

CHAPTER -2

ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR RESPONSE TO PREVENT WOMEN TRAFFICKING IN DARJEELING HILLS.

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2.1 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

The present research study is on 'Trafficking of Women in Darjeeling Hills- A Sociological Study'. Since Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have been working to prevent women and girls trafficking taking place from the rural areas to the towns and cities so it is important to give the focus on the role played by NGOs in Darjeeling Hills and its surroundings. NGOs are a voluntary group of individuals or organizations usually not affiliated with any government which are formed to provide services or to advocate a public policy. Although some NGOs are for-profit corporations, the vast majority are non-profit organizations. They are independent of government, state or international governmental organizations (though at times they are funded by government). They perform a variety of humanitarian services and the members can be voluntary citizens or groups or individuals having common interests. Their main focus is to uplift the vulnerable sections of society so as to make them physically and mentally fit to fight the exploitations in the surroundings.

Different NGOs cater solutions to different kinds of social issues and their focuses are on a wide range of scales ranging from human rights to improving health, providing education to the underprivileged, spreading awareness on the environment, upliftment of women and children combating human trafficking and so on. The term 'NGO' is not always used consistently. In some countries, the term NGO is applied to an organization that in another country it would be called as NPO (Non-Profit Organization) and vice versa. Although NGOs vary considerably in size, organization, and approach, they share the basic belief that principled individuals working together can do much to solve human and environmental problems.

NGOs are sometimes even referred to as civil societies which are organized to work on the community. Cambridge Business English Dictionary defines a Non-Governmental Organization as an organization with social or political aims that are not controlled by a government. The term "NGO" has various interpretations, it is generally accepted to include private organizations that

operate without government control and that are non-profit and non-criminal. Other definitions further clarify NGOs as associations that are non-religious and non-military. Historical records suggest that the term Non- Governmental Organization came into use in 1945, the term was coined during one of the conferences of the United Nations, as a measure to distinguish organizations from inter-governmental and member organizations. Studies suggest that several organizations were actively engaged in combating slavery, racism and women suffrage during the late eighteenth century. These organizations run with the help of donations given by families, friends and well-wishers (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>).

Some NGOs may have 'Charitable Status' whereas others could be the registered ones based on tax exemption. Some NGOs could be provided with some financial assistance from the government. Some work for religious purposes, some for political or on other interests. In regard to human trafficking, there are numerous NGOs that have already started working to combat the social evil from society. There are some who wholeheartedly surrender their dedication to society. These organizations relentlessly work towards development and bringing a positive change in society. NGOs may have different structures, activities and policies, but all NGOs are committed to their cause and perform their functions to achieve their respective goals.

Sociological sciences emphasize their importance in enhancing social integration, implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, building civil society, social dialogue and participatory democracy. The main tasks of NGOs in the health system are providing services and health advocacy. Provision of services includes medical, social and psychological services as well as, integration activities, care and nursing, material and financial support, educational and information services and training. Health advocacy is a combination of individual and social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health goal or program. An important task carried out by NGOs is participation in the formation of health policy. The increasing role of NGOs in providing social services and the participation in political processes, result in the need to confirm the validity and credibility of their operation. One of the ways could be to introduce the mechanisms to assess quality and efficiency, such as registration as a part of a legal system, self-regulatory activities (card rules, codes of ethics), certification, and participation in networks, monitoring and audit.

There are many challenges that come their way like the shrewd and dangerous traffickers, goons, and mafias, who threaten as well as cause obstruction in their functioning. Some corrupt officials who tend not to take these matters seriously even if they are aware of the traffickers somehow try dismissing the case. Sometimes they shake hands with the traffickers and at other times they counsel the victims and their families about the dragging of the court cases, asking them to make some agreements. Because of the weak legal justice system, it takes ages for the justice to be given since there are no fast-track courts. There is deep-rooted gender inequality as males are given more preferences than the females. Though in the Hills there are not many differences seen, there is a line drawn between masculinity and femininity, which are indices leading to the increase in trafficking.

There are several NGOs in Darjeeling Hills that are working to combat women and girls trafficking. They have initiated different ways and methods to combat trafficking, by organizing outreach programmes regularly, spreading awareness among people through seminars, demo acts in schools and colleges especially for students and also distributing pamphlets, documentaries, short video clips are shown especially in the rural areas. They have formed clubs and committees in schools and colleges like 'Students Against Trafficking Clubs' (SATC), Youth Against Trafficking Club (YATC), and others. Organizations like MARG (Mankind in Action for Rural Growth), HSWS (Hill Social Welfare Society), Crossroads, Bal Suraksha Abhiyan, Hariyo Kharka are NGOs from Darjeeling and Kalimpong. Along with them, other NGOs from Siliguri have equally joined hands working to stop Human Trafficking. NGOs like KUKWS (Kanchanjunga Udar Kendra Welfare Society), Tiny Hands Society, Aatma Vikas Sansthas, Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre, CINI (Child In Need Institute), World Vision, Duars Express Mail from Doars, Maiti Nepal from Indo-Nepal border, IMPULSE organization from Shillong (Meghalaya) are all working to prevent human trafficking.

The NGO people have formed different groups accordingly for their awareness programmes in the tea gardens, rural areas where people are poor and illiterate. Panchayats heads are approached, local Samaj which is formed with same caste people are approached for those programmes. They mainly focus on schools, colleges in urban areas. Rickshaw pullers, drivers are made aware whereas DAT (Drivers Against Trafficking) as an organization against women trafficking has been formed in urban centres like Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Mirik.

Awareness Programmes are conducted for the hoteliers or owners of the hotels and restaurants. Police both the traffic police and the city Police are sensitized on a regular basis.

Table 1: The List of NGOs and the Resource Persons contacted for Interview

SL.No.	Name of the NGO	Year of Establishment	Registration Number	Location	Name of the Interviewee and His/Her Designation
1	MARG (Mankind in action for Rural Growth)	8 TH September, 2006	S-56516-2006	Darjeeling	Mr. Nirnay John Chettri (General Secretary)
2	HSWS (Hill Social Welfare Society)	23 RD November, 2000	S\IL\1026-2000-2001	Kalimpong	Mr. Govind Pradhan (General Secretary), Mrs. Yuden Bhutia (Member)
3	KUKWS (Kanchanjunga Udhar Kendra Welfare Society)	15 TH December, 2004	S/IL 26023-2004-05	Siliguri	Mr. Prabhat Pathak (Member)
4	Tiny Hands	1 ST June, 2016	S/2L/59735-2016-17	Siliguri	Mr. Ashim Rai (Co-ordinator)
5	Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre	2016	S/IL/59769-2009-2010	Siliguri	Ms. Margret Horo (Member)
6	CINI (Child In Need Institute)	1975	S/17076, 1975-1976	Siliguri	Mr. Shekar Saha (Unit Co-ordinator)
7	World Vision India	1970's but functional from 2004	NO 63-27/3/1976	Siliguri	Mr. Amos Tshering (Member)
8	Impulse NGO Network	1980's but functional from 1993	SR/INGON-74/99-1999	Shillong	Ms. Hasina Kharbhih (The Managing Director)
9	Duars Express Mail Welfare Society	May, 2000	S0000276-2018-2019	Odlabari, Duars	Mr. Raju Nepali (Founder)
10	CROSSROADS	August, 2014	IV-00069-2014	Kalimpong	Mr. Bhim Bahadur and Mrs Kylie Duncan (Founders)
11	Aatma Vikas Sanstha	September, 1990	24886	Siliguri	Mrs. Niruta Sherpa (The Managing Director)
12	Bal Suraksha Abhiyan	2006	--	Kalimpong	Sister Subeshna Thapa (The Managing Director)
13	Hariyo Kharka	2010	--	Kalimpong	Ms. Sharu Koirala (Member)
14	Maiti Nepal	April, 1993	--	Kakarvitta, Jhapa	Mr. Govinda Ghimirey (General Secretary)

Source: Interview with resource persons from various NGOs

Case Studies of Some of the Important Non-Governmental Organizations

2.1.1 Case Study 1: MARG

MARG (Mankind in Action for Rural Growth) is an organization that is self-financed and very active in Darjeeling Hills. It started on 8th September 2006 under the guidance of Mr. Nirnay John Chettri, who had a vision to work for the society especially the 'Darjeeling Hills'. Having its regional Centre in New Delhi its sole purpose was to 'Ignite Smiles' in the lives of under privileged and marginalized sections through the medium of education, health care and livelihood generation.

It not only works as a rescuing unit for the trafficked victims but also provides basic education for the under-privileged women and children. It also helps to bring awareness amongst the people. Initially, it had started with the humble step of financially sponsoring 9 children from the nearby rural areas, which started increasing and till the present day they have 250-300 children. MARG has been financially supported by relatives and well-wishers around, though, at times, there are some projects which are given by the Government. In 2010, MARG started working against the trafficking of women by taking on a project in which they recovered 9 girls from Darjeeling who had been taken to Bangalore and had become victims of commercial sexual violence.

There has been no accurate calculation then but from 2012 onward 12-43 girls have been rescued from various age categories. Seven men were convicted to two to four years of imprisonment. 150 so far recovered but the saddest part is that there is no rescue home (shelter home), in Darjeeling so they have to be kept in Coochbehar. The victims cannot be brought home until the court has given the order and the home verification is carried out. Most of the victims were minors below the age of 18. There are various reasons as to the trafficking taking place in the hills. The registered missing cases collected from the District Crime Bureau have shot up from 420 in 2010 to 923 in 2012. According to Mr. Chettri, this report indicates how awareness has helped in the increase of reporting cases.

MARG has been successful in spreading awareness amongst the residents of Darjeeling as well as the surrounding areas sensitizing the local press in such matters and removing the stigma

attached to the trafficking victims. They have recovered many girls' mid-way from trains and buses.

Information is gathered from various sources like from parents, police, Sansthas (Committees) and local clubs. Once the missing information is reported to the organization, be it a minor or a major, it is taken very seriously. The police are mobilized immediately and more information is gathered about the victim. According to Mr. Chettri, past working experiences are a great help to identify the case whether it is of elopement or trafficking, though 1% still remains unknown so chances cannot be taken.

Working against crime is not very easy, there are lot of difficulties faced by the organization in fighting against trafficking- According to MARG there are two perspectives one from the society where they appreciate the good work being done, the other perspective is from the trafficked victims who regard the NGOs and the Police as outsiders and as bad forces, for them it is the trafficker who provides them with food, clothing and finances. There have been many instances when the Police went to rescue the girls, they bit the Police personnel's who later had to be injected with tetanus, and sometimes, they also ripped off their clothes in front of them so that they could run away and hide, as they had been misled by the madams and pimps, they fear the Police. After the raid the one who has been rescued has to be separated from the rest and even in the Police vehicle, she has to be kept separately because by the time they reach the Police station her verdict may totally change which most of the time becomes impossible. There is no timing for rescuing, it can take any moment, and at times the Police personnel are corrupt or may have joined hands with the traffickers who might have warned the traffickers in advance about the raids to be conducted. The organization takes help from higher authority rather than the grass root for this very reason.

Mr. Chettri added "It was very difficult for the organization as well as the Police to carry out their rescue operation. Therefore, the Supreme Court has passed an order that in times of rescuing the Police has to take female constables as well as one organization member has to be accompanied along with some blankets, bed sheets and so on. Rescued girls from the Hills are languishing in various shelter homes outside Darjeeling as there is no rehabilitation Centre so far established, so the rescued girls are kept in the nearest shelter homes at Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri, which becomes very difficult in functioning well." After rescuing from the destination points,

like Delhi, Bengaluru, Goa, and other cities, they are brought to the shelter homes/ protection homes, nearest which is located in Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar, since Darjeeling does not have a shelter home. The women and girls have to be kept at other places.

It is not a very easy process of making the society accept the trafficked victim, where in one instance a girl trafficked from Kalimpong was rescued and brought back, the people in the region were totally against, they made it a point that they would not allow her to cross the river Teesta, so awareness had to be drawn so that the people could change their mindset and not consider the girl as an outsider but as their own daughter, sister in great distress requiring utmost help. So, after the rescuing, the victims are counseled by professional counselors who help in reintegrating in society. MARG has two counselors Miss Aditi Kharel and Miss Gayatri Rai.

Victims Rescued by MARG

Amongst the cases rescued by MARG, maximum was of schedule caste category followed by the Schedule tribes and majority falling in the BPL (Below Poverty Level) category. Age group ranging from 12-40years. The victims were from Kurseong, Kalimpong, Siliguri and Darjeeling. The organization has successfully formed clubs like 'DAT' (Drivers Against Trafficking), there are 2 in Kalimpong, 1 in Darjeeling. There is also the Maha Sangh Committee which collaborates and works with DAT. Religious communities also have extended their help in the form of providing psycho-socio counseling and life development programme and supporting the organization. There is also the 'VAT' (Villagers Against Trafficking) Club, in Dhajay, Sittong, Phuguri where they maintain register of members in the village, keeping a record of all the members going out of the village and the reasons to it.

Outreach Programmes

A lot of outreach programmes are organized by MARG every now and then, especially in schools, colleges in and around Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and also will be centering Jalpaiguri and Siliguri colleges by forming clubs amongst the students, so far, there are 7 clubs in Darjeeling, 4 clubs in Kalimpong. Awareness programmes are initiated even to the grass root level where the local Samaj, Hotels, Drivers Samaj, the Police are being made conscious about the ills of trafficking.

According to MARG, the Police are very supportive which was not so in the past. At present, a lot of sensitizing is happening amongst the police personnel and they have become more co-operative and are providing good support. Organizations directly approach the senior level Police force who are well sensitized and act instantly. There is always a joint venture undertaken between the NGO's and the Police. The Rail Police Force is also alerted in times of need as well as in stopping the traffickers. Without the support of the Police the organization is crippled likewise, the Police too requires the support of the Organizations.

Regarding the Political influences, the organization has never let it come in between their work. Mr. Chettri says there is no fear when the community supports and works together as a team. In Darjeeling Hills, the numbers of rape cases (minor) too are soaring along with trafficking. The laws which have been imposed on them (the traffickers) are POCSO ACT (Protection of Children against Sexual Offence Act) which came up after the NIRBHAYA CASE (14th November 2012). If a child below 18 years is subjected to sexual abuse or any other lewd comments and messages are being texted to her, one can approach POCSO which will count it as a very severe offence and the person will be sent to jail. Another ITPA Act where if a person is convicted, he/she will be liable for 7-10 years of imprisonment. Another can be IPC kidnapping offence along with trafficking a person is sent behind bars.

Prevention of Trafficking

By spreading awareness to the parents, youngsters particularly students through awareness programmes like seminars, skits, procession in schools and colleges as well as even in rural areas either by performing or educating them about the ways they and their children can be lured by false promise given by traffickers of providing good job opportunities in cities and abroad. Through seminars in schools it was noted that two youngsters named Tejasweeta Pradhan (18 years) and Shivani Gond (17 years) members of the 'Students Against Trafficking Clubs' (SATC) of Darjeeling had helped in exposing an international sex racket at Munirka in New Delhi, Gurgaon and Haryana. They saved several girls from Darjeeling, Dooars, Sikkim and Nepal from the traffickers. These two girls were awarded by the West Bengal Commission for protection of Child Rights (WBCPCR) on 21st November, 2016 in Kolkata. So awareness programmes are a must. (Source: The Asian Age, 17th January, 2017)

Future Plans of MARG

It is a big challenge for the organization, as in the past it was easy to identify the trafficker with the physical attributes, description and so on, but nowadays, the traffickers are very advanced and they use the mode of ICT-Information Communication Technology through this they are faceless characters they use other persons fake accounts, someone else's photo where they disguise/ hide their actual identity. So, as the saying goes, 'Iron can be moulded by iron' so even the rescuers have to be faceless (hidden identity) to catch the traffickers and to counter this trafficking issue. Traffickers use mobile phones to traffic likewise, the Police too uses mobile phones to trace and catch the traffickers.

Regarding the data of trafficked and rescued victims, before 2011, the data were not properly kept as they did not feel the importance, but from 2012 onwards they rescued 12 minors and 30 majors along with those 30 traffickers too were arrested and five were convicted. There were girls from the tender age group of 12-40 years and most of them were from the SC category (below poverty level). In one case five girls were trafficked from Madarihaat and recovered in Delhi, and then they were kept at Delhi shelter home. 2 girls were from Darjeeling but since there is no shelter home, they too were kept in Delhi Shelter Home. There was another missing case of 3 girls (minors) who were rescued and handed over to CWC (Child Welfare Committee), later they were reintegrated. There are two shelter homes nearby - Nariniketan in Coochbehar, and Korak Home in Jalpaiguri. The girls from the hills after rescuing are kept in these homes. Society's expectation is very high, in case of a missing report, they want a very quick response where the NGOs and Police have to act very quickly and give them the response. Slowly, society has given into acceptance of the trafficked victims, due to the initiation of regular awareness programmes which are conducted. The news may sometimes mislead especially it happened in the case of Teesta Rape CASE of a minor, where there was no compensation given even after the collapsing of three years but in the newspapers, it was mentioned that the compensation was made.

MARG also states that the National Schemes like the UJJWALA and SWADHAR has to be relooked upon so that a new rehabilitation scheme can be prepared by the panel constituted by the Supreme Court, where the Government would help them start afresh life as to set up a

business or to study. They also will be given the option of either being rehabilitated in an institution or staying at rented premises.

2.1.2 Case Study 2: Hill Social Welfare Society

The chief functionary of the Hill Social Welfare Society (HSWS) is Ms. Shova Chhetri. This organization is a women-based organization working for the empowerment of womenfolk. It has been focusing on combating Women and Girls Trafficking and even spreading awareness by imparting education as well as providing training to the youth. It also focuses on agriculture and provides jobs on farming based projects which are concentrated in four blocks of Kalimpong I, Kalimpong II, Block Algarah and Gorubathan, Rangli-Rangliot Block. It also checks on the health, proper nutrition and diet. Since Kalimpong is an agricultural belt and it has mostly rural areas, the focused area for them is the Bhalukhop area in Kalimpong where they go and organize programs and awareness camps. They also focus on multi-crop farming, square feet farming, animal husbandry etc.

The target group of this organization are distressed and deserted women (Destitute) and girls (Rescued victims/ FSWs/Domestic violence facing women/exploited victims), children, school dropouts, small and marginalized farmers, Self Help Groups (SHG) and single women (widow, unmarried, divorced and separated). It also runs an information Centre for the underprivileged and dropouts, a DIC (Drop-in-Centre) for the high-risk community people, a Centre for prevention, re-integration, restoration of women and child trafficking, a handloom weaving training Centre/ production existing with more than 100 of women beneficiaries and 316 Self Help Groups especially women from the rural belt.

Regarding their financial position, they are stable as they get donations from friends and well-wishers, also through memberships which are annual based and lifetime (Rs. 250/- and Rs. 1000/-). It depends on the mother NGO (West Bengal) for aids. FCRA (Foreign Centre Regulation Act) also provides the organization with funds for children (18 years and below) for their education and health of about approximately 2 lakhs-10 lakhs annually. The vision of the organization is to create a society with justice having ecological balance and gender equity. The mission is the upliftment of women, children and other marginalized in regard to holistic

development in the Hills as well as its adjacent areas without disturbing the cultural heritage and biodiversity within the period of 10-12 years.

Objectives of the NGO

1. To pursue the Community Health related activities, sanitation, prevention and care units for STI/HIV/AIDS and linking approach of RCH (Reproductive and Child Health), Tuberculosis and malaria services.
2. To promote Livelihood development activities related to socio-economic development of the community in the sustainable way and linkage with different firms.
3. To establish the programme for relinquished children for their protection through Child Rights. To pursue activities on the educational and health, nutrition related to child and youth both formal and non-formal systems.
4. To promote and uplift the indigenous cultural status and local folks.
5. To make people aware on anti-human trafficking and ensure protection for the vulnerable children, girls and women.

According to Mr. Govind, the general secretary of the organization, stated that their organization has rescued many minors aged 13-14 from local areas as girls are trafficked to the cities and even to Sikkim, they have also rescued minors where the parents had given their child on free will which becomes even more challenging for the organization to deal as they might be counterattacked not only by the traffickers but by the parents of the victims as well. Mr. Govind too spoke about different factors leading to trafficking of the girls.

Awareness programmes are conducted once in two months. These are also held in rural areas of Lopchu, Peshok due to the closure of the tea gardens, forced migration is taking place so it is necessary for Awareness and outreach programmes. The organization has been taking care of 200 underprivileged children, having set up 12 educational schools (8 in Peshok, 4 in Lopchu with 12 teachers in total).

The organization has been receiving support from Panchayats, Muslim Sansthas and also from GDNS (Gorkha Dukh Niwarak Samelan). The members of the organization have been taking up the challenge of giving a platform to the rescued victims by providing a training based on sewing, kitchen gardening, beauty parlor courses, so that they can stand on their own, by earning

their livelihood in future. The sad thing is there is no rescue or shelter home so they have to keep the girls in Coochbehar or at Siliguri but they also do follow-ups after the rescue, they have also alerted the Christian missionaries and other Sansthas to take proper care of their members.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

They get the information from parents, relatives and friends. Police too inform the organization regarding the missing child, so whenever these cases are reported to the organization they ask to write a report and submit it.

Though, there are many difficulties faced by the organization but when there is no cooperation seen from the police it becomes very difficult to function as without the assistance/help from the police side then it is not possible to track down a missing individual. Many a time, the organization has given a direct letter to the SP (Superintendent of Police) seeking assistance from the Police force. Sometimes, the Police tend to be involved with the traffickers, so no seriousness is shown by them, and the cases are taken very lightly. It becomes very difficult for the organization to act in this type of atmosphere. Sometimes, there has been political pressure during the functioning of the organization, especially during the time of formation of GTA (Gorkha Territorial Administration) the lower level political groups created a lot of problems at the time when a girl was rescued from the brothel and the organization was trying to reintegrate her back into the society but they were not allowing, then the organization approached the top level and finally within a week's time she reintegrated with her family.

Rescue Operation

When a written missing information is reported to the organization either by the parents, relatives or friends, a written application too has to be submitted for better evidence and the organization takes an updated information about the missing individual along with doubts or guesses which they have as to how and when or with whom, then the matter gets registered in the Police station. Police force is very much required at the time of rescuing as the NGO alone cannot act on its own, collective effort is needed but as said earlier the case is not taken seriously by the Police. Therefore, the higher authorities have to be requested during the time of rescue.

Acceptance/Non-Acceptance of the Rescued Victims

Girls are not easily accepted by the society. In this context, there are two categories –first one where girls and women rescued from the traffickers hand before they land up in the brothels are accepted by the society whereas the second one where the girls rescued from the red light areas or brothels are not easily accepted by the society so with the counselling from NGOs and also the assistance from the Police the society gradually has accepted some of the trafficked victims back into the society. Regarding counseling, professional counselor is required but since the organization does not have a professional counselor, the total members from the organization are twenty-nine out of which four are the counselors who understand the problem and have the capability to deal, convince, counsel the victims, their parents and the society. Counselors are Mrs. Yuden Bhutia, Mrs. Meera Laber, Mrs. Tshering Lhamu Lepcha and Mrs. Sunita Rasaily.

Caste/Categories of the Rescued Victims

As per the activity so far conducted by the organization the schedule tribes are the most targeted category as compared to the schedule castes, OBC's and General. But it does not mean that the other categories are not trafficked, the others are lesser in number in comparison to the schedule tribes who have poor economic conditions, illiteracy, and are schools and college dropouts, forced by the parents to migrate to other places.

Future Plans of the NGO

The major focus is on control and prevention by providing training on various fields so that they do not have to go out in search of jobs, generating innovative ideas in them. Though, trafficking cannot be completely eradicated but it can be reduced when such provisions are given to them.

Table 2: Activities on Trafficking by HSWS

Year	No. of Cases Handled	No of Victims Rescued	Category (ST/SC/OBC)	Age Group	Reasons For being trafficked (Social/Economic/Political)	Response from Society	No. of Victims put in Protection Homes
2011-2012	17	17	ST and OBC	21-35 years	Friend circle/false marriage	Relatives did not accept them as they had been rescued from brothels	1 sent to Maiti Nepal
2012-2013	07	07	3 ST and 4 others	25-32 years	Poverty/unemployment	Rescued before they reached the brothel so family and society accepted them	reintegrated
2013-2014	14	14	2General, 3 OBC, Others ST	21-30 years	Economic conditions	Family accepted, no response from the society	reintegrated
2014-2015	04	04	2ST, 1SC, 1General	19-24 years	Failed in Madhyamik exams/ home issues/broken family	No acceptance	
2015-2016	Nil	Nil	-	-	-	-	-
2016-2017	Nil	Nil	-	-	-	-	-

Sources: Interview with Mr. Govind Pradhan, Hill Social Welfare Society (HSWS)

2.1.3 Case Study 3: Kanchanjunga Udhar Kendra Welfare Society

Kanchanjunga Udhar Kendra Welfare Society is a very old Organization, registered on 15th December 2004. Ms. Rangu Souriya is the founder of KUK. This organization has been working for more than a decade already and it is the first to work on Prevention of Human Trafficking, what started as a voluntary involvement in the rescue of a 13-year-old girl from bonded servitude at the house of a businessman from Delhi who had captivated her as a bonded labour in 2004. She has not looked back since then, it has already rescued girls both major and minors from brothels and domestic servitude across the country. The main focus of KUK is that it works primarily in the domain of Child and Youth Development. The mission of Rangu Sauriya's life is to rescue these girls and put an end to the inhuman practice altogether. Though, along with this Child Protection, violence against women is also its focus. The area of work is Darjeeling district, Siliguri, Dooars and many times cases from Jalpaiguri and surrounding countries are also handled. They are financially supported by well-known Professionals like Doctors, friends, sponsors and they do conduct fundraising projects as well.

The organization has rescued victims from Mumbai's 'Kamakipura' area which is one of Asia's largest red-light areas, the other is from Pune 'Budabarpet' red-light area and the third is Kolkata's 'Sonagachi' red-light area. It also has rescued victims from Delhi's J.B.Road; Islampur and Khalpara (Siliguri) from West Bengal and so on. KUK has started with a mission to 'free women from sexual bondage and exploitation'. Ms. Rangu Sauriya has been conferred with over 22 awards from various regional organizations. Her work in this regard has been recognized and awarded by the Office of the President of India upon recommendation by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

KUK has been sharing close proximity with other NGOs national as well as international from Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh connecting it with mainland India. Siliguri has been the main transit hub for major sex rackets as women and girls from different regions are brought to Siliguri and from there the destinations are decided. KUK also does transit monitoring and cross border trafficking at the India-Nepal border town of Panitanki (near Siliguri) and repatriated them to their countries. It has been providing functional literacy, life skill, education and vocational training to the girls between the ages of 12 to 20 years who are not attending school. The Organization has been helping nine rescue workers (males) of closed tea gardens of

Panighata Tea Estate (situated in Terai of Siliguri subdivision) who were taken as bonded labourers to Mumbai.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

Information is given to them by the police when they come to know about any trafficking case. Village Protection Committees, where the locals of the rural areas are trained by the NGO officials - some of them are teachers and advocates who also provide information to the organization. They also receive help from '*Decoir Customer*' indicating to some known staffs from within the organization who acts as customers and make their search for missing individual/s. This local-level prevention helps in a lot of work. Religious communities like the Christian community have also helps the organization. Travel agencies also do report to the organization at times.

Previously it was difficult for the organization to function but nowadays technology and mobiles have greatly helped to track down the details as well as the location of the trafficked victims. Rescue can be done but the integration and rehabilitation is still a major challenge because there are chances of re-trafficking. Society does not accept the victims easily. One instance where one girl after being rescued was reintegrated but she committed suicide, so reintegration is also very challenging.

Rescue Operation

After rescuing, the minors are kept at CINI shelter home, Siliguri and the adults who were rescued in Delhi were kept at Delhi shelter home for counselling till the court procedure got completed and then handed over to their parents. NGOs do the follow-ups even if it be long-distance, it is done over the phone and also request the partner NGO's to do the follow-ups. Company like VLCC came over and gave many of the rescued victims training at a very low rate. Many of them have been placed there as well.

Acceptance/Non-Acceptance of the Rescued Victims

Societies from Darjeeling hills and Doars tea regions have accepted the rescued victims though there are some exceptions where some societies do not allow the victims to reintegrate but somehow organizations manage to help victims adjust in the society. Generally, the biased

perspective which society holds in regard to males and females likewise they feel that the victims have come from a bad place so they might as well traffic others from the area or might spoil the others in the society. Society blames the victims for their condition as to they themselves are responsible for the act and makes them feel guiltier which further affects them physically and mentally.

Counseling is given by the staffs to the victims separately and also to the parents. Counseling is very much required as sometimes when the victim has been in the brothel for more than six months they do not wish to come out from there due to addiction in their lifestyle so staff counseling, as well as professional counseling, is a must. The organization does not provide relief but has a lot of tie-ups with other partner NGOs which helps the rescued victims.

Caste/Categories of the Rescued Victims

Nepalese are trafficked more in number due to their fair complexion, submissive behavior, as they fail to retaliate, they deal well with customers. Bengalis from Purulia, Malda are trafficked, tribal girls from Assam along with Nepalese are brought to Khalpara, Siliguri. Nepali girls from Nepal are trafficked more in number compared to the Nepali girls from the hills. Political instability in Nepal was another reason (push factor) that pushed the girls out from their own country. To escape the insurgency and also for the fear of Maoists, they crossed the border and came to the Indian side and then they were easily trafficked.

Outreach programmes

Outreach programmes are organized regularly in schools along with police who shares talks about cyber-crimes. Joint programmes are very effective. Drivers association is placed at Darjeeling more where volunteers spread awareness to travel agencies by distributing stickers on prevention of trafficking. The organization has developed a very good rapport with the police force so they are very co-operative and active. There has been no political pressure on them so far in case of preventing trafficking.

Future Plans

Since there are no shelter homes, the organization Kanchanjunga Udhar Kendra has taken it very seriously so whatever the matter holds or how much ever funding is required they have started

with the construction of a shelter home at Devidanga, Siliguri. As the saying goes “Prevention is better than cure”, the cure is not possible but at least prevention can be done. The organization plans to start SHGs (Self Help Groups) where the products can be made marketable and that the rescued victims can make their own living so that at least unsafe migration will reduce which will further reduce the trafficking cases.

Trafficking is just not the trafficking of women and girls but even men of different age categories are trafficked. In many cases girls are trafficked with fake passports to other countries especially the Gulf countries. In 2016, 79 male workers had been trafficked to Bangalore to work in Dhup Factory where they were locked for three years without adequate food. Finally, with the help of administration they were rescued.

In the year 2016, three batches of girls were taken to U.P, Bihar for Orchestra singing where Bollywood item numbers are played and one by one the girls are sold off to the people who attend this programme. 8 major girls were rescued from Raxaul (Bihar) out of which 5 were from Nepal, 2 from Doars and 1 from Assam. Approximately 100 trafficking cases of women and girls cases were handled in 2004-2008 out of which mostly were from Nepal who were running away to escape the Maoist threat. In 2013, 5 traffickers were convicted.

2.1.4 Case Study 4: Tiny Hands Society

Tiny Hands Society is located in Pradhannagar, Siliguri. It does transit monitoring, prevent trafficking by bringing awareness among passengers, stakeholders, rickshaw pullers, auto drivers, hotel owners and also travel agencies, Police and GRP (Government Railway Police). Its focus area is Siliguri Junction / Tenzing Norgay Bus Terminus / Panitanki, the Indo Nepal border/ New Jalpaiguri etc. its financial condition is good as it gets donations from members and their friends, other well-wishers and also from the church.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

Information is given by the staffs since they do transit monitoring, sometimes members of SSB (Seema Sashastra Bal), the other branch of the organization is located at the Indo-Nepal border (Panitanki) so information is passed down from there as well.

A lot of difficulties is faced especially when the traffickers are spotted with the girls and the girls/victims do not accept that they are being trafficked. Sometimes, they deny knowing the trafficker/s as the victims have already been brainwashed by the trafficker/s. Sometimes the victims tell that they are going to work out of their own will, even after continuous counseling they retaliate/ fight a lot with the staffs of the organization. It has happened after the girl's denial that the person accompanying them was not a trafficker but later it was understood that the person was the trafficker. Without confirmation from the side of the organization neither can the police be called nor can the traffickers be stopped from travelling. There are instances when police were called, they arrived an hour late by that time the trafficker escaped. Since, there are no shelter homes it becomes very inconvenient for the rescued victims and the organization as the rescued victims cannot be brought home. It becomes very challenging for the organization when victims refuse to file the case against the traffickers and as there are no evidences gathered so the traffickers are let off. In case if a case is filed, the police have to go the court frequently for hearings so they also ask the case to be settled within the traffickers and the victims. The court cases get prolonged so the police do not show keenness to check on the issues.

Rescue Operation

After rescuing, the minors are kept at CINI shelter home and for the majors, the parents are called and handed over. Sometimes, for the majors, the organization also requests the bus drivers to drop them off at their homes.

Acceptance/Non Acceptance of the Rescued Victims

Victims those who are rescued before being taken to the brothels are easily accepted by the society.

Counseling

The staff counsels the victims and put them into the shelter homes, though a professional counselor is required. The organization does not provide relief but makes sure that they reach their home safely.

Caste/Categories of the Rescued Victims

Most of the big groups encountered were Nepalese from Nepal who were accompanied by the traffickers, since Kathmandu airport is very strict it becomes easy for them to cross Indo-Nepal

border by road which does not have very strict vigilance. They are taken to Delhi and from there they are flown to Gulf countries like Oman, Kuwait, Dubai and other places. In small groups there were Adivasi girls along with the traffickers.

Outreach programmes

Outreach programmes are organized once in a while within the Christian community at Malbazar, Panitanki and surrounding areas. At hotels and restaurants too pamphlets are distributed to generate awareness.

Future Plans

The organization is willing to do more for society and expand its areas of work. The organization has handled 52 cases in Siliguri area where 5-7 of the traffickers were kept in Police custody but again released. Trafficked girls were from the tribal community and scheduled castes.

50 cases were handled in Panitanki (Indo-Nepal border) of Siliguri subdivision where two traffickers were caught out of which one trafficker was convicted and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment according to the law of Nepal whereas in India it is 5-7 years and sometimes up to 10 years. 3 cases were from Malbazar, no traffickers were caught as victims were ready to give the statement but later they changed their statement and the trafficker was released. All the rescued victims from Siliguri and Malbazar were the tribal girls whereas all were Nepalese who were rescued in Panitanki situated in India-Nepal border of Siliguri subdivision. According to Mr. Rai, trafficker usually does not show himself, his identity is hidden where everything is monitored over by the phone, as to where the girls have to stand, whom they would be meeting, but the traffickers from Nepal have to travel along with the victims as they are crossing countries border and many of the girls hesitate to come on their own, so the traffickers accompany them.

2.1.5 Case Study 5: Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre

Miss Margret is a member of Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre, Champasari near Siliguri. She informed that the organization is run by Loreto Sisters and has been established in 2016. Though, it is operational from 2009. It is financially independent as it has funds coming from friends and communities. The focus areas of the NGO are the nearby tea gardens in Darjeeling

district. Six tea gardens are looked after by them- Mohar Gaon, Gul Marg, Sukna, New Chumta, Putin Bari and Nischaritapur Tea gardens.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

In case anyone reports them about the missing case, they guide them to lodge F.I.R. and these informants could be the relatives or the neighbours of the missing person. After that the rescue operation is conducted with the help of the police force. After rescue, the minors are kept in CINI shelter home and majors are reintegrated in their respective societies. The organization conducts a lot of awareness programmes in all these tea gardens which have helped them to know their rights. Regarding counseling, a professional counselor is required but since they do not have so the members of the organization give counseling to the victims. The organization does not provide relief but sees that the girls are reintegrated back into their families.

As informed, most of the cases encountered by this NGO are from tea garden areas belonging to the schedule tribe category. Panchayats and police provide assistance. Although they were not very cooperative before but they have started cooperating now. Political pressure is there at times.

The organization's future plans are to cover up more tea garden areas though, it has already started from Jalpaiguri district where they have conducted a Legal Aid Program in 8 tea gardens. They hope to expand their area soon. So far they had handled 22 cases, out of which 7 cases were based on trafficking. After rescue operation, minors were put in CINI homes and others reintegrated. Miss Margret says that she looks into other areas too like domestic violence cases, land-related issues, rape cases and child abuse cases also. She guides women and girls residing in these tea gardens as she herself is a tribal lady who can understand and talk to the tribal in a better way.

2.1.6 Case Study 6: CINI (Child In Need Institute)

CINI is an organization that focuses on the entire state of West Bengal and Jharkhand. The main focus of CINI (Child In Need Institute) is primarily on ensuring services in the realms of education, protection, health and nutrition to women and children living in the urban slums of Siliguri. They look into the system strengthening and providing a child friendly atmosphere.

They take care of children from the age of 0 to 18 years. Here '0' is actually the pregnancy phase, the gestation period of 40 weeks where the pregnant mother and the fetus is looked after by the organization. The main areas which are looked into by this NGO are health, education, nutrition etc. In West Bengal, the North Bengal wing stretches from Darjeeling to Alipurduar. The organization has been functioning with the help and support given by the well-wishers and sponsors. Government funding is also received along with certain training programmes initiated by the government for children through the organization.

Mr. Shekar Saha, the Unit Coordinator of the NGO, informed that trafficking usually takes place more from the rural areas compared to the municipal areas. North Bengal, Nepal, Assam, Dooars etc were the main areas and Siliguri is the main transit area for the traffickers to take them to and fro. It has reduced now compared to 10 years before as there is the SSB which has been monitoring at different points. The members of the organization are also posted at different bus stands and railway stations to monitor and prevent trafficking.

There has a three-tier system of the organization- primary, the secondary and the tertiary, where at the primary level the children sensitization programme takes place, at the secondary level the dropouts, children of single parents and the street children are monitored and it helps them to come to the mainstream, and at the tertiary level the girls rescued from the traffickers are kept at CINI provided with proper counselling after the social investigation procedure is done.

Rescue Operation

After rescuing a child, the social investigation is done and then CWC, Child Welfare Committee gives the order for the child to be kept at the shelter home. Though family is the best place but the organization keeps the child in the shelter home for some days. If the child has faced serious trauma, first-hand counseling is given then process training so to reduce the trauma. Since there are very less professional counselors, the government has appointed expert trainers who can be hired at times. Then the parents are called to take their children home after completion of the procedure with the communication report of CWC. Children are kept in this open shelter for a time duration of 2-3 months according to the government rules and not more than that period. Sometimes, it becomes very difficult for the organization and police to act when parents delay in passing the missing information about their children.

The Government of India has also initiated the Railway ChildLine Programme in June 2015. ChildLine is connected throughout India. There is a Missing Portal that can track and keep a record of missing individuals. Passengers of rails, potters, sweepers, are very alert in reporting any case of suspicion. The main focus of the organization is to make Child Friendly Railway Station with Standard Operative Processing and Police where Home Departments and Railway Protection Force work together. Even in the villages, members of the health department, from ICDS, from Police, NGO, SHG (Self Help Group) come together with prevention mechanisms and create child-friendly environment tea garden areas.

2.1.7 Case Study 7: World Vision India

World Vision India works for Humanitarian response and community development. It has its branches all over India. In Siliguri, the main focused regions are Phasidewa, Khalpara and Khoribari (Siliguri Subdivision). World Vision India is an organization where funding comes from foreign countries like the U.S.A., Finland etc. This project too has been sponsored by the U.S.A.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

World Vision India has been following protocols or guidelines- where there is the coordination of different stakeholders, parents and police come and inform about the missing children. Online software has been established also known as '*Missing Person Portal*' that is an online case registry. IMPULSE has done a tremendous job of introducing this where it becomes easy for case intervention. There are many NGOs who have adopted this method and World Vision India is a moderator along with two or more NGOs. This online website is also known as 'Impulse Case Infocentre'.

Difficulties faced by the organization is solved through social media, a WhatsApp group which has been created where all the members of different NGOs share vital information, like a missing case, tracking devices, recovery and so on. It can happen that members from within the group can act as a betrayer and pass the information to the trafficker which could be a great stab for the organizations.

Outreach Programmes

The organization has been holding a lot of awareness programs for adolescent girls like in these villages '*Girl Power Group*' has been formed under the age category of 14-18 years where they are made aware about the factors, and effects of trafficking. There is another form of awareness that focuses on the males of the village also known as '*Men Care Model*' which falls from 15-20 years. Police as such has been very cooperative.

Rescue Operation

After rescue, counselling is given to the victims. There is an ATN-Anti Trafficking Network where 12-13 NGOs have come together and once a month they meet and are felicitated by World Vision. A good relationship is being established between Nepal NGO and Indian NGOs. Cross border meetings are very helpful in rescuing victims and reintegrating them back with their families. At times, there are political pressures so a group nexus is required.

Future Plans

For the future, World Vision has planned to work in Khalpara area with Child-Friendly Learning and Recreation Centre. Education will be implemented for the children of sex workers.

2.1.8 Case Study 8: Duars Express Mail

Mr. Raju Nepali is the founder of Duars Express Mail, an NGO working against human trafficking and child rights. The nature of work is on anti-trafficking, rescue and protection of rights, welfare and educational awareness for women/children. The area of work is in Jalpaiguri district, Alipurduar district, North Bengal and Sikkim. Regarding the financial position, it is self-financed; they receive support and contribution from the members and volunteers of the organization.

Access of Information and Facing of Difficulties

They get information from the police, parents or NGOs. First the missing information is registered, then the type of case is analyzed, sometimes it could be elopement also. In Nepali culture, in the Hills the practice of three days' time period is given to the girl to return home after eloping. In most of the cases they have found out that if the mobile is switched off it's a case of trafficking, many fake marriages have also led to girls becoming FSW (Flying Sex Workers).

There are many difficulties faced by the organization in rescuing mission- they have received threatening calls, sometimes also from Political power holders. The other difficulty is since there are no shelter homes, girls (minors) are kept in Jalpaiguri shelter home and in CINI, whereas the majors after being rescued are counseled, and kept as housemaids in some local families but without disclosing the incidents. Police delay a lot in reaching the spot, and other times they, in turn, depend on the organization for any type of decisions.

There is no financial aid given by the government in times of rescue. The girls are not easily accepted into the society.

Caste/Categories of the Rescued Victims

All categories of women have been rescued so far. After rescuing the victims are counseled by the members of the organization as well as partner NGOs also help in providing expert counselors and after counseling the girls/women are provided jobs as housemaids in nearby areas. The organization provides some relief by giving them employment in the government introduced schemes like Geetanjali, as well as 100 days' work. North Bengal is a source provider and destination is other places mainly cities. The Panchayats, other NGOs as well as religious communities provide help and support when needed.

Outreach Programmes

Outreach programmes are held on a weekly base and it is in inter-districts and nations like Bhutan, Nepal borders.

Future Plans

For the future, they would want to encourage more of livelihood programmes along with Self Help Groups so that people are not compelled to go outside to work, they can get employment from within the villages.

2.1.9 Case Study 9: CROSSROADS

Mr. and Mrs. Bahadur runs this organization named 'CROSSROADS' which was registered on the 14th of August 2014. The main objective of the organization is to prevent trafficking. The organization directs people to report cases and lodge an F.I.R. and also do follow ups by trying to locate them. They build a network so that even after locating the victims the staff helps them, by

providing counseling and spreading awareness. It focuses on the areas of Darjeeling Hills, Kalimpong, Doars and Sikkim.

Access of Information

Many times it has happened that after the awareness programme, people come over to talk about the missing cases in their areas, or in their families. Then the organization helps them to report the cases and takes the follow-ups. Since the organization does not rescue it informs other organizations like MARG which takes up the cases along with assistance from the police. The police are very cooperative, thanks to the sensitization and awareness programmes held for the police that they play their roles very efficiently. There was a case from Pedong where a minor girl was almost being trafficked by a lady from Finland, but the organization on hearing this made a thorough check on the lady and with the help of the police the girl was saved from falling prey to the trafficker. Actually, the lady had befriended the girl's father and had promised a scholarship for her in Finland but in actual it was not so, and with the help of some friends in Finland they could get more details of the lady that she was a fraud. There was another case where two minor girls were trafficked and were travelling in the train without tickets the police arrested them and they were brought back home. Mr. Bhim also gave a term called '*Positive Deviance*' according to him he stated that there are cases where through social networking sites and other technologies traffickers are trafficking the victim but when the girl even after chatting or befriending a stranger online is alert and knows how to deal and refrains or stops/saves herself from being trafficked is Positive Deviance.

The organization would like to have trained counsellors or psychologists who would be able to counsel the victims after rescuing. The organization is conducting awareness programmes, making people come front and report the missing or trafficking cases on their own, but many are still hesitant, could be a hook that stops them, could also be a threat, or sometimes the traffickers too are in the same village who still convinces the parents that they would bring the girl back but even after a month the story is the same so the staff of the organization helps the parents to lodge complaints. The organization helps in alerting the surrounding nearby NGOs.

Acceptance /Non Acceptance of the Rescued Victims

Girls are not easily accepted in society, and therefore more awareness programmes are required.

Caste/Categories of the Rescued Victims

According to them the age category of victims trafficked are from 15-55 years. All categories are trafficked meaning that not only the schedule tribes or the schedule castes, others are trafficked also. The minors are referred to Childline for follow-ups, like two minor girls were trafficked from Kalimpong and rescued in Himachal Pradesh so the Childline of Delhi took over. According to Mrs. Bahadur, the education system should also be changed as to not enforce on the students as to what is written has to be accepted but also allow them to assess and give their views and opinions which would really help the youngsters.

Future Plans

The organization is open to all types of ideas and information flowing so that they can improve as well as adopt new methods to act for the betterment of the organization and for society. According to them, the church as a religious institution should be involved in these cases so that the trafficking cases could be reduced.

2.1.10 Case Study 10: Aatma Vikas Sanstha

Aatma Vikas Sanstha was established in September 1990 in Vivekananda Road, Khalpara of Siliguri. The nature of work is to rescue victims who have been trafficked, to generate awareness among different groups of underprivileged women and also empower them so that they are independent. This organization also gives ample opportunity to these women by teaching and providing training to them in handicrafts like beaded necklaces, bangles, earrings, shawls, scarves, and other clothing which is online based so these items are sold at different places nationally as well as internationally. They have their outlets in Delhi, Mumbai and U.S.A.

Areas focused are red-light area of Khalpara and places near to it like Kuleshimalla, Koiladipu, Tikiapara. Financial position is based on the work of handicrafts. There are presently 31 women of different age categories from 17-40 years who are salaried every month from this organization. They are paid Rs. 4000/- every month. Out of the 31 members, 25 are Muslims and 6 others. Mrs. Niruta Sherpa has rescued many women and five of them she has also kept with her at her residence. She tells that the work is very challenging and risky but it has made her mentally stronger. It has been 18 years already that she has been working in the Khalpara area though she has joined this organization in 2014.

Future Plans

She tells that in future she has promised to rescue more women, take them out from the brothels and make them more confident and independent. Presently there are 31 in number; she plans to rescue more women and girls in future.

She has rescued many young girls, women from the brothels and also prevented them from being trafficked. There was a case of a young girl who was being sold off by her own father, the girl on hearing about Aatma Vikas came over to the organization and reported the matter to her. Mrs. Niruta intervened and rescued the girl. Now she has been working in Aatma Vikas for the last one year. Aatma Vikas has been able to support many women and girls and their families by building their self-confidences and giving them more strength and courage, making them independent to face society.

2.1.11 Case Study 11: Bal Suraksha Abhiyan Trust

Bal Suraksha Abhiyan Trust (BSA) is a nonprofit organization run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny which was established by prominent French nun Anne Marie Javouhey alongside eight others in 1807. The sisters' key mission is to uphold human rights for all and provide education to the underprivileged across the globe. The sisters strongly believe that no child should be deprived of basic rights to education and personal development, just because they do not have access to the resources needed to realize their dreams. The Organization runs a shelter home for the victims of child labor, it started in 2006.

The Director of the Organization is Sister Subeshna Thapa who focuses on the issues of trafficking (forced trafficking for forced labor), fights against child labor, where children below 14 years are exempted from carrying out other manual/physical work like working in brick kilns factory, daily wage labourer and so on, rescuing and spreading awareness among the people. Children, who have had a tough experience of life, are totally rehabilitated. They have supported over 700 children. Its targeted areas are Kalimpong, India-Bhutan border along with its networking with SSB, Darjeeling-Mirik, Sikkim-Pedong transit points where some projects for children are being organized.

In 2007, BSA partnered with Glenn Family Foundation which donated funds to build the Child Labor Rehabilitation Centre on BSA premises. The facility opened in 2009 and is equipped with dormitories, offices and recreation areas. At their base in Kalimpong they have a purposefully built facility that houses 130 children who have been rescued from child labour. GFF has continued to provide funds to BSA since 2007 which supports 100 children with basic needs such as education, food, health and hygiene. In 2011, BSA became an NGO partner of ChildLine India, becoming responsible for children in distress within Kalimpong district. As a result, BSA formed a ChildLine team who managed to offer instant access to support 24×7 actively intervene or simply just offer a listening ear for children in distress.

The mission of this organization is to promote human rights and dignified life for children and to protect those rights for holistic growth and development. The aim is to facilitate this growth through total rehabilitation of children by providing mainstream education, counseling and health and hygiene in a child-friendly environment. BSA has remained committed to fulfilling its vision of a child labour free society, having rescued and rehabilitated over 600 children since its foundation. Its goal is to move towards labour free society in which every child is given a fair chance to achieve their dreams. Kalimpong area is affected as children who are trafficked are rescued and brought to Bal Suraksha as there are no Governmental Homes, they are kept in this organization and their statements are recorded in the court, produced before the Child Welfare Committee, and provided counseling. CWC gives orders for the restoration process to take place and the children are handed over to the family.

Difficulties Faced by the Organization

Previously, it was very difficult as families did not accept the victims but now after rigorous counseling sessions families too are accepting the children. Sometimes, the children after overcoming the fear factor are taking the risk of going back again which becomes very difficult. The main focus of the organization is to rescue and generate awareness among the individuals. Police have been very active and take up the FIRs in case of a missing child. MCA (Missing Child Alert) is very much in use. The Supreme Court too has allowed filing cases anywhere where the children have gone missing.

2.1.12 Case Study 12: Hariyo Kharka

“Hariyo Kharka” (Green Pasture) is a religious organization, working in all the sub-Himalayan regions covering Darjeeling District, Sikkim, Jalpaiguri District, Bhutan, and Nepal. Its head office is situated in Kalimpong (below Mac Farlane Church). It started in 2010 and mainly focuses on various spheres- the spiritual growth, overall development of the youth like training in leadership skill, counselling, sports etc. Miss Koirala, a member of the organization has done a lot of study on the sex workers in the brothels of Mumbai and has been in touch with NGO’S working to combat Human Trafficking. According to Ms. Koirala, sometimes it is very difficult to reintegrate a victim because society is not ready to accept her and sometimes during the time of rescue, girls are not willing to come out because they fear that they will not be accepted in society again and another question arises as to their survival. During raids, the minors are hidden underground and in hideouts which we cannot even imagine, where girls are squeezed in and made to hide. In most of the time, the police are also the client and they take the weekly *hafta* (money) from the pimps/madams, so they themselves inform them about the unexpected raids beforehand. The minors who are rescued should be counseled by professional counselors and she also insisted on the fact that there should be proper Government aided rescue homes. She said that presently the treatment of the rescued victims in the homes are worse than animals, they are hardly given any respect as human beings. Many of them escape from these homes and again land up in the brothels because the traffickers too continue to eye the victims even after their rescue, so with their contacts again the girls land up in the same job as before.

She stated that even when major girls are rescued there is no place to keep them, sometimes the shelter homes are overcrowded and even after rescuing the police release them back into the brothels. In the shelter homes, there have been many cases of lesbianism as the girls have been habituated with their clients. There should be proper care taken and even the girls should be provided with some trainings so that they could survive well in the outside world.

2.1.13 Case Study 13: IMPULSE

Miss Hasina Kharbhih is the founder, the Managing Director of IMPULSE which is an NGO working against human trafficking in Meghalaya. She has been fighting against the illegal trade of humans as well as the exploitation of child labourers in India and especially in coal mines in

Meghalaya. Thousands of children are working in hazardous conditions where mining is done unscientifically using the traditional mining method called rat hole mining where the labourers are forced to crawl into narrow tunnels deep under the ground to collect the coal without any safety equipment or structures. Many of the children working in the mines have been trafficked and sold as bonded labour to the mine owners. Impulse NGO Network conducted a variety of studies in the area by mapping the mines and child workers. The horrifying results were presented to both the State and Central Government. However, no concrete action was taken to help these child labourers. Impulse NGO Network is one of the first and foremost organizations to have started work to counter the rampant human trafficking in the region.

Impulse NGO Network works towards ensuring equal human rights for all particularly for women and children. The mission is twofold-to provide direct assistance to those in need of care, protection, and empowerment; and to create networks with the community, other NGOs and government bodies to ensure a rights-based approach as well as sustainable livelihoods are available for those who need them. To enable the creation of a just and equitable social order, Impulse NGO Network is committed to the goal of enabling individuals to live a life of dignity. The main focus of IMPULSE was to make all NGOs proactive for combating trafficking and facilitating a chain of robust under one umbrella so that they could function more properly and effectively.

Some religious institutions also have started putting their hands in all the pies meaning to state that if their focus is on the educational sectors, they have started plunging really deep into other departments as well which does not seem beneficial to the society. Therefore, IMPULSE is trying to fix up the 'Meghalaya Model' with the NGOs all over so that at least to some extent NGOs across the state can join hands and work as a team. This has been a mission and vision of IMPULSE as an organization to work against trafficking globally.

2.1.14 Case Study 14: Maiti Nepal

The words '*Maiti Ghar*' in the Nepali language means 'Mother's Home'. This is used mostly for married women to refer to her '*Maiti*' or her parental home where she is born, nurtured and raised till she leaves her home after marriage. She then moves to her husband's house or the '*sasural*' (in-laws) as used in local terms. Maiti Nepal was founded in April 1993 with the aim of

preventing human trafficking by reaching out to the community particularly children and young women by raising awareness and providing counseling, life skills to girls and women who are at risk of being trafficked. It takes care of all those who are exploited, rights violated and rejected by society. Maiti Nepal is an international organization, a nonprofit organization founded by Anuradha Koirala after years of servicing society and fighting against the ills existing in society. It is working in providing protection, rescue, and rehabilitation of survivors of trafficking by promoting their human rights in diversified avenues. They have also taken a greater opportunity to create greater sensitivity and generate broader solidarity among national lawmakers. The vision of the organization is to envisage a society free from sexual and all other forms of exploitation. The organization works towards providing gainful employment opportunities for survivors of human trafficking. It also provides life skills so that children and women are independent and do not fall prey to traffickers. It provides counseling, health counseling, and provides assistance to destitute women, and those who are victims of domestic violence. Though, the financial status of the organization is stable as they generate income from their handicrafts, mushroom cultivation, handloom weaving, tailoring and so on. There are donors and well-wishers worldwide who help the organization function.

Table 3: Unique factors/causes of women trafficking given by various NGOs

Non-Governmental Organizations	Unique Factors/Causes stated by the NGOs for Trafficking
MARG	Chor ko Shor, demonstrative effect/easy money, use of advanced technology-(Google earth), missed calls, advertisements for escorts/friendship clubs. Beauty parlours and emotional people are the causes for women trafficking
HSWS (Hill Social Welfare Society)	Shift in occupation, peer circle, Physical appearance and demand for white skin, early marriages, taking food offered by strangers, fairy tale thinking (inspired from movies), desire for latest gadgets
KUK (Kanchanjunga Udhar Kendra)	Globalization
Tiny Hands Siliguri	Lack of awareness, ignorance (especially they apply for jobs without understanding the details of the service asked), family pressure to bring income, intra country migration, deception of lovers, or between husband and wife after marriage
CINI (Child in Need Institute)	Less awareness of child rights
BSA (Bal Suraksha Abhiyan)	A sweet pledge, emotional blackmail
Duars Express mail	No fair wage for the tea garden labourers (no increase in their income in spite of the inflation in the prices of tea)
World Vision India	Social media
CROSSROADS	Politics, poor implementation of legislation-legal laws, sexual abuse

Source: Fieldwork

Table 4: Common factors leading to women trafficking given by various NGOs

Non-Governmental Organizations	Common factors/causes leading to women trafficking
MARG, HSWS, KUK, Tiny Hands Siliguri, World Vision, CROSSROADS, Duars Express Mail, Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre	Poverty, Illiteracy, Alcohol, Fake marriages, Unemployment, Domestic violence, Broken families, Closing down of tea gardens, Poor socio-economic background, Love affairs, Elopement, Large families, Well organized traffickers with the use of advanced technology, Unsafe migration, Use of mobiles/desire for the latest gadgets.

Source: Fieldwork

2.2 Some Case Studies of Rescued Victims by NGOs

2.2.1 Case Study No 1

Mrs. Yuden Bhutia from HSWS informed about the case of the minor girl from Kalimpong who was illiterate and had been easily lured on the pretext of false marriage. The girl was promised by her boyfriend that he would marry her, so they decided to elope and get married. The boy took her to Kolkata saying that his aunt lives there. They halted there for a night but did not meet the so called ‘Aunty’ and the next day they went to Mumbai, from Mumbai to Pune where the girl was taken to a room and introduced to a lady whom her boyfriend referred to as an aunt, he then left her saying that he would go to the market and buy some things, but when he did not return, the girl became panicky, it is then that the lady told her that she had been already sold off by that boy. The girl was surprised and totally broken, so she started crying loudly, the lady came in and started beating her up with a stick, she was then ordered to wear inappropriate clothing and to serve the clients at night to which she totally opposed and then she was beaten up by other male members and locked in that room for three days and nights and on the fourth day she was again sold off to another (*kothi*) brothel. She did not know as to how much she was sold off to the next *kothi* madam, even here, she refused to work as a prostitute, so yet again she was sold off to a third one, by now she had become senseless due to severe beatings, her health had gone

down and her physical body had been swollen, burnt with cigarettes. She was in mental trauma, and felt that there is no way of escaping from the brothel. She finally had to give in to the work. Here, she met an NGO member from Pune, she opened up to him about her being there, the NGO member promised to pull her out from there but the girl refused as she no longer had trust in anyone, since the one she had trusted the most had betrayed and had sold her off. In brothels matured girls were kept outside whereas young minors were kept inside. Mrs. Bhutia was then contacted and she furthermore went to the girl's house for more inquiry. She met the girl's mother, when Mrs. Bhutia asked the whereabouts of her daughter the mother was unaware of her child, she only knew that she had gone to Rangpo to her friend's place. It had already been 6 months and she had not heard anything from her daughter. Mrs. Bhutia then informed the reality of her child and asked her to go along with her to bring her back, this was the first time Mrs. Bhutia along with the constables and the mother of the girl headed to Pune. They along with Police Force from Pune went to raid the *kothi* at 3 in the morning, but to her surprise, the *kothi* had been informed in advance about the raid that would take place so the minors were nowhere to be seen. They searched everywhere but could not find, finally one Police constable located a big plastic water tank, when they opened they found it had been covered with thermocols and underneath were five minor girls aged 15, 14, and 12 years old had been squeezed into it, and this was in midsummer month of May, when they were taken out, the girls were senseless, due to the heat, they must have been hidden there for quite a long time. The girls were from 24 Parganas, Howrah and Kalimpong.

Mrs. Bhutia spoke to the girls and found out that they were made to drink, smoke and injected drugs so that they would be addicted to it and that they would do anything asked to them. The girls were brought to the shelter home in Kolkata. Regarding shelter home, it was in a very bad condition, overcrowded and the food given to the rescued girls was minimum- just two rotis and little dal (pulses). Elder girls used to beat up the young ones. The reason the girl had to be kept there in Kolkata home is that there are no shelter homes in Darjeeling hills, so after the rescue they requested CWC if they could bring the girl home but could not. Later, she was sent home. Presently this girl is working in HIV Project, she has become much smarter so as to never again trust anyone blindly, though Mrs. Bhutia tried changing her profession but she did not agree and is now a FSW, who handles her work on her own terms and conditions and also looks after her mother.

2.2.2 Case Study No 2

According to Miss Margret from Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre, there was one case from Bagdogra (Siliguri) where three minors along with a trafficker and a lady had been moving around NJP station. Their organization was keeping an eye and finally tracked them down, when questioned the lady stated all were her relatives, Miss Margret asked for their identity proofs to which she became very agitated and refused to give. To this, the organization called the police, who came and took all of them in custody while one of the minor (local) started crying and spilled the beans out as to the lady (tribal) had a connection with another Muslim pimp and these girls were going to be handed over to her soon. On more investigation it was found that one was from Doars, the other from Jalpaiguri, and one was local. The girls were returned to their homes and others, that is the lady, her husband, and a young boy, were dealt in the police station but sooner or later they were released. It becomes difficult when there is no willingness seen by the parents to file cases against the traffickers and next is when the victims do not recognize the trafficker. The tribal society is way too simple especially when the organization is looking after the tea gardens the rescued girls are easily accepted by the society and reintegrated.

2.3 Data collected through Seminar and Interviews from other Sources

Mr. Rishikant, Director of Shakti Vahini an organization working to combat Human Trafficking, was the resource person for the National Seminar on Trafficking in Person: Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation organized by the Department of Law, University of North Bengal on 26th and 27th of November 2016. Mr. Rishikant started the session as trafficking initially starts from violence as well a lot being media's influence. After watching Crime Patrol even the traffickers are alerted about their steps and technology.

He stated that there are a lot many reasons leading to women and girls trafficking from the region. The use of mobile phones by our young generation and the missed calls have given way to really big problems, where with a single missed call there has been a direct interaction between the trafficker and the victims. Mr. Rishikant stated that West Bengal has the highest number of trafficking cases, out of the 10 girls rescued 8 girls are from West Bengal. In

Kolkata's Diamond Harbour there are many hotels who give rooms for a few hours before girls were trafficked to Mumbai but now Delhi has become the next Destination (areas like Lajpatnagar, G.B.Road, Delhi and also Ghaziabad). In G.B. Road there are a lot of brothels, in a raid, the *dalal* (Aspak) and the pimp(Saira) were picked up by the police who in the raid found they had 10crores as bank balance and 100 crores were raided. He confessed having sold 5000 Bengali girls, this has also been documented.

From West Bengal girls were trafficked to Jammu Kashmir. He gave the example of a professor's family who had planned out a vacation to Kashmir and within the trip his daughter fell in love with a Kashmiri driver who was escorting them around, when they were back to Kolkata, the very same day the daughter went missing, later Shakti Vahini too was informed so finally they could track her down from Kashmir where she had been lured by the driver acting like a jilted lover, she could in no time be trafficked to some other place had it not been alerted at the spur of the moment. Mr. Rishikant also said that Nepali girls were sold from Rs.5 lakhs to Rs.8 lakhs. Girls from Nepal are trafficked easily through the Nepal-Indo border.

He stated that the girls are forced into prostitution, when they refuse to accept there is a term called '*Breaking Period*' where the victim is tortured physically and violently and also raped by the '*dalals*' unless and until she agrees to their terms and conditions. They are trafficked and made as escorts for business class men, pushed into massage spas and parlours, and also for entertainment purposes. In a spa in Salugara, Siliguri, a raid was conducted where minor girls about 14-15 years were into prostitution serving almost 40 customers a day. As far as North Bengal is concerned there are many dance bars that have come up in Siliguri after the metropolitan cities.

He also updated on the maximum trafficked cases were by having '*Puchhka*' where the water had made the victims unconscious for 24 hours. There were missing reports of 5000 missing girls from 24 North Parganas. He gave an example of a missing class 9 girls from Bagdogra where she was relocated at Uttar Dinajpur where her hand was about to be chopped off for begging.

According to him the police are very slow to deal with the cases as the traffickers have started using flights whereas the police use trains which delay their investigations. Rescue takes place but the '*dalals*' escape, police should be provided with good infrastructure and transportation

facilities so to counter the traffickers. Police should not be quiet, but they need to speak up to their higher authorities regarding the problems and the facilities required in their investigations. The traffickers are very smart. They know about the mobile tracking system, so they have started the use of WhatsApp which is not possible to track in India.

Interview with Sister Sangeeta Rai, Kalimpong Hospital

Sister Sangeeta is the head of HIV/AIDS Department of the Sub Divisional Government Hospital, Kalimpong. She has been associated with the hospital for more than a decade, she has been dealing with HIV infected people as well as counseling and helping them with their health and other problems. According to her, trafficking has been taking place due to various reasons some of the cases which she has dealt with is Molestation in the tender years (10 years old) within the family, where the stepfather, uncle have taken advantage of the girls. Family molestations: when the family background is not very strong, could be a single parent household or either joint family, children are vulnerable to be exploited by the uncles or the other relatives in the household. This has also been a major factor to push these children into illegal activities. Some are sold by their own family members to the traffickers.

Alcoholism is a very bad practice in the hills where out of five homes, three or even four houses have alcoholics. Broken families where even the stepmother has played a major role in selling off the young girl to a pimp. Ignorance where People are simple in the hills, lack awareness as to their rights and also face a social stigma to hush up things instead of speaking it out. People lack education, many youngsters are school and college dropouts. Low income groups where people have to depend on outer sources for employment opportunities. Broken marriages, Peer pressure, Poverty are also some of the reasons for trafficking. Sister Sangeeta informed that many a times it is the NGO's who send the trafficked/rescued victims for examination like conducting tests on STD's HIV/AIDS and so on. The girls are traumatized so she does counseling by being one of them, where they can share everything with her. She has developed a good rapport which is very much required. If she acts professionally then it becomes very difficult to understand their problems and they hesitate to open up so she counsels them in a very friendly manner and provides them with medicines.

She has found out that the trafficked victims rescued have taken up the profession of FSW (Flying Sex Workers), in and around the area. School and college girls are engaged in flying sex work, reason is for easy money in order to have the expensive gadgets (mobiles), clothes, good food etc. Hills do not have brothels so the practice takes place in the hotels, but clients are less so the girls go to Sikkim. In Jorethang they have a much bigger place and they also go to Bangalore and Delhi if they get good money.

Rehabilitation becomes very difficult at times because the trafficked victims have been sex habituated, sex has become an integral part of their life and their body, not only with males but at times they show sexual advances even to the females. Substance intake without the use of drugs, cigarettes cannot survive. It becomes very difficult for reintegration as the society looks down as outcaste and does not accept them neither does their family so these girls stay on rent premises along with their friends in the same profession. It becomes very difficult for them to come to the mainstream. According to her, even if NGOs are providing some training skills to help them, they do not wish to do hard work instead it seems easy for them to indulge in sexual activity and earn for a living.

In the past there were many outreach programmes conducted along with the NGO (Hill Social Welfare Society) in the rural areas of Kalimpong, Peshok and Lopchu but it has been three years that all these projects, like TI- Targeted Intervention, have been closed by the State Government. Closing of the tea gardens have been of serious concern as the traffickers are ready to set their foot in and convince the labourers to give their children who in turn have no option but to hand over their children to them.

In Doars there was a case where the pimp herself came over and married a local tea garden labourer and acted as a bride of the house there was no suspension on her, within a year or so she was successful in trafficking many of the helpless girls from the tea garden areas. Awareness programme is conducted where free FC (Female Condom) is distributed and awareness of safe sex is emphasized, they have their checkups for STDs, vaginal tests to be conducted every six months.

Since 2007 to 2009 there were four trafficked girls who were taken to Mumbai and Pune. From 2010 onwards the girls were rescued before being trafficked before reaching the brothels. In

2016, three school girls two of class X went to meet their Facebook friend in Kolkata they stayed in the hotels but within no time they were suspected by the Police there that they were almost on the verge of being trafficked so they were returned home. Miss Yuden Bhutia along with her team brought them back. Regarding help from Police, they do cooperate, but it is only after being provided with all the updated details of the missing victim who has been trafficked otherwise they do not show any keenness in cooperation.

At times even the NGO's run around just for the credit, just for the fame which they derive through the media and other sources, they rescue a trafficked victim bring her back but what happens next that is uncertain. There is nothing of any security nor do any follow up. So, this topic still remains for a bigger discussion as to what can be done to the trafficked victims who have been rescued.

In addition, Sister Shanta Baraily, a member of the HIV/AIDS Department also stated that any exchange (could be items, objects or commodities) for sex would be termed as a "Sex Worker" likewise even a housewife who is getting some materialistic things in exchange for sex would be a sex worker. All classes of people are involved in it, mostly the lower class and the high class society. Lower class, due to the poor economic conditions and the High-class society they cannot have all their needs fulfilled. Sex worker can be out of choice or compulsion as they have chosen it as their profession but there is a difference as to a trafficked victim in a brothel who is providing all the sexual favours to the client, she has been sold off, without her knowledge or with her knowledge and has been forced into prostitution. Trafficking has been taking place due to the lifestyle where the girls are easily tempted to go to any extent even for fulfilling sexual favours, they become easy targets for trafficking. Some of the young girls say about 14-15 years old have boyfriends and many cases are there where the boys have demanded sex on their birthdays to prove their love for them and in this way many of them have been sexually abused leading them to FSW. It is after the childhood abuses children run away from homes in search of security outside but to their utter dismay, they fall into the hands of the pimps or madams and are forced into brothels and made to serve as escorts to rich business class people or a prostitute in the brothel. Trafficked victims after being rescued have started their profession as FSW.

According to her, NGOs too face a major problem when it comes to rehabilitation because the trafficked victims have been sexually habituated meaning to say that they cannot live without

having sex, as sex has become an integral part of their lives and their body, not only with males but at times they also show sexual advances even to females. Along with this, there is intake of substances could be drugs, cigarettes and other harmful substances, which also becomes very challenging for the organization to reintegrate them back into their families and their societies. According to her if the NGOs are providing some training skills to help them, they do not wish to do hard work instead it seems easy for them to indulge in sexual activity and earn their living. There are some who visit her for medication as they have been infected with HIV/AIDS and STDs, they have been rescued from brothels from the cities but now they have become FSW (Flying Sex Workers) and they also wear the used condoms ring as a bangle around their wrists as an indication for others to see. They have developed emotional bonds with some of their clients whom they refer to as *Babu* and they do not charge any amount to these people. Peer group also pull young girls into FSW.

Interview with Father Stanley Sj, Darjeeling

Father Stanley, a Jesuit Priest who is also an advocate in Darjeeling, has also handled few trafficking cases. According to Father, the main cause of trafficking is poverty, unemployment and mostly tea garden laborers are the targeted ones. Though he does not rescue, many cases from the tea gardens were brought to him where he had referred to MARG. He stated that once the trafficker takes the victim out of the border areas it becomes very difficult to trace them back. The NGOs have to be at their toes and need to have a very strict vigilance especially in the border areas. NGOs have to work together for best outcomes

2.4 Conclusion

Non-Governmental Organizations have been working to prevent women trafficking in Darjeeling hills. Awareness programmes are often conducted in both rural and urban areas. Educational schools and colleges are being focused on so that the youth becomes aware of trafficking. Seminars too have helped in preventing the trafficking of women and girls. The formation of trafficking clubs at schools and colleges have also created awareness amongst the students. Drivers are also sensitized so that they can inform the local NGOs or police when they suspect something unusual.

Ms. Hasina Kharbhih, managing director of IMPULSE, an NGO working against trafficking stated that NGOs have to form a nexus in order to work against trafficking. Since North Bengal is the corridor to the North East, IMPULSE is focusing to make all NGOs proactive in combating trafficking and facilitating a chain of robust umbrellas so that they could function more properly and effectively.

NGOs have started working together and have formed collaboration. Anti-trafficking Network has helped in passing down information in the group by various NGOs and the NGO whichever is located near the place of rescue goes out and helps in rescuing the victims whenever needed. They exchange their views and ideas which also helps them in rendering their services to society. NGOs have been coming together and meetings are being held along with their planning. Without the help of the organizations the victims could not have been rescued and the police also have been assisted by the NGOs during the rescue missions as well as they have been spreading awareness among the police forces. NGOs and Police working together have helped rescue the women and girls.