: +91-9433811598 Landline: 033-4602-1085 admin@mhfkolkata.com
3.	Dr. Rima Mukherjee Crystal Minds	26, Mahanirvan Road, Kolkata 700029	<u>+91 9903302621/ 9230616750</u> 033-3551-6131 <u>crystalmindkolkata@gmail.com</u>

APPENDIX N**CONFIDENTIALITY COMMITMENT FOR PEER DEBRIEFER**

Date:

Boundaries for Peer Debriefers:

The Peer Debriefers are expected to maintain confidentiality, such as not revealing the names and identities of participants, location, and contact information. You agree not to disclose the stories and discussions of the project to others. You are expected to maintain integrity and honesty in dealing with the research documents and records, keeping them in a secure place.

Please know that we are committed to treat each other with love by ensuring confidentiality and privacy. If you agree with the above statements, please sign and date this form and return it to the researcher, Bradley Thompson. You may keep a copy of the form for yourself.

Peer Debriefers Signature Date

Peer Debriefers Printed Name

Signature of Researcher Date

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CURRICULUM VITAE

BRADLEY THOMPSON

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

Eager to continue utilising my skills and experience in local and global efforts to transform the lives of most vulnerable children and families, I enjoy collaborating with communities, governments and civil society organisations to create a caring, loving and just world for children.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- Experience developing successful government grant proposals for funding child health, HIV/AIDS and development programmes, and leading large operations of health and HIV/AIDS programmes in developing country contexts
- Effectiveness in leading highly skilled technical and knowledge workers, including education, livelihoods, climate change, and health and nutrition professionals in a multi-cultural environment
- Background conducting population-based social research using qualitative and quantitative methodologies
- Validated as World Vision Global Technical Resource Network (GTRN) subject matter expert for designing and implementing maternal, child health and nutrition programmes in communities (2009)
- Proven skills in leading global end-to-end learning, capacity building and change efforts
- Representative in national and international forums focused on programming for vulnerable children and communities
- Expertise in Assessment, Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DME) of health and development programmes
- Computer skills including word processing and use of Internet, JMP-IN and SPSS
- Fluency in English, Hindi and Tamil languages

CAREER HISTORY

Senior Director/Director: Capability and Ministry Integration	2016-Present
Global Child Sponsorship, World Vision International, Hamilton & Manila	

- Lead global end-to-end learning, capacity building, and change efforts for programme integration and efforts to simplify and transform field environment, leveraging digital capabilities in partnership with national office leadership, Global Technology and Digital Solutions, and Ministry Impact teams. The global initiative covering all national offices and area programmes focused on radically simplifying and improving systems, business processes, standards, roles, and tools for greater impact and mutually transforming experiences for children, supporters, and field staff.

- Provide global technical leadership for field-related, end-to-end business processes of child sponsorship programmes, ensuring integration and synergy.
- Oversee development of technical guidance for Child Sponsorship Programming and integration with Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation processes and manage global learning and knowledge management in close collaboration with Global Evidence and Learning as well as Ministry Impact teams.
- Lead global projects and contribute in the areas of policy research, cross-sectoral integration, development of quality standards, guidelines, tools, and resources for child sponsorship, integrated with development programming.
- Lead the development of new partnership Child Sponsorship standards in close collaboration with global marketing and field sponsorship operations.
- Contribute to integrated learning and development strategy, strengthening World Vision's contribution to the well-being of children in World Vision's Development Programmes with Child Sponsorship.

Senior Advisor/Technical Director: Policy and Programmes

2011-2016

Global Child Sponsorship, World Vision International GC, Manila

- Provided strategic technical leadership, advice and support to enhance sponsorship-supported development program contributions to promote sustained child well-being among children, especially the most vulnerable.
- Helped with development and implementation of integrated global child sponsorship learning and development framework. Collaborated with key stakeholders internationally to support development of standards, guidelines, tools, and resources for sponsorship in programming, including monitoring and case management for children in difficult circumstances. Led development of training resources for grassroots staff and volunteers.
- Led projects and contributed in the areas of global child sponsorship policy, research, and learning and development. Facilitated technical support and guidance for the development and implementation of capacity and change management strategy, contributing to the realisation of strategic intent and vision of Child Sponsorship.
- Contributed to the development of measurement metrics in collaboration with stakeholders.

Associate Director: Technical Solutions/HIV/AIDS

2008-2011

World Vision India, Chennai

- Provided leadership and oversight for development and rollout of cross-sectoral strategies and project models related to health, nutrition, economic development, water and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS for child-focused development programmes. Member of FedNet panel that conducted organisational capacity assessments of World Vision's Support Offices and National Offices in the Asia Pacific Region in 2010.

- Developed learning resources and facilitated training of area development program staff for child well-being programming. Led technical support for Health and HIV/AIDS initiatives to plan and mainstream promising practices for integrated community-led responses. Core team member of 'Child Health Now' advocacy team focused on providing inputs on child health policy issues in India in 2009-2010.
- Led pilot testing, research and documentation process to disseminate innovative and proven practices, and facilitated development of child focused programming tools and resources for staff.
- Provided technical support, guidance and programming resources for ADPs to ensure program outcomes were met.
- Led development of Quality Strategy and 'Multi-Sectoral Response to Malnutrition' for WV India in collaboration with key stakeholders including Asia Pacific Regional Integrated Programming team and the Global Health team.
- Worked as organisational capability assessment (FedNet) and Global Technical Resource Network (GTRN) point person for WV India.

National Coordinator: HIV and AIDS

2006-2008

World Vision India, Chennai

- Supervised HIV and AIDS programmes in 12 locations across India, as well as advocacy and mainstreaming projects covering several Area Development Programmes. Managed \$2.9 million USD per year.
- Built capacity of staff in HIV and AIDS programming for prevention, as well as care and support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). Developed interventions for effective family and individual case work for those affected by HIV/AIDS. Facilitated development of training curriculum for Life Skills Education and HIV/AIDS awareness for young children and adolescents.
- Developed program and financial proposals to donors for funding and successfully accessed resources.
- Provided technical support for operations research in HIV Prevention in children and programming for OVC care and support. Provided technical support to Area Development Programs to ensure mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS within development programs.
- Developed strategic linkages with National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO), State AIDS Control Societies, and networked for resource sharing, building coalitions & partnerships. Was a part of the World Vision Regional (Asia Pacific) Disaster Management Team (RDMT) focusing on relief programming and health in emergencies.

National Coordinator: Impact Measurements (TDI)

2005-2006

World Vision India, Chennai

- Coordinated, supported, and trained World Vision ADP staff on Transformational Development Indicators (including health and nutrition indicators) using qualitative and quantitative tools.

- Led and supported participatory impact evaluations for ADPs including accessing whether planned programme objectives for child well-being and sponsorship commitments were met.
- Ensured documentation of the measurement processes, reporting, and dissemination of lessons learned.

Program Quality Manager: Health

2004-2005

World Vision India, Chennai

- Provided technical support for development and rollout of World Vision India's Health and HIV/AIDS policy and strategy. Built capacity of health and HIV/AIDS project staff for effective programming.
- Coordinated with program directors, line managers and Area Development Program (ADP) teams to develop new program proposals and to access additional funds for new health initiatives. Documented and disseminated best practices of health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS programs for relevant and appropriate replication. Developed and updated designs and action plans for Health and HIV/AIDS projects in Area Development Programs (ADP) in India. Planned and facilitated program evaluations to study outcomes and impact of health and HIV/AIDS interventions.
- Networked and liaised with bilateral, government, and NGO partners for advocacy, program implementation, and resource mobilisation at the National, State, and district levels.

Associate: Health Programs

2002-2004

World Vision India, Chennai

- Planned and facilitated implementation of new health and nutrition initiatives in ADPs.
- Provided training for staff in the area of health and HIV/AIDS for ADPs and special projects.
- Prepared and submitted proposals on health initiatives to access grant funding.
- Monitored and reviewed reports from special health and HIV/AIDS projects and compiled them for submission to support offices and donors in accordance with the reporting requirements.
- Developed research initiatives to identify effective ways of promoting health in ADP target areas.
- Conducted regular visits and provided technical guidance for project interventions.
- Networked with Government and civil society organisations on health issues. Coordinated and collaborated with officials of the Ministry of Health (National and Regional) and other organisations.

Associate: Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DME)

2001-2002

World Vision India, Chennai

- Developed design, monitoring and evaluation framework for ADPs.
- Facilitated project monitoring and evaluation with zonal design, monitoring, and evaluation staff.
- Reviewed and provided feedback on evaluation reports submitted by zonal evaluation staff.
- Provided training to project staff on monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Helped develop MIS (Management Information System) to monitor project performance and generate reports.

Operations Auditor

2000-2001

World Vision India, Chennai

- Audited programmes to ensure standards in development program planning and implementation were met.
- Ensured service standards for child sponsorship supported programs in ADPs were consistently met.
- Provided feedback and recommendations to senior management to improve ADP operations.

Technical Coordinator

1997-2000

Path Finder, Chennai, India

- Developed training curriculum for Life Skills Education and HIV/AIDS awareness for young people and facilitated implementation in schools in North Chennai. Provided technical guidance to assistant coordinators in areas of casework, family counselling and community organisation.
- Coordinated training activities of project, especially in area of HIV/AIDS and de-addiction.
- Delivered individual and family counselling to persons living with HIV/AIDS and substance users.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

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- PhD Candidate, Holistic Child Development, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines.
 - Digital Business Strategy: Harnessing Our Digital Future, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Executive Training Programme, 2020
 - Masters in Community Health, Specialising in International Health and Development - Trinity College, Dublin, 2000
 - Masters in Social Work, Specialising in Medical and Psychiatric Social Work - Loyola College, Chennai/University of Madras, India, 1997
 - Intervention Strategies for Children in Crisis – Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS), Manila, 2013
 - Ethics and Biostatistics for Research by Johns Hopkins - Bloomberg School of Public Health/Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, 2009

- Certified Level 3 Facilitator for Channels of Hope - Mobilising Faith Leaders to Respond to HIV AIDS and Orphans and Vulnerable Children, 2007
- Workplace Competency Assessments (Certificate IV) - Validation by Melbourne University, Bangkok, 2007
- Certificate III in Competency in Humanitarian Emergencies - Melbourne University, 2004
- Health in Emergencies - National University Singapore (NUS), Singapore, 2002
- Anthropology of HIV and AIDS - Royal Free College, London, 1999
- Bachelor of Science - Loyola College, Chennai, India, 1995
- Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Applications - Loyola Institute of Business Administration, Chennai, 1995

TRAINING

- Public Health and Development of Children - APNTS, Manila, Philippines, 2014
- Working with Children at Risk - APNTS, Manila, Philippines, 2011
- Global Leader Orientation - World Vision International, Johannesburg, 2010
- Mentoring and Coaching Workshop for Technical Leaders - Chennai, 2010
- Training on Behavioural Interviewing - Chennai, 2010
- Geographical Information Systems - Development Alternatives, India, 2009
- Health Proposal Writing and Program Design - World Vision Asia Pacific, Chennai, 2007
- Coaching for Performance Training - Coach School, Singapore, 2005
- Global Leap (DME) Learning Event - World Vision, Bangkok, 2005
- Natural Disaster Risk Management/Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Framework of Tamil Nadu - World Bank Institute and Environmental Planning Collaborative, 2005
- Integration of Disability Programming - World Vision, Singapore, 2005
- Virtual Leadership Development Program (VLDP) - Management Sciences for Health, 2004
- Trainer in Positive Deviance/Hearth Programming - Child Survival Collaborations and Resources Group (CORE Group), Ahmedabad, 2003
- Food Security Training - World Vision, Hyderabad, 2002
- Monitoring and Evaluation - Manila, Philippines, 2001
- Counselling for Sexual and Relational Problems - Living Waters Trust, London, 1999

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Authored book chapter titled 'Children, Advocacy and the Kingdom of God' in the book *Gods Heart for Children: Practical Theology from Global Perspectives*, edited by Rosalind Tan, Nativity Petallar, and Lucy Hefford, Langham Publications, June 2022.

- Authored a book review of the *Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* by Bartholomew Craig and Michael Goheen in the Asian Journal of Mission, Volume 13, May 2012
- Presented poster on “Faith Based Responses to HIV AIDS in North East India” at International HIV AIDS Conference in Mexico City, Mexico, 2009
- Conducted skills-building workshop on Orphans and Vulnerable Children at International Interfaith Pre-Conference during ICAAP conference in Sri Lanka, 2007
- Facilitated skills building workshop on a faith based response to HIV and AIDS at the Go-forth Conference in Singapore in August 2008.
- Prepared “Health and Transformational Development” paper presented at Christian Medical College’s’ Conference on Our Mission and Mandate’ in Ludhiana, Punjab, India, 2003
- Presented poster on “Burden of Caregivers of Persons Living with HIV and AIDS in Chennai, India” at First International Conference of HIV and AIDS in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1999

REFEREES

Available upon request.