

The Asia Foundation
Gainful Employment Opportunities for
Girls at Risk of Trafficking and Trafficking Survivors
CA No. 367-A-00-03-00148-00

PROGRESS REPORT
July - September 2003

Summary of Program Activities in Current Reporting Period:

- **Subgrant disbursement**
- **Steering Committee meeting**
- **Staffing and recruitment**
- **Training manuals and needs assessment**
- **Selection of participants**
- **Monitoring and technical assistance**
- **Issues and challenges**

Subgrant disbursement

The Foundation signed three subgrant agreements in July with AgroForestry and Basic Cooperatives Nepal (ABC Nepal), Nepal RUGMARK Foundation, and WEAN Cooperatives, Ltd. for the implementation of project activities.

Staffing and recruitment

During this initial reporting period, partners recruited and hired nonformal education teachers and central-level program and support staff such as guards and wardens for offices in Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Bhairahwa, and Biratnagar. Remaining staff positions will be filled during the second reporting period.

Manuals and needs assessment

ABC Nepal began compiling a package of literacy materials, which included information on reducing the risks of trafficking and abuse. SAATHI developed three manuals/ packages on social awareness and counseling for its trainees. RUGMARK also compiled existing information to develop a curriculum for trainees focusing on practical needs such as health, issues associated with adolescence, and guidance on interacting with the community and in the workplace. All partners are developing materials utilizing existing IEC materials, which they are adapting to their specific target group.

Selection of participants

ABC Nepal selected 30 vulnerable girls/women ranging from 15 to 30 years of age for its program. The participants include victims of trafficking and violence, those rescued from circuses, those who have voluntarily left sex work, school dropouts, and girls/women otherwise vulnerable to trafficking due to extreme poverty. The participants are currently engaged in different levels of basic literacy training depending on their existing capabilities.

Nepal RUGMARK Foundation removed, on a voluntary basis, 23 girls/women ranging from 14 to 20 years of age from RUGMARK licensees' carpet factories. They

were placed at the RUGMARK/UCEP rehabilitation center in Sano Thimi, Bhaktapur. On the basis of their educational levels, they were assigned to basic, intermediate, or advanced-level groups for informal education.

After conducting a baseline survey, WEAN/SAATHI began the process of identifying vulnerable and high-risk girls/women for the program, but has not yet enrolled participants.

Steering Committee meeting

The Asia Foundation hosted a partners' meeting on July 14th to share project documents and present and discuss key objectives and targets under the project. Following the signing of subgrant agreements, the first Steering Committee meeting was held on August 22nd. Chaired by the Foundation, the meeting was attended by all project partners and USAID. Agenda items included selection criteria for the identification of project participants, as well as areas where the partners could share experience to further project objectives. The Foundation highlighted the need for all partners to maintain separate case files for all project participants, documenting their personal history, selection, program participation, and job placement.

Monitoring and technical assistance

The Foundation is monitoring subgrantees through meetings, by telephone, and through regular visits to project offices and training sites. The Program Officer visited ABC Nepal's Biratnagar office in September.

The Foundation arranged for one representative each from the three partner NGOs to attend a conference entitled "Saving Tomorrow's Children Today: Business/NGO Strategies to Stop Child Trafficking" organized by the U.S. Embassy, Delhi in coordination with FICCI/AMCHAM. The conference focused on economic empowerment and rehabilitation of vulnerable children through NGO-private sector collaboration. Participation enabled the partners to learn about existing practice in this area, and to consider replication in Nepal. The participants were: Lucky Sherpa, Program Coordinator, ABC Nepal; Deepa Regmi, Program Officer, RUGMARK Foundation; and Shraddha Singh, Program Coordinator, WEAN.

Issues and challenges

Initial activities were delayed pending the recruitment of central level staff. The August festival season also interfered with the early enrollment of participants. Activities are expected to accelerate in the second quarter.