**REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program Name: | **Kazakhstan Actions against Trafficking in Children (KATCH) Project** |
| Request for Application (RFA) No: | **KATCH-10019-RFA-03** |
| Date RFA Issued: | **18 April 2024** |
| Pre-application Conference Date, if applicable: | **3 May 2024, 14:00**[**Join the meeting now**](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_OTE2YTRiMjMtODE4MS00NWY2LWFiOTAtZGQ1YTA4YTJkZTM5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%229be3e276-28d8-4cd8-8f84-02cf1911da9c%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%226b4ba84a-b9ee-4135-a4ec-d351e8daa265%22%7d)Meeting ID: 249 269 516 995Passcode: pEgPeJ |
| Due Date and Time for Questions: | **3 May 2024** |
| Due Date and Time for Response to Questions: | **3 May 2024** |
| RFA Closing Date and Time: | **18 May 2024 11:59pm (Almaty time)** |
| Estimated Award Date: | **01 August 2024** |

# SECTION 1: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

* 1. **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this RFA is to solicit applications from prospective grantees to support Winrock International (Winrock) in the implementation of the Kazakhstan **Actions against Trafficking in Children (KATCH) Project**, funded by **U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons** for the period of **April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026,** Award No. **SSJTIP23GR0009**.

In recent years, as a transit and destination location for **migrants from** Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan is facing increased domestic and international migration. Thousands of undocumented migrants enter Kazakhstan via informal border crossings for seasonal labor in construction, agriculture, retail, and hospitality; these individuals are particularly vulnerable to trafficking by virtue of their irregular immigration status, as are their accompanying children. The largest group of migrants were reporting poor working conditions in available jobs, low income, insufficient to cover their living costs and save [monthly average income among the respondents was 194,212 Kazakh Tenge (421 USD)]. Half of the respondents reported living in temporary accommodation with limited access to education and health services. [[1]](#footnote-2)

According to the Department of State (DOS) Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report 2023: “Human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Kazakhstan, and traffickers exploit victims from Kazakhstan abroad.

Traffickers force some children **to beg and coerce them into criminal behavior, such as drug trafficking or stealing.**

Children from neighboring East Asian, Central Asian, and Eastern European countries, as well as from rural areas in Kazakhstan, are exploited in **sex trafficking** in Kazakhstan; in most cases, traffickers target girls, luring them with promises of employment, including through social media, as waitresses, models, or nannies in large cities. Organized crime groups and small trafficking rings with recruiters operate in conjunction with brothel operators in Kazakhstan and abroad. Observers noted increased use of online recruitment by traffickers.

Kazakhstani and foreign national **forced labor victims** may go unidentified in farms located in remote rural areas.

**The most vulnerable groups at risk** of trafficking include undocumented migrants, persons without identity documents, unemployed individuals, individuals experiencing homelessness, and people living with disabilities. Experts also noted individuals with substance use issues are at increased risk for trafficking.[[2]](#footnote-3)

The Government of Kazakhstan (GOK) has made notable efforts to combat TIP in recent years, including elevating the status of its law enforcement unit dedicated to anti-trafficking efforts and increasing the number of its specialized anti-trafficking police officers. The much higher number of registered criminal offenses related to child and human trafficking for 2023 is reflecting higher detection rates due to this expansion of police capacity. The Ministry of Internal Affairs oversees TIP concerns and plans to release an updated “Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings” law in the short term. In addition, the President amended the Law on Migration and Law on Special Social Services, which entitled foreign victims to the same benefits as Kazakh citizens.

Despite progress, Kazakhstan’s **existing child protection and CTIP systems lack the capacity** **and resources** to effectively identify and protect child TIP survivors. GOK legislation designated five ministries to protect children’s rights, but none has clear responsibility to ensure that child TIP survivors are identified and assisted. This often leads to confusion and overlap regarding division of roles and responsibilities; it also results in many survivors being overlooked.

Law enforcement authorities are responsible for identifying potential survivors of TIP, but other sectors such as education, health, labor and social protection are equally important to both the identification and referral processes.

Authorities acknowledge the **labor inspectorate** is underfunded, and civil society reports inspectors require more training to identify trafficking cases. Additionally, the frequent use of inspection moratoriums on certain types of businesses makes it difficult to ensure identification of forced labor cases.

The current situation of **overcrowded schools** and overworked staff makes the likelihood of them paying due attention to identifying and referring potential survivors of child trafficking low, which may also be the reason for a perception that overall state social support provided by schools to disadvantaged families is nonexistent.

Equally, **medical professionals** are essential when it comes to weighing the risks to child safety and the importance of reporting missing children. However, the quality of patronage services largely depends on systemic issues, including staff shortages and overworked medical professionals.[[3]](#footnote-4)

NGOs report that resources to operate the **trafficking hotline** remained inadequate in 2023.

Service provider support in **Juvenile Adaptation Centers (JACs)** is generic without use of child-sensitive or trauma-informed approaches that tailor support to the distinct needs of the child (e.g., by sex or age), build trust, and avoid re-traumatization. Most case workers in JACs have not been trained in child TIP identification or child-sensitive and trauma-informed care. The scope of services in organizations providing special social services to victims of trafficking does not differ between adults and children. Shelters have insufficient government resources and funding, including insufficient capacity to assist the number of victims referred.

Migrant children are not registered or issued documentation at border crossings. Without identity documents, children are invisible and cannot access services, increasing their overall vulnerability. Unified **statistics** on volume and demographics of migrant children are not available, as state agencies collect information differently—or not at all. Data scarcity prevents evidence-based responses to address the needs of migrant children and child TIP survivors.

To address these challenges, Winrock International is implementing a three-year project—KATCH—to support central and local government agencies, as well as NGOs network to improve identification and offer individualized, comprehensive assistance to child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families and to increase accountability within the child protection system.

* 1. **OBJECTIVE AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**PROJECT GOAL**: GOK agencies and NGOs proactively identify, refer, and assist child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families in southern Kazakhstan using child-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches. Our approach will lead to systemic change (a) at individual levels by equipping service providers with trauma-specific skills and tools to identify, refer, and assist child TIP survivors; and (b) at organizational levels by strengthening the capacity of local organizations to expand services to child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families and by mobilizing government and civil society leaders to coordinate and improve accountability of child protection systems.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES**: KATCH protects child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families through two objectives:

(1) Service providers have the capacity and resources to identify and assist child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families in a child-sensitive, trauma-informed manner; and

(2) Child protection and victim identification systems are proactive, coordinated, and accountable to child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families.

**PRIORITY REGIONS OF KAZAKHSTAN**: KATCH works in five oblasts—Turkistan, Qyzylorda, Almaty, Zhambyl, and Jetysu—and the cities of Almaty and Shymkent in southern Kazakhstan, where economic opportunity and proximity to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan borders attract high numbers of migrants.

**TARGET POPULATION:**

The target population for project impact is child survivors of trafficking, vulnerable migrant children and their families in targeted regions.

***Under this RFA, the KATCH project in Kazakhstan is seeking interested applicants who can support the following objectives: increase identification of potential child TIP victims and expand child protection and outreach efforts to prevent and reduce child TIP incidence.***

**Illustrative activities:**

* Conduct sensitive outreach to potential child TIP survivors and migrant children from vulnerable families, including through social media and other non-conventional means—especially to target newer threats like cyber-trafficking
* ***Рrovide child-sensitive, trauma-informed protective services and case management tailored to a child’s distinct needs*** ***such as, but not limited to:***
	+ Family tracing and risk assessment, reunification with families and reintegration into society
	+ Support families with children in repatriation procedures
	+ Appointment of a guardian to accompany the child throughout rehabilitation
	+ Legal assistance, restoring identification documents, such as birth certificates
	+ Providing interpretation
	+ Safe and adequate accommodation, meals, clothing
	+ Medical care
	+ Psychological support
	+ Educational support, life skills

**Case management involves:**

* Identifying victims
* Needs assessment
* Developing a care plan
* Recovery [delivering services or referring them to other services, if unavailable]
* (Re)integration
* Post-integration monitoring and follow-up support

**Expected results:**

Identification and individualized service provision using case management to child TIP survivors, migrant children and their families in southern Kazakhstan strengthened

SECTION 2: GRANT INFORMATION

* 1. **ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF GRANTS TO BE ISSUED**

The **KATCH Project** expects to award up to 4 grants under this RFA but reserves the right to award fewer or none based on the quality of applications received and availability of funding.

* 1. **ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF GRANTS**

It is expected that an individual grant amount will not exceed **10,000 US dollars** equivalent to 4471070 **KZT, OANDA currency converter, 18 April 2024**. The final amount awarded will depend on award activities and final negotiations. Applicants are encouraged to propose realistic budgets based on actual costs of operating expenses. A budget template is included as Annex B to be used for this purpose. Upon decision of the Winrock evaluation committee, Winrock can contact applicant organizations with a request to reduce or enhance suggested activities and budget.

* 1. **ANTICIPATED START DATE AND DURATION OF GRANTS**

The anticipated period of performance is **August 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025**, depending on the negotiated award activities.

* 1. **TYPE OF GRANTS TO BE ISSUED**

Winrock will determine the appropriate grant mechanism, in consultation with the applicant during the negotiation process, based on the pre-award assessment of the applicant, nature of the award activity, and estimated total cost of the award.

# SECTION 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

This solicitation is open to all non-profit non-US organizations. To be minimally eligible for funding, applicants must comply with the following conditions:

* Be legally registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan.
* Physical presence of the office in one of the following cities/regions: Turkistan, Qyzylorda, Almaty, Zhambyl, and Jetysu—and the cities of Almaty and Shymkent in southern Kazakhstan
* The proposed project should not duplicate the NGO’s current projects funded by other donors, but could complement them.
* Agree to be subject to a pre-award assessment carried out by Winrock staff to examine that the applicant has sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures.
* Be able to demonstrate successful past performance in implementation of relevant programs and approaches.
* Provide a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number at the time of award. If the applicant already has a UEI number, it should be included in their application. Otherwise, applicants will be expected to get a UEI number before an award is issued.
* KATCH will prioritize selection of groups that are led by TIP survivors, women, migrants, or ethnic minorities and will broaden the applicant base by targeting organizations that work with children or youth but are unfamiliar with risks associated with child TIP or educational organizations for marginalized children not trained in trauma-informed approaches.
1. **INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**
* Any entity that has been found to have misused US government funds in the past (unless specifically approved by the U.S. Department of State Grants Officer).
* Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates.
* Organizations led directly or indirectly by Government Officials, including when they are office bearers of private companies.
* Organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities.
* Faith-based organizations whose objectives are for discriminatory and religious purposes, and whose main objective for the grant is of a religious nature.
* Any entity whose name appears on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs (https://sam.gov/SAM/ ).
* Any entity with a member that appears on the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Person list (https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDN-List/Pages/default.aspx).
* Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List https://www.un.org/sc/suborg/en/sanctions/un-sc-consolidated-list
* An organization refusing to comply with the required certifications.
* Partner government entities, without specific prior approval by the U.S. Department of State Agreement Officer.

# SECTION 4: INSTRUCTION TO APPLICANTS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. **PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE**

[x]  A pre-application conference will be held as detailed below. All applicants are encouraged to attend.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date:  | **3 May 2024, 14:00** |
| Location: | [**Join the meeting now**](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_OTE2YTRiMjMtODE4MS00NWY2LWFiOTAtZGQ1YTA4YTJkZTM5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%229be3e276-28d8-4cd8-8f84-02cf1911da9c%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%226b4ba84a-b9ee-4135-a4ec-d351e8daa265%22%7d)Meeting ID: 249 269 516 995Passcode: pEgPeJ |
| Confirmation: | **An e-mail confirming attendance must be sent to KATCHgrants@winrock.org** |
| Language Conference to be Held In: | **Russian language** |

[ ]  A pre-application conference will not be held.

1. **Technical Application**

Applicants will develop their applications based on their understanding of the program’s needs, their prior institutional experience and their determination of the approaches that would be feasible and successful. In all cases, applicants shall clearly explain the rationale for the proposed approaches chosen.

Submissions must clearly state the objectives and the expected results of the activity within the life of the funding period and define an implementation plan with a proposed time frame and budget. On-going monitoring and reporting of the funded activities will be the responsibility of the applicant. An Application Form template is provided as an attachment to this RFA.

1. **COST APPLICATION**

Cost applications shall be submitted separately from the technical application. Applicants shall submit a summary and detailed budget in Microsoft Excel with budget notes identifying how the applicant would allocate any grant funds received during the term of the potential agreement. The budget narrative should explain and justify the need for the costs proposed in the budget. The narrative should help the reviewer understand why an item of cost is necessary and how it will be used to support the activity for which it will be incurred. The budget narrative should demonstrate the relationship between the proposed activities and the budget. Just as the technical application should reflect the applicant’s understanding of the objectives and the proposed approach to achieve those objectives, the budget and the accompanying narrative should be realistic and show a similar understanding of the financial requirements of the proposed activities.

Applicants should include into the project budget bank transaction fees and other service fees, required for utilization of international grant, in line with national legislation.

1. **COST-SHARE**

[ ]  Cost share is required

Applicants are encouraged to provide cost-share demonstrating their commitment to the proposed grant activities in order to be competitive. Cost-share may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, including real property, equipment, supplies, and other expendable property. Other examples of cost-share include volunteer services and donated office/venue space. To be counted, a cost-share contribution must:

* Be verifiable – The applicant must be willing and able to provide sufficient documentation to support all recorded cost-share.
* Not included as contributions for any other USG-assisted program.
* Necessary and reasonable for efficient and proper accomplishment of the objective(s).

[x]  Cost-share is not required

1. **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

All questions and other communications regarding this RFA should be submitted in writing to **KATCHgrants@winrock.org**. Written responses to questions will be made available to all applicants.

Applications must be submitted in **Russian or Kazakh, using Times New Roman, font size 12, single-spaced**.

Applications (including a technical description, estimated budget and supporting documentation) **must be submitted electronically via email KATCHgrants@winrock.org and should reference KATCH-10019-RFA-03.** Applications must be submitted **no later than 18 May 2024 11:59pm (Almaty time).** Receipt time for electronic submissions is when the application is received by Winrock’s Internet Server. Your email with attachments **should not exceed 20 MB limit**.

Incomplete or late applications will be marked as such and will be ineligible for review or award; however, Winrock reserves the right to accept and include incomplete or late applications in the review and award process when it is considered within the best interest of Winrock to do so. Applications that are submitted late or incomplete run the risk of **not** being considered for review.

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice via email received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by an organization or its authorized representative if the representative’s identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the application before award is made.

A complete submission, at a minimum, will include the following:

* A copy of the applicant’s valid legal registration
* A completed and signed technical application
* A completed and signed budget application
* Budget supporting documents, including the budget narrative, as applicable
* Letters of recommendation and support from local administration, other organizations (if any);
* CVs of the project staff, copies of diplomas and certificates confirming their qualifications.

Add other specifics according to your requirements e.g. audit reports or financial statements, organizational chart, and so on.

# SECTION 5: APPLICATION EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

1. **MERIT REVIEW**

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this RFA. A total of 100 points are possible for all components of the application. The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by approximate weight by points.

In evaluating the applications, Winrock will examine overall merit and feasibility, as well as specific criteria relevant to each component as elaborated below. Up to 4 awards will be made to the overall highest scores to the responsible applicant(s). Applicants should note that these criteria: (1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Merit Review Criteria** | **Points** |
| 1. **Technical Approach**
 | **50** |
| 1. How relevant is the proposal to the goal/objectives and priorities of current Request for Applications? | 10 |
| 2. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? Will the target population and (or) their representatives be involved in the project (project inclusiveness)? | 10 |
| 3. How elaborated, logic and coherent is the overall design of the action? Does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved?  | 10 |
| 4. Is the action feasible? Will the intervention achieve its objectives and its results? | 10 |
| 5. Is there a mechanism to ensure the institutional and financial sustainability of the project after the end of the grant agreement? Visibility strategy | 10 |
| 1. **Organizational Capacity / Past Performance**
 | **40** |
| 1. Proven experience in managing grants/project from International Organizations | 10 |
| 2. Does the applicant have previous or on-going experience in implementing similar activities [Proven expertise in service provision and program intervention for TIP. Experience in networking and referral of trafficked survivors]? What results have been achieved in previous activities of the applicant, what were the quantitative, qualitative and impact-level results?  | 10 |
| 3. Physical presence of the office in the city/region. Access/availability of sheltering facilities is plus | 10 |
| 4. Is the staff capacity of the applicant appropriate for implementation of the suggested activities? Number of staff assigned to the project. Relevant education and experience | 10 |
| 1. **Budgeting**
 | **10** |
| **1.** Is the budget complete and clear, has sufficient details, and corresponds to project activities, amounts are reasonable and appropriate, budget notes clearly justify the needs for costs. | 10 |
| Overall Rating (out of 100 points) | 100 |

1. **REVIEW PROCESS**

Grant applications will be reviewed and evaluated by an evaluation panel using the merit review criteria indicated above.

It is anticipated that awards will be made within **3 months** after the submission deadline, as stated on the cover page of this RFA. Final negotiations and award will be managed by Winrock.

**All grants are subject to approval by the**

**U.S. Department of State**

**Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons**

# SECTION 6: OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **DISCLAIMERS**
* The issuance of this solicitation does not commit Winrock to make an award to any prospective grantee responding to this solicitation. Prospective grantees will not be reimbursed for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Winrock reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to make an award without further discussion or negotiation.
* All awards will be negotiated, denominated and funded in Kazakhstan Tenge. All costs funded under the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable.
1. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Applicants must provide disclosure of any past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this RFA and anticipated grant. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in Winrock having to re-evaluate selection of a potential applicant.

1. **OTHER CONDITIONS**
* Applicants must agree and be willing to sign and submit required certifications before a grant is issued.
* For those selected for a grant award, Winrock will conduct a pre-award risk assessment.
* Issuance of grant agreements will be subject to applicable prior written approval by Winrock funder, as needed.
* Applicants may only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
* Individuals are not eligible to receive funding under this solicitation.
* Applications must remain valid for at least 180 days.
* Application forms should be signed by an authorized agent of the applicant’s organization.
* Applicants that submit applications that meet or exceed the evaluation criteria will be notified of next steps in the application process.

Additionally, the following items cannot be purchased under the potential resultant grants:

* Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations or "representation" expenses
* Ineligible Commodities, including but not limited to: military equipment, police or law enforcement equipment, surveillance equipment, abortion equipment and services, weather modification equipment, luxury goods, and gambling equipment
* Construction, infrastructure, renovation, or rehabilitation projects
* Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Winrock, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed activities
* Previous obligations and/or bad debts
* Fines and/or penalties
* Creation of endowments
* Other costs unallowable under U.S. Department of State and/or federal regulations, such as alcoholic beverages.
* Expenses intended to influence the outcome of elections or other political processes

# SECTION 7: ANNEXES

Annex A – Application Form

Annex B – Detail Budget Template

1. https://dtm.iom.int/reports/kazakhstan-baseline-assessment-and-surveys-international-migrant-workers-kazakhstan  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/  [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Rapid Situational Assessment on the Child Trafficking Context and Response in Southern Kazakhstan: Situational Analysis Report](https://winrock.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/RSA-KATCH-eng_checked-by-GK.pdf)  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)