

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
October - December 2003

Summary of Program Activities in Current Reporting Period:

- **ABC Nepal**
- **Nepal Rugmark Foundation**
- **WEAN/SAATHI**
- **Steering Committee**
- **Monitoring**
- **Issues and challenges**

ABC Nepal

During this reporting period, ABC Nepal admitted 30 vulnerable girls/women into its residential vocational training program in transit homes located in Baneswor and Koteswor. In addition, through its branch offices, ABC engaged 11 girls in Bhairahwa and 12 girls in Morang in non-residential training. These girls underwent nonformal education of various durations depending on their needs.

Fifteen girls based in the Kathmandu shelter underwent three months of Community Health Worker's (CHW) training through the Institute of Community Health (ICH). Beginning in February, ABC and ICH will work together to place the girls in jobs in private hospitals, nursing homes, and community-based organizations. The girls will also have an opportunity to compete for government jobs.

Fifteen trafficking survivors with basic literacy skills are undergoing a three-month training program at the Shangri-la Hotel and Tourism Training Center in four different subjects: reception/front office, cooking, housekeeping, and bakery. ABC is conducting training on paper bag production for 10 vulnerable girls in Bhairahwa. Market linkages have already been developed with departmental stores and sale of the product has begun. ABC is planning embroidery training for 10 girls who were rescued from a circus in Biratnagar. The market for this skill has been identified to be expanding and the potential profit margin appears good. Two girls have received driving licenses after a month-long course in safe tempo driving. This training was provided in coordination with the Electric Vehicle Association of Nepal. ABC is working with the Association to place the two girls in jobs.

Nepal Rugmark Foundation

RUGMARK expanded its program participants to include high-risk girls from small restaurants and bars, and non-RUGMARK licensee carpet factories. The carpet industry and its sister concern, the spinning industry, remain RUGMARK's priorities. Girls selected qualify within the categories of out-of-school children, girls and women displaced by conflict, recent migrants to urban centers, and survivors of trafficking taking refuge in rehabilitation centers.

RUGMARK currently has 65 girls under its program residing at UCEP in Sano Thimi. Of these girls, 25 are undergoing basic literacy training, 16 are at the intermediate level, and 24 are in the advanced literacy class. The majority of the girls come from the carpet industry. Twenty-five girls are engaged in a six-month course in advanced sewing and cutting at A.R Sewing and Cutting Institute. They simultaneously undergo four hours of advanced literacy training each day. An earlier group of seven girls who received this same training are currently placed as apprentices in Nakarmi Garment Institute, where they make cushions and bags at the rate of Rs. 50 per day. After they complete this apprenticeship phase, they are expected to receive a monthly salary of Rs. 3,200.

WEAN/SAATHI

SAATHI selected 75 vulnerable girls through a comprehensive survey in Banke. All are between the ages of 15 and 25, and from low caste groups or disadvantaged ethnic communities such as the Kamaiyas, Badis, or Tharu. Some are also migrants displaced by conflict. On November 9-19 SAATHI conducted a ten-day counseling training (TOT) for its staff and counselors. Representatives from RUGMARK and ABC Nepal also participated in the TOT.

SAATHI conducted social empowerment training for its first group of 15 participants on November 30-December 17. The package included awareness on the importance of society, family, and friends; confidence building; and legal awareness focusing on women's rights. At the end of the program, each participant received individual counseling, followed by a five-day personality development training package and three-day entrepreneurship training course. The entrepreneurship training included visits to various small and indigenous industries. A second group underwent social empowerment training beginning on December 30th.

The individual counseling by SAATHI revealed psychosocial problems among some of the participants. Eight of the participants are now being provided regular counseling through SAATHI's counseling center. Vocational training by WEAN is scheduled to begin in March.

Steering Committee

The Asia Foundation chaired a Steering Committee meeting on December 10 attended by all project partners and USAID. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain project updates, and to stress the importance of the partners maintaining individual case files on all participants, which they are now doing based on a format shared by RUGMARK. There was also a debriefing on the Delhi workshop.

Monitoring

The Foundation is monitoring subgrantees through visits to the Foundation's office, by telephone, and through staff visits to project offices and training sites. In November, Foundation and USAID staff visited Bhairahwa, Biratnagar, and Nepalgunj. They also visited the RUGMARK office during the same period.

Issues and challenges

RUGMARK faced a shortage of eligible girls in the carpet industry because of an outflow of workers to construction projects and other sites. To keep intake on target,

they requested to include high-risk girls from small restaurants and bars, and non-RUGMARK licensee carpet factories. This was approved by USAID. Still, more than 95 percent of the participants were drawn from the carpet industry and its associated spinning industry.