

**Catholic Relief Services  
India  
Anti-Trafficking Summary**

The trafficking of human beings, especially of children, has become a matter of serious concern around the globe. India has one of the highest incidences of human trafficking in the world as a source, destination, and transit country. Many regions of India have become “hot spots” for trafficking with up to 65 million persons trafficked each year, a majority of them as minors. CRS/India is currently involved in three initiatives in an effort to combat trafficking activities.

The **Bachpan Anti Child Trafficking Project** began in 2014 through a partnership with the Bal Sakha & Fakirana Sisters’ Society. The project is based in twelve villages in India’s third most populous state, Bihar, *where half of its 100 million inhabitants are children*. Limited livelihood options and poor access to education lead many families in Bihar to marry girls at an early age and or pull their children from school for labor purposes. The project objectives include a reduction of the risk of unsafe/early marriages for girls under 18 years of age, a reduction in the incidence of boys 14 years and younger leaving their villages for work, and a reduction in the use of local entertainment (considered a gateway for trafficking) that exploits young girls. The project aims to directly benefit 4,261 households in the West Champaran and Purnea districts of the state. *Major project achievements to date include the formation and strengthening of community based structures such as protective community vigilance committees and youth peer groups. These groups have been pivotal in creating community awareness surrounding the dangers of trafficking.*

A second initiative, the **Preventing Child Migration by Strengthening Livelihoods and Education Project**, initiated in January 2015 through a partnership with the Bettiah Diocesan Social Services Society (BDSSS) and The Goat Trust. The implementation of the project is taking place in the West Champaran district, also in India’s Bihar state. The key objective of the project is to support impoverished families in reducing child migration by increasing their incomes and sensitizing communities around child education and protection issues. The project aims to work directly with 100 marginalized households in five villages of the Bagaha II administrative block of West Champaran district. *Project outputs to date include the formation of village child protection committees (VCPCs), peer groups (PGs), bore well committees, and demonstration of improved goat shelters and fodder plots.*



*The brother and sister pictured here are beneficiaries of the Bachpan Anti-Trafficking Project and were re-admitted to school in June of 2015 after a lengthy absence.*

The third and most recent initiative is the **CRS Combatting Human Trafficking Project** which addresses the prevention and rehabilitation of child trafficking for labor or for the sex industry. A comprehensive assessment was recently carried out in an effort to identify and confirm key geographic source areas and assess actors capable of implementing anti-trafficking programs. In addition to selected local partners with prevention expertise, the project will work with a seasoned partner, **Prajwala**, to successfully reintegrate sex trafficking survivors. Prajwala is a leading anti-trafficking organization and, since its inception, has reintegrated over 5,000 trafficked women with their families. This CRS initiative will build off current experience and take a holistic approach in an intervention to: *1. Reduce the incidence of trafficking in select communities by targeting key sources of child trafficking (including sex trafficking and child labor trafficking); and 2. Work with parents and communities in source areas to establish a safe enabling environment for survivors and the children of survivors to prevent trafficking.* Continued assessment and project start up activities, including partner selection, are planned for the months ahead.