

***South Asia Regional Initiative/Equity Support Program
(SARI/Equity)***

***End of Project Report
August 2003 – September 2006***



**Funding provided by the
United States Agency for International Development
Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 386-A-00-03-00123
under Leader Award No. AEP-A-00-01-0004-00**

Submitted by:
Academy for Educational Development
Center for Civil Society and Governance
The AED Global Civil Society Strengthening Partnership
AED Reference 1270-2926-12

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Washington, DC
December 2006

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This report was prepared with funds provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development under Associate Award No386-A-00-03-00123 for the South Asia Regional Initiative/ Equity Support Program (SARI/Equity). The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

South Asia Regional Initiative/Equity Support Program (SARI/Equity)

End of Project Report August 2003 – September 2006

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SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL INITIATIVE/EQUITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

END OF PROJECT REPORT PERIOD: AUGUST 2003 – SEPTEMBER 2006

Introduction

Building and strengthening local capacity in South Asian countries effectively to address trafficking and violence against women has been the guiding principle of the SARI/Equity Program from its inception to its conclusion. Initiatives and actions were based on the collective wisdom of, and the needs expressed by, civil society organizations, academics, judges, government representatives, IGOs and regional institutions whose advice and cooperation was sought throughout the Program and most particularly since March 2004 when over 50 experts met in New Delhi for a strategic brainstorming session. An Advisory Council—with expertise representative of the region—provided valuable inputs. Achievements in the Program’s focus areas—within the short period of its existence and covering up to six countries—are manifest and will be highlighted throughout this Report, adding to what already has been indicated in the Quarterly Reports of the past year.

In line with the overall parameters of the initial Program document, SARI/Equity’s support focused on: (i) reducing trafficking; (ii) improving the implementation of legal norms and policies; (iii) fostering safe migration; and (iv) raising the standards of care for survivors of trafficking and violence. It did so mainly through:

- Strengthening networks, networking, and cooperation within and across borders;
- Identifying and encouraging the replication of effective approaches/good practices; and
- Enhancing knowledge and skills.

Major tools were:

- Regional Action Forum (RAF) mechanisms;
- Small grants programs;
- Fellowship awards;
- Operational and action-oriented research;
- Technical support;
- Program website that served as a platform for sharing “products”, events, and partners’ successes.

Despite its short existence as a regional program, SARI/Equity’s achievements in a “nutshell” include:

- Tangible interest in the region and beyond to sustain or establish RAF mechanisms;
- Bonding across borders between grantees for future project collaboration;
- Enhanced project capacity of NGOs from “outside the normal circuit” of donor funding;
- Quality products – unique in the region and of timely relevance; and
- SARI/Equity’s website to continue “beyond the Program’s” existence.

The SARI/Equity Team is hopeful that its 597 partners—direct and indirect; RAF-focused; and INL/GTIP or regional grant-related—will continue to work for the benefit of vulnerable groups and individuals with their own resources and with outside support, if and whenever required. The SARI/Equity Team is gratified to note that its partners regarded it as a trusted facilitator of knowledge flow and a provider of advice. “You have given us a face,” added one of them.

A. Regional Program

SARI/Equity was conceived as a regional program with small grants and regional workshop/meeting components. This initial design developed into a sprawling network of regional platforms for initiatives and actions as well as grant-awarded projects that focused on “discovering” new methods and tools across borders; on replicating good practices or approaches of civil society organizations in another country; and on strengthening the nascent region-wide networks of like-minded organizations. India-specific projects—INL/GTIP funded and added to the SARI/Equity Program during its first year of existence through awards by USAID—provided for a range of anti-trafficking activities that either preceded “region-focused” grant activities and thus served as a “learning experience” or piloted a set of care activities likely to become a model for future replication elsewhere in the region. Their “added value” is uncontested. SARI/Equity interacted on an almost daily basis—by e-mail, telephone, and on site visits—with 84 RAF partners, 481 “regional” grantees and their associates, and 32 INL/GTIP funded India-specific grantees. This continuous “human” contact created a feeling of belonging to SARI/Equity, so often expressed by partners throughout the region.

1. Regional Action Forum Mechanisms – Facts and Figures

The Strategic Planning Workshop (New Delhi, March 2004), attended by over 50 eminent scholars and professionals in the fields of migration, law and justice, and care of survivors, marked the beginning of the RAF process in three SARI/Equity focus areas: (i) Improving the Implementation of Laws; (ii) Strengthening the Care of Survivors/Victims; and (iii) Fostering Safe Migration. NGOs, academic institutions, governments, UN organizations, and donors put together an extensive list of issues of concern to, and in, the region that needed to be addressed urgently. Established soon thereafter, and meeting at periodic intervals since May 2004, the Forums and their national “extensions” (National Core Groups) generated a web of activities—from operational research at the country level to the finalization of “products” at the regional level and implementation at both national and regional levels.

- RAF mechanisms and processes have been considered as a “one of its kind initiative” for bringing together prominent experts from the region to act coherently and cohesively on anti-trafficking and safe migration issues, with due attention to the need for improving the application and implementation of legal standards and norms.
- RAFs played a unique role in addressing trafficking and unsafe migration issues in a holistic manner—usually through parallel streams of concepts and activities.
- The seven Regional Products developed within the three RAFs have often been identified as “essential in fostering equity for women and children.” The two Regional Protocols on victims’ rights and protection and care and support for survivors are considered to be the “first of a kind.”

- Initiation of a timely constructive dialogue with the SAARC Secretariat at the highest levels by RAF Members, Grantees, and SARI/Equity.
- A “web” of consultations with government ministries and departments; and non-governmental organisations in all SARI/Equity countries sparked actions, commitments and promises in respect of the application/adoption of the Regional Products that will have to be followed up “beyond SARI/Equity” for maximum impact.
- A six-member Core Group from within the RAF membership prepared a “Concept Note on a Future RAF Mechanism and Structure” for wider discussion among the totality of the RAF membership and for funding purposes. SARI/Equity welcomes the prospect that the process will continue in one way or another and that a UN agency will serve as a conduit of funds for a small secretariat that will carry forward the directives, wishes, and agreed activities of the joint RAF membership.

Membership¹

As unique policy platforms comprised of experts from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (the two latter in respect of Safe Migration) the Regional Action Forum Membership consisted of:

- Governments (7): the Ministry of Labor and Transportation, Nepal; Bureau of Foreign Employment, Sri Lanka; Central Child Welfare Board, Nepal; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Afghanistan.
- Judiciary/Law Enforcement (6): Former Attorney General of Bangladesh; Deputy Attorney General of Bangladesh; Former Chief Justice of India; Judges and Lawyers, Supreme Courts of Nepal and India.
- National Human Rights Commissions (2): Nepal, Sri Lanka.
- NGOs/IGOs (41): Heads of organizations that are recognized experts in the region.
- Academics (7): University of Colombo, Sri Lanka; University of Delhi, India; Rabindra Bharati University, India; Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India; University of Dhaka, Bangladesh; Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan; Tribhuvan University, Nepal.

As extensions of the RAFs at the country level, National Core Groups (NCGs) carried out operational research, and called for workshops and consultations to push the RAF agenda forward. In addition to the RAF membership, the NCGs comprised representatives from:

- Government (2): District Administration Office and Central Child Welfare Board, Nepal.
- Judiciary/Law Enforcement (3): Supreme Court Judge and Deputy Attorney General, Nepal.
- NGOs (16): Heads of Organizations.
- Academics (3): University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Working Sessions²

- **Nine Regional Action Forum Meetings** (three of each Forum throughout the period 2004-2006) to agree on priority issues for action, to review and finalize agreed “products,” and encourage their dissemination/application.
- A **Joint Regional Action Forum Meeting** of representatives from the Law, Care of Survivors, and Safe Migration Forums to take stock of work accomplished since the

¹ Contact addresses for RAF and NCG Members are available on the AED-SARI/Equity website (www.sariq.org)

² Reports/summary proceedings are available on the AED-SARI/Equity website.

inception of the RAFs and to discuss the possible benefits and shape of a continued Regional Action Forum mechanism and processes “beyond SARI/Equity.”

- **Four Regional Sub-Group Meetings** to finalize the Regional Victim Witness Protection Protocol, the Regional Minimum Standards Protocol, a Regional Safe Migration Toolkit, and a Regional Safe Migration Policy, respectively.
- **National Core Group Meetings** to undertake/initiate activities agreed in National Action Plans, organized by the SAP offices in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and by SARI/Equity in India.
- **Workshops** on “Implementing Policy Change” and “Social Marketing Strategies” for the Regional Action Forum Membership (Law and Care of Survivors) facilitated by the President of MSI and a Senior Consultant/Journalist, respectively on innovative “market-oriented” ways of approaching stakeholders and “selling” social products.

Regional Products³ :

- **Victim Witness Protection Protocol** including a one-pager on the Protocol and seven Regional Versions translated into Bangla, Hindi, Marathi, Nepali, Sinhala, Tamil and Telugu.
- **Protocol on Minimum Standards of Care and Support** for the Victims of Trafficking and Other Forms of Violence including a one-pager on the Protocol and seven Regional Versions translated into Bangla, Hindi, Marathi, Nepali, Sinhala, Tamil and Telugu.
- **Handbook for Practitioners** on the Regional Minimum Standards Protocol and its Hindi translated version.
- **Resource Book on Livelihood Options** for Survivors of Trafficking and Other Forms of Violence.
- **Compilation of 50 Progressive Landmark Judgments** from South Asia.
- **Policy for Ensuring Safe Labor Migration** within and beyond South Asia.
- **Mass Awareness Toolkit** on Safe Migration.

Products are widely acknowledged as being of high quality, unique, timely and beneficial: (i) Victim Witness and Minimum Standards Protocols: “No other such comprehensive protocols” exist at the moment, neither in South Asia nor in South East Asia. (ii) The Regional Policy on Safe Migration has become a “benchmark” for drafting national policies addressing the nexus between unsafe migration and trafficking. (iii) Judges from the region have sent appreciative messages to SARI/Equity agreeing to apply the progressive judgments in their respective areas of work. (iv) International organizations including the UN consider the “Regional Products” valuable in their advocacy and capacity building programs [For example, UNDP Colombo (regional) shared the Resource Book on Livelihood Options with civil society partners in South East Asia, particularly in the Greater Mekong Sub-region]. Similarly, UNODC has made extensive use of the landmark judgments and the two protocols in training programs with law enforcement agencies and prosecutors in India.

Dissemination of Products

More than 9,000 hard copies and 2,000 CD-ROMs have been disseminated to multiple stakeholders by way of personalized letters; in consultations and meetings by grantees, RAF

³ The Regional Products in English and in the regional languages are available on the AED-SARI/Equity website.

members and partner organizations; and personal visits by SARI/Equity team members. The list of recipients includes:

- SAARC Secretariat and Country Directors
- Ministries: External Affairs, Constitutional Reforms, Law and Justice, Home Affairs, Women & Child Development & Social Welfare; Labor; and Overseas and Employment
- State Departments of Women and Child Development and Directorate of Social Welfare in the case of India
- District Administrative Officials and representatives of Local Self- Governance
- Human Rights Commissions and Women's Commissions
- Judiciary: Supreme Court; High Court; Appellate Court; and District Court Judges; Law Commissions; Chief Justices of Supreme Courts and the High Courts; Attorneys General
- Bar Councils and Associations
- Law Enforcement Agencies: Police; Lawyers and Public Prosecutors
- Libraries: Supreme Court; High Court and Lower Court Libraries; Law Colleges and Universities
- Law Students and Professors
- National/State Judicial Academies
- NGOs and INGOs
- UN Agencies: UNDP; UNIFEM and UNODC
- Global Commission on International Migration
- UN Representative on Migration
- Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants
- Media

National/ State Consultations

- Seven National Consultations (four in Nepal and three in Sri Lanka) for the dissemination and adoption/application of the Regional Protocols and the Regional Resource Book on Livelihood Options with representatives from Ministries of Women and Child Development; the Judiciary; Law Commissions; Human Rights Commissions; Police; Advocates; UN Agencies; Superintendents of government, and NGO-run Shelter Homes; and the media.
- One National and 14 State Level Consultations in India on the Regional Protocols and the Resource Book (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Orissa, West Bengal and the North-Eastern States including Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Tripura). Key stakeholders at those consultations included Departments of Women and Child Development, Social Welfare, and Social Defense; State Human Rights Commissions; Child Welfare Committees; State Women's Commissions; NGOs; Law Enforcement Agencies; the Judiciary; and the Media. These consultations were organized on behalf of SARI/Equity by RAF members in partnership with local NGOs (some of them also being SARI/Equity grantees) or in collaboration with the Department of Women and Child Development, in the case of Maharashtra and West Bengal.
- Four National Consultations on the Regional Safe Migration Policy—one each in four SARI/Equity countries—with key officials from the Ministries of Foreign Employment and Foreign Affairs (Sri Lanka); Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (Bangladesh); Ministry of State for Labor and Transport (Nepal); Ministries of External

Affairs, Home Affairs, Labor, Overseas Indian Affairs, and Women and Child Development (India); NGOs; INGOs; IGOs; academia, trade unions; media, and NCG Members.

Impact, Trends and Promises

The RAF process has been instrumental in creating a “dynamic network” of professionals and experts from within the South Asian Region. The provisions of the two Protocols, the Policy Framework for Safe Migration, the guidelines for replication from the Resource Book on Livelihood Options, and the Progressive Landmark Judgments are being widely discussed, used, and integrated in the programs and services by multi-stakeholders including government ministries and departments, civil society organizations, government and private shelter homes, law enforcement agencies, the judiciary, and academia. The two Protocols are used as “monitoring tools” in government and NGO-run shelter homes in many states of India. A Safe Migration Policy is being drafted by Inter-Ministerial Committees in Nepal and Sri Lanka based on the Regional Safe Migration Policy Framework. Various advocacy initiatives have been undertaken at the national and regional level by RAF/NCG members—jointly or individually. Linkages between and among RAF members and SARI/Equity grantees have been facilitated and strengthened during that process. Details on “Trends of Impact” have been documented by SARI/Equity in order to provide a **guide for follow up “beyond SARI/Equity” (See Annex 1 to this Report).**

Additional Initiatives of Relevance

- The National Judicial Academy, Nepal, supported by SARI/Equity, organized two Trainings of Trainers (ToTs) to constitute a “pool” of senior judges, attorneys, and judicial officers who would undertake the training of peers on issues of gender and violence against women and children using thereby the two Regional Protocols. NJA also conducted a three-day training on gender justice for 20 newly appointed district judges which served at the same time as a “test” for the newly acquired skills of the participants at the two earlier ToTs.
- A Conference on the Migration/Trafficking Nexus, convened by SARI/Equity with UNIFEM and IOM in Dhaka to stimulate dialogue and commitments for action on these issues in the region, was to promote understanding of the magnitude, dimensions, causes, and consequences of trafficking and migration within South Asia, explore the ambiguities in the migration-trafficking nexus, identify the gaps in and components of strategies/practices/interventions in migration and counter-trafficking activities, create a model for integrating a gender sensitive human rights approach in all trafficking and migration programs, and develop an action plan for implementation.

Sustainability of the Regional Action Forum Process

A six-member Working Group was established from within the Joint RAF membership to develop a Concept Note for wider discussion and approval by the three Forums for funding purposes. (Dr. Nimalka Fernando, Sri Lanka—Convener of the Group; Mr. Shahidul Haque, Bangladesh; Mr. Ganesh Gurung, Nepal; Dr. Asha Bajpai, India; Dr. Sunitha Krishnan, India; Dr. Aliya Khan, Pakistan—Members of the Group)

At a meeting organized by SARI/Equity on 8 August 2006 at its office in New Delhi, the working group finalized the Concept Note developed with SARI/Equity’s technical and substantive support. It is understood that UNODC will, with the support of USAID, continue to

sponsor an RAF mechanism and process, under the guidance of the core group. (See Annex 2 for the Concept Note.)

Unfinished Tasks with Future Potential

In addition to pursuing the fullest possible implementation and application of the seven Products throughout the region based on the trends and promises made during the relatively short but intense dissemination period, some actions—initiated by the Forums—have remained unfinished due to lack of time and clear focus by the RAFs, in particular:

The Regional Training Guidelines on Violence against Women and Children for Law Enforcement Agencies and Judicial Officers. Though progress has been made and efforts of the three regional coordinators and the regional editor have been much appreciated, it may be indicated to review the purpose of such guidelines, the type of end-users they are meant for, and their potential regional applicability before finalizing for publication the three parts of the Guidelines (General, Police, Judiciary).

2. Regional Grants Program4 – Process, Facts and Figures

Although the outreach of the regional and India-specific grants programs was different, basic features—the focus on victim protection and prevention of victimization—were common to both. Experience in implementing both types of grants showed that synergies between the two programs were manifold: (i) learning from the difficulties encountered in obtaining results-oriented project proposals from INL grantees positively influenced the conception and support provided to regional grantees; (ii) India-specific grant projects led to the successful application by a number of INL grantees for regional SARI/Equity awards which facilitated their outreach and enriched their learning experiences “across borders”; (iii) INL/GTIP grantees benefited from the RAF products in their project activities; and (iv) some grantees even organized consultations on the dissemination and application of those products to a wider group of government, civil society, and policy makers. The Report deals with the Regional and India-specific grant projects separately but, in view of the above, linkages between the two have been highlighted whenever indicated.

Grant-making Process

Following the Strategic Agenda meeting in March 2004 that sparked many ideas of what kind of grants should be part of the program, three types were proposed to USAID: discovery, networking and advocacy, and replication of demonstrated models.

- Discovery Grants: To investigate models implemented successfully by other organizations within the region, senior NGO staff was to be provided with the opportunity to benefit from observing “hands-on” the work of the mentor organization.
- Replication/Scale up Grants: To assess the suitability and adaptability of a tested model of another organization for implementation.

⁴ Contact addresses for Regional Grantees are available on the AED-SARI/Equity website (www.sariq.org)

- Networking Grants: To strengthen existing and emerging networks within the region “across SARI/Equity focus areas.”

Templates for Fixed Obligation Grants (FOGs) and Standard Grants based on those developed for the INL grants were approved by the USAID Contracting Officer during the first quarter of 2004. The Program was officially launched on 30 June 2004. Nine orientation workshops in the four SARI/Equity countries were conducted with the purpose of familiarizing NGOs with the grants program and procedures and to answer queries of potential applicants. In India, orientation workshops were held in Mumbai, Kolkata, Lucknow, Bangalore and Delhi.

The application procedure for the “first batch of grants” was open to an unlimited number of local NGOs in a two-step process:

(i) NGOs were requested to submit a concept paper outlining basic ideas and indicating their organizational capacity. Although a “rolling process” was foreseen in principle, awarding the majority of the funds as quickly as possible was regarded as highly desirable by SARI/Equity in order to impact on the focus areas of its Program. Following an initial review by the SARI/Q team in Delhi and a further review by its Advisory Council, SARI/Equity—based on the combined scores of the reviewers—made the final determination of who should be eligible to be part of the second stage of the award process.

(ii) South Asia Partnership (SAP) with support from SARI/Equity was requested to provide technical assistance to NGOs within their respective countries, in areas such as developing activity plans, establishing an evaluation mechanism and a detailed budget. SAP Program Officers received a one-day orientation on developing “stage II applications” in order to be able to advise potential grantees in the preparation of the project document. This procedure proved less effective than envisaged and SARI/Equity took over, electronically or physically. Based on 128 applications 14 grants were awarded after careful scrutiny: three Discovery, eight Replication and three Networking grants.

It was obvious from the majority of applications that NGOs’ thinking was not automatically “regional” and special efforts by the SARI/Equity team, supported by the CTO and USAID Missions in the four countries, were required to help applicant NGOs include regional perspectives in their proposals.

Based on lessons learned from the first batch of grants, the second batch of grants, Network and Replication Grants, was selected from applications that were sought from a ‘closed universe’ in the first and the third quarter 2005, respectively. Four Network grants and 13 grants for “Good Practices”/“Replicable Approaches” were finally awarded following advice from the SARI/Equity Advisory Council, USAID, and SAP offices in the region.

Achievements

The great achievement of the regional grants program that altogether covered 37 projects—many of them with ramifications in more than one country and implemented with more than one partner - consisted in bringing people together, providing opportunities to learn from each other and work together. In illustration of the above the following may serve as examples:

“Bringing People Together”

Events

- In the final phase of the SARI/Equity Program a Project Partners’ meeting (Colombo, July 2006) gathered 30 organizations/grantees to share project experiences; showcase successes; analyze project impact; discuss the benefits of using RAF products; examine challenges in implementing their projects; and relate their experiences with replicating “good practices”/“approaches.” This interaction “face to face” was much welcomed and helped partners across borders but with the same focus of action to identify linkages and collaborative efforts “beyond SARI/Equity”
- To dispel misunderstandings between the media and civil society about their respective roles in “social issue reporting” over thirty participants from the media and SARI/Equity’s NGO partners in six countries met (Colombo, December 2005) to jointly address their mutual grievances and misconceptions; to undertake joint reporting and to arrive at a more systematic collaboration that resulted, in effect, in many instances in the publication of informed newspaper articles on SARI/Equity focus areas. Comments by a participant: *“This (workshop) was one of its kind where NGOs and Media together, critically yet positively, gave tips and feedback to each other.”*
- To provide a space for reflection on innovative “business” approaches to social issues, 22 members of 14 partner organizations in the region under the guidance of a “business” facilitator gained insights into new marketing methods for their “social/rights” products.

In view of the shortness of time and severe budget cuts at the beginning of 2006, follow up actions by the SARI/Equity Team—although a necessary component of any project/event—could not be undertaken in order to maximize and sustain the impact of the promising initiatives and initial results.

“Providing Opportunities to Learn From Each Other”

Exposure/Discovery Visits

Discovery, Replication, and other regional grants (with provision for exposure visits to organizations in other countries) “obliged” partners to visit and learn from others in the region and made available, particularly to “young” organizations, “experienced” mentor organizations—a search which SARI/Equity facilitated. Some illustrative comments on such learning experiences are given below:

- ACD, Bangladesh, after a visit to Sri Lanka: *“ACD is interested in incorporating the holistic community approach of SARVODAYA in its own community work.”*
- Youth Action Nepal, an organization of committed youths, after a visit to the Migrant Services Centre, Sri Lanka: *“The action plan of Youth Action Nepal is based on the learning experience of our study visit to Migrant Service Centre (MSC) and a number of other relevant organizations and their activities for safe migration in Sri Lanka.” “Organizing returnee female migrant workers as seen in MSC’s work will be an effective tool to fight for their rights and influencing other potential female migrant workers for safe migration”.*
- CeLLRd, a Nepali organization with a legal focus, after a visit to ODANADI, a victim protection and trafficking prevention-oriented organization in Mysore, India: *“If the organization is able to strengthen the self esteem of the survivors just like ODANADI is doing it, this will not only help in their reintegration but also provide a dignified platform for them in the community.”*
- VHAT, Tripura, India, after a visit to Women in Need (WIN), Sri Lanka to observe the functioning of short stay homes: *“Working with government hospitals for holistic service provision to victims of violence is a new idea for us. The collaborative effort of WIN with local police stations for counseling to settle disputes was really inspiring.”*
- Shakti Shalini, a legal and economic empowerment NGO in India, after observing a Gender Equality and Justice inter-action program by Pro Public for Judges and Public Prosecutors in Nepal: *“These kinds of interactions will go a long way in changing the mindsets of Judges and Public Prosecutors and making them more gender sensitive. With the larger goal of achieving gender justice in our societies, these kinds of information exchanges and discussion workshops with judiciary and legal fraternity are invaluable.”*
- ATSEC Bangladesh, after a visit to study the fledgling Mumbai Victim Registry: *“The Secured Victim Registry System has the potential to be applied as an integrated tool for tracking victims of trafficking, from rescue to service delivery and finally to their re-integration into society. The study team members owe it to... SARI/Equity for providing this exposure of first hand experience on technical issues like the Secured Victim Registry System”.*

“Facilitating the Establishment of Working Relationships”

- To provide just one example of many similar working relationships: SARI/Equity’s familiarity with the availability of specific “expertise” among the many partners in the region led to CAP, India, joining with ACILS, Sri Lanka, WARBE, Bangladesh and NIDS, Nepal in a regional project of re-training and re-deployment of garment workers—a relationship based on the partners’ specific but complementary expertise that was promising.

“Including NGOs Never Before Part of a Grants Process”

Receiving a grant from SARI/Equity helped to gain “recognition” in the wider NGO and donor community, build confidence and skills of young NGOs to seek further donor support “beyond SARI/Equity”:

- While in existence as a network before SARI/Equity, ATSEC West Bengal became operational with SARI/Equity support, using individual network members’ “value added” in the grant project’s joint action in respect of awareness and advocacy campaigns at the community and government level at the West Bengal/Bangladesh border. This efficient cooperation with tangible results led the network to receiving further funds under the UNDP/TAHA project.
- The South Asia Study Centre (SASC) with SARI/Equity’s grant (its first ever) established itself at six Indo-Nepal border points filling a void that had existed for a long time: *“The Nepali migrants traveling to India do not have adequate information regarding their working and living conditions in India.... when they reach India and have to face difficulties, their dreams are shattered; many even face psychological problems.”* Subsequently, commonality of interests prompted SASC and ACILS to cooperate “beyond SARI/Equity.”

“Replicating with Imagination”

Based on five “Good Practice” models (*“Mock Trials to Prepare Victims for Testimony in Court; Direct Community Access to the Legal System through Paralegal Services; Young People Act to Prevent Trafficking; Child to Child Anti-trafficking Initiatives; Turn Border Town Rickshaws into Anti-Trafficking Alert Vehicles”*) 13 awards to NGOs in the region sparked creative ways of transforming the models that were applied in other parts of South Asia, taking into account local needs and circumstances. For example, STOP, India; Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS), Bangladesh; and Legal Aid and Consultancy Center (LACC), Nepal, replicated the Sri Lankan Mock Trials model in three different ways that proved effective in their results.

- **STOP:** Providing victims with a choice of roles within the larger parameters of the trial proceedings (e.g. as observer; judge, witness or perpetrator), leaving the role of the victim to be play-acted by someone else. Once comfortable with the process in playing other roles, the victim most often than not agreed to play her own role.
- **NUS’s:** Publicizing the benefits of mock trials for victim protection with concerned stakeholders such as the police, prosecutors, media and community leaders led to considerable interest and media coverage.
- **LACC:** Popularizing the concept in rural areas through radio and the print media led in a short period of time to 22 cases relating to violence against women being won in the courts as a result of testimonies provided by victims who had undergone mock trial sessions (with real judges, real lawyers and “close to reality” simulation of the court room setting). Many organizations in Nepal have requested LACC’s help. Popular demand for continuing mock trial sessions is rising and LACC is seeking funds “beyond SARI/Equity.”

“Expanding Networks”

Support to organizations such as NNAGT, VHAT, ATSEC India, SASC and Manav Seva Sansthan included components of “local” network membership expansion and/or of establishing new country chapters in “a regional context”. The latter refers in particular to the loose regional ATSEC alliance of three country chapters that was increased to five including Pakistan and Sri Lanka and to the establishment of a regional structure with a Charter and a rotating Regional Secretariat.

“Strengthening Networks’ Institutional Capacity”

- Network assessment workshops for the benefit of VHAT, NNAGT, Manav Seva, SASC, ATSEC Bangladesh. and Nepal to:
 - Articulate desired impact;
 - Identify dimensions of the network that needed capacity building to effectively achieve desired results; and
 - Develop a capacity building plan; a strategy for collaboration; and a timeline for implementing activities
- Individualized support at the initial stage of the grant proposal process strengthened the participatory process. One-day sessions included:
 - Basics of Design, Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - Preparation of project summaries based on a results framework; and
 - A detailed implementation plan including an activity schedule, milestones, projected targets and a monitoring & evaluation plan.

Trends of Impact

Although results are clearly visible within each project and sometimes compounded by results of similar projects located in the region, the impact of “awareness raising and advocacy efforts”, of “legal training and simulation of legal proceedings”, of “child-to-child and youth-to-youth communication”—to provide just a few examples of grant project activities—would require a longer time span, more sustained networking and continued support in order to produce a “snow ball effect” in the region. Notwithstanding, some examples of trends under the three categories are given below:

“Awareness raising and Advocacy”

Involving rickshaw drivers in transit and source areas of trafficking in information campaigns (distributing stickers, watching out for unusual movements and events) proved highly participatory and created a “sense of responsibility” among the rickshaw drivers/owners that helped identify potential trafficking cases in time on the Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Nepal borders (Bhorouka, West Bengal; Rights Jessore, Bangladesh; Bhoomika Vihar, Bihar). In a similar campaign at the Indo-Bangladesh border addressing the issue of “missing children,” involving communities in awareness raising programs, the population of South 24 Parganas has started to address the issue in a new perspective and complaints are lodged for missing children at the police station as probable cases of trafficking (Bhorouka, West Bengal).

“Legal Training and Simulation of Legal Proceedings”

While interactive programs on gender and justice in Nepal inspired judges to issue favorable judgments in respect of the citizenship of children from the Badi community (sex workers), women’s property rights and their right to go abroad; and mock trial sessions in the region induced the delivery of justice against the perpetrators of violence against women, these successful activities would have to be continued in a systematic manner and possibly expanded in order to have a more tangible impact on the whole region. However, this is a promising beginning!

“Child to Child Communication”

Various efforts in the region to encourage child-to-child communication took off very well and showed positive results. Comic books about the evils of trafficking such as ICWO’s book entitled “The Escape” which was based on a similar initiative of Him Rights, Nepal, were widely appreciated. Their impact on the prevention of trafficking and violence will still have to be measured over time. Children’s Development Banks, Children’s Newspapers, Children’s Parliamentary sessions, the establishment of Children’s Clubs—all project activities under SARI/Equity’s regional grants program—no doubt have contributed to raising awareness and knowledge levels about trafficking, unsafe migration, sexual abuse etc. in communities. Much still needs to be done to sustain them. **(For a complete list of Regional Grants and Key Results see Annex 3 to the Report.)**

B. India-Specific Grant Programs⁵

1. INL Grants

INL funds for India-based anti-trafficking grants, channeled from the State Department through USAID to AED, were administered and monitored by SARI/Equity. Although the transfer agreement only stipulated management of the grants “in accordance with the law” and the provision of information as and when requested by the Department of State, SARI/Equity’s review of grantees’ proposals made an assessment of their institutional capacity, and provision of technical assistance to address deficiencies in their proposals imperative. Grant activities proved directly relevant to the SARI/Equity agenda and some grantees participated both in the Regional Grants Program⁶ and the Regional Action Forum mechanisms to mutual benefit. Initial apprehension by the grantees about funding and process gave way to excellent cooperation (99% of grantees reacted positively to the process adopted by AED.)

SARI/Equity began to award grants under the INL scheme from April 2004 onwards. Three grants [Odanadi, Prerana, and Ramola Bhar Charitable Trust (STOP)] were delayed in their operations due to requests for vehicles for which waiver requests had to be submitted to USAID; two other grantees (Apne Aap and ATSEC West Bengal) experienced initial difficulties because of the required FCRA clearance. By July 2004, however, all the 12 grants had commenced.

⁵ Contact addresses for INL and GTIP Grantees are available on the AED-SARI/Equity website (www.sariq.org)

⁶ Five INL Grantees (Bhoomika Vihar; HELP; STOP; Shakti Shalini; and Center for Social Research) were also awarded regional grants.

Later on in the process, SARI/Equity's efforts to link India-specific grants with regional grants were received favorably. Those alliances benefited not only the respective organizations but also the communities with whom they worked, sometimes on both sides of the border and beyond.

SARI/Equity's experience in managing the INL Grants was rewarding since in many ways these grants set the stage for the design of regional anti-trafficking projects and the building of organizations' institutional capacities through timely technical assistance and infrastructural support.

Process

Start-up workshops for all grantees (in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata) were organized by SARI/Equity with the objective of providing guidance on program and financial management of USAID grants; other details of the grant agreements; on drafting activity schedules which included a Performance Monitoring Plan for the life of the project. Feedback was positive. Dr. Neelam Gorhe from Stree Adhar Kendra, Mrs. Sudha Tiwari, Shakti Shalini, Mr. Arun Kumar of Bhoomika Vihar, and Dr. Roma Debabrata of Ramola Bhar Charitable Trust (STOP) went on record to appreciate the assistance received from SARI/Equity.

Activities

Activities were vast in scope and diverse in nature—assistance to trafficking survivors in short-stay shelter homes; provision of sustainable livelihood training; linkages across borders (Nepal and Bangladesh) in repatriating women and girls; identifying potential trafficking victims; training police and vigilance committees; running advocacy campaigns destined for the public or tailored to the needs of the local police and administration.

Timely Actions with Results

In pooling the expertise of nine organizations forming part of the ATSEC West Bengal network, strong linkages across all levels of government ranging from state to village level could be established in a time and work effective manner, thereby reaching the most vulnerable districts of West Bengal.

Filling a gap in vigilance and supportive care at the Indo-Nepal border, Bhoomika Vihar (Bihar) established vigilance centers with the possibility of immediate counseling by trained staff of women/girls coming across the border to India. Excellent contacts of trust with the border police facilitated their tasks.

Pinpointing the plight of victims in dealing with the police based on gender studies in two Indian states (Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan) CSR prepared a Manual for Trainers of mid and lower level police personnel focusing on those issues. Presented to and appreciated by senior police officials in New Delhi, the Manual's practical use in trainings still needs to be identified "beyond SARI/Equity." **(For a complete list of INL Grants and Key Results see Annex 4 to this Report.)**

2. Mumbai Victim Protection and Goa Anti Sex Tourism/Pedophilia Projects

Mumbai

Reducing trafficking and sexual exploitation and minimizing the adverse impact of these practices on women and children was the prime objective with which SARI/Equity embarked on the Mumbai Victim Protection Project. The project was unique in many ways: in its holistic multidisciplinary service provision to survivors of trafficking and violence in shelter homes over a period of twenty months; its close interaction with government departments and shelter home staff; its integrated case management and establishment of an electronic victim registry.

Process

SARI/Equity's consultations with organizations most likely to participate in the project resulted in a strategy based on the strengths of each participating NGO with respect to service delivery in shelter homes. The ensuing city-wide effort of a consortium of five NGOs and civil society institutions resulted in tangible improvements in the services to women and child survivors. Since a comprehensive service delivery is linked in many ways to effective prosecution, trends of increases in arrests and prosecutions can already be observed. The program has also significantly changed the outlook of NGOs accustomed to working in isolation. Viewing this pilot as a catalyst for change, NGOs such as Oasis and Save the Children India have already committed to **replicating this model** in Bangalore and Goa. In a meeting at the end of the project in August 2006, partners vowed to continue the "integrated management processes" beyond SARI/Equity.

Activities

A Baseline Study of the **College of Social Work** on shelter home services in Mumbai set the stage for the consortium's interventions and prompted in particular the inclusion of health service delivery which was found badly wanting. Two Knowledge-Attitude-Practices (KAP) studies in the shelter homes; a training manual for shelter home staff with subsequent trainings; the placement of senior social work students in the shelter homes; a process document detailing the activities under the various components of the project were among the "added value" provided by the College.

The vocational training of rescued girls, residents in shelter homes, by **Child And Police (CAP)** whose expertise until then had focused on training youth from the poorest segments of the population encountered difficulties at times due to the special psychological frame of mind of trafficking victims; residential restrictions of movement; the need for keeping the origin of the girls confidential for the employer; and unforeseen repatriation of the girls to other states in India or across borders. Notwithstanding the above and being a learning experience both for the service provider and the shelter homes, 195 girls across seven shelter homes received employable skills. (SARI/Equity expresses the hope that the vocational training with a focus on employability of victims/survivors will be pursued "beyond SARI/Equity".)

A psychosocial counseling package and psychosocial package for victims of trafficking prepared by **Prerana** was applied in the shelter homes where 190 rescued minor girls and adult women were provided with psychosocial counseling services individually or in groups. Prerana conducted 11 life skills education sessions complementing those undertaken by Save The Children India and coordinated preparations for the operationalization of, and initial inputs into, an electronic Victim Registry with support from all partners. Prerana will continue data entry “beyond SARI/Equity.” It should be noted that the Department for Women and Child Development of Maharashtra indicated its interest in taking charge of that Registry—a matter which may need follow up. SARI/Equity believes that only ownership by the government in the long run can ensure completeness of data entry and the cooperation of the police in securing fingerprinting of the victims instead of divulging their identities in photographic inclusions

Oasis India Foundation carried out an assessment of healthcare services and living conditions in shelter homes, which helped in shaping the kind of needed health interventions. It provided a diagnostic “health check” protocol for newly arrived residents to six participating homes and a “three bed acute care center” for in-house management of illnesses in an independent facility.

Save the Children India managed two components of the integrated service provision (educational skills and upgrading the shelter home environment; and legal services). The organization’s activities included: preparation of a Training Manual on Literacy, Numeracy, and Life Skills for trafficked survivors (disseminated in August 2006); provision of educational (formal and non formal) opportunities to trafficked survivors in shelter homes; physical / infrastructural developments in two government homes—implemented with adjustments since a new government home under the SWADHAR scheme was in the planning stage of construction to which service provision and residents of the other government shelters would be moved in due course. As planned, STCI established a model shelter for trafficked survivors. Its legal services were extended to 74 girls residing in government and non-government homes based on referrals by the homes. A dual approach of group and individual counseling was used. STCI has lodged complaints against 43 traffickers and brothel keepers; prompted the arrest of eight accused; assisted victims in property recovery and helped the police in identification and arrest operations.

During SARI/Equity’s “closure” visit in August 2006, **shelter home staff** (eight shelters were part of the pilot) was highly appreciative of the integrated efforts deployed by the SARI/Equity consortium. This had helped in maximizing the benefit of the assistance to rescued girls and to avoid duplication almost entirely. Information flow between NGOs and shelter homes was regarded as being excellent. Although their request that the project continue for at least three more years to institutionalize processes and bring about long-lasting benefits could for obvious reasons not be heeded to, it is SARI/Equity’s sincere hope that successor organizations will favorably consider this request.

Goa

The Goa project was a relatively modest addition to a much larger project by UNIFEM, under the same donor funds. It had two distinct objectives: to support activities aimed at the better protection of children against violence, pedophilia, and trafficking; and to enhance effective implementation of provisions of the Goa Children’s Protection Act. The two SARI/Equity partners in these efforts were **Child Rights Goa (CRG)** and **Childline**.

Professor Harendra de Silva, ex-chairperson of the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) Sri Lanka, provided valuable inputs into CRG’s multidisciplinary approach to the protection of children. Additionally, in order to refine their knowledge concerning the NCPA “on the spot”, the Case Coordinator and Director of CRG visited the NCPA as well as the organizations PEACE and Don Bosco in Sri Lanka to learn more about child protection mechanisms. Government/NGO cooperation in bringing pedophiles to justice was also part of that “exposure” visit.

A case analysis of prosecutions of pedophiles and sex offenders undertaken by **CRG Goa** assisted CRG and other NGOs in identifying factors that facilitated effective prosecution and would help to sensitize the police and the judiciary. The establishment of Beach Nodal Centers, the distribution of deterrent messages, the placement of posters at the beaches and the airport during the tourist season resulted in the reporting of 40 cases of pedophilia. CRG will expand its services during the next tourist season to five more beach areas. CRG’s presence on the beaches led to children/beach vendors to be included in the organization’s non formal education classes held near the beaches.

To improve connectivity among NGOs and thus service provision in Goa for the benefit of abused children in need, **Childline India Foundation** developed a Resource Directory of Non Governmental Organizations working in Goa. Childline’s agent in North Goa, Don Bosco, also received two two-wheelers and mobile phones to speed up interventions with children in need.

Achieving tangible results in the short period of project duration had been a constant challenge for the organizations.

C. Service Provision by SARI/Equity and Sub-Grantees

1. Guide to Replicable Approaches

Closely linked to the Grants Program, both Regional and India-specific, was the development of a ***Guide to Replicable Approaches***. Based on materials collected in four South Asian countries by a team of researchers “in-country” and in Delhi, under the direction of AED’s partner Management Systems International (MSI), the Guide contains 18 “Approaches” successfully used by 38 organizations/entities—both government and non-government and including 17 SARI/Equity grantees. “Replicable Approaches” in the Guide have been categorized under the following headings:

- Prevention of Cross-Border Trafficking;
- Rapid Documentation of Trafficked and Other Missing Minors;
- Victim Witness Protection;
- Cross-Border Rescue and Repatriation;
- Support to Returnee Migrants.

Although the Guide has been widely disseminated it would require persistent follow up and a small grants program to encourage replication of the Approaches contained therein on a wider scale.

2. Fellowships

The Program provided civil society professionals from the region with an opportunity to work on an action-oriented research project for a period of 4-6 months, based in the SARI/Equity office in New Delhi, India. Four fellowships (see topics below) were awarded through a competitive application process in the SARI/Equity countries to fellows from Bangladesh, India; and Nepal. While the program benefited young professionals in obtaining a “regional exposure” and broadened their “regional perspective,” it also contributed to strengthening the working relationships between SARI/Equity and NGOs in the region.

- **Effectiveness of Community Theater in Addressing Issues of Violence against Women in Bangladesh and India** (Bangladesh) exploring the use of theatre media as an effective tool for raising awareness on the issues of violence against women.
- **Demand Side of Trafficking** (India) indicates behavior patterns of “users of sexual services” that are strongly influenced by the traditional/stereotyped thinking of males and females in society. The heightened demand for young girls appears also to be strongly induced by brothel owners, pimps and traffickers for whom young girls are bigger “money makers.”
- **Cross Border Networking for Repatriation** (India) surveys the functioning of cross border networks for repatriation and provides recommendations for: a) effective networking among NGOs and other stakeholders for the rehabilitation of victims and b) mechanisms for increased participation of grass-root level NGO partners in the networks for formulating and monitoring region-specific rehabilitation programs.
- **Multiple Vulnerabilities of Dalit Women** (Nepal) investigates the extent to which Dalit women, compared to women of other communities, experience violence and the linkage of such violence to the dual vulnerability of Dalit women to trafficking and unsafe migration.

3. Website

The SARI/Equity website developed from being a general information portal with announcements of grants and fellowship programs (including downloadable application forms and procedures) into an interactive gateway for information-sharing on activities and programs conducted by SARI/Equity and its many partners in the region. Examples of sections on the website:

- Success Stories by grantees and RAF partners highlighting impacts of grants and programs on the lives of victims/ survivors of violence and encouraging similar action.
- Nine Products of SARI/Equity and the Regional Action Forums on Law, Care of Survivors and Safe Migration in English and in downloadable format - in addition to the proceedings of the various RAF meetings and national consultations. Two Regional Protocols in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Sinhala, Nepalese, and Bangla in addition to English.
- The regional and national consultations on the dissemination and adoption/application of the Regional Minimum Standards Protocol; Victim Witness Protection Protocol; and the Resource Book on Livelihood Options – for information and follow up.
- Media coverage of events and corresponding link ups to texts.

The website will continue to be functional “beyond SARI/Equity,” being linked to AED’s website in Washington D.C.

D. Management and Administration

1. Staffing

At its full operational strength, the SARI/Equity team in Delhi consisted of 15 professionals, two office assistants and one driver. In addition to Indian nationals, the staff component included at the start of the project a Nepali national, and during its second year a Bangladeshi citizen. MSI, a sub-contractor to AED, held three positions (Senior Program, Program, and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer).

The regional perspective of the program was strengthened through the incorporation into the SARI/Equity team of Fellows from Nepal and Bangladesh for a limited period of time—up to six months—as well as in the second half of the project through full-time Program Officers under the supervision of the Executive Directors of SAP Offices in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka but with job descriptions and tasks outlined by SARI/Equity after the initial agreement with SAP International expired in May 2005.

High turn-over of staff, a common occurrence in the region, did not disrupt the ever increasing operational activities of SARI/Equity since (i) core positions remained relatively stable and (ii) newly arrived colleagues in substantive positions blended in very easily and with competence. The institutional memory was affected only to a minor extent.

The unexpected budget cuts in the beginning of 2006 which entailed personnel cuts, particularly on the part of MSI, did not unduly disrupt the ever increasing outputs and quality of the SARI/Equity Program owing to the dedication of the remaining core staff.

2. Implementing Partners

Management Systems International

In addition to providing inputs into the SARI/Equity Program at the start up of the project, MSI through a team of seven core researchers in Delhi with 19 temporary consultants in the four SARI/Equity focus countries undertook the task of compiling and sifting through information regarding good practices/replicable approaches in the areas of Victim Witness Protection, Prevention of Cross Border Trafficking, Rapid Documentation of Missing Women and Girls likely of having been trafficked, Rescue and Repatriation Across Borders and Support to Returnee Migrants. The team conducted electronic research, telephone interviews and visited potential sources of good practices; they provided a vast array of information before concluding their activities at the end of January 2006, due to the unexpected budget cuts by the donor agency. Additionally and as a consequence of the budget cuts, the three MSI staff positions were terminated by MSI at the end of March 2006, with consultancies being offered by AED to the affected individuals to preserve the continuity of the SARI/Equity program in many sectors. Well

appreciated training on Implementing Policy Change through innovative methods and reflection was provided by the president of MSI to the members of the Law Forum in July 2005.

South Asia Partnership

The initial agreement with SAP International was not renewed at the end of the first year of its existence since developments in the SARI/Equity Program made it highly desirable and important for the SARI/Equity team to work directly with the SAPs in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka while taking direct responsibility for the India component in the absence of a national SAP. The arrangements through which Executive Directors (25 per cent of their time) and one Program Officer (full time) functioned as the logistical and organizational support arms of SARI/Equity for events in each of the three countries worked out well. At the conclusion of the SARI/Equity Program the SAPs agreed that their relationship with SARI/Equity had improved their knowledge base in the areas of anti-trafficking and safe migration and had enlarged their circle of contacts in the country—both of which they were determined to use for the benefit of their current and future projects funded by other donors.

IREX

A relatively small fund had been set aside for IREX's activities. Thus, IREX consultants on Media and NGOs, respectively, facilitated a regional workshop in Colombo in December 2005 that in a unique manner brought together journalists and NGOs at the same table. Its results were promising and indicated the beginning of a strengthened and much better understood cooperation between media and civil society. Systematic follow up efforts in individual countries however were cut short due to the severe budget restrictions the SARI/Equity Program had to face in the beginning of 2006.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Requested by USAID, SARI/Equity contributed to the establishment of indicators for components directly relevant to the SARI/Equity Program.

Additionally, SARI/Equity activities were regularly monitored by the CTO at USAID Delhi and her/his advice sought and provided—on grants and RAF membership in particular.

The following reports were submitted to USAID New Delhi through AED Headquarters:

- Quarterly Reports (11)
- Annual Reports (3)
- Workplans (4, including one revision)
- PMP Reports (2) including one target revision
- End-of-Project Report

Two Reviews of the SARI/Equity Program by the USAID Management Team including the USAID Missions in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and at the second Review the USAID Regional Office in Bangkok were held in November 2004 and December 2005, respectively.

E. SARI/Equity - Successes and Challenges of a Regional Program

Successes

- Establishment of a loose but effective regional mechanism (RAFs/NCGs) with a membership founded on the expertise of individuals with a “support (power) base” backing them (heads of NGOs, academics-universities, heads of research institutes, government officials);
- Rapid identification of concerns and needs for priority action common to South Asia countries;
- Multiplier effect of actions, products and experiences in view of common programmatic areas, needs and interests;
- Products deriving from the regional process are “needed” and applicable with little modification and adjustment in all SARI/Equity countries;
- No need for “parallel” work on common problems particularly when (i) uniformity in outlook and application is beneficial to the protection and social, economic, political development of vulnerable groups throughout the region; and (ii) unity of action vis-à-vis countries outside South Asia is important;
- Grantees in individual countries benefit from a regional approach – being exposed to partners in other parts of the region and to their approaches and actions on similar issues that can serve as test cases/models;
- Networking becomes a necessary by-product of a regional perspective (“similarity of concerns”);
- Regional processes such as those created within SAARC (Anti-Trafficking Convention, Social Charter, SAFTA) can be influenced more effectively and positively if certain issues have already been examined at the regional level by an “outside” forum with the “weight of unanimity of purpose of action;” and
- The cost-benefit ratio in respect of a regional program is higher than in respect of a multiplication of individual country programs concerning the same issues/tasks.

Challenges

- A regional program requires time for listening to “voices” from within several countries; for conceiving the appropriate mechanism that is suitable and committed to action; and for obtaining maximum impact in each country. (A five-year program at the minimum was suggested by many partners.);

- A continuous exhortation, follow up, alertness to complicating circumstances and events in individual countries under a regional program;
- A mechanism with a “regional overview” suitable to serve as prompter, adviser, monitor and facilitator of information as well as institutional memory;
- In-country programs under a regional program should, ideally, be funded by country-specific USAID Missions who would be closely roped into the implementation/application of regionally conceived products, and support NGOs participating in the regional process and undertaking operational research in-country or testing models of successful approaches or good practices from other countries. This would also contribute to a sustainability of action and increased ownership “sentiment” of donor agencies for regional programs.