

# THE POWER OF COMMUNITIES:

PLAN INTERNATIONAL NEPAL'S ANTI-TRAFFICKING CAMPAIGN



Until we are all equal



CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



PROTECT's holistic approach has transformed local communities by actively engaging them to campaign against human trafficking ©Plan International Nepal

## Context

### From a project to a campaign

Since its inception, Plan International's PROTECT project has steadfastly adhered to a holistic approach—a characteristic strategy consistently employed by Plan in its projects across diverse countries. The organization's commitment to a 'comprehensive program response' is evident in its initiatives, which not only address the lack of knowledge within households and communities but also proactively tackle the root causes of vulnerability.

This holistic methodology is manifested in Plan's engagement across all strata and tiers of society throughout the PROTECT project. From grassroots communities and civil society, where activism thrives, to the state level, where governance takes precedence, Plan has left no layer untouched. The project's greatest strength lies in the robust engagement of local communities, where state officials, law enforcement, and elected representatives play integral roles. This inclusive approach has not only been instrumental in the project's success but has also transformed PROTECT into a community-led campaign.

### Changing perceptions

In 2019, when Plan International started its PROTECT project, the local government structure in Nepal known as 'Local Coordination Committee Against Human Trafficking (LCCHT)' was defunct and inactive in all the targeted municipalities, indicating that human trafficking was a low priority among local governments. Even the government officials and representatives admitted that human trafficking didn't fall in their priorities as much as road building and infrastructure development, followed by education, health and so on.

Combating human trafficking was mostly seen as a donor-funded 'project' run by NGOs even in the districts where the risks of trafficking are so high. That perception is still quite common even today in the rest of the country, based on observations by anti-trafficking activists.

At the community level also, when Plan started its partnership with local anti-trafficking NGOs experienced in anti-trafficking for decades, the project team found that the concept of human trafficking was highly stereotyped. The prevailing concept of trafficking was confined to a specific scenario—mainly the perception that only girls sold into the sex trade in India across the Nepal-India border were labeled as victims of trafficking. This limited understanding not only hindered comprehensive awareness but also contributed to a lack of community engagement on the broader issue.

The issue of 'unsafe migration' and the risks it carried had not yet surfaced. Scams enticing people with the promise of lucrative jobs only to exploit them for child or forced labor were not considered as 'trafficking.' A significant misconception was the prevalent gendered notion that trafficking exclusively affected girls and women, particularly those involved in the sex trade, leading to an underreporting of boys and men being trafficked for forced labor..

The local perceptions that boys and men aren't trafficked were common. This perception is, however, not just in Nepal but in many countries. The global detection of male trafficking victims has risen steadily



# From ideas to implementation on the ground

## Engaging communities into action

### Empowering children and families

The primary objective of the project was to empower children and families by providing them with the knowledge and tools essential for recognizing, preventing, and addressing human trafficking. The project consistently prioritized cultivating the capacity of both children and their families to actively participate in safeguarding their communities.

By employing a multifaceted approach, the project achieved significantly heightened awareness among families and children regarding the risks, conditions, and consequences of child trafficking. To do this, the project initiated the creation and widespread dissemination of Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) materials, which aimed to raise awareness about the intricacies of trafficking issues.

Plan created its comprehensive SBCC strategy through consultations with various stakeholders, including age-diverse groups, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and a desk review. The strategy encapsulated key messaging, tools, and the essence of SBCC, and was shared through in-person SBCC sessions. Diverse activities, such as the creation of posters, story-telling sessions incorporating child protection safeguards, production and animation of videos, and mural graffiti, were undertaken.

#### School outreach programs and engagement

To extend the reach of awareness campaigns, the project conducted school outreach programs in the project implementing municipalities of Makwanpur, Banke, and Sunsari. These programs were designed with a multifaceted manual, incorporating different



elements of the SBCC campaign, including animation video series, creative posters, sticker campaigns, and the utilization of social media for positive reinforcement.

Recognizing the importance of empowering young people, the project introduced Plan's "Stick and Stones" training package. This program was developed by Plan International to actively involve children in their own protection by providing practical activities that help them recognize risks and protect themselves.

To ensure the sustainability of the program, teachers underwent Training of Trainers sessions on the "Stick and Stones" curriculum. Accompanying manuals were provided to teachers, serving as a guide for classroom implementation. Teachers were then able to carry out the trainings with their students. The project originally aimed to reach 1600 students with this training but, driven by the success of the program, this number was far exceeded, with over 4500 children completing the training.



The strength of youth ambassadors are growing as they join hands to strengthen their campaigns ©Plan International Nepal

In summary, the project's comprehensive approach, ranging from awareness campaigns to targeted training programs, contributed significantly to enhancing the community's capacity to combat child trafficking. The focus on schools, teachers, and students contributed to building a resilient and informed community capable of safeguarding its children.

### Youth ambassadors: catalysts for community engagement

In a strategic move to amplify community engagement on trafficking issues, the project introduced a unique output—the cultivation of role models and change agents, referred to as Youth Ambassadors. This initiative aimed to leverage the influence and energy of young leaders in steering community action plans against trafficking.

The project undertook the crucial task of identifying and selecting candidates with the potential to become Youth Ambassadors. Given the complex nature of trafficking issues, the selection process prioritized individuals capable of effectively championing the anti-trafficking campaign while remaining cognizant of sensitivities. The selection criteria emphasized candidates who could articulate the issues at high levels or in policy contexts while prioritizing the well-being of survivors.

### Safeguarding and child protection

Extensive discussions with key representatives were conducted to ensure rigorous safeguarding and child protection measures. The paramount objective was to

safeguard the lives of trafficking survivors and protect them from potential harm arising from public disclosure of personal details or identifiable information or re-traumatization in recounting their experiences.

### Reaching the targeted communities

To amplify the reach of SBCC materials, the project employed a dissemination strategy through Child Clubs, Youth Clubs, and Young Women's Organizations. Trained facilitators, designated as SBCC facilitators, played a crucial role in disseminating these materials, ensuring a wide and diverse distribution across communities.

A distinctive component of the Youth Ambassador initiative involved training in Theatre for Development. This encompassed script writing, distribution in local youth theatre groups, and live performances. Key intergenerational dialogue groups were identified, and young advocates, particularly adolescent girls, were selected for leadership roles in implementing action plans.

The project also used the power of storytelling through serial radio dramas. Storyboards were meticulously crafted, recorded, and airtime spots were secured on community radios. These dramas, enriched with SBCC messaging, featured key characters leading the narrative. The involvement of the local community, representatives of local government, along with community activists and leaders, ensured an immersive experience and contributed to the effectiveness of the performances.

Since the start of the SBCC campaign, young people from the communities were drawn to the messages.

## Strengthening community social safety nets and structures

The PROTECT project played a pivotal role in strengthening the defunct Local Committees to Counter Human Trafficking (LCCHT), recognizing their significance in the broader strategy against human trafficking. Through a series of targeted interventions, the project aimed to enhance the capabilities and efficacy of these local bodies in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by human trafficking.

One major barrier to communities' capacity to combat trafficking was the lack of a formal mechanism within the protection system dedicated to the issue. Though mandated by the government, most LCCHTs were nonfunctional, with no little or no budget to implement anti-trafficking programs. From the onset, the project sought to strengthen these committees and transform them into frontline actors. Recognizing that a well-informed and trained committee is better equipped to address the complexities of human trafficking, the project facilitated training sessions. These sessions were designed to update committee members on evolving forms and modes of human trafficking, legal frameworks, and government strategies. This ensured that LCCHT members had a comprehensive understanding of the issues they were combating.

### Strategic Planning

The project actively engaged LCCHTs in the formulation of strategic plans tailored to their local contexts. These plans encompassed a spectrum of anti-human trafficking activities, including awareness campaigns, budget allocations, and concrete steps to combat

trafficking effectively. By involving committee members in the planning process, the project aimed to foster a sense of ownership and commitment at the local level.

### Adaptability to Change

Recognizing the dynamic nature of human trafficking, the project emphasized adaptability within LCCHTs. Committee members were encouraged to stay abreast of changing forms and modes of trafficking, enabling them to respond effectively to emerging challenges. This approach aimed to create proactive committees capable of addressing evolving trafficking patterns within their jurisdictions.

The project supported LCCHTs in implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of their initiatives. Regular review meetings and feedback sessions gauged the impact of their activities, identified areas of improvement, and celebrate successes. This iterative process aimed to ensure continuous learning and refinement of anti-trafficking strategies.

### Collaborative Networking

Acknowledging the interconnected nature of anti-trafficking efforts, the project encouraged LCCHTs to actively collaborate with various stakeholders, including local government bodies, NGOs, and law enforcement agencies. By fostering collaborative networks, the LCCHTs could leverage collective expertise and resources to enhance the overall impact of their initiatives. The project's holistic approach to strengthening LCCHTs went beyond individual training sessions. It sought to create a sustainable and resilient framework where local committees could proactively address the challenges posed by human trafficking.

#### **Mandira Thapa, former Chief of Women, Children and Social Inclusion Division, Gadi Municipality, Makwanpur**

"The PROTECT project played a crucial role in reactivating and empowering LCCHT. In Makwanpur, trafficking has always been a big problem but we had no data on trafficking related issues. Before the project came, we had a plan, and our main focus was gathering information. Unfortunately, it took a year to start. However, after forming LCCHT, our first crucial task was collecting data about trafficking.

To ensure that the LCCHT functioned actively, the project team consistently monitored and checked how well the members were doing, reminding us and asking for updates on our activities. Their watchful eyes and regular checks have made our work against trafficking successful. Without them, we'd have a plan, but there wouldn't be any action.

The project's involvement and LCCHT were key in initiating data collection. We now have wealth of data about children and trafficked persons, thanks to the project. We should now ensure that LCCHT is created in every ward."

## Empowering Survivors and Fostering Economic Independence

Integral to the project's holistic approach was also building a social safety net, focused on rebuilding the lives of survivors. This commitment not only focused on preventing trafficking but also aiding survivors in their journey towards recovery and economic independence. The initiative focused on improving access for vulnerable families to economic opportunities and essential services, with a particular emphasis on trafficking survivors and other vulnerable populations.

### Skills Development and Economic Empowerment

PROTECT's economic empowerment initiative began with a small-scale market assessment, providing valuable insights into the prevailing market requirements. This assessment laid the foundation for tailored skills training programs designed to empower survivors to become economically self-sufficient. Expert consultants were engaged to ensure that the training addressed the specific needs and capacities required for sustainable economic engagement.

Over 50 survivors completed this skills training program, equipping them with the necessary expertise to thrive in the job market or start their own businesses.

### Enterprise Your Life (EYL) Training

Survivors who completed the skills training were further equipped with Plan's Enterprise Your Life (EYL) course. This specialized program aimed to enhance their understanding of entrepreneurship, boost employability, and guide them in setting up and managing small businesses. The training, conducted over 4 to 5 days, followed established models such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) framework.

### Seed Funding for Business Start-ups

Recognizing the importance of a seamless transition from training to entrepreneurship, and to bridge the gap between training and investment requirements, the project provided seed funding, either in cash or kind (with a preference for the latter), to interested survivors. This financial support was instrumental in propelling them towards initiating their own businesses or contributing to family rehabilitation and livelihood support. The seed fund, ranging from 15,000 to 40,000 Nepali rupees (approximately 112 to 300 USD), aimed to motivate and empower survivors to pursue

**"There are still good people out there."**

-Rabina, beneficiary of PROTECT's Enterprise Your Life training

**Running a cosy tailor shop in a quiet village in west Nepal, a young woman Rabina (name changed) suffered so much due to her bigamist husband. She was barely 17 when she got married and suffered from severe depression that almost cost her life. Rabina attempted to kill herself but she wanted to live for her daughter. Today, her life has changed with help of PROTECT's EYL that has helped her establish her startup business. She shares her story.**

"The training the project provided in tailoring ignited a light of hope. Despite challenges in my life, I have been able to survive and take care of my daughter. The project team believed in me and provided the skills that helped me to start my own tailor shop.

Without the project's support, I don't know how my life would end. I was thinking of migrating to India for a job but I changed my mind. I had some basic tailoring skills but not enough to start my own business. Also, I would need a sewing machine, and other essential accessories and tools and I would never be able to afford that.

Now, I have all I need to run my shop professionally. I save enough money to take care of my daughter and make sure that she never suffers like I did. I want her to finish school and have a good life.

I feel that there are still kind-hearted people who care for me like the project team and they have given me every support. I have enrolled my daughter in school and I have my own money and I don't have to depend on anyone. I even got a loan now and I can grow my business. I want to get more advanced training because I want to also become a professional trainers. And, I can also choose to work in a big garment factory.

Today both my daughter and I are happy thanks to the project people who helped me."

## Empowering state and non-state actors to campaign against trafficking

Engaged communities need the support of both state and non-state actors, and the PROTECT project made efforts to enhance their capacities to respond effectively to human trafficking. The project helped to mobilize actors through joint efforts to ensure the safe repatriation of survivors and facilitate their successful reintegration into society.

The project engaged various stakeholders, including Information and Assistance Centers in border areas, border police, NGOs, and government agencies. Duty bearers were a core focus, with training programs designed to increase their knowledge of standard protocols and child-friendly methods for rescue and repatriation. Parents' groups were also actively involved.

### Information booths at the border

The project established and operated two Information and Assistance Centres, strategically positioned at Jamunaha border in Banke and Bhandabari border in Sunsari. These centers served as crucial hubs to provide information and counseling services and raise awareness about the potential risks of human trafficking.

The project trained duty bearers, including border information booth staff, who were playing a pivotal role in operating these centers, ensuring that individuals, especially girls and young women, were thoroughly informed about the risks associated with their travel. Vigilant booth staff closely monitored border activities, interrogating and verifying the intentions of travelers, thereby preventing potential trafficking cases.

The impacts of their work are showing. For example, in April-June 2023 alone, these information booths and assistance centers engaged with 1417 individuals, imparting information and messaging about human trafficking and helping in the successful rescue and reintegration of a children and young women at high risk of trafficking.

Booth staff constantly remain vigilant, actively enquiring individuals and providing information about potential risks of human trafficking. Since the booths



Anita Yadav, Deputy Mayor, Koshi Rural Municipality, Sunsari district  
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were created, a significant number of people, including girls and young women, came into contact with these booths, receiving information and messaging about human trafficking.

Since 2019, the PROTECT project has facilitated the rescue of over 800 people from trafficking situations, including children, women, and men at high risk of exploitation. A total of 13,211 individuals, including approximately 2,300 under the age of 18, received information from project-supported information booths and assistance centers. PROTECT's local implementing NGO partners are committed to continue these initiatives even after the project ends.

### Enhanced collaboration among non-governmental organizations:

The project actively worked towards fostering collaboration and coordination among NGOs within and across countries. Through influencing and coordination workshops at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, the project established a platform for key agencies who are taking the lead championing against human trafficking to share experiences, discuss challenges, and develop joint action plans.

The project has helped to organise district-level events and meetings, bringing together various stakeholders, including NGOs, CSOs, security forces, and government representatives, to discuss ongoing



## PROTECT project has taught us a lot about human trafficking-related issues

"It is very important to have this partnership. They have also organized meetings with Indian police. Nobody can do this work alone. Not even the government can work alone. NGOs also cannot do this alone. We need each other. When the project came, I understood how human trafficking takes place and I wanted to understand more. If the project had not come, we would never pay attention to this issue of trafficking... I am sure the 164 girls who were rescued would still be in India in risky situations.

I feel that we should be monitoring all areas. In the last 5 years, in Koshi Palika, there has been a rescue of 164 girls, many who would have not survived this, and would have died. The impact of the project has been good, and the rescue of these women are exemplary. After the project ends, we will also continue our monitoring and we will also work closely with the youth ambassadors to continue the campaign against

**Anita Devi Yadav**  
Deputy Mayor,  
Koshi Palika, Sunsari

activities, share data on rescued trafficking cases, and formulate joint work plans. This collaboration has helped to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the collective impact of organizations combating human trafficking.

Through the project's initiative, like-minded organizations have demonstrated a commitment to collaboration, coordination, and cooperation to effectively combat human trafficking. These efforts extended to the development of action plans for sustained impact after the project's completion.

Over 400 individuals have participated in interaction events facilitated by the project, representing 178 state and non-state actors. This collaborative platform has become instrumental in sharing data, discussing ongoing activities, and developing joint work plans. One of the key impacts has been to also coordinate and collaborate on the rescue of trafficking survivors.

For example, a common platform for anti-trafficking organizations was established in Banke district, recognized as both a transit and origin point for trafficking. The initiative involved the creation of a loosely structured forum by the project, facilitating monthly meetings among various entities. Given the expansive nature of the issue, with multiple organizations operating in the district, collaboration became imperative.

In Banke, the project initiated bringing together a group of organizations aligned with the same anti-trafficking theme, necessitating the sharing of information and ideas among them.

An example of collaborative efforts occurred when Plan International Nepal and its partners, Saathi, Banke UNESCO Club, and Shakti Samuha joined forces to rescue two minor girls aged 13 and 16 from Sindupalchok district. The girls had been deceived by the perpetrator, who had promised to take them southeastern Nepal but intended to transport them to India in the coming days. Following their rescue in Nepalgunj, where they had been lodged in a hotel for three to four days, the loose forum received information and promptly initiated action.

Despite the perpetrator's escape and the minors' reluctance to pursue legal action, the forum coordinated efforts to provide services and return the girls to their families. Contact was established with the minors' families, and arrangements were made for their transport via flight to Kathmandu, where their families reunited with them.

This has created a new spirit of collaboration between NGOs. The engagement of non-state actors also goes beyond established organisations. The project also mobilised parents to campaign against human



Balkumari BK, Counselor, Information Booth in Bhantabari in Sunsari, has worked closely with Indian police to intercept survivors. ©Plan International Nepal/Naresh Newar

trafficking. 780 parents and caregivers, predominantly women, have established anti-trafficking groups across 13 municipalities with the project's support. These groups play a crucial role at the ward levels, actively engaging with communities to promote safe migration and prevent trafficking risks for Nepalis migrating to India and other countries.

#### Cross-Border Interaction and Training Initiatives:

The project has reached beyond the boundaries of the targeted districts, having initiated cross-border training sessions and coordination meetings involving duty bearers, local parents, youth ambassadors, and government stakeholders from both Nepal and India. These initiatives have helped to share experiences, policies, and trends related to human trafficking.

The platform provided by these events facilitated a dialogue between Nepali and Indian security personnel, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. It has also resulted in the agreement to continue working

**"I am dedicated to working collaboratively to combat human trafficking and protect human rights with all the stakeholders. I am thankful for the project for making me familiar about the issue and picture of trafficking in our region."**

Bipin Acharya,  
Chief District Officer  
Banke District

**"We are grateful for the project for working effectively against human trafficking in Bhantabari border. I appreciate the work the project has been doing. We have been jointly working with Nepal Police here in Bhantabari border, and I commit to continue it."**

Alok Kumar, SSB Commandment of  
45 th Batalian, Birpur, India

in coordination to address the challenges posed by human trafficking.

The cross-border interactions have helped to facilitate information sharing on emerging trends in human trafficking and to explore preventive measures on both sides of the border. Focused on strengthening coordination, collaboration, and fostering common understanding, the program brought together stakeholders from Nepal and India to enhance the efficiency of the rescue and repatriation process for victims of human trafficking.

The project maintained a close collaboration with the Indian security forces at the border, setting a commendable example. This partnership extended to the Indian police as well. The project built a strong working relationship with the Indian police, and the project's efforts were highly regarded. In fact, they sought the project's assistance in training their battalion.

# Lessons learned:

## Engaging the communities in anti-trafficking efforts

### Empowering children and families



Students have empowered to identify risks and take action for their self-protection ©Plan International Nepal/Naresh Newar

**Comprehensive SBCC strategy:** The success of the project was rooted in a meticulously crafted Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) strategy. The comprehensive approach, including key messaging, diverse tools, and engaging activities, contributed significantly to raising awareness about child trafficking.

**Multifaceted awareness campaigns:** The project's use of various mediums, such as posters, animated videos, storytelling sessions, and mural graffiti, helped create a multifaceted awareness campaign that reached diverse audiences. This ensured a broader understanding of the complexities of trafficking issues.

**School-centric approach:** By incorporating school outreach programs, the project not only reached a significant number of students but also engaged teachers. The "Stick and Stones" training package empowered students to recognize risks, and teachers were equipped to continue this education, ensuring sustainability. The training has been well received by both teachers and school administrators, and incorporating the training into the school curriculum has helped to ensure continued implementation after the project has closed..

**Youth ambassadors as change agents:** The introduction of Youth Ambassadors was a strategic move to involve young leaders in the fight against trafficking. The careful selection process, safeguarding measures, and integration into various awareness activities proved to be an effective approach. Youth Ambassadors have been successful in securing resources from local governments to continue to address trafficking in their communities.

**Theatre for development and radio dramas:** The use of Theatre for Development and serial radio dramas added a storytelling dimension to the awareness campaign. This creative approach engaged

### Strengthening community social safety nets and structures

**Empowering local committees:** The project recognized the pivotal role of Local Committees to Counter Human Trafficking (LCCHTs) and prioritized their capacity building. This approach highlighted the importance of investing in local structures to effectively combat human trafficking.

**Continuous capacity building:** The systematic and continuous training of LCCHT members showcased the project's commitment to keeping local committees well-informed about evolving trafficking patterns, legal frameworks, and government strategies. This emphasized the necessity of ongoing capacity building for sustained effectiveness.

**Localized strategic planning:** Localized Strategic Planning: It is important to adapt anti-trafficking efforts to the unique challenges faced by each community. Engaging LCCHTs in the formulation of strategic plans tailored to their specific contexts has fostered a sense of ownership and commitment, ensuring their continued activity after the project ends.

**Adaptability to change:** Emphasizing adaptability within LCCHTs showcased an understanding of the dynamic nature of human trafficking. This lesson underscored the need for proactive committees capable of responding effectively to emerging challenges.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** The project's support for implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms highlighted the importance of assessing the effectiveness of anti-trafficking initiatives. Regular review meetings and feedback sessions contributed to continuous learning and refinement of strategies.

**Collaborative networking:** Acknowledging the interconnected nature of anti-trafficking efforts, the encouragement of collaborative networks emphasized the value of collective expertise and resources in enhancing the impact of initiatives.

**Holistic approach:** The project's holistic approach, going beyond training sessions to address economic empowerment and survivor rehabilitation, underscored the interconnectedness of preventing and addressing human trafficking.

**Focus on Economic Independence:** The commitment to rebuilding lives and fostering economic independence for survivors showcased the project's dedication to comprehensive, long-term solutions beyond immediate prevention efforts.



## Empowering state & non-state actors campaign against trafficking

**Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** The PROTECT project demonstrated that effectively combating human trafficking requires the collaboration of both state and non-state actors. Engaging with Information and Assistance Centers, border police, NGOs, and government agencies showcased the importance of a united front.

**Community-Level Collaborative Efforts:** Establishing Information and Assistance Centers at strategic border locations and training duty bearers contributed to collaborative community-level efforts. This approach proved effective in preventing potential trafficking cases and ensuring the safe repatriation of survivors.

**Empowering Duty Bearers:** Training duty bearers, including border information booth staff, equipped them to play a pivotal role in monitoring and preventing

human trafficking at the borders. This proactive approach significantly contributed to the successful rescue and reintegration of individuals at high risk of trafficking.

**Networking and Data Sharing:** The project actively promoted networking and data sharing among NGOs, CSOs, security forces, and government representatives. Creating a collaborative platform for sharing data, discussing ongoing activities, and formulating joint work plans proved instrumental in avoiding duplication of efforts and enhancing collective impact.

**District-Level Collaboration:** The establishment of loosely structured forums at the district level, bringing together various organizations aligned against trafficking, exemplified the importance of local collaboration. This facilitated coordinated efforts, information sharing, and joint actions to combat trafficking effectively.

**Parental Involvement:** Mobilizing parents as advocates against human trafficking demonstrated a novel approach. Empowering parents to establish anti-trafficking groups at the ward levels showcased the potential of community-led initiatives in promoting safe migration and preventing trafficking risks.

**Cross-Border Interaction:** The initiation of cross-border training sessions and coordination meetings between Nepal and India highlighted the significance of international collaboration. Sharing experiences, policies, and trends enhanced mutual understanding and cooperation, contributing to a more efficient rescue and repatriation process.

**Engagement with Security Forces:** Collaborating closely with Indian security forces and police, including training sessions, exemplified the importance of working hand-in-hand with law enforcement agencies. This partnership not only

# Next steps

## Continuing the project's lessons to the next level

### Empowering children and families

**Scaling youth ambassador program:** Given the success of the Youth Ambassador initiative, there is an opportunity to scale up the program. Identifying and training more young leaders can further amplify community engagement.

**Integration with Formal Education:** Collaborating with education authorities to integrate anti-trafficking education into formal curricula can ensure sustained awareness and empowerment of students.

**Expanding SBCC Facilitators Network:** Strengthening the network of SBCC facilitators and exploring partnerships with local organizations can

enhance the dissemination of materials and messages across a broader geographical area.

**Incorporating Technology:** Leveraging technology, such as mobile applications or online platforms, can provide an additional channel for awareness campaigns, ensuring accessibility and relevance among tech-savvy youth.

**Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular monitoring and evaluation efforts will be crucial to assess the impact of ongoing initiatives, identify areas for improvement, and adapt strategies based on the evolving needs of the community.

### Strengthening community social safety nets and structures

**Replication and expansion:** Share the successful model with other regions and consider expanding the project to replicate its success in different contexts.

**Enhanced Survivor Support:** Strengthen the support system for survivors, including mental health services, mentorship programs, and community integration initiatives.

**Sustainable Economic Models:** Work towards sustainable economic models for survivors, ensuring that their ventures remain viable in the long term.

**Advanced Training Programs:** Introduce advanced training programs for LCCHTs, keeping them updated on the latest trends in human trafficking and effective intervention strategies.

**Advocacy and Policy Influence:** Advocate for policies that support the prevention of human trafficking and the rehabilitation of survivors, leveraging the project's success and lessons learned.

### Empowering state & non-state actors campaign against trafficking

**Continued cross-border collaboration:** Strengthen ongoing collaboration with Indian counterparts, maintaining the momentum of cross-country information sharing and joint initiatives.

**Expansion of community-led initiatives:** Extend the successful model of mobilizing parents and establishing anti-trafficking groups to additional municipalities, fostering a broader community-led approach.

**Capacity building beyond project duration:**

Develop mechanisms to ensure continuous training and capacity building for duty bearers, NGOs, and community leaders even after the project's completion.

**Scaling collaborative forums:** Explore opportunities to replicate collaborative forums in other trafficking-prone districts, fostering coordination among diverse organizations and enhancing collective impact.

**Advocacy for policy changes:** Use the collaborative platform to advocate for policy changes and improvements in the legal frameworks of both Nepal



**Until we are all equal**

## **About Plan International Nepal**

Plan International has been working in Nepal since 1978 to help marginalised children, families and communities access their rights to survival, protection and participation. At present, we run programmes in 23 districts, working with partners to strive for a just world where we are all equal. Nepal remains a highly patriarchal society and minority groups are especially vulnerable. Girls' and women's access to social, economic and political power is limited and they are subject to harmful social norms and practices. We tackle the root causes of the challenges and inequalities that children and young girls face. We won't stop until we are all equal.

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