

USAID/Nepal's
Female Literacy
Program
Technical Assistance

Trip Report
March 12-April 1, 1997

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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
TRIP REPORT	1
SCOPE OF WORK	1
SUMMARY STATEMENT	1
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES	2
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	3
LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION	3
FEMALE LITERACY IN NEPAL: INPUT TO A WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM RFA	5
BACKGROUND	5
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	8
Long-term Objective	8
Short-term Objective of the Literacy Interventions	8
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	9
Literacy	9
PROGRAM GUIDELINES	9
Specific Circumstances Surrounding the Implementation of Literacy	9
Requirements	10
Indicators of Achieving Results in Specified Intervention Areas	12
Review (Evaluation) Criteria	13
LITERATURE REVIEWED	17
SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	19
Attachment A: Activity Scope of Work	21
Attachment B: Mission Comments about Technical Assistance Performance	

TRIP REPORT

SCOPE OF WORK

To develop the terms of reference for the basic literacy component of Nepal's Women's Empowerment Strategic Objective, SO3, for 1997-2000. See attached scope of work, page 21.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

This technical assistance was in response to a request from USAID/Nepal to write a scope of work for the new package of integrated literacy for the next funding period: 1997-2000. To achieve the desired integration and synergy, the mission brought in three design teams to work on the three Intermediate Results (IRs) of SO3: IR1, basic literacy; IR2, legal literacy and advocacy; and IR3, economic participation. The IR1 basic literacy team consisted of two persons, Jim Hoxeng (G/HCD/BELS) and the author, Nagat El-Sanabary. A five-person economic participation team, which included Heather Clark from the Economic Growth Center of the Global Bureau and Ginny Lambert of G/WID, was to design the activities to be provided under IR3 and to develop a scope of work to be used in an RFP/RFA for next package of interventions under IR3. Another team of two members, Soc Reyes and Michael Jill, from The Asia Foundation (TAF) were developing a proposal for a cooperative agreement for the delivery of interventions under IR2, legal literacy and advocacy. The mission brought in the three teams at the same time to ensure a close working relationship in the development of the two scopes of work and the proposal of The Asia Foundation. This strategy proved to be effective in achieving the desired coordination and integration. Not only did the three teams coordinate their activities, but the basic literacy and economic participation teams also worked together to develop one RFA for an integrated Women's Empowerment Program. Several drafts of the RFA were presented orally and in writing to the SO3 team leaders to secure their concurrence on the approach the teams were taking. The SO3 staff was pleased to see how team thinking evolved to produce a new, integrated approach toward increasing women's empowerment. When the expatriate team members departed, the draft RFA was finalized during the first week of April by two economic participation team members, Betty Wilkinson and Russel Dionne, who reside in Nepal.

This was an unusual consultancy because two teams, which originally were to produce two separate scopes of work, worked together to produce one integrated RFA for Women's Empowerment, which included basic literacy and economic participation. This was done in a collaborative effort with constant guidance and support from mission staff, particularly SO3 team leader Jane Nandy and IR1 leader Nancy Langworthy, and with full collaboration from the SO3 partners. In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, several ad hoc meetings were called either with USAID staff or with partners to clarify issues, provide additional data, and consult on possible alternative approaches and strategies. Team members sorted out issues, resolved differences, and agreed on an exciting new program as the most efficient and synergistic approach to achieve the mission's strategic objective of increasing women's empowerment. Although The Asia Foundation

team members were less involved in the total group effort, they came in at various occasions to discuss how to ensure linkage and synergy among all three interventions of SO3.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Other expatriate team members and I arrived in Kathmandu during the weekend of March 14-16. I found a package of reading material at the hotel, which I reviewed during the weekend. On the first day at the mission, Monday, March 17, we had five meetings of all three team members with mission staff, mission director, and USAID partners working on SO3 activities (see Schedule of Activities, page 19). Jane Nandy, SO3 team leader, provided an overview of the history of SO3 and the parameters for developing the new SO3 package of interventions. She emphasized the importance of linkage and synergy among the three IRs of SO3 as well as with SO1 (sustainable increase in sales of high-value agricultural and forestry products) and SO2 (reduced fertility and improved maternal and child health) interventions. She urged team members to work together to ensure the development of a common vision and an integrated approach. After the joint meetings on Monday, April 17, each team reviewed the relevant documents, met with the appropriate partners to learn more about ongoing activities, and began thinking about activities in their sector.

During the following 10 days, we met with all the SO3 partners, and with the staff of SO1 and SO2 to learn about their programs and to discuss ongoing linkages and synergy with SO3 interventions. We met also with members of donor groups and a representative of the Ministry of Education. Ginny Lambert and I, accompanied by Nancy Langworthy, IR3 team leader, and Marcia Odell, deputy director of PACT, visited three literacy classes in Bhaktapur, approximately 45 minutes by car from Kathmandu. These meetings were very useful in providing information on the wide range of activities supported by USAID/Nepal and implemented by its partners. The literacy classes we visited were of variable quality, but we noted much enthusiasm among participants in the literacy classes. Everybody was supportive of the mission's women's empowerment approach.

We did much of the actual planning work as a group activity in the mission, but we also wrote different portions of the scope of work on our own for integration into the RFA. As the teams worked together, it became obvious that integration required close collaboration and coordination among team members. By Thursday, April 20, the economic participation and literacy teams started working together. Things changed daily as the group thinking evolved. A key decision was made in consultation with the contract officer for the mission, Michael Snyder. Literacy and economic participation would be combined into one activity, with one RFA to be implemented by a bidder or a consortium. Consequently, we began developing the RFA on Friday, March 21. We spent the whole day in a working meeting to outline the contents of the RFA and determine the responsibility of various team members.

We continued individual and group work, to develop targets and budgets, gather the supporting data from the partners, and draft the various sections of the RFA. By Wednesday, March 25, we were ready to give a debriefing to the mission director and to program and contract staff. The timing was to precede the departure, on the same night, of the economic participation team leader,

Heather Clark. Ginny Lambert presented the overall conceptual framework for the Women's Empowerment Program, Heather Clark presented the economic participation component and the overall targets, and I discussed the literacy component. The debriefing went well. We addressed most of the concerns raised by the program staff members who were mainly concerned about the anticipated reduction of the number of women receiving basic literacy under the new program. We affirmed that this was the most efficient and synergetic way of achieving the mission's objective of providing all three interventions to at least 100,000 women by the end of the three-year grant period.

This is a unique women's empowerment activity designed to achieve the mission's strategic objective of increasing women's empowerment. Empowerment of women as defined by the mission refers to women recognizing and challenging the constraints on their lives, and taking individual and collective action to change the conditions in their families and communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This technical assistance was highly successful in accomplishing its stated objectives, and even going beyond them, by producing a draft RFA for an integrated Women's Empowerment Program. The SO3 team leader and her team members were pleased with the results. We produced an integrated program that contributes to achieving the strategic objective and intermediary results of SO3. As the literacy team leader, I performed all the tasks specified in the scope of work, participated in all group meetings, attended all meetings with mission staff and partners, wrote most of the literacy portions of the integrated RFA, and participated in the oral debriefing to the mission director. My work continued after returning to Washington. I received the draft RFA in Washington on Monday, April 7, and reviewed it and provided my recommended revisions via E-mail to the Betty Wilkinson, who continued work on the RFA after we departed Kathmandu. The satisfaction of the mission with this technical assistance was expressed in the positive feedback from the SO3 team before my departure from Nepal and after my return to the United States.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

The main lesson learned from this technical assistance is that we must be flexible and responsive to the needs of the missions, even if this means, occasionally, a possible change in the nature of work after we are in the field. Although I tried to follow the scope of work provided by the mission and approved by G/WID, I had to go along with the group will, which was acceptable to the mission, to work on a combined group effort designed to achieve the results desired by the mission. USAID Nepal's SO3 team knew what they wanted to accomplish, and provided us with clear parameters to guide our work. All team members worked closely together and with mission staff to develop a package of interventions that would produce the best results at both the intermediate and the strategic levels. I communicated the change through E-mail to the WIDTECH project director and COTR in Washington to ensure they were fully aware of the changes in the scope of work as my work progressed in the field. The presence of Virginia Lambert of the WID Office

provided added support. E-Mail communication with the WIDTECH project in Washington was very useful in ensuring constant communication and consultation.

The attached technical report is a compilation of material I provided to the team members who were integrating the contributions of various team members to the RFA. Copies of the material I presented to them were shared with the SO3 team leader and IR1 manager. The mission did not want a separate literacy scope for the RFA; they wanted the integrated Women's Empowerment Program package, to which I provided contributions.

FEMALE LITERACY IN NEPAL: INPUT TO A WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM RFA

**Draft Prepared by
Nagat El-Sanabary, Human Capacity Development Specialist
The WIDTECH Project
During a TA to USAID/Nepal
March 12-April 1, 1997**

This report is a compilation of the material contributed to the draft RFA for an integrated Women's Empowerment Program. The material was integrated in the appropriate sections of the draft RFA.

BACKGROUND

The literacy rate in Nepal is among the lowest in the world, with women's rates persistently and significantly lower than men's. Data from the 1991 Nepali census showed that only 25 percent of all females were literate; a 22 percent literacy rate for women aged 15-44; and the rate for all women over 15 was only 17 percent.

To solve the illiteracy problem, the Government of Nepal has been expanding formal and nonformal educational opportunities for girls and women. While pursuing an expanding basic education program, the government runs a large-scale literacy program for women and men. Government of Nepal support for female literacy is provided through its Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare and through the Women's Development Division of the Ministry of Local Development. The Small Farmer Development Program of the Agriculture Development Bank also provides basic literacy classes to women and men. The majority of literacy students have been women. In 1996, the Ministry of Education reaffirmed its commitment to female education and literacy at its National Workshop on Girls' Education (September 18-20, 1996). The government declared a massive literacy campaign to start in 1997 in 45 districts of the kingdom, with special attention to be given to girls and women in remote areas. Conference participants stressed the need to mobilize the resources and cooperation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international nongovernment organizations (INGOs), and national institutions to promote and support female literacy. The government's ambitious goal is to achieve 67 percent literacy by the year 2000 through basic and nonformal education.

In addition to literacy programs provided by the national government, several INGOs provide literacy education supported by international donors. USAID has played a major role in supporting national literacy in Nepal, especially for women. Literacy programs provided by the government and INGOs include programs operated by the Ministry of Education; Basic Primary Education Program (PBEP); Production Credit for Rural Women Program (PCRW); and Small Farmer Development

Program (SFDP). Among the international NGOs providing literacy in Nepal are World Education International (WEI), Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT), Save the Children/US, and CARE. World Education provides support to the Ministry of Education in developing and operating its national literacy program. Over 90 percent of the literacy courses use the national literacy text called *Naya Goreto* (The New Trail). Both Save the Children and CARE provide integrated literacy as part of their community development programs.

The literacy curriculum uses the Paulo Freire methodology and approach, which use key words and phrases. Supplementary materials including charts, games, and flash cards. Teaching instruction is interactive, allowing students to discuss concepts and role-play to enforce learning of concepts. The literacy curriculum and teaching methods emphasize the development of critical thinking and encourage learner participation in dialogue and discussion of issues relating to empowerment.

The long-term goal of the basic literacy program in Nepal aims at providing all women with basic literacy and numeracy skills that can be applied in practical life situations. In addition to basic literacy, post-literacy education is provided relating to key development areas. For instance, the Health Education and Adult Literacy (HEAL) Project provides education in health and population issues. The HEAL course was developed by World Education and is provided by the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA). The project has been highly successful.

USAID/Nepal has long worked in education and literacy. SO3's literacy is funded through the Basic Education Support: Female Literacy Activity (BES) and will continue to be so until SO3 undertakes a strategic objective agreement with the Government of Nepal (planned for this summer). Literacy through BES was originally free of programmatic ties to other objectives or goals, but was developed as a direct, national-level service delivery activity for all the Mission's objectives. BES predates the current Congressional Presentation and its establishment of the increased women's empowerment strategic objective by about a year and, therefore, presents literacy as a free-standing mission activity rather than an integral part of increased women's empowerment. In FY 95/96, following the mission's approved Congressional Presentation strategy, significant changes were made in the literacy program, shifting from its former programmatic freedom to an integral component of the SO3 program.

USAID has funded a three-year, \$5.7 million program to bring literacy to 350,000 women, implemented through PACT and World Education, Inc. (WEI). Both support and train local non-governmental NGOs to offer literacy classes. PACT provides literacy classes through the Women Reading for Development (WORD) Project, and WEI builds the institutional capacity of the Nepali government in the education sector.

The number of classes and number of women enrolled, as well as those who completed the course and passed the literacy exam, have increased progressively over the past three years. The impressive achievements of the USAID-funded female literacy program is indicated by the numbers of women who completed the literacy course and passed the literacy exams. It is estimated that USAID provided basic literacy to hundreds of women during the past three years (including projections for 1996/97). These include 123,000 newly literate women in 1994/95, 100,000 women who became literate in 1995/96, and an estimated 140,000 projected for 1996/97. Yet research has

shown that literacy is not enough and that newly literate women want to receive additional information and knowledge and to gain additional skills, especially in the area of economic participation. USAID/Nepal took significant steps to strengthen the linkages and achieve synergy among literacy (IR1), legal literacy and advocacy (IR2), and economic participation (IR3). Literacy has always been an important entry point to women's empowerment.

During 1996, USAID/Nepal worked with its partners to establish linkages and achieve synergy among SO3-funded interventions as well as with SO1 (forestry and agriculture) and SO2 (population, health, and nutrition). These steps paved the way toward the kind of integrated package of intervention leading to women's empowerment and achievement of SO3 objectives.

In the last several months, the SO3 partners worked hard to establish smooth hand-off mechanisms. Extensive discussions between IR1 literacy partners and the IR2 rights and advocacy partner have identified a number of possible mechanisms, some of which have been immediately implemented. Similar discussions have occurred between IR1 literacy partners and IR3 economic participation partners, but progress has not been as swift. The SO3 partners have been reaching out to participants from the other SOs. For example, literacy and microenterprise development support has been offered to women participants of SO1's community forestry and irrigation user groups (CFUGs).

Similarly, USAID/Nepal has begun forging linkages between the SOs. World Education's HEAL project provides health and family planning information, the focus of SO2, through a post-literacy course, an SO3 activity. SO3 has also begun providing literacy and microenterprise development support to women participants of SO1's community forestry and irrigation user groups (CFUGs). Two other post-literacy courses provide basic business skills to literate women. Two models are currently in use, the Women's Economic Empowerment and Literacy (WEEL) course by World Education and PACT's self-based business class. Save the Children and CARE provide income-generating skills as part of their basic literacy courses.

Most literacy classes have been provided through local NGOs that apply for and receive support and training from INGOs to offer classes to women in their communities. It is expected that under this new integrated program Nepali NGOs will continue to play a key role in providing literacy and post-literacy classes. The number of NGOs in Nepal is large, but not all of them are able to provide literacy classes and will need extensive support to enable them to assume this new function. It will be the responsibility of the grantee for this SO3 integrated Women's Empowerment Program to identify and provide the necessary support to local NGOs to provide basic and post-literacy as integrated components of the new women's empowerment package of interventions.

Support by USAID of female literacy has been based upon research findings on the impact of female literacy on women's lives. The research indicates that these programs have had generally positive impact including positive changes in attitudes toward family planning, health, and ecology, and that women gained more self-confidence, were more able to express themselves in public situations, and had positive attitudes toward sending their daughters to school. A study by Pramund Parajuli and Elizabeth Enslin found numerous aspects of empowerment of women generated through participation in literacy classes. They argued that literacy courses, if grounded in the realities of

Nepalese society and using interactive methodologies, could be a real force for initiating empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Other research reviewed by Robinson-Pant showed that literacy classes, when integrated with other skills relevant to women's lives, helped create positive attitudes among women's in various areas, made it easier to motivate them for various community development activities, and demonstrated the value of group work for rural women.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Long-term Objective

The long-term objective of this program is the empowerment of a minimum of 100,000 women by providing them with a package of integrated interventions: basic literacy, economic participation, and legal literacy and advocacy. Synergy and linkages are essential to the success of all SO3 IR interventions. These three IR-level interventions are expected to contribute to the mission's SO3 objective of substantially increasing the number of women who take collective action as agents of change to improve their lives, their family, the community, and the wider society.

Short-term Objective of the Literacy Interventions

The objective of the literacy interventions of USAID/Nepal in the next three years is to build upon and strengthen the accomplishments of the program over the past three years. In general, the literacy component of USAID SO3 interventions is to contribute to the overall objective of the mission of providing the three IR interventions to at least 100,000 women by the end of the project period. Specifically, the objectives of the literacy program will be to:

- (1) Provide basic literacy to the largest possible number of women who are active members of women economic groups supported by USAID/Nepal's economic participation component IR3;
- (2) Provide business-related post-literacy in a cost-effective manner to women who completed the basic literacy course and passed the literacy test; and
- (3) Enhance the empowerment aspect of the basic literacy classes through the introduction of supplementary empowerment messages in the areas of legal rights, economic participation, and reproductive rights. Such supplementary empowerment materials will prepare women who complete the basic literacy course for participation in the economic groups or the legal literacy and advocacy classes.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Literacy

Institutional Capabilities of Implementing Organization(s)

The bidding organization or consortia for assistance under this Women's Empowerment Program should demonstrate the following capabilities:

1. Demonstrated successful experience in implementing quality female literacy programs in Nepal
2. Demonstrated skills in the development and implementation of basic literacy and post-literacy materials
3. Familiarity with the cultural context of Nepal
4. Ability to work effectively with Nepali grassroots NGOs
5. Creativity, flexibility, and ability to introduce creative female literacy materials, methodologies and strategies
6. Ability to work collaboratively with other partners involved in the delivery of female literacy, post literacy, economic participation, or other SO3 as well as SO1 and SO2 interventions
7. Commitment to USAID/Nepal's approach to the empowerment of women through integration, linkage, and synergy among various SO3 and other USAID interventions targeting women for empowerment purposes
8. Capacity in gender empowerment / grassroots organizational development
9. Ability to leverage other resources to support and strengthen women's empowerment
10. Ability to achieve cost effectiveness and efficiency of scale.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Specific Circumstances Surrounding the Implementation of Literacy

- So far, literacy has been provided on a national scale. Funding limitations do not allow for this national focus. Therefore, USAID/Nepal will concentrate its SO3 interventions in specific geographic regions where other interventions are being provided so that women can participate sequentially in all three interventions during the project period. Preference will be given to those areas where a substantial number of women are participating in economic groups. The project will concentrate all three interventions of SO3 in the Terai and Rapti regions where SO3 interventions as well as other SO1 and SO2 interventions have been or are currently provided.
- Because both literacy and legal literacy and advocacy are mobile, whereas economic participation groups are not, literacy and post-literacy (business and legal) interventions will focus on women who are members of Grameen-type and other economic groups. Since existing post-literacy business courses are still in the experimental stage, they may need further

testing and revision. Hence, post-business literacy will not be provided in the first year of the project. This year will be used to develop, revise, and decide on a business literacy course rooted in the local culture and suited to the needs of Nepali women who are participants in economic groups (Grameen-type and other groups).

- Many of the areas where economic groups are located may not have NGOs that can provide basic and/or post-business literacy. The grantee should be able to undertake the special effort required to train existing NGOs to provide literacy classes or to bring in its own staff to work with local groups for the provision of literacy.
- Since literacy in itself is not sufficient for achieving empowerment, literacy will no longer be provided as a stand-alone activity. It will be part and parcel of the empowerment package and will be linked horizontally and vertically with other SO3 interventions, as well as with SO1 and SO2 interventions.
- The focus of this activity is on empowerment rather than literacy per se. Consequently, the number of women receiving basic literacy under this activity will be smaller than in the past, as focus shifts from basic literacy to post-literacy, including business literacy and legal literacy and advocacy. This shift is supported by research indicating that women gain better knowledge and skills, the equivalent of two additional years of schooling, from a three month post-literacy course (Christine Smith and others, November 1996).

Requirements

Targets and Budget

Target numbers of participants and a tentative budget are included in Table 1, which was developed by the team. The figures in this table are based on available data on women members of various types of economic groups in the targeted geographic areas, the number of women who are currently enrolled in literacy classes, and women who passed literacy tests in these areas during the past two years. Budget constraints are also a major factor. The enrollment and budgetary figures are based on the cost per student in literacy classes provided by the current contractors (approximately \$12.50 per student per class, excluding overhead expenses). (See Table 1, p. 15.)

Under the new Women's Empowerment Program, literacy becomes an integral part of an integrated package of interventions. It is linked horizontally with the two other SO3 interventions (economic participation and legal literacy and advocacy) and vertically with interventions under SO1 and SO2. Under this integrated approach, literacy is much more than the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy. The approach aims at providing women with a set of social and economic skills that help them not only cope with their environment, but also empower them also to change it, and gives them the means for doing so. It should lead to greater confidence in women participants and their ability to change their situation. It should heighten women's aspirations and provide them possibilities for improved life conditions. Thus, literacy will become a source of personal and collective empowerment.

Adult literacy activities are, therefore, linked with training in economic participation and legal literacy in an integrated effort to increase the sense of empowerment among women receiving training in the three areas of SO3 interventions. As the starting point is in economic groups, the pre-requisite for literacy services is that the woman be a member of an economic group operating in the target area. The women will have numerous opportunities to apply their skills in their daily activities, especially financial and business interactions. They will also have achieved an enhanced knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as economic and social agents in their communities.

The grantee for this program must ensure that women's economic participation is the engine for all three SO3 interventions. Women's economic participation is also the anchor for the two other interventions. The grantee should provide a plan to show how it envisions connecting literacy, economic participation, and legal literacy and advocacy vertically and horizontally to ensure the delivery of an integrated package. Although the grantee has the primary responsibility for economic participation and literacy interventions, work in these two areas must be closely coordinated with The Asia Foundation's legal literacy and advocacy work.

USAID/Nepal realizes that not all women will be interested in participating in all three interventions. We believe that most women, however, will be interested in at least two interventions. As programmatically and financially feasible, there will be more women participating in any one intervention than those who will continue on to participate in other interventions. For instance, in any one target area, some women who are not members of economic groups may enroll in literacy classes. But these women will not count toward the target of 100,000 women receiving all three interventions by the end of the project, unless they join some existing economic groups such as Grameen-type or newly developed savings and loan groups.

Bidders should provide a strategy of how they will encourage and promote women's involvement in all three interventions sequentially, and what kind of sequencing they anticipate to occur among various groupings. Much of this sequencing will depend on the number of literate women who are members of economic groups.

Bidders are expected to provide information on the type of gender empowerment messages they plan to use to supplement the basic literacy text, and how these will be incorporated in the existing curriculum.

Improved training of the literacy facilitator will be integral to the implementation of the empowerment basic literacy curriculum. More training needs to be provided to the trainers of trainers and to the facilitator, in interactive teaching techniques. The grantee is expected to provide a plan for the development and implementation of a training of trainers and a facilitator training program to enhance the skills and effectiveness of literacy facilitator. Any revisions of the training manuals should be spelled out in the proposal.

The grantee must also provide a plan of how it will handle the logistics of dealing with the government with regard to districting limitations and /or other linking possibilities with government-provided literacy classes.

Indicators of Achieving Results in Specified Intervention Areas (IR Indicators)

Baseline Indicators to Be Provided by the Grantee:

- The number of women members in economic groups who passed the literacy test within the last two years

Output Indicators:

- The number of women members of existing economic groups (Grameen-type or saving and loan groups) who pass the basic literacy test
- The number of these women who pass the basic literacy test and go on to take the legal literacy and advocacy class
- The number of women who take the post-literacy business class and pass the basic business test
- The cumulative number of women who have taken all three interventions: basic literacy and numeracy, membership in economic groups, and legal literacy and advocacy.

To ensure linkage with SO1 (forestry and agriculture) and SO2 (family planning, health and nutrition), the grantee is also to keep track of the number of women taking post-literacy classes provided under each of these SOs such as HEAL and WEEL.

Impact Indicators:

- The percentage of women who received the three interventions who retain the skills provided under these interventions. The grantee will develop an evaluation strategy to assess the impact
- Women's ability to use their acquired literacy and math skill and the effect these skills have made in their lives

Empowerment Indicators:

The grantee is encouraged to use the empowerment indicators developed in research by Shirley Burchfield such as:

- ☐ The number and percentage of women achieving a sense of economic security
- ☐ The ability to earn a living
- ☐ The number of women who report having control over their own income

- The number of women who report having achieved greater control over their family's economic resources
- The number of women who report having achieved greater control over their own reproductive health
- The number of women who participate in nonfamily groups and organizations and engage in group activities on a regular basis
- The number of women who report having achieved greater control over the decision to send their daughters to school.

Review (Evaluation) Criteria

The following are ideas developed in a working group meeting of all team members:

Institutional Capabilities: as outlined above.

- Technical expertise of the bidder or (consortium) both in and outside Nepal in the effective delivery of integrated literacy

Key Personnel:

- Degree to which the chief of party possesses superior managerial and technical skills experience in Nepal
- Solid management capability of projects requiring innovative approaches
- Quality of the technical proposal
- Level to which the other key personnel as designated by the applicant show superior skills in women's empowerment and literacy/post literacy program management.

Empowerment Inter-Connectedness:

- Demonstration of how each component contributes to the success of others, and measures its own success by the success of the others, as well as the success of the overall process of the three interventions
- Clarity of presentation of process, techniques, methods, and mechanisms; demonstration of exactly how the results will be produced for each of the technical areas, and how they will synergize into the empowerment of women

- Extent to which empowerment data collection and evaluation is managed by the individual women clients, in particular, so they self-monitor their own empowerment process.

TABLE 1
TARGETS AND BUDGETS
(developed by the team)

IR 1: Women in existing economic groupings receive basic literacy					
Organizations	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	3-Year Cost
Grameens	35,000	15,000	20,000	70,000	
PCRW	10,000	5,000		15,000	
Other	2,000	6,000	2,000	10,000	
Sub-Total	47,000	26,000	22,000	95,000	\$1,500.000
IR 1: Women in SO2 groupings gain access to basic literacy and post-literacy training					
HEAL	2,000	3,000	5,000	10,000	SO2 budget
TOTAL	49,000	29,000	27,000	105,000	\$1,500,000

IR 3: Women in existing economic groupings receive business fundamentals training					
Organizations	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	3-Year Cost
Grameens		20,000	15,000	35,000	
PCRW		12,000	10,000	22,000	
Other		5,000	5,000	10,000	
SCF		5,000	5,000	10,000	
Sub-Total		42,000	35,000	77,000	\$1,300,000
IR 3: Women borrowers and savers of financially viable credit and savings associations and microfinance institutions					
Nirdhan	10,000	5,000	6,300	21,300	\$900,000
SCF	2,000	3,500	3,500	9,000	
SO1 CSAs	500	1,000	1,500	3,000	\$650,000
CECI	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000	\$300,000
Sub-Total	13,500	10,500	12,300	36,300	\$1,850,000
IR 3: Women in SO3 IR 2 advocacy groups gain access to business fundamentals training materials					
TAF				40,000	IR 2 budget
Sub-Total					

TOTAL	8,500	52,500	47,300	108,300	\$3,150,000
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Additional items are included in the draft RFA.

IR 1 Indicators

Number of adult women passing literacy tests and number of those who are members of existing economic groupings

Year 1	49,000	
Year 2	29,000	
Year 3	27,000	
Total		105,000

IR 3 Indicators

Number of women in economic groupings who have learned to conduct the financial management of their groups.

Year 1	1,500	
Year 2	52,500	
Year 3	47,300	
Total		101,300

Number active members of savings and credit groups/microfinance organizations

Year 1	13,500	
Year 2	10,500	
Year 3	12,300	
Total		36,300

Credit and savings groups/organizations reaching higher levels of financial self-sufficiency. Save, Nirdhan and SO1 savings and credit associations

Year 1	1	
Year 2	12	
Year 3	102	
Total		102

LITERATURE REVIEWED

Mission Documents/Reports

USAID/Nepal Country Program Strategic Plan FY 1995-2003 and Action Plan FY 1995-97

The 1997 Nepal R4 Report

The USAID/Nepal Briefing Book

TDY report by Michael Paolisso and Gretchen Bloom on USAID/Nepal's *Women-Centered Synergy*

“Basic Education Support (BES) Project Paper”

Reports from the November SO3 Team Best Practices Workshop and the December SO3 Partners’ Workshop

USAID/Nepal. *SO3 Empowerment of Women*

Nancy Langworthy. “Women’s Literacy in Nepal,” Presentation to the Girls’ Education Workshop in Washington, September 1996

Research Reports

Burchfield, Shirley. *An Analysis of the Impact of Literacy on Women’s Empowerment in Nepal*. For USAID’s ABEL2 Project. February 1997.

Kauffman, Anne. *Survey of Literacy and Civic Education Materials*, Prepared for The Asia Foundation. August 19, 1995.

Status of Women in Nepal, 1981 and 1995 update

Pramila Rajbhandari. *National Workshop on Girls’ Education*. Edited by Durga Regmee. September 18-20, 1996.

Smith, Christine A. John P. Comings, and Chij K. Thresta. *A Research Study on the Effectiveness and Achievement in the Nepal National Literacy Program*. November 1996 (Draft). Prepared for World Education. Kathmandu, Nepal.

Wedeen, Laura. *The Status of Women in Nepal: A Review of the Empowerment Literature*. Prepared for USAID/Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal, July 1996.

Robinson-Pant, Anna. Overseas Development Administration (ODA). *Community Literacy Project. A Review of the Literature on Post Literacy Education in Nepal*. Kathmandu, January 1995.

International Nongovernmental Organization Reports

CARE, Nepal. *Evaluation of CARE Nepal's Literacy Program*. Kathmandu, September, 1996

PACT. *Women Reading for Development, The Word Project*. Progress Report No. 8, July 1- Sept. 30, 1996

Save the Children, US (SC/US). *10 Year Retrospective on Literacy and Empowerment*. January 1997

World Education, *Female Literacy for Nepal*, Project Progress Report # 8, July 1, 1996 - September 30, 1996.

World Education. *Health Education and Adult Literacy (HEAL)* Project Progress Report No. 5, Oct.- Dec., 1996.

CARE. *Evaluation of CARE Nepal's Literacy Program*.

9:00 AM - 5:00 P.M. Joint Literacy and Economic Participation Design Team Planning Meeting, Determining Scope and Content of the RFA for Women's Empowerment, USAID TDY Office

Saturday, 3/22/97

9:00 AM-12:30 PM Team Work to Develop Targets and Budget, USAID, TDY Room

Sunday, 3/23/97

9:00 - 11:00 A.M. Meeting with The Asia Foundation Legal Rights and Literacy Team, The Shangrila Hotel

Monday, 3/24/97

9:00 - 10:00 A.M. Meeting with Literacy Researcher, Nancy Burchfield and GWE Country Representative. USAID Conference Room

Tuesday, 3/25/97 Writing First Draft of the Literacy Scope of Work in Room at the Hotel

3:30 PM-4:30 PM Meeting to Plan for the Debriefing of Mission Director Scheduled for Wednesday, 4/27/97 (Prior to the Departure of Economic Participation Team Leader, Heather Clark, USAID Conference Room.

Wednesday, 3/26/97

9:00 AM -12:00 PM Writing
 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. Previewing and Preparing for Debriefing
 3:30 - 4:30 PM Debriefing of Mission Director and Program Staff (Presentations by Virginia Lambert (G/WID), Heather Clark (G/Econ Center), and Nagat El-Sanabary (WIDTECH)

Thursday, 3/27/97 Writing Final Draft

Friday, 3/28/97 Finalizing Draft, Integrating Literacy with the Economic Participation Component: Content of the RFA (TDY Office, USAID)

Saturday and Sunday

3/29-3/30 Final Wrap-up and Preparation for Departure.

Monday, 3/31/97

9:00 - 10:30 Brief Meeting with SO3 Staff at USAID

11:00 Leave Hotel for the Airport, Depart Nepal

ATTACHMENT A
ACTIVITY SCOPE OF WORK

SCOPE OF WORK
SO3 Women's Literacy Program
1997-2000

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this TDY is to develop the terms of reference for assistance arrangements for the next three years under SO3's women's literacy program.

II. BACKGROUND

In 1995, USAID/Nepal developed a strategy for providing development assistance to Nepal. The new strategy, approved in June 1995, will reduce rural poverty in Nepal. This will be accomplished by achieving the following three strategic objectives:

- 1) a sustainable increase in production and sales of forest and high-value agricultural products (SO1);
- 2) reduced fertility and improved maternal and child health (SO2); and
- 3) empowerment of women (SO3).

The Mission's rural-based economic growth strategy articulates clear and measurable objectives which have national impact, and presents a vision for sustainable development in areas of critical importance for Nepal. The strategy supports larger U.S. interests in Nepal: strengthening and consolidating democracy, encouraging economic growth and addressing global issues of population and the environment.

Since the strategy is based on the premise that the three SOs are critical elements of broad-based economic growth, the Mission is committed to ensuring that its customers, as far as is practical, benefit from interventions implemented by each of the SO teams. Since the 1996 R4 review, the Mission has undertaken steps to strengthen synergy both within SOs and between SOs to broaden program impact, and to ensure that a focus on women's empowerment is maintained and strengthened throughout the strategy. Whereas women's empowerment is central to SO3, the Mission recognizes that empowering women is also a key element of achieving SO1 and SO2.

SO3: Increased Women's Empowerment

USAID/Nepal defines empowerment of women as the process by which women define, challenge and overcome barriers in their lives and ultimately change their life circumstances. USAID/Nepal is focusing on three critical components of women's empowerment.

- 1) increased women's literacy;
- 2) an improved legal environment for women; and
- 3) strengthened women's economic participation.

Prior to June 1995, when SO3 was created, USAID/Nepal's support for women's empowerment comprised a variety of discrete projects in these three areas of intervention. The underlying premise behind creating SO3 was that these interventions--literacy, legal rights and economic participation--were inextricably linked to the empowerment of Nepali women. Numerous studies support this premise. The programmatic linkages between SO3 interventions and women's empowerment have subsequently been defined and strengthened.

In these three areas of intervention, activities are currently being implemented by eight partners: The Asia Foundation, Save the Children/U.S., Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI), Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector (IRIS), Pact, World Education, Institute for Integrated Development Systems (IIDS) and the National Democratic Institute.

The indicators to measure the achievement of SO3 are:

1. Indicator: collective actions for social change initiated by women in target areas
2. Indicator: women's influence over household decision-making in target areas
 - a) percent of women who increase their influence over allocation of their own income and/or income-producing assets
 - b) percent of women who increase their influence over allocation of household income and/or income-producing assets
 - c) percent of women who increase their influence over the decision to keep their daughters in school

Current SO3 projects are (all but CECI end this year):

- 1) World Education: District Female Literacy Expansion Project
- 2) IRIS (Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector): Institutional Strengthening, Synergy, and Environment Enablement for Woman-Owned Micro-enterprises
- 3) Pact: Women Reading for Development: The WORD Project
- 4) Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI): Women's Economic Empowerment through Access to Savings and Credit Services, Generation of Income and Enterprise Development
- 5) The Asia Foundation (TAF): Women's Legal Rights and Representation
- 6) Save the Children/US: Women's Basic Empowerment Basic Education for the Least Educated (BELE)
- 7) IIDS: Marginal Women's Self-Reliance Project
- 8) National Democratic Institute: Increased Women Candidates for 1997 Elections

We are at a vital crossroads in our empowerment program. As part of a natural project life cycle, the institutional arrangements with all our partners (with the exception of CECI) end in 1997. At our November 1996 retreat, the SO3 team looked back at where we have come in our empowerment program and did some hard thinking about where we would like to go for our next generation of assistance.

We clearly want to continue further integrating our program: the notion of three legs supporting one empowerment stool is our controlling metaphor. **Our assumption is that for empowerment, women need all three components. We should be trying to move our**

program so that more and more women receive all three. This is also what we want to achieve in the next generation of our empowerment assistance. Our current target is that 100,000 women should receive all three interventions by the year 2000.

Synergy and Linkages

Since the creation of SO3, USAID/Nepal has forged strong linkages between the eight partners. In some cases, USAID/Nepal has requested the partners to work in the same geographic areas so that targeted women benefit from each of the three interventions. The result is that in a growing number of cases, women who have completed basic literacy classes are also provided the opportunity to participate in legal literacy fora and microenterprise development programs. This is our first priority and must be an integral component of all new SO3 assistance.

We have begun to improve integration within SO3's IRs and between the SOs by strengthening field-level "hand-off" mechanisms. The Mission has begun exploring possible mechanisms, but these are mostly *ad hoc*. The first priority is within SO3, to achieve a targeted core of 100,000 women who have received all three interventions by the year 2000. In the last several months, the SO3 partners have worked hard to establish smooth hand-off mechanisms. Extensive discussions between IR 1 literacy partners and the IR 2 rights and advocacy partner have identified a number of possible mechanisms, some of which have been immediately implemented. Similar discussions have occurred between IR 1 literacy partners and IR 3 economic partners, but progress has not been as swift. The SO 3 partners are also reaching out for participants from the other SOs. E.g., literacy and microenterprise development support has been offered to women participants of SO1's community forestry and irrigation user groups.

However, to the extent possible SO 3 needs to consider how to improve and systematically make the critical field-level connections ensure broader participation by the customers in activities implemented by the other SOs **without undercutting achievement of SO3 targets and goals.** USAID/Nepal has begun forging linkages between the SOs. World Education's Health Education and Adult Literacy (HEAL) activity provides health and family planning information, the focus of SO2, through a post-literacy course, an SO3 activity. CEDPA (a Kathmandu-based U.S. nongovernmental organization) works in health and family planning. It has the local institutions through which it works apply to Pact for basic literacy classes. Pact trains the institutions' personnel to conduct basic literacy classes, and CEDPA draws upon the graduates from these classes to undertake the HEAL classes it supports. SO3 has also begun providing literacy and microenterprise development support to women participants of SO1's community forestry and irrigation user groups.

Another aspect of synergy was raised recently. In the December SO3 partner workshop, the partners requested that reproductive health be added as a fourth element (the other three being literacy, legal rights and economic participation) to women's empowerment. They believed that reproductive health was a critical missing element to complete women's empowerment. We support this premise and in turn are looking for ways to connect SO2 reproductive health opportunities with SO3 program interventions. At the same time, we are very clear that we are not going into the reproductive health business.

An SO3 database has been constructed to identify where intermediate result-level interventions are being implemented (by district and village development committee), and by which partners. A merged SO3/SO1 database is also available, and a merged SO3/SO2 database is planned. These databases will be used to help SO teams and Mission partners identify groups to which to deliver interventions.

Increasing Women's Literacy

The literacy rate in Nepal is among the lowest in the world, with women's rates persistently and significantly lower than men's. Data from the 1991 Nepali census showed that only 25% of all females were literate; a 22% literacy rate for women aged 15-44; and the rate for all women over 15 was only 17%.

USAID/Nepal, therefore, has long worked in education and literacy. SO3's literacy is funded through the Basic Education Support: Female Literacy Activity (BES) and will continue to be so until SO3 undertakes a strategic objective agreement with the Government of Nepal (planned for this summer). Literacy through BES was originally free of programmatic ties to other objectives or goals but was developed as a direct, national-level service delivery activity for all the Mission's Nepal objectives. BES predates the current CPS and its establishment of the increased women's empowerment strategic objective by about a year, and therefore, unfortunately, presents literacy as free-standing Mission activity rather than an integral part of increased women's empowerment. In FY95-96, following our approved CPS strategy, we made a significant change in the literacy program, shifting it from its former programmatic freedom to an integral component of the SO3 program.

Increasing women's literacy is now one of three intermediate-level interventions aimed at achieving increased women's empowerment. Briefly, the SO3 thinking is this: Literacy is not enough for empowerment and by itself does not empower. Literacy is only the entry point for empowerment when women go on to participate in the other IR interventions: get information about their legal rights and how to advocate and how to put money in their pockets (and, linked to SO2 interventions, learn about their reproductive health). Just doing literacy isn't sufficient. It is truly a synergistic situation: any one intervention doesn't create empowerment. Empowerment is not a condition which can be broken down into components, one third of which make a woman one third empowered. It takes all three, together, to become empowered women. SO3 is very serious when we say the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This was entirely backed up by our 1996 customer survey findings and, just for literacy, by Shirley Burchfield's work. (All these materials will be available for the team to work with here.)

The program has been a very successful mechanism for making women literate, effecting significant increases in current estimates of the women's literacy rate. The 1991 Nepali census reported that only 22% of adult women aged 15-44 were literate. In FY94-95, 123,000 women were made literate, exceeding our R4 target and increasing the literacy rate as we estimate it to 25% in that one year alone. This year we will report preliminary figures for the FY95-96 literacy season of 100,000 women made literate, also exceeding the target and, we estimate, raising the literacy rate to 28%.

Last summer, new empowerment themes were inserted into the basic literacy curriculum along with updated messages introducing legal rights, economic opportunities, high-value agriculture, forestry, health and population. This new curriculum is being used in the current literacy cycle. The literacy partners worked with the other SO3 partners to establish greater geographical overlap of literacy classes with the other SO3 interventions and also with the SO1 and SO2 partners. The partners are gathering information about women's group participation so as to offer women classes where possible. Local NGO partners offered classes wherever possible to women from existing mothers clubs and health groups, forest and irrigation user groups, and savings/credit groups and helped the new literates form groups and link up with opportunities to learn about legal rights, economic participation, and health education. SO3 continues to reinforce growing synergy between literacy and the SO2 population program.

III. THE OBJECTIVE

The team will write a scope of work which can be immediately inserted into an RFA for the next three years of USAID assistance through women's literacy component of the women's empowerment program.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The team will write a scope of work (SOW) for the period of FY97-98 through FY99-2000 for the women's literacy intermediate result activity in the women's empowerment strategic objective. This SOW will be written so that it can be immediately inserted into an RFA. The SOW will call for horizontal linkages between literacy and legal rights/advocacy and economic participation and vertical linkages with increased women's empowerment as well as meeting performance targets which will be set during that TDY.

Specific Tasks:

A. The TDY team will familiarize themselves with the Mission's strategy and the SO3 program.

1. SO3 will provide the following documents for this purpose (1) the Country Program Strategic Plan FY 1995-2003 and Action Plan FY 1995-97; (2) the 1997 Nepal R4 Report; (3) the USAID/Nepal Briefing Book; (4) Status of Women in Nepal, 1981 and 1995 update; (5) Laura Weden's Review of the Empowerment Literature and the Status of Women in Nepal; (6) TDY report by Gretchen Bloom and Michael Paolisso on USAID/Nepal's women-centered synergy; (7) Basic Education Support (BES) Project Paper; (8) ABEL2 women's literacy research report (Shirley Burchfield's research); (9) SC/US's 10 Year Retrospective on Literacy and Empowerment; (10) reports from the November SO3 team workshop and the December SO3 partners' workshop; and (11) selected documents to be provided by each of the other IR teams.

2. SO3 intends that the TDY period be extremely collaborative and interactive between the IR TDY teams as well as with the partners. The literacy TDY team will meet with the other IR TDY teams to understand existing handoff and integration mechanisms, brainstorm and identify potential new mechanisms for improving integration first and foremost between IRs and

also between the IRs and the other Mission SOs, and identify and discuss potential bottlenecks and solutions to integrating interventions/programs at the field level. The TDY team will meet with the other IR teams separately and jointly. Some of the parameters are:

- ☐ Core areas and geographic focus;
- Management capacity of international and Nepali implementing organizations [one of the literacy partners has annually worked with hundreds of local NGOs, the legal rights partner with dozens, and the economic partners with even fewer---do we want to continue this way and, if so, how will we achieve good patterns of hand-off?], and varying organizational structures and practices [everything from different accounting systems to pay scales];
- ☐ Monitoring and supervision of integration initiatives;
- ☐ Financial resources;
- ☐ Being creative while attending to lessons learned¹; and
- ☐ Achieving handoff and integration without hampering achievement of each IR and while facilitating achievement of SO level targets

3. SO3 will set up one or more meetings between the TDY team and the literacy partners to learn more about the partners' organizations, programs, and field realities. (Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that the team will have enough time to get out of the Kathmandu Valley on this trip.) Being careful not to raise conflict of interest issues, the team may want to use this meeting to brainstorm on parameters regarding the lessons learned and best practices related to literacy implementation at both the basic and post-basic levels, hand-offs, and/or other areas as appropriate. We do expect the following themes to arise:

- ☐ Programs of different duration and methodology; and
- ☐ Working with the Government of Nepal.

B. In preparing the SOW, the TDY team will focus on the critical areas below. The team must consider the issues and concerns below, but is not required to incorporate any one of them into the SOW if the team concludes it is not in the best interests of achieving SO3 targets.

1. Basic literacy interventions are short-term and finite. The interventions can be offered anywhere in the country where women are not literate. Therefore, the TDY team will consider ways to take advantage of literacy's mobility in linking to the the other IRs, especially to the much less mobile economic participation interventions. The economic interventions will essentially determine the location of the SO3 "core" areas.

2. SO3 currently has no vehicle for communicating or reinforcing specific empowerment messages; there is no SO-level activity to help us achieve our objective. The TDY team will consider the possibility of using a post-literacy course to perform that purpose. The team will look into the possibility that the SOW call for the design of a new post-literacy course specifically for SO3 purposes as well as calling for amending an established post-literacy course to include empowerment messages, specifically pertaining to the indicators. The TDY team will consider issues of costs and required time to develop a new course as compared to amending an old one; demand issues: motivation and interest of rural women to participate in the new material under one form or the other; and other relevant issues.

The TDY team should be mindful of the two offsite workshops we've held recently, particularly attending to the parameters we identified during the November SO3 team workshop.

3. It is very clear that the future literacy program will be much smaller than in the recent past. Yet, the literacy program will still maintain the capability to produce annually somewhat more women made literate than are needed in the core areas to produce the SO3 target of 100,000 women empowered over three years. Specific funding levels will determine just how much greater the "production" might be, of course. The TDY team will consider the issue of any additional newly literate women in terms of entering non-core areas, horizontal and vertical linkages within SO3 and linkages with other SOs, whether certain "literacy core" areas should be targetted for irradiation of illiteracy and readiness for other interventions, and other appropriate issues.

4. In the December SO3 Partners Workshop, the partners identified an informal fourth leg of the empowerment stool, reproductive health. Reproductive health is a SO2 intervention. The TDY team will consider ways to increase the on-the-ground linkages and synergies between reproductive health and women's literacy, without undercutting literacy's primary linkages and synergies with the legal rights/advocacy and economic participation and without undercutting achievement of SO3 targets and goals.

IV. THE DELIVERABLES

A. Scope of Work

The TDY team will present the final scope of work to SO3 Team Leader by March 31, 1997.

B. Verbal Debriefing and Presentation of the Written Scope of Work

The TDY team will verbally present the information contained in the written scope of work to the SO3 and its invitees.

ATTACHMENT B

**MISSION COMMENTS ABOUT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
PERFORMANCE**

Subject: Nagat's TDY

Date: Tue, 1 Apr 97 0:02:02 -30000

From: "Nancy Langworthy" <nalangworthy@usaid.gov>

To: <Rekha@icrw.org>, "Muneera Salem-Murdock" <msalem-murdock@usaid.gov>

CC: "Jane Nandy" <jnandy@usaid.gov>

The two weeks were VERY productive. Thank you very much for your help in making this happen. Good teams and good interaction, good thinking, and--best of all--a good result. Nagat was a critical participant in this process. Jane's just left for a well-deserved week of relaxing and shopping in the sunny warmth of Singapore, so let me fill you in.

It was a very participatory time, with us SO3ers in almost all the discussions and often bringing in various partners. Folks from the other SOs briefed the combined team, too, and SO1 especially worked hard with them---the econ link is such a natural! The TDYers were very responsive to our directions/parameters and sensitive to our needs and constraints. They took synergy seriously. They listened hard and we all thought hard. There were lots of ideas and information-sharing and debates. Really fun, actually.

Anyway, with all that hard work we ended at a different place than we thought we were going to---a strategic place stronger and better than ever, you will be pleased to know. We now really have an integrated package, not a series of joined boxes. We have maintained our primacy of synergy (internal, between the IRs, and external, to the other SOs) and efficiency (cost and time). We did not change our SO or its indicators. This was exactly what we wanted: a TDY team which understood the purpose of the effort sufficiently and was creative and open-minded enough to think with us beyond the limits of the original SOW, to get to the desired result. We much appreciated Nagat's flexibility and hard work so this would happen.

We are now talking about a different metaphor: economic participation is the anchor for increasing women's empowerment. This "anchor" metaphor better captures the concept of the lack of mobility of econ interventions in addition to its fundamental importance. Econ is the anchor because---to mix my metaphors---we want to work where the land is richest, where the fertility is highest, where we have the best chance of success. We will be working with women whose need is great and who have already shown us that they are ready for empowerment. They have made the biggest and most difficult step, that of beginning econ participation. We will help them with that and help them with the other critical steps, increasing their empowerment.

As the anchor, we will start with women already participating in established economic groups. They will receive additional econ interventions. Very few of them are literate, so we will immediately hook them up with basic literacy. Some will go on to receive a post-literacy focused on business and economic issues as well as strong and clear empowerment messages, further helping them in their econ efforts. The group structure will be critical, as they continue their econ participation. They will receive legal rights and advocacy training incorporated into a post-literacy course and advocacy groups will be formed. Women potentially will be members now of two groups. We have links to SO1 and SO2 built in, with accessing women forest users groups

and helping women access HEAL post-literacy classes.

I'm sure that I'm shortchanging something in this quick explanation. Nagat will be able to explain this to you in more detail. There is one more thing we hope that Nagat can help with, that is a briefing on the TDY for a broad Washington audience (G/WID, ANE, PPC, etc). We've asked Gretchen Bloom to help coordinate this, but we'd really appreciate it if Nagat could participate. As this is a bit different than what we had been talking about and from what we presented in the R4 that we just sent in, we think that such a briefing will be the most efficient way to explain our "next generation" to the greatest number of people.

The entire process is speeding along and we're pleased to be coming to such closure. The Nepal-based members of the joint team are working this week to finish the write-up and put the whole package together for us, so we can almost just attach the boiler plate and put out a single integrated econ/literacy RFA out for bid very soon. (We will still use the non-competitive, solicited proposal route, with The Asia Foundation, for assistance in the legal/advocacy area.)

If you have questions, let me know and I'll explain further. But Nagat is looking forward to telling you all about this effort, and can probably answer your questions better than I.

Again, thank you for your help.



jnandy@usaid.gov on 04/10/97 12:45:48 AM

To: Nagat EISanabary/DAI
 cc: msalem-murdock@usaid.gov
 Subject: Thank You

On behalf of USAID/Nepal and most specifically, SO 3, I would like to most warmly thank you for your March TDY participation in the broader SO 3 team re-examination process which set a strategy defining our partner assistance for the next three years. Empowerment as you know is not a science. In fact, I venture to guess that the complexity of our empowerment SO at times can make quantum physics seem simple. Nevertheless, I believe your TDY work resulted in an accurate, clear and compelling picture of how to transform SO 3 to give it a real competitive advantage. I know you had to make a series of difficult choices among also not insignificant differences of team opinion about the future direction of SO 3 -- most particularly the role of economic participation to empowerment. But you helped the team explore the unknown and take new roads not taken: bravo! I also applaud your perseverance and flexibility as our literacy team leader where I think you worked team miracles to meet and strengthen the role of literacy within SO 3.

We provided the team with clear and detailed parameters which you were required to take into account in developing the SO 3 course for the next three years. These parameters constrained and tested your deepest resources of risk taking, innovation and strategy-setting skills to the utmost. They were also a reality check on where SO 3 needed to go, linked as they are to the vicissitudes of SO 3's role in a still-evolving limited presence mission. But, in the end you helped to create a three-year vision for SO 3 that was fully consonant with the SO 3 parameters we provided. Anticipation is the basis of opportunity. You understood and anticipated the need to work through existing women's economic groups, a strategy that was both efficient and synergistic with the other two SOs in the Mission. Your insight into efficiencies and understanding of synergy allowed you to creatively reinvent SO 3 based on the principle that empowerment will put down roots best where the soil is already fertile: working with existing economic groups through which literacy, legal rights and business skills can be provided. It also addresses a principle of value added rather than creating new which is both cost effective and time sensitive: key SO 3 parameters for the future. Moreover, you helped move our SO 3 mantra from an economic engine to an economic anchor. In fact, in end I think we decided it was both an anchor and an engine.

This was hardly a routine TDY: you were part of a complex TDY undertaking that involved three "mini SO 3 teams" for literacy, legal rights and economic participation. You understood, however, that teams work best if they get to know and trust each other. You willingly cast your vision beyond your role as the literacy team leader in pursuit of the greater empowerment good of SO 3 overall.

You brought an armory of professional skills to the SO 3 strategy-setting work, and it resulted in opening a new three-year frontier for SO 3. You were good at taking advice and equally good at taking decisions: both were necessary TDY qualities!

Thank you for helping SO 3 to come of age, resulting in an empowerment strategy which we expect in three years to count as one of the great USAID success stories in how to address women strategically.