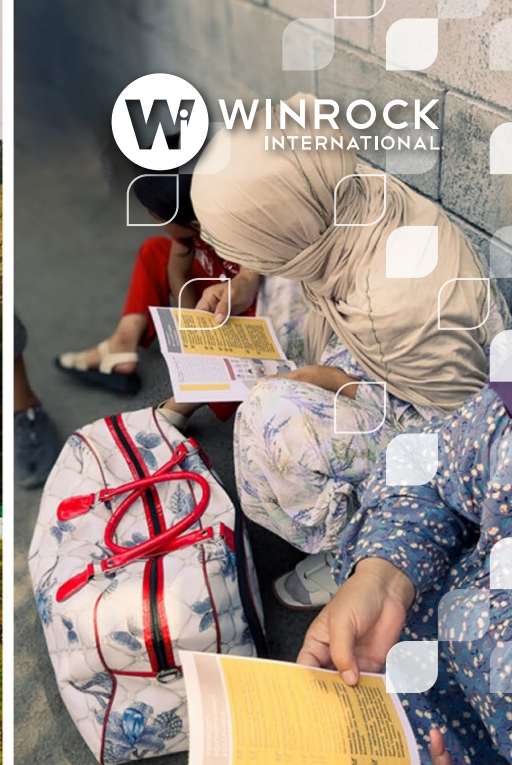




Kazakhstan Actions Against Trafficking in Children

THE CHALLENGE

Despite government efforts, regional instability and economic pressures have increased migration and heightened protection concerns for children in Kazakhstan. Many migrant children are not formally registered and lack documentation, limiting their access to essential services, such as healthcare and education. As a result, they face increased risk of trafficking in persons (TIP), child labor, begging, involvement in criminal activities, and sexual exploitation, especially as recruitment through digital channels intensifies. Key child protection gaps include fragmented systems for identifying and assisting child victims, as well as limited availability of child-sensitive, trauma-informed services.

THE INTERVENTION

Kazakhstan Actions Against Trafficking in Children (KATCH), a six-year project funded by the United States Department of State (USDOS), works to improve identification of child TIP survivors and accompanying children of migrant laborers (ACML), and support them with appropriate, comprehensive care. KATCH operates in Turkistan, Kyzylorda, Almaty, Jambyl, and Jetisu oblasts and Almaty and Shymkent cities in southern Kazakhstan, where economic opportunity and proximity to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyz Republic borders attract high numbers of migrants.



KATCH OBJECTIVES

GOAL:

Government of Kazakhstan agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) proactively identify, refer, and assist child TIP victims and ACML in southern Kazakhstan using child-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Service providers have the capacity and resources to identify and assist child TIP victims and ACML in a child-sensitive, trauma-informed manner.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Child protection and victim identification systems are proactive, coordinated, and accountable to child TIP victims and ACML.



WINROCK'S STRATEGIC APPROACH

Strengthen Services: KATCH improves frontline services by training social workers, educators, and healthcare providers to identify and support child TIP victims using trauma-informed, age-appropriate approaches, while expanding services through grants to local partners.

Improve Systems: KATCH promotes coordination across government agencies, including Ministry of Education's Committee on Child Protection, Interagency Commission on TIP, and Child Rights Ombudsman, by clarifying roles, improving referral pathways, and supporting implementation of Kazakhstan's 2024 anti-trafficking law.

Mobilize Leadership: KATCH recruits and mobilizes a diverse network of Child CTIP Champions, including service providers, community leaders, and government officials, who drive local advocacy, accountability, and prevention efforts in their communities.

Center Survivor Voices: KATCH activated Kazakhstan's first Survivor Advisory Group (SAG) to ensure that project strategies reflect lived experience. SAG input shapes project design, strengthens services, and informs system improvements, helping ensure responses are grounded in the real needs of children vulnerable to TIP.

RESULTS TO DATE

As of April 2026, KATCH has achieved the following:



341 child TIP victims and ACML reached

with critical services, including shelter, legal aid, and psychosocial support



18 child TIP victims

identified and referred to protective services



473 frontline professionals trained

across social services, education, and healthcare sectors



5 local organizations

strengthened to expand and improve child protection services



58 Child Anti-Trafficking Champions trained

to lead local action and advocacy



686 awareness materials and/or events

produced and/or organized to prevent trafficking and raise public awareness



76 government and civil society entities

aligned on roles and responsibilities for child protection



12 policy recommendations

submitted to national government bodies to strengthen Kazakhstan's child TIP response

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