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## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS
(As of 22 May 2002)

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asia Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACD</td>
<td>Association for Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARISE</td>
<td>Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSEC</td>
<td>Action Against Trafficking Sexual Exploitation of Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAIRA</td>
<td>Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCCP</td>
<td>Bangladesh Centre for Communication Programs</td>
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<td>BDR</td>
<td>Bangladesh Defense Rifles</td>
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<td>BIDS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Institution of Development Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMET</td>
<td>Agency of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNWLA</td>
<td>Bangladesh National Women’s Lawyers Association</td>
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<td>BSAF</td>
<td>Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>CATW</td>
<td>Coalition Against Trafficking in Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO’s</td>
<td>Community based organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDPA</td>
<td>Centre for Development and Population Activities</td>
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<td>CID</td>
<td>Central Investigation Division</td>
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<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPCCT</td>
<td>Child Development: Coordinated Program to Combat Child Trafficking</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Country Strategy and Program</td>
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<td>CSW</td>
<td>Commercial Sex Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWCS</td>
<td>Centre for Women and Children Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAM</td>
<td>Dhaka Ahsania Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLE</td>
<td>Family Life Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>FWA's</td>
<td>Family Welfare Assistant</td>
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<td>FWV’s</td>
<td>Family Welfare Visitor</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAATW</td>
<td>Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographical Information Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICDDRB</td>
<td>International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>INCIDIN</td>
<td>A Research and Services NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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IPEC  International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor  
KKS  Karmojibi Kalyan Sangstha  
LGD  Local Government Division  
MoHFW  Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
MOL  Ministry of Labor  
MWCA  Ministry of Women and Children Affairs  
NFE  Non-Formal Education  
NGOs  Non-governmental Organization  
NORAD  Norwegian Aid  
NPA  National Plan of Action  
PFA  Platform for Action  
PIU  Project Implementation Unit  
PP  Project Proforma  
PSC  Project Steering Committee  
RETA  Regional Technical Assistance  
RRMRU  Refugee Migratory Movement and Research Unit, Dhaka University  
SAARC  South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation  
SME  Small and medium enterprises  
SNAT  Sectoral Need Assessment  
STD  Sexually Transmitted Diseases  
TOT  Train the Trainers  
UN  United Nations  
UNDP  United Nations Development Program  
UP  Union Pradishad  
USAID  United States Agency for International Development  
UNFIP  United Nations Fund for International Partnerships  
WB  World Bank  
WOREC  Women’s Rehabilitation Centre  

NOTES
In this report, "$" refers to US dollars, and BDT refers to Bangladesh Taka.
CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..............................................................................................................1

II. INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................................7
   A. Background to the RETA .................................................................................................7

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT ........................................................................................................11

IV. DYNAMICS OF TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN ........................................25
   A. Macro / External Factors ..............................................................................................27
   B. Supply Factors ..............................................................................................................28
   C. Demand Factors ...........................................................................................................39
   D. Impacts of Trafficking ..................................................................................................40

V. CURRENT PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES: ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES ......43
   A. Preventive Approach .....................................................................................................43
   B. Interception / Rescue ..................................................................................................54
   C. Re-integration ...............................................................................................................59
   D. Initiatives taken by some International Agencies .........................................................62

VI. INTEGRATING ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES INTO ADB’S OPERATIONAL
    STRATEGY IN BANGLADESH ..............................................................................................69
   A. Relevance of Trafficking to ADB .................................................................................69
   B. Recommendation .........................................................................................................70
   C. Country Programming ...................................................................................................72
   D. Project-Level Poverty and Social Analysis ....................................................................77
   E. Policy Dialogue ..............................................................................................................80

APPENDIXES

   Appendix 1: List of Transit Points
   Appendix 2: Child Development Coordinated Program
   Appendix 3: Risk Factors Table
   Appendix 4: Poverty Reduction and Links
   Appendix 5: Sector Guidelines
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The alarming numbers of women and children being trafficked for forced labor or slavery-like practices (including commercial sexual exploitation) is a development concern for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Although available statistics are limited and contested, the existing data has served to highlight the issue as evidenced by increased national attention to trafficking issues. An important dimension of inclusive development and a key focus area for the ADB involves strengthening the participation of vulnerable groups in mainstream development, reducing gender discrimination and promoting the development of social capital. ADB’s involvement in combating trafficking of women and children directly addresses its strategic goals: poverty reduction and promoting gender equality.

2. Following initial investigations in the South Asia region and discussions with the governments of India, Bangladesh and Nepal, the following objectives were developed for the ADB Regional Technical Assistance (RETA):

(i) To increase ADB’s understanding of how its existing country programs and regional policy dialogue can be used to support and strengthen anti-trafficking efforts in South Asia; and

(ii) To contribute to capacity building and other efforts by stakeholders to develop and implement policies and programming which will effectively combat trafficking in women and children in South Asia.

3. The challenge of combating trafficking is far beyond the capacity and resources of individual organizations alone, therefore the ADB sought a collaborative approach for this RETA to learn from the experiences of member countries and ask questions about what it can do to help assist and move forward to address trafficking. The methodology utilized by the RETA Team recognized that ADB should seek to bring specific value-added to an already active field of stakeholders by analyzing where the strengths and expertise of the organization lies and how to engage, as partners, those with technical experience in addressing trafficking concerns.

4. The approach to achieving the RETA objectives was based on carrying out a comprehensive analysis of the factors that induce and facilitate trafficking on the demand and supply side, and the potential for addressing vulnerabilities created by these factors in the context of ADB’s policies and ADB-assisted projects. This analysis sought illustrations of how different types of anti-trafficking activities already underway could be used in the context of sector activities such as road improvement, micro finance, women’s empowerment or other mainstream poverty reduction projects to combat trafficking of women and children. The findings of this assessment, as presented in the RETA reports, can now be used not only by ADB staff, but also by other agencies and organizations seeking to draw on a broader base of resources available through mainstream poverty reduction programs.

5. The objectives of the RETA have been achieved through preparation of Country Papers for India, Bangladesh and Nepal, and a synthesis paper of the regional findings. A supplemental report on legal frameworks and issues relevant to human trafficking in the South Asia sub-region was also prepared. In addition the RETA facilitated an exposure visit for stakeholders from India, Nepal and Bangladesh to Thailand to explore the experiences of various organizations in address trafficking from a regional perspective. The RETA Team consulted widely, reviewed the extensive literature on trafficking in South Asia, and assessed
existing programming and its relevance to mainstream poverty reduction efforts. The findings were discussed with stakeholders both at National Consultation Workshops and at a Regional Workshop held at ADB headquarters in Manila. In Bangladesh the RETA worked in partnership with the International Organization for Migration regional office in Dhaka, and considerable support and leadership was extended from the government focal point at the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. Valuable and sometimes time-consuming inputs were also provided by a wide range of stakeholders whose patience and generosity was much appreciated.

6. The findings of the RETA Country Paper for Bangladesh confirm that the dynamics of trafficking reach across the South Asia region, where, despite specific and different historical and cultural circumstances, similarities are clear. Extensive consultations verified that there is a severe lack of concrete data from which to build an accurate picture of the scope of trafficking. Traffickers go to great lengths to avoid monitoring of their illegal activities and any available data must be treated with caution. However, it was stressed very strongly that while concrete data is limited, this does not mean that government and international agencies should discount the magnitude of the trafficking problem. Trafficking appears to take place within Bangladesh - about which there is the least amount of data available. Many hundreds of thousands of women and children are estimated to have been trafficked out of Bangladesh, either directly or once they had migrated voluntarily. Many remain in India or are taken on to Pakistan or the Middle East - and in some cases beyond that. There is also some evidence that Bangladesh serves as a transit point for trafficking operations out of Myanmar.

7. The lack of data and solid body of research has also lead to the building of certain myths and assumptions about trafficking that need to be questioned, for example, that trafficking is usually for the purposes of prostitution, when there is evidence of the use of trafficked labor as domestic workers, or in factories. Assumptions that most trafficking incidents starts with kidnapping are also false, as coercion or deception by traffickers frequently occurs as part of a migration experience. Understanding why those vulnerable to trafficking migrate in the first place and how to make migration a positive experience is key to addressing the risks mobile populations face. It was clear from the RETA analysis that stakeholders in Bangladesh, among the three RETA countries, have made the greatest progress on understanding the links between trafficking and migration.

8. It is also frequently assumed that all trafficked persons desire to return home, whereas they may have initially left home before being trafficked to escape an abusive environment. Stigmatization by other community or family members might also make return difficult if not impossible. Adopting a rights-based approach to rescue and reintegration is vital if such efforts are to be positive and effective for the trafficked person. The complexity of trafficking, the links with visceral issues such as commercial sex work and exploitation of children, and the politics of migration management has meant that there is much contention over the definition of trafficking and the types of policies and programming that would effectively combat this serious crime and affront to basic human rights.

9. Consensus is evolving through UN international mechanisms on a working definition for trafficking. In this context it is important to clarify that this RETA employed the following definition - trafficking in persons - means:

(i) The recruitment, transportation, purchase, sale, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons: by threat or use of violence, abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion (including the abuse of authority), or debt bondage, for the purpose of:
(ii) Placing or holding such person(s), whether for pay or not, in forced labor or slavery-like practices, in a community other than the one in which such person lived at the time of the original act described in 1.\(^1\)

10. Another area of consensus is that gender-based differences and attitudes play an important role in both the supply and demand dynamics of trafficking. From what data is available in South Asia, it appears that the “worst forms” of trafficking relate to the illegal movement of women and children for the purposes of exploitation in sectors such as commercial sex work, and child labor of all forms,\(^2\) and the low status of women increases their vulnerability as targets of traffickers and limits their options as survivors seeking a new life. The ADB’s strong commitment to redress gender imbalances and to contribute to women’s empowerment through its operations provides a strong rationale for the RETA to consider the issues associated with combating the trafficking of women and children, as those most frequently harmed by and vulnerable to its effects.

11. In order to explore potential entry points to address trafficking through poverty reduction initiatives, the RETA analyzed the complex factors that push or pull the vulnerable into situations of high risk to be recruited by traffickers, and those that create a demand for exploitable labor. The most commonly identified push factor that starts the trafficking process is poverty. The necessity to meet basic needs, in combination with other factors is the most commonly identified motivation to migrate or to encourage a family member to leave. An understanding of the non-economic elements of poverty – lack of human and social capital, gender discrimination – is also necessary to identify the most vulnerable to marginalization from the development process and, simultaneously, to trafficking. Governance issues also play a role in allocating resources and services in a community and those living in poverty tend to have limited access to these development opportunities, reinforcing their vulnerability to trafficking. Other pull factors, such as images drawn from the media and stories from returning migrants entice many into migrating under ill-informed and risky circumstances.

12. Macro-factors such as the impacts of globalization, employment, trade and migration policies and conflicts and environmental disasters can put into motion circumstances that increase vulnerabilities. Development-induced risks also play a role. The demands for exploitable labor in sectors where harsh and criminal working conditions go undetected also create a pull effect on those already vulnerable. For example, the demand for younger and younger sexual partners - girls and boys frequently as young as 10 or 11 years old - in the commercial sex sector is linked to many clients seeking HIV/AIDS free partners. For as long as these demands exist, opportunistic traffickers will fill that niche.

13. As quoted by Coomaraswamy: “traffickers fish in the stream of migration”\(^3\) and can easily identify those who are most easily deceived or coerced, so building resistance among migrants to ensure that these experiences bring positive outcomes is another important aspect to addressing trafficking concerns. The negative impacts of trafficking are also considerable. No information or analysis is currently available but it would seem undeniable that the social, economic and health impacts are undermining development efforts at many levels.

14. A theme that emerged from the RETA research, which was strongly endorsed through the consultations with stakeholders, is the need for clarity and caution when developing

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2 Skeldon, R. *Trafficking: A Perspective from Asia*, International Migration, Special Issue, 2000/1
operational steps to address aspects of trafficking. Challenges exist when developing programming in areas such as:

- Migrants need protection and policies and programs to facilitating safe migration, but such activities have been used to exclude women from migrating or to limit the flow of migrants thus stagnating the important role of migration in development. New immigration policies might also create new niches for opportunistic traffickers to exploit;
- Communities need to be made aware of the harm trafficker cause when they arrive in their midst, but without causing suspicion of newcomers or marginalizing those already considered “different”;
- Labor standards must be addressed to curb the demand for trafficked labor, but this is very challenging in the informal sectors and fraught with suspicions in the formal sectors concerning opportunistic measures by developed countries to limit trade from economies with cheap labor;
- Prevention campaigns and safe migration programs might simply drive traffickers away from that community to an area where they are less likely to be noticed; and,
- Targeting the vulnerable and source areas is difficult as the modus operandi of traffickers must be flexible to fill demand niches as they emerge and be ready to change their routes or source areas to evade prosecution.

15. The Bangladesh Country Paper also identifies key stakeholders involved in combating trafficking in respective countries and the types of programming underway. This information provides examples of types of anti-trafficking initiatives that could be incorporated into ADB operations as well as background on potential partners among government and NGO stakeholders.

16. The findings of the RETA are that there is considerable potential for collaboration by ADB with and among existing stakeholders to address trafficking concerns through poverty reduction programming, particularly in the area of prevention and reducing vulnerabilities of those most at risk. The challenge lies in creating mechanisms to improve targeting and identification of risks. ADB policies and guidelines are already in place to address specific aspects of poverty reduction, for example concerning gender equality, governance, resettlement and social protection. These can be used and expanded to incorporate trafficking concerns. There are also several areas of research and dialogue where ADB’s expertise and unique position in the region can be used to make progress, for example, in curbing the demand for trafficked labor, to encourage collaboration among governments regarding trade and migration policies and to assess the impacts of trafficking on regional development and integration efforts.

17. There is potential for ADB operations to address trafficking in the following ways:
- target those most vulnerable to trafficking, especially women and children;
- assess the impacts of ADB operations to take up opportunities to prevent, minimize and mitigate development induced risks;
- rebuild social and human capital among mobile (or potentially mobile) populations in emergency loans and assistance in post-conflict reconstruction
- encourage safe-migration; and,
- stem demand for trafficked labor, especially in informal sector and among small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

18. The following general steps can be used by ADB staff to mainstream trafficking into ADB operations:
• Where possible, flag the issue of trafficking in subregional strategies (e.g. Subregional Cooperation Strategy and Program - SCSP) and country analysis and strategies (e.g. country poverty analysis, CSP and CSP updates and country gender analysis and strategy).

• Include the analysis of groups that are particularly vulnerable to trafficking in IPSA and PSA. In particular, include mobile population into the analysis as well as women and children.

• Develop project designs that would directly and indirectly combat and reduce human trafficking.

• Identify and work with partners (e.g. Ministries, NGOs, private sector including contractors, donors etc.) to develop and implement anti-trafficking project components.

• Where non-lending products and services (e.g. TAs and sector and thematic works) provide opportunities, consider addressing trafficking.

• Raise awareness among relevant ADB staff including dissemination of findings of the reports produced un the RETA through various means such as: a) publication, external website, and relevant committees and networks; b) developing pilot projects with the initiatives of Regional Departments in collaboration with RSPR; and c) developing guidelines and good practices on contractors’ codes of conduct and loan covenants in collaboration with COPP and OGC.

19. As stated in the closing remarks by the Director General, South Asia Department at the Regional Workshop, ADB is committed to addressing trafficking concerns and since the adoption of the Poverty Strategy there is greater rationale and potential to incorporate such concerns and new sources of funding are now available. The mandate of ADB also directly includes the promotion of regional cooperation. Trafficking is a serious limit on the positive forces of development, and bringing additional resources from broad based poverty reduction projects to address the root causes of vulnerabilities and risks must be encouraged. ADB will continue the commitment expressed through the RETA and now seek other opportunities and means to combat trafficking in all its operations.
II. INTRODUCTION

A. Background to the RETA

20. Assisting developing member countries to reduce poverty, and improve the living conditions and quality of life is the mission of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Being anchored in the Asia and Pacific region, ADB has the responsibility to respond to new issues and those emerging as priorities in the region. The benefits of development will have to reach all groups that make up the region’s poor, including women and children, for developing member countries to achieve sustained and equitable development. An important dimension of inclusive development and a key focus area for the ADB involves strengthening the participation of vulnerable groups in mainstream development, reducing gender discrimination and promoting the development of social capital.

21. The alarming numbers of women and children being trafficked for forced labor or slavery-like practices (including commercial sexual exploitation) is a development concern for the ADB. Although available statistics are limited and contested, the existing data has served to highlight the issue as evidenced by increased national attention to trafficking issues. ADB’s involvement in combating trafficking of women and children directly addresses the strategic goals of the ADB: poverty reduction and promoting gender equality.

22. In July 2000, ADB fielded a mission to Nepal, Bangladesh and India to assess the human trafficking issues confronting the region. The Mission met with representatives of the government, donors and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) active in anti-trafficking initiatives. During these initial meetings the potential role of ADB in fighting trafficking in the region was highlighted and where ADB’s specific expertise and profile in the region can add value to on-going endeavors. The challenge of combating trafficking is far beyond the capacity and resources of individual organizations alone. It requires a coordinated and concerted effort.

23. Following the July 2000 Mission and a further preparation period, a Regional Technical Assistance (RETA) started in July 2001 for India, Bangladesh and Nepal with the following broad objectives:

   (i) To increase ADB’s understanding of how its existing country programs and regional policy dialogue can be used to support and strengthen anti-trafficking efforts in South Asia; and

   (ii) To contribute to capacity building and other efforts by stakeholders to develop and implement policies and programming which will effectively combat trafficking in women and children in South Asia.

24. These objectives were framed around the ongoing activities of a wide range of stakeholders including government departments and NGOs, which have developed specific expertise and capacities in different areas of programming. The recommendations of the RETA therefore seek to make a contribution to these ongoing efforts in a complementary and collaborative manner. There have also been a series of events associated with combating trafficking of women and children anticipated in the region, including:
25. During international and regional meetings associated with these events, many stakeholders identified that, as poverty has such a strong connection with trafficking, poverty reduction programming of large development agencies should target those most at risk to trafficking more effectively. Given the ADB’s extensive involvement in poverty reduction programming, its particular contribution can be to mainstream anti-trafficking initiatives into the Country Program strategies and regional policy dialogue and hence ensure those most at risk to being trafficked benefit from these efforts.

26. The objectives of the RETA will be achieved through: preparation of Country Papers for India, Bangladesh and Nepal; a Supplemental Study on Legal Frameworks Relevant to Human Trafficking in South Asia; a synthesis paper of the regional findings presented at a Regional Workshop in Manila, in May 2002; and an exposure visit to Thailand.\(^4\) The ADB RETA Team is led by Ms. Helen Thomas of Agriteam Canada and comprises six members across the region. The RETA in Bangladesh worked in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the National Program Officer, Ms. Rina Sen Gupta and Ishrat Shamim from Center for Women and Children Studies (CWCS). Particular thanks are extended for the tremendous support provided to the RETA Team by the IOM Regional Representative, Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque and all his staff at the Dhaka office.

27. During interviews and meetings, many stakeholders made invaluable contributions and have kindly provided the RETA team with important materials. Contributions by stakeholders who attended the National Consultation Workshop, held in April, 2002 were also key in sharpening the findings of the work in Bangladesh, and were greatly appreciated in light of the other extensive time commitments for those who attended, including the Secretary from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of Bangladesh, Mr. Mahfuzul Islam. Three government and three NGO stakeholders from Bangladesh were also represented at the RETA Regional Workshop in Manila in May 2002, and provided valuable insights to the discussions. Particular thanks must be extended by the RETA team to MWCA, under the leadership of the Minister Khurshid Jahan Haq, the focal point for trafficking of women and children of the Government of Bangladesh. The ADB staff and RETA Team received strong endorsement and support from MWCA during the planning and implementation of the RETA. Joint Secretary, Ferdous Ara Begum from MWCA and her staff provided extensive comments on this Country Paper and are continuing to demonstrate their commitment through follow up to the RETA sponsored Exposure Visit to Thailand and Regional Workshop in Manila.

B. Bangladesh Country Paper

28. The objective for the Bangladesh Country Paper is to increase the understanding of how to mainstream trafficking concerns in poverty reduction programming through an analysis of (a) key issues (e.g. existing statistics, pull-push factors, legal framework,\(^5\)) and gaps in bilateral-

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\(^4\) Reports for each of these outputs are available for downloading at http://adb.org/Gender/reta5948.asp.

\(^5\) Analysis is included in RETA 5948 Supplemental Study on Legal Frameworks Relevant to Human Trafficking in South Asia.
multilateral agreements); (b) mapping of source and transit areas and destinations; (c) mapping of key stakeholders and their activities; (d) identification of gaps in legislation, policy, institutional frameworks and other areas. The findings of this analysis are complemented by good practices from a range of anti-trafficking initiatives illustrating practical ways to mainstream these concerns into a range of related development assistance initiatives. The paper also includes case studies illustrating how trafficking concerns could be integrated into existing project activities in ADB projects in Bangladesh.

C. **Methodology**

29. The RETA team in Bangladesh took the following steps in the preparation of the Country Paper:

- Participated in the RETA Inception Workshop in Delhi that reviewed and revised the original project scope in light of initial findings from all three RETA countries;
- Reviewed existing data in regard to the range of issues associated with trafficking of women and children;
- Consulted stakeholders (NGOs) directly involved in programming;
- Collected information regarding several ADB projects, traveled to project sites and reviewed existing anti-trafficking programming in the area to identify good practices and explore entry points for incorporating anti-trafficking initiatives;
- Developed recommendations for the ADB regarding mainstreaming of trafficking concerns into ADB’s activities in Bangladesh. These recommendations were developed using ADB’s comprehensive poverty reduction framework for the analysis of the nature and extent of trafficking in Bangladesh;
- Conducted a National Consultation Workshop to present the findings of the RETA for Bangladesh and solicit verification and discussion of findings and to develop additional recommendations to be incorporated into the final Country paper;
- Conducted a Regional Workshop in Manila to present the findings of the RETA to stakeholders from all three countries involved as well as relevant staff from ADB Headquarters to apply the country level recommendations to a regional context and promote dialogue among regional stakeholders regarding the overall findings; and
- Prepared final Country Paper that incorporated findings and recommendations from stakeholders and ADB and case studies illustrating good practices to assist in implementing recommendations.
III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

A. Understanding Trafficking

30. Human trafficking in Bangladesh is not a new phenomenon. For hundreds of years the movement of kidnapped or bonded labor has taken place. Human trafficking was an integral part of the traditional economy of what is now Bangladesh, and the cycle of movement of people within South Asia. Recent studies and analysis are demonstrating changes in the process and economy of trafficking in the South Asia region as it becomes more integrated into transnational criminal activities and the demands for trafficked labor adjust to globalizing economic structures. In order to understand the phenomenon and hence develop strategies to combat a vicious and harmful criminal activity for trafficked persons and communities alike, it is important to outline some definitions and descriptions of the modus operandi of traffickers.

31. Human trafficking is increasingly recognized as a complex process, involving a series of episodes for the trafficked person\(^6\) requiring markedly different responses from governments or communities. These episodes might start with a desire or need to leave their home / community or migrate, followed by an encounter with a trafficker leading to coercion or deception and to highly harmful and exploitative working situations. For other trafficked persons, the process might start with family members handing over responsibility for their safety and well being to others known to them, and then end up trafficked by a third set of actors. The trafficked person after some time might prefer to remain away from their original community, despite the exploitation and harm they have suffered. The options for returning home may involve further stigmatization, lack of control over their lives and no opportunities for economic survival. Some argue that most trafficked persons remain migrants, often moving on to less exploitative situations. What is clear is that a trafficking episode changes a person’s situation for life.

32. As there are relatively few cases of kidnapping it is important to understand the motivation or need behind why a trafficked person was convinced or voluntarily moved in the first place and who or what influenced that decision. This information can assist in building resistance to traffickers. Poverty or the failure to meet basic needs, social exclusion, insecurity or stigmatization are often identified as the initial motivating factor and provide a starting point to address these concerns. ADB has potential to contribute to addressing those factors that may result in a trafficking experience through its operations in Bangladesh.

33. For traffickers, the process is a systematic, well-organized economic phenomenon, involving the displacement and movement of persons solely to profit directly or indirectly from the exploitation of the trafficked person’s labor. Trafficking offers opportunities to make quick cash for many, and for some it garners extremely high profits. Some forms of human trafficking have existed for thousands of years, while others take advantage of opportunities presented by emerging economic niches.

34. Traffickers take advantage of vulnerabilities in others, many of which are the outcomes of poverty, poor governance (for example limited law enforcement or implementation of labor standards), social exclusion or gender discrimination. Desperate circumstances often lead migrants to take difficult decisions and lead them into situations of great risk and vulnerability.

\(^6\) Many people argue that using the term “victim” to describe someone who has been trafficked is disempowering, therefore, for this paper the term “trafficked person” will be used.
Again, these are factors that can be addressed as part of ADB poverty reduction operations and thus contribute to combating trafficking.

35. The persistence and apparent recent increase in human trafficking can perhaps be understood in part as an inextricable aspect of the “modernization” or development process. Vulnerability to trafficking is linked to some of the changes that come with modernization, for example: individuals migrating to seek new horizons as their horizons are opened through education or new media; the movements of rural populations to cities as traditional livelihoods are disappearing; those excluded from the development process are forced to move to meet their basic needs. A key finding of the RETA is that if such risks are minimized as development programs are implemented, then trafficking can be curbed and the harm it causes reduced. The minimizing of these same risks of exclusion and vulnerability is also the objective of ADB’s poverty reduction strategy.

36. Despite the increasing global recognition that responses to human trafficking must be more effective to stem this harmful process, there remains great contention amongst activists, policy makers, legislators and survivors about the definition and means to combat the full range of human trafficking activities. This lack of consensus highlights the following aspects of trafficking:

(i) The highly complex nature of human trafficking processes that affect many different actors—trafficked persons, their families, communities, and other third parties recruiting, transporting, harboring and using trafficked labor.

(ii) The difficulty if not impossibility, to quantify the scope of trafficking, because of its illegal character. Those profiting from it seek to obscure their activities and encourage complicity from as wide a range of actors as possible, through coercion and offers to share in profits, in order to enhance their impunity from prosecution.

(iii) The mechanisms, routes and destinations for human trafficking change rapidly according to economic conditions and risks involved. For example: in response to changes in immigration regulations, traffickers seek new channels to make profit; as labor demands change, coercion methods shift to ensure a suitable supply of victims is available. This makes it difficult to generalize about the modus operandi of traffickers or to ensure that new legislation, while preventing one form does not create new opportunities in other areas.

(iv) Because of this complexity and the need for traffickers to respond to prevailing legal, economic and social conditions, the causes and characteristics of human trafficking vary greatly from region to region, country to country.

(v) Human trafficking supplies labor for many sectors, including commercial sex work (CSW). Any analysis, policies or programming in this sector raises numerous moral and visceral responses from different stakeholders leading to significant differences in ideological approaches to address trafficking concerns. There are also similar debates around definitions of children and their roles in the work force, which complicate and often delay responses.

(vi) Human trafficking involves gross violations of human rights, great human suffering and yet appears to be very difficult to combat. Despite increasing investments from government, donors and civil society organizations, evidence seems to suggest an increasing incidence of human trafficking as the demand for this form of exploitable labor persists.

(vii) The links between human trafficking and migration theory are not well understood or explored, and consequently the role migration management can play in addressing trafficking has been largely ignored by policy makers and
development planners alike. For example, in Bangladesh, there is no comprehensive policy for migration management.

37. This paper seeks to clarify some of the debates concerning the definition, causes and effects of trafficking and to consider strategies for addressing some of the causes of trafficking of women and children in Bangladesh. The paper will start by reviewing the nature of trafficking itself in Bangladesh. This will be followed by an analysis of the causes of trafficking, examining the supply and demand ends of the process, push – pull factors and assess who is most vulnerable to being entrapped into these difficult and dangerous circumstances. A section follows this on the anti-trafficking strategies adopted by stakeholders in Bangladesh. Finally the paper will look at ADB’s program in Bangladesh and identify where anti-trafficking activities might be integrated into ADB’s overall poverty reduction approach and policy dialogue.

B. Definitions and Debates

38. The foundation definitions of human trafficking used by activists and other stakeholders are those identified in United Nations (UN) conventions, protocols or other multi-lateral instruments as they seek to establish norms upon which national and bilateral legislation, agreements, policies and programming can be set. These definitions have evolved over recent years as the need has emerged to sharpen a common understanding of the process and economy of trafficking.\(^7\)

39. A UN General Assembly (1994) resolution defined human trafficking in a broad manner incorporating many forms of exploitative and oppressive work situations (including prostitution and forced labor of any kind). However, it only included specific cross-border movements and did not cover the extensive internal trafficking that takes place in a region such as South Asia.

40. Early definitions also made no distinction between: a) prostitution as a form of labor which can take place in the form of services between two consenting adults; and b) forced prostitution of trafficked persons. Without these distinctions, any form of prostitution or CSW would be considered as trafficking, providing additional support to those advocating the complete banning of prostitution as a means to combat trafficking. More recent definitions recognize implicitly the right of prostitutes to choose to work in this sector. However, it is important to stress that under Article 34 and 35 of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989, any form of sexual exploitation, sale of or trafficking in children is an abuse of their human rights.

41. UN definitions do not place trafficking clearly into the context of on-going migration. Distinctions between involuntary and voluntary migration are unclear in all definitions and have not recognize the need to make migration safe for those who choose to move, especially across borders. For example, in response to cases where employers have abused women who migrated voluntarily, some South Asian governments have sought to “protect” women by restricting their right to leave the country as unskilled migrant workers. This implies that any migrant woman who is abused is trafficked, which is not necessarily an accurate reflection of her experiences. This response also excludes unskilled women who still migrate outside their country from any protection from their government once they fall into difficult circumstances. Adult women should have the same rights as adult men to migrate.

\(^7\) A more detailed discussion of legal definitions and evolution of UN international mechanisms to combat human trafficking, please refer to the RETA 5948 Supplemental Study on Legal Frameworks Relevant to Human Trafficking in South Asia.
42. Another important aspect of any definition is to distinguish between the rights, needs and interests of women as distinct from those of children. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for a series of reasons, but they are not the same reasons. Minors have distinct needs for the protection of their rights. However, under some legislative jurisdiction, women are considered to require the same protection as minors, restricting their rights as fully fledged individual adults, denying women the rights attached to adulthood, such as the right to have control over one’s own life and body. The conflation of women’s and children’s interests also emphasizes a single role for women as caretakers of children without acknowledging the changing nature of women’s role in society. A notable example is not accounting for women’s increasing role as the sole supporter of dependent family members and, consequently, as economic migrants in search of work. Nearly half of the migrants in the world today are women.

43. Many definitions and discussions of concepts of human trafficking also focus on trafficked persons and place less accountability on governments to prosecute perpetrators. The most recent UN definition is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2000), which supplements the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), places much greater responsibility on states to punish those responsible for trafficking, including consumers of trafficked labour. However, in many countries, including Bangladesh, national constitutional protection and legislation do not have similarly comprehensive approaches to address human trafficking. An assessment of aspects of the implications of the gaps in legislation in Bangladesh and efforts from stakeholders to address these gaps is assessed in the RETA legal mechanism assessment paper.

44. In October and November 2000, the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, traveled to Bangladesh, Nepal and India and prepared a report to the Commission on Human Rights on the issue of trafficking of women and girls. In this report she used a definition of human trafficking that is both clear and simple and covers the most basic characteristics of human trafficking from which a more complex analysis can be drawn. This definition is therefore adopted by the REAT and used in the following analysis:

   Trafficking in persons means:
   (i) The recruitment, transportation, purchase, sale, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons: by threat or use of violence, abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion (including the abuse of authority), or debt bondage,

   For the purpose of:
   (ii) Placing or holding such person(s), whether for pay or not, in forced labor or slavery-like practices, in a community other than the one in which such person lived at the time of the original act described in 1.

45. These debates over definitions of human trafficking may seem relatively unconnected from moving forward on combating trafficking activities within communities. The definitions also fail to paint an adequately complex picture of the experiences of trafficked persons who set out on their journeys into trafficking for such a huge range of reasons, and end up in an equally wide range of situations. However, especially for areas where there are strongly held

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8 www.gaatw.org website and information based on data from IOM and ILO among other organizations

ideological differences (women’s right to movement, sexual choice etc.), establishing internationally acceptable standards and norms has proved vital in progressing on forming an objective framework for counter-mechanisms to be developed and implemented at national levels. The next step is to identify, within a rights-based framework, how best to address different aspects of the causes and effects of trafficking.

46. To assist in understanding what can be considered trafficking, the Country Paper builds on widely adopted definitions to identify key characteristics that form the framework for the analysis. The key characteristics are:

(i) The existence of demand for exploitable labor for certain types of work, for example, CSW, bonded labor in some industrial and agricultural sectors; domestic work, begging, entertainment sector – including camel jockeying. The types of work facilitate maintaining highly exploitative working conditions that are gross violations of human rights and labor standards in locations and conditions that are difficult to monitor or address through regular means.

(ii) Recruitment and working conditions are characterized by coercion, lack of consent, and an inability for the trafficked person to make choices, once the process of trafficking has begun. Recruiters use many forms of coercion ranging from false promises to threats of and actual violence. Trafficked persons are often required to conspire with the perpetrators to avoid detection as they move to the place of work. Once working, conditions might include debt bondage, slavery-like practices ensuring no escape and reinforcing the sense of absolute “ownership” over the trafficked person through violence or threats of violence, and no control by the trafficked person over their own body or sexuality. It can also be argued that forced ‘marriages’ are a form of trafficking whereby women or girls are required to provide domestic labor while being held as virtual prisoners, raped continually by their ‘husbands’ and often forced to become pregnant for the purpose of providing their ‘husbands’ with children.

A feature of the coercion placed on trafficked persons is the fear of the consequences of reporting or taking steps to prosecute the perpetrators. In many cases, families and other community members close to the trafficked person also benefit from the process further limiting the probability of the trafficked person taking action to escape or bring about the severe consequences of prosecution. Another aspect of coercion is the knowledge that survivors are rarely accepted back into their communities. It is especially difficult for women to return as they are usually assumed to have been involved in CSW and are therefore considered to be “ruined” for marriage. Without marriage such women will continue to burden their families economically and through social stigma. Recruiters and those using the labor (brothel owners’ etc.) play on this stigmatization to ensure the trafficked person does not try to escape.

Care must be taken, however, over the use of the terms consent and the ability of any individual to have choice and control of their lives. All individuals have only comparative agency and control over their lives. Experiences for trafficked persons in their homes or previous community setting may mean they actually choose to remain in a highly coercive and exploitative situation, as the alternatives are perhaps worse. There is a continuing debate among stakeholders and activists regarding the extent

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10 Definition of Slavery and Debt Bondage appears in the UN Slavery Convention 1927
to which trafficked persons must retain the right to choose to remain in exploitative conditions, even if they are continuing to be harmed.

- The threads of this debate reach into many facets of efforts to combat trafficking. For example, for some activists, all women and girls should be taken out of CSW as it causes great harm irrespective of the wishes of the CSW. These activists support the actions of police who raid brothels and take into detention all women and girls found there. Others feel that the rights of individual adult women to choose to remain working under these conditions should be respected. In some cases women find their working and living conditions - although exploitative - are less oppressive than those they were subjected to at home. For others, their families may be in debt from assisting the girl to migrate even though under false pretences. Being forced to return home before the debt is paid would have worse consequences for the trafficked person than remaining in the brothel until the debt is paid. Issues concerning consent and personal agency are highly complex and require programming that respects the different needs and rights of all individuals.

(iii) Human trafficking involves movement and is part of a migration experience - the trafficked person moves from one place and travels to another. This does not necessarily involve movement across borders. However, such movement for the purposes of trafficking should not be confused with voluntary migration, which may result in many benefits as well as involve risks. For example, many attempts to address trafficking have resulted in limitations being placed on women’s migration. In the long run this has driven the trafficking process further underground and "... a trafficked person’s status as an illegal migrant is often a very effective tool in the hands of traffickers, leaving the migrant vulnerable to further coercion and abuse".11

(iv) Time factor is crucial – the process of trafficking has a distinct beginning and end point with many implications for both trafficked persons and perpetrators. For example, harm can be reduced the earlier interception takes place along the time continuum. This also has implications for the types of supports required to overcome harm, to make choices trafficked persons might perceive to be available and to seek prospects for long term recovery. If recruiters are to be prosecuted measures have to be taken quickly after recruitment takes place and before trafficked persons are passed on into the control of the next person in the chain of events.

(v) Third party or parties benefit / profit – these include all those benefiting as the trafficked persons pass through the hands of a chain reaching from the point of recruitment to the point of use of their labor. All are direct perpetrators of the crime of human trafficking. Understanding the benefit for family members or other guardians of trafficked persons is more complex, but has to be taken into account as enforcement measures are designed. Most attention is paid to prosecuting recruiters, those involved in supporting this process along the way such as transporters (bus and truck drivers, train conductors) and hotel and restaurant workers – who knowingly provide services to traffickers and their victims. Efforts to capture and convict the heads of organized criminal networks have also recently increased as demonstrated through the adoption of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime in 2000 by many countries.

Less attention has been paid to those exploiting trafficking labor (factory owners, heads of householders using domestic workers), and especially consumers such as clients in brothels who do not question the conditions under which CSW is carried out.

C. Gender and Human Trafficking

47. From what data is available in South Asia, it appears that the “worst forms” of trafficking relate to the illegal movement of women and children for the purposes of exploitation in sectors such as commercial sex work, and child labor of all forms. Gender discrimination and the low status of women across South Asia results in women and girls having fewer options or means available to them to counter the deceptions of traffickers and are more vulnerable to the threats of violence than men. Stereotypes of behavior for young women tend to reinforce a sense of helplessness and of being unprotected without a man, a vulnerability quickly recognized by opportunistic traffickers. Women and girls are also most likely to suffer from stigmatization once they return to their communities from such experiences, and have fewer options for alternative survival strategies. Hence the traffickers can increase their control over and isolation of women and girls through fear of such further victimization. In cases where their families or guardians push women or girls into trafficked circumstances, many do not rationalize this as harmful, as they are considered chattels of their father or guardian and further protection from their community would be inappropriate. These attitudes create an atmosphere of impunity for many traffickers who are free to seek out those most marginalized. The ADB’s strong commitment to redress gender imbalances and to contribute to women’s empowerment through its operations provides a strong rationale for the RETA to consider the issues associated with combating the trafficking of women and children, as the most frequently harmed by and vulnerable to its effects.

48. Although most attention in recent years has been paid to trafficking of women and children, it should also be taken into account that men are also trafficked. As argued above, while a demand for male labor exists in the sectors most associated with using trafficked workers, control can be exerted more effectively over those most powerless in society – women and children. This lack of interest in male trafficked persons may also be based on the assumption that men “migrate” while women and children are “trafficked”. In Bangladesh this assumption is prevalent as are similar notions about women’s role in the economy. Public spaces where economic activity takes place are traditionally a male domain. Women are not expected to migrate into these public spaces, and if they do it is assumed to be under coercion. However, as many stated above women make up 50% of migrants worldwide and a rapidly increasing proportion in South Asia as they seek ways to meet their own and their family’s basic needs. Many stakeholders are challenging these assumptions, but most of the legal instruments available to combat trafficking in Bangladesh still apply only to women and children.

D. Nature and Extent of Trafficking in Bangladesh

49. Due to the clandestine nature of trafficking, perpetrators go to great lengths to hide their activities from any form of monitoring or assessment. Prosecutions are rare and fraught with difficulties and using these crime statistics presents a very low estimate of the incidence of human trafficking. Consequently figures are estimated and tend to be quoted and cross-quoted in all literature. There are three possible points at which estimates can be made: a) from the number of missing persons reported at the community level, from which a proportion can be

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12 Skeldon, R. *Trafficking; A Perspective from Asia*, International Migration, Special Issue, 2000/1
assumed to have been trafficked; b) from data collected at border crossings for estimates of those moving into and out of Bangladesh to India, or Myanmar, where they may remain or be moved on to another destination; or c) from the point of exploitation, for example studies carried out in brothels in India or Dhaka, in factories or among domestic workers. Comparisons between these kinds of data are not possible, although general indications can be drawn that the incidence is not falling, although the extent to which it is increasing is unclear. The variety of means and destinations rapidly changes based on demand and in response to efforts made to limit such activities.

50. Hence, information and data on trafficking in women and children have not been systematically collected in Bangladesh. Reports by UN agencies and NGOs indicate that the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in women and children are on the increase. The UN assesses that globally at least 4 million persons, men, women and children, are trafficked every year.\(^\text{13}\) Whereas, the Trafficking in Persons Report, 2001 of the US Department of State indicates that 700,000 people become victims of trafficking every year\(^\text{14}\) demonstrating the wide variation on statistic available.

51. There is no reliable data concerning women and children who have been trafficked from Bangladesh to other countries. But according to estimates by human rights activists in Pakistan, about 200,000 young women and girls were trafficked to Pakistan, continuing at the rate of 200-400 women per month and most of who end up in prostitution.\(^\text{15}\) According to most reports, Bangladesh and Nepal provide the highest number of trafficked girl children to other countries in South Asia.

52. Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA), in a study undertaken in 1997, cited the numbers of children being trafficked as follows:\(^\text{16}\)

(i) 300,000 Bangladesh children work in the brothels of India 4,700 children were rescued from traffickers in the past five years;
(ii) 4,500 women and children are trafficked to Pakistan yearly (SAARC & UNICEF);
(iii) 1,000 child trafficking cases were documented in the Bangladeshi media press during the year 1990 to 1992; and
(iv) 69 children were reported being rescued at the border during a three months study in 1995.

53. A UNESCO-sponsored study conducted early in 2000 reveals that some 30,000 women were taken from Bangladesh and sold over the last decade. But the actual figure is probably higher than official figures, because many cases go unreported.\(^\text{17}\)

54. Estimates regarding the number of women and children being trafficked are not only difficult to collect, but also different sources cite wildly different figures. However, an attempt to determine the magnitude and trend of the problem, a mapping exercise of missing, kidnapped and trafficked children and women from Bangladesh was undertaken based on ten years media

\(^{13}\) http://www.unfpa.org/gender/facts.htm
\(^{14}\) US government, Report from Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, 2001
\(^{15}\) Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid, Annual Report, Pakistan, 1991
\(^{17}\) Farid Ahmed, 2000.
coverage from 1990 to 1999 by the Center for Women and Child Studies (CWCS).\textsuperscript{18} It revealed that in 1990, the number of trafficked children was 37. The trend increased until 1997, when the total was 927, with a downward trend since then. The same trend is seen also in the case of trafficking in women.

55. These statistics have to be used with great caution and cannot be used to draw conclusions that, for example trafficking are on the decline. The media do not cover all cases, mostly only those that are reported to the police stations. Also when including all missing persons cases, this does not take into account those who have chosen to leave their families and remain estranged, for examples those who elope, or are living in insecure family situations. The following tables, however, do provide at least some collation of data that is available through the media.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{Boy Child} & \textbf{Girl Child} & \textbf{Total} \\
\hline
1990 & 20 & 17 & 37 \\
1991 & 75 & 127 & 202 \\
1992 & 97 & 147 & 244 \\
1993 & 88 & 118 & 206 \\
1994 & 113 & 104 & 217 \\
1995 & 240 & 185 & 425 \\
1996 & 197 & 181 & 378 \\
1997 & 490 & 437 & 927 \\
1998 & 331 & 354 & 685 \\
1999 & 32 & 44 & 76 \\
\hline
\textbf{Total} & 1,683 & 1,714 & 3,397 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Trafficked Children by Gender}
\end{table}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{Total} \\
\hline
1997 & 780 \\
1998 & 243 \\
1999 & 54 \\
\hline
\textbf{Total} & 1,077 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Trafficked Women by Year}
\end{table}

56. The RETA India Country Paper contains a set of comparative data regarding cross border trafficking into India for the purposes of prostitution. This was collected from a group of Indian NGOs working primarily in Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi and demonstrates the wide variation in statistics, and challenges to comparing data collected over different time frames using different sets of data. This information, however, does again provide some evidence that Bangladesh women are found in brothels and are presumed to be moving across the border points.

\textsuperscript{18} Shamim, I., 2001
Table 3: Number of Trafficked Women in Indian Brothels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of women</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70% of 1000 to 10,000</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>Over last 5 years</td>
<td>Sanlaap 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 (140 flying CSW’s)</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>1990 – 1992</td>
<td>Sanlaap, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Trafficking Watch - Bangladesh Reuters, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Mumbai, Goa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Trafficking Watch - Bangladesh, Reuters, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Nepalese</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ghimire 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Shamim, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7% of women (a)</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Central Social Welfare Board, India 1991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (a) Persons trafficked are used for purposes other than prostitution in Kolkata, and would not be included in this table, invalidating projections from this number.
Table 4: Number of Women Trafficked from Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Women</th>
<th>Frequency/ Time Frame</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Source (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200-400</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>BNWLA, 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24,000-48,000</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 (b)</td>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Rape of Minors Worry Parents, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pakistan, India, Middle East</td>
<td>Rape of Minors Worry Parents, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Pakistan, via India</td>
<td>BNWLA, 1998 (Press Statement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>1990-1997</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Shamim, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% of 500,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Central Social Welfare Board, India, 1997; BNWLA, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreign CSW's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ittefak 1990; UBINIG, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000 or more</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>UBINIG, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 6,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indian Brothels</td>
<td>Shamim, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
<td>UN Special Rapporteur, 2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(a) Full details of the source documents are provided in the bibliography. Table 4 demonstrates great variation in statistics.
(b) The figure of 200,000 victims being trafficked to India is used in many sources. The statistic seems to be cross-quoted but the original source never identified.

57. There is also no data collected anywhere in Bangladesh on internal trafficking flows. Rural to urban migration has been increasing rapidly in the past 10 years. New arrivals in urban areas are vulnerable to being coerced and exploited by those already settled as well as organized traffickers who can easily identify a newly arrived and vulnerable woman or child.

58. Several studies in Bangladesh\textsuperscript{19} have identified that large numbers of children are brought to urban areas as domestic workers, often by their families or trafficking rings. Even middle-class families condone exploitation of these children in their communities. Those children who escape often end up as street children vulnerable once more to being trafficked for CSW. There are no studies on the extent of use of trafficked labor in the industrial sectors, but anecdotal evidence suggests that in the garment sector, for example, many young girls are brought from rural areas under false promises of high wages, and kept in conditions where labor brokers and supervisors demand sexual services in return for finding employment.\textsuperscript{20} As the current economic recession hits the garment sector, many thousands of young women are loosing their jobs, and many of them are lured or coerced into CSW. Many of these young women also feel they cannot return to their communities to their old life with few income opportunities and restricted mobility, so they are looking increasingly for migration opportunities outside Bangladesh, again putting themselves in high risk situations for exploitation and trafficking.

\textsuperscript{19} Blanchet, 1996. \textit{Lost Innocence, Stolen Childhoods}, UPL, Dhaka

\textsuperscript{20} Interview with Project Field Manager of CIDA, Urban Services for Advocacy and Gender Equality/ NUK Project and based on 2002 unpublished report findings.
E. Major Routes of Trafficking

59. In South Asia, Bangladesh and Nepal are the main countries of origin for trafficking, while India and Pakistan are considered countries of destination or transit to other regions, commonly Gulf States or South East Asia. Kolkata in India, for example is regarded as a major transit point for other destinations. However, large-scale trafficking in persons also takes place within these countries.

60. The total land border of Bangladesh covers 4,510 kilometers, of which Bangladesh has 288 kilometers common borders with Myanmar (Burma) and 4,222 kilometers with India. Twenty-eight districts of Bangladesh have common borders with India and two districts have borders with Myanmar. The most advantageous route used by the traffickers is the land route followed by air and waterways. Those using the air routes usually have work permit or a false family visa to travel to the countries of the Middle East.

61. Cox's Bazaar is said to be one of the major centers where children and women are gathered before being smuggled out of the country to Myanmar and then on to other destinations in South East Asia or further. There is very little research or studies carried out regarding the movement of trafficked persons through or from Myanmar in contrast to the understanding of modus operandi and estimates of scope of trafficking through India.

62. There are also transit points on the other side of the Indian border where women and girl children are processed on to the various destinations (Pakistan, Gulf States etc.) through networks and organized criminal gangs. It is believed that demand and profits are much higher for traffickers in the Middle East. There are as many as 20 transit points from districts of Bangladesh bordering India through which women are smuggled out of the country. The easiest and best-known land route to India is through the Benapole border crossing, close to Jessore, which is the southwest transit point of crossing route from Bangladesh to India. As it is well connected by bus and train, traffickers can easily reach Kolkata through Bongaon, only 10 kilometers distant. For a long time, Kolkata has been well known as a center for CSW and the sale of women and children from Bangladesh as they are moved on to Mumbai and New Delhi or further. It is evident from a CSCW study that Jessore has many transit points with corresponding pickup points, especially in Chabbish Pargana, India.

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\text{In Kushtia area, some villages are used as stations for the traffickers. Rajshahi border, Bidirpur and Premtali are used because there are fewer checkpoints. Jessore border is very popular with traffickers. Some hotels and godowns are used to keep the girls brought from different parts of the country. At least 13 women are being trafficked every day. In eight months police could rescue only 28 women who were being trafficked, and arrested 38 traffickers. Usually the traffickers do not accompany the women while crossing the border. Therefore, it is difficult for the border police to arrest them. There are female members in the trafficking gang, who help to hide their identity.}^* \\
\]

\[\text{Shamim, I. & Kabir, F., 1997}\]
Figure 1. Trafficking Routes from Bangladesh during 1990-1999 – IOM Study
From the study of missing person reports in the media from 1997-99, the most common place of origin of trafficked children is Comilla, followed by Narayanganj, Dhaka, Dinajpur, Jessore, Mymensingh and Rajshahi. The other districts have more or less an average of 12 children trafficked over the period 1997-99. Most cases of trafficked women were reported from Jessore, Dhaka, Chitagong, Dinajpur, Narayanganj and Khulna followed by Natore, Bogra, Satkhira, Patuakhali, Jamalpur and Brahmanbaria during 1997-99. The following maps are attached in Appendix 1 and provide more indicative ideas of the scope of trafficking in Bangladesh:

- Map of Place of Origin of Trafficked Children,
- Map of Place of Trafficking of Children,
- Map of Place of Origin of Trafficked Women, and
- Map of Place of Trafficking of Women.

The Appendix also includes a table of the most frequently used land routes with the corresponding transit points into India.

Children are mostly trafficked from Dhaka (56 children), followed by Kurigram, Chittagong, Comilla, Narayanganj and Jessore during the same period. Dhaka is not only densely populated, but the inflow of rural children is more acute and many cannot find shelter and start living on the streets. The traffickers have easy access to these hardcore poor and vulnerable children. Young migrant girls working in garment factories are also easily allured by traffickers on promises of a better life than working in factories. Most of the cases of women trafficking occurred in Dhaka, Jessore, Bagerhat and Barisal followed by Jessore, Dhaka, Chittagong, and Dinajpur, during 1997-1999.

Najma Begum came to Dhaka with her husband Mannan and settled at the same slum as Amena in 1993. Najma soon came in contact with an organized group of traffickers and with the lure of easy huge money was soon recruited by them. She made friends with Amena and when she got the chance she abducted Rubel (then four years old) with the help of Jahangir, Rubel's step-father. Najma took Rubel to Dubai disguised as her son, going by the name of Shariful. The Trafficking gang provided her with passports and all necessary documents. The boy Rubel was only four when he was abducted and trafficked to Dubai. Six years later on his return he is only fluent in Arabic and Hindi and does not understand and speak Bangla. Rubel had a long a painful story of physical and mental torture and agony. He lived with three other boys, one Pakistani and two Indians. They all worked as camel jockeys. Rubel expressed his traumatic experiences specially about witnessing a Sudanese boy's plunge to death from the back of a camel during a race. The regulation weight for camel jockeys was fifteen kilograms and Rubel was returned to a farm after he became heavier than the regulation weight. He described that they were compelled to work in the desert without adequate food and water in a bid to make them lose weight.


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22 Shamim, I., 2001
IV. DYNAMICS OF TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

65. Despite the lack of hard data, but drawing on evidence from years of working with trafficked persons and survivors, prosecution of perpetrators, and so forth, a complex set of factors can be identified which contribute to the persistence of human trafficking. In order to explore these factors, it is useful to consider those that push the vulnerable into situations of high risk to be recruited by traffickers. There are also pull factors that encourage young people or those already living in dangerous circumstances to seek out more glamorous or sustaining life options than they feel are available in their own communities. Once mobile, some of these migrants are more vulnerable to being coerced by traffickers, for example children, particularly girls, and women in general who have less exposure to the world outside their villages and few survival skills in new circumstances. As stated by the UN Special Rapporteur, Radhika Coomaraswamy,24 “traffickers fish in the stream of migration” and can easily identify those who are most easily deceived or coerced. Despite these complexities, some generalizations are useful to assist in identifying both those who are most vulnerable to being trafficked, strategies to overcome these vulnerabilities and to assist in interception, rescue and effective integration of survivors back into communities of their choice with improved life options.

66. Most accounts of trafficking experiences from trafficked persons demonstrate links with migration or movement from one place to another. Human trafficking of all forms involves abuses of basic human rights, but some argue that as it fundamentally involves movement of people, it should perhaps be better understood by using migration theory. The fact that such a vast majority of trafficking episodes start after migration or movement from one place to another has already begun validates the need to look at what causes people to move, and why they are vulnerable to being trafficked during movement as a starting point to understanding the factors contributing to human trafficking.

67. In Bangladesh, a stakeholder-lead Thematic Group on Counter-trafficking (coordinated through IOM) have been meeting regularly seeking to clarify, through discussion and debate, various aspects of human trafficking. This group identified the following needs or motivations that compel a person or an agent of a person to move them from one situation to another – i.e. migrate:

- To meet basic needs e.g. food, shelter, clothing, health etc,
- To increase security to ensure sustainability of basic needs over time,
- To increase status and/or income,
- To escape stigmatization from incidents such as incest, rape, former sex worker, divorce, widowed,
- To respond to or avoid social considerations e.g. marriage without dowry, elements of society that limit women’s personal development, political oppression etc.,
- To take up adventure based on a desire to experience life and explore the world, and,
- To obtain emotional stability for many reasons such as family situation is dysfunctional, seeking emotional support system.25

68. These motivations and/or needs are influenced by a series of agents or the person themselves, including family members, recruiters, smugglers, traffickers, returnees or other migrants, community leaders, neighbors, and of course the migrant herself/himself.

69. A series of factors also hinder or facilitate a person through a migratory experience that can result in a positive outcome, where these needs are met or motivations achieved, or a negative outcome such as the consequences of being trafficked. Examining the needs and motivations that initiate the migratory process and the factors that influence the outcomes, can help to identify activities and programs to reduce the vulnerability of those most at risk to being trafficked.

70. Figure 2 illustrates broad categories of these factors and how they can be seen to link together.
Figure 2: Dynamics of Human Trafficking

MACRO LEVEL FACTORS
- Impacts of globalization;
- Employment, trade, and migration policies;
- Development policies; and,
- Conflicts and environmental disasters

SUPPLY
Influenced by needs/motivations to improve life options.

PUSH FACTORS
- Economic; including feminization of poverty, meet basic needs, loss of livelihood or employment;
- Social / cultural; including increased security and status, reduce / eliminate stigmatization; and,
- Governance; including limited access to government services and programs, poor law enforcement, lack of access to decision-makers.

PULL FACTORS
- Media and new technologies; and,
- Enticements of new life

DEMAND FOR LABOUR / OUTCOME OF MIGRATION

HARMFUL RESULTS
Trafficked Outcome:
- Exploited labour (CSW, factory, domestic servitude),
- Forced detention; and,
  - Profits to traffickers (recruited).

Positive Outcome:
- Freedom of choice;
- Sustaining employment; and
- Increased status.

NON-HARMFUL RESULTS
- Security/rights respected
A. Macro / External Factors

71. A range of policies and environmental circumstances also influence the incidence of poverty and vulnerability to risks for migrants to being trafficked. For example:

- **Impacts of globalization** have included the spread of modernization with greater access to transport, media etc., but also for many, disappearance of traditional income sources and rural employment, pushing the poor and unskilled to migrate to survive. Asia has also become a center for low cost, labor intensive, manufacturing operations. Competition between countries in South Asia has further driven the cost of labor down encouraging some employers to use illegal practices such as bonded labor to access cheaper and cheaper labor sources.

- **Conflicts and natural disasters** force communities to move, often en masse to meet their basic needs. When individuals within that community have no skills or education, and are exposed to health risks, their capacity to secure sustainable livelihoods is limited, and their risk to trafficking heightened.

- **External Migration Policies** that exclude many unskilled people, particularly women, from legal migration and are therefore forced to seek alternative livelihood options through illegal means. Human smugglers offer forged documents or transportation to other countries where they promise to link migrants with job opportunities. These are often the same smugglers who traffic labor (i.e. coerce migrants into certain types of work, create debt bondage conditions or refuse migrants freedom to return home). Those working in illegal situations are more susceptible to coercion by traffickers. It is anticipated that migration policies will continue to discourage migration of unskilled labor, or that labor movements will be confined within South Asia and to certain South East Asian countries and that this situation will continue. These countries have poor records of protecting rights of these irregular and illegal migrants or trafficked persons, which perpetuate conditions that offer profits to opportunistic traffickers. There is currently no migration policy in place in Bangladesh to address the impacts of these trends, nor to promote development benefits from safe migration.

B. Supply Factors

72. The most commonly identified push factor to the trafficking process is poverty. The necessity to meet basic needs, in combination with other factors, such as those identified in paragraph 67 above, is the most commonly identified motivation to migrate or to encourage a family member to leave. Those most vulnerable to trafficking do generally come from the poorest and marginalized segments of communities. However, a simplistic view of poverty based on low-income levels does not assist in understanding why it is that women and children appear to be the most vulnerable to trafficking.

73. An understanding of the non-economic elements of poverty – lack of human and social capital, gender discrimination – also helps identify the most vulnerable to marginalization from the development process and, simultaneously, to trafficking. Governance issues also play a role in allocating resources and services in a community and those living in poverty tend to have limited access to these development opportunities, reinforcing their vulnerability to trafficking. Similarly, income disparities between regions/countries or job opportunities encourage out
migration, but do not explain alone why some poor people do not take up these opportunities. Social factors also affect decisions to seek opportunities elsewhere.

1. Poverty and Limited Economic Options

a. Overall Development Status in Bangladesh

74. Despite Bangladesh’s low human development index (HDI), which is lower than most South Asian countries, there has been decline in those living below the poverty line from 47% in FY1996 to current levels of 45%. Some key social development indicators have improved, for example the education gap between male and female primary school enrollment, which stood at 22% in 1985, declined to 3% over the past 15 years. Health indicators however remain poor, especially for women, reflecting the limited services available and general conditions of poverty for such a large proportion of the population that results in malnutrition and the many associated health conditions.

75. There remain concerns about the quality of many Government services and equity of access, especially for women. The government’s poverty reduction strategy emphasizes education, health, social welfare, women and youth development, labor and manpower, and physical infrastructure and institutional development in the rural areas. The ADB Country Strategy and Program (CSP) update in 2001 concluded, “While some poverty reduction initiatives of the government are well focused, in many instances, weaknesses in various areas … continue to erode the potential benefits of the interventions.”

b. Economic Vulnerability to Trafficking

76. An examination of the highest source areas for trafficking of women and children in Bangladesh points towards a need for those living in poverty to seek to meet their basic needs, through whatever means available. For those at risk of or already living in conditions of poverty, under and unemployment remains high, and levels of functional landlessness are increasing because of population density, environmental erosion, or natural disasters without corresponding increases in employment opportunities in other sectors. In the industrialized sectors (see discussion of women’s participation in the economy below paragraph 80) the proportion of casual workers has increased, and structural change in many sectors is leading to dislocation and unemployment for thousands. These conditions lead to increasing numbers of women and men moving in order to seek alternative livelihood options - and hence become more vulnerable to being trafficked.

The site for recruitment is usually a poor area marked by food insecurity and unemployment. For example, in the northern districts of Bangladesh women can find only seasonal work at very low wages. Thus, parents do not delay in accepting offers of marriage or employment for women and children particularly where there is promise of payment. “

Source: Hussain, Hameeda, 2000, from Proposal for a Plan of Action to reduce trafficking in adolescent girls and young women from Bangladesh prepared for UNFIP, Dhaka.

27 ADB, Women in Bangladesh, 2001, page 9
28 ADB, CSP Update, Bangladesh, 2001 page 3.
77. Poverty drives many to take “unthinkable” decisions and “undoable” acts that might include the handing over of a child to either another family member or even a stranger on the promise of offering a better life for them. These promises may also include the prospect of sending back remittances to help other family members. There are many cases in Bangladesh of families of young girls being trafficked to brothels in India openly acknowledging that their daughters are living under difficult and harmful circumstances, but see no other option for their survival.

78. Living under these conditions of extreme poverty also means that the promises of good jobs in places such as Mumbai and Delhi encourage people to migrate without a clear idea of what they will find outside their communities (see discussion below regarding safe migration).

c. Feminization of Poverty

79. Women are disproportionately excluded from development opportunities through deeply rooted discrimination and low status within Bangladesh society. It would appear that in Bangladesh, based on the definition identified by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1998, there is considerable feminization of poverty in Bangladesh:

- Women compared to men have a higher incidence of poverty, especially among female headed households - 95% of female-headed households in Bangladesh are considered to fall below the poverty line and represent perhaps as many as 20-30% of all households;\(^{29}\)
- Women’s poverty is more severe than men’s poverty because of lack of access to resources and very low rates of human capital among women (level of education, health status etc.) - as demonstrated by the gender gap in all social indicators in Bangladesh and overall female life expectancy is lower than that of men; and
- Over time, the incidence of poverty among women is increasing compared to men, based on women’s lack of access to productive assets and skilled employment opportunities. There is a negative sex ratio for women in Bangladesh can be attributed to excess mortality of women and girls resulting from both direct and indirect discrimination in the provision of food, care, medical treatment, education and above all physical and sexual violence. This ratio is widening demonstrating the acceleration of this process with current generations.\(^{30}\)

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\(^{29}\) ADB, Women in Bangladesh, 2001, page 19 which provides may indicators demonstrating the increase in female headed households and other poverty related indicators.

d. Women’s Contribution to Economy

While women have much lower skill levels than men, their contribution to the economy is largely unrecognized. Women are still primarily involved in the non-monetized sector and subsistence activities and hence tend not to be reported in macro statistics. Women make up a disproportionately high percentage of unpaid family workers in agriculture and informal manufacturing sectors, and as such are the most underemployed. When women do receive wages in the informal sector, there are wide gender differences. Women’s participation in the formal work force has increased, as the demand for low cost, unskilled labor has grown in the urban areas, particularly in the garment sector. Again, though wage gaps are significant. “… in the readymade garment and weaving apparel industries, where there is roughly a 2:1 ration between women and men, a woman receives less than 22-30% of what is earned by her male colleagues. This is because men still predominate in more skilled occupations.” This sector, the only one with high levels of female employment opportunities, is now in recession and may not recover as preferential tariffs under the Multi-Fiber Agreement are phased out.

e. Feminization of Survival Strategies

In Bangladesh, as elsewhere in South Asia, the feminization of poverty is accompanied by the feminization of survival strategies. In hard times, women are more likely than men to exploit every possibility for work or income, including precarious and dangerous activities and poorly paid work at home or in the informal sector. Women are increasingly taking up opportunities that require a change of residence or migration to the city or a foreign country even if it requires taking risks and becoming an illegal migrant. Women are more vulnerable to the negative social effects of economic restructuring and recession as they are generally unskilled and work in the most vulnerable, low productivity sectors.

Programs and services developed by the government to address unemployment are less accessible to women, failing to take opportunities that investments in women’s skills have to increase overall family. Discriminatory practices such as gender-based wage differences and harassment by employers and other men seeking to deny women equal access to the market place have not been addressed. Government agencies have also rarely delivered economic development programs directly to women to improve productivity and incomes in the informal sector. NGOs have had more success in Bangladesh with micro finance projects that also build skills and introduce new technologies and trades. However, few of these are targeting urban areas, where so many women are now seeking survival strategies.

2. Social Attitude and Practices

As identified in the data presented in previous sections, there are considerable gender gaps in Bangladesh for all key development indicators. These gaps reflect deeply rooted biases in Bangladesh society that are institutionalized in the family, community and society as a whole. With the recent 30% reservation for women at all levels of political representation, women do now have greater access to decision makers. In practice, however, it is taking some time for

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31 Ibid, page 12
32 Siddiqui, T. Transcending Boundaries, Labor migration of Women from Bangladesh; University Press, Dhaka, 2001 and see discussions in paras. 95 - 104 below
33 World Bank, 2001, Engendering Development provides data demonstrating that investments in improving women’s skills increases family status more than comparative levels of investment in improving men’s skills.
these elected women to take leadership in their communities to promote women’s issues and
gender equality. This growing political empowerment of women has come about partly from
women’s struggle from within Bangladesh society, but also due to external pressures and
changes on traditional social practices from economic demands. As stated in a recent DFID
study\(^3^4\) few would have predicted in early 1980s that by the year 2000, 1.7-2 million women,
many from rural areas, would be working in the garment and food processing industries in
Bangladesh. Women’s rapid increased participation in the public sphere of the formal sector
has brought about significant changes in social structures as well, for these many thousands of
women, their families and their communities.

84. However, most other women remain effectively marginalized from decisions and
opportunities that could deeply affect their lives – education, health, access to credit, public
places where self-confidence and empowerment can be built. This starts early in life. Son
preference is still very strong in Bangladesh, and girls are considered to be a burden on the
family. In circumstances of extreme stress on a family, girls are more likely to be given away or
exchanged for money than sons. Girls in rural society in Bangladesh are beginning to go to
school more regularly as demonstrated by increased literacy rates. However, a much lower
percentage of the girls than boys continue to attend classes in higher grades.

85. Despite official efforts to
discourage payment of dowry upon
marriage, the practice that requires a
girl's parents to make payment of
property, goods or money upon a
daughter’s marriage, remains strong
in many areas of Bangladesh – as
elsewhere in South Asia. This
practice is part of the complex web
of ways that gender disparities are
maintained as girls are considered a
liability in their families, accentuating
the preference for sons who will
bring dowry payment into the family.

86. The impacts of these
practices on women are many - the
inability to give dowry by the girls’
parents has resulted in number of
violent measures against new brides including physical and mental abuse. The demand for
dowry can also facilitated traffickers in persuading parents to hand their daughters over to their
control, with the false prospects of ‘dowryless' marriage.

87. Lack of education condemns girls and women to low skilled labor, and limits options for
alternative income generating opportunities. Lack of status within the family and community,
coupled with no or little education, means that women are generally unaware of their rights or
entitlements to protection from the law, even when threatened by traffickers. Gender
stereotypes are used to reinforce women’s low status. Women are never encouraged to
challenge control by men and are expected to accept their position in life without complaint.
These stereotypes are reinforced in young women by a sense of helplessness and of being

\(^3^4\) Lawson-McDowall, J., *Key Gender Issues in Bangladesh*, DFID, 2001
unprotected without a man. All these factors play into the hands of opportunistic traffickers who can more easily control young women and break their spirit.

88. Some women are moving into decision-making positions in business and government. The quotas reserved for women in all levels of political office are leading to more and more women running for openly contested seats. Many efforts are being made through government and NGOs to build the capacity of these elected women to fulfill their mandates more effectively and take on greater leadership, especially concerning the empowerment of other women.

89. Combinations of social and economic empowerment are necessary for those women most exposed to risk as they seek to survive, often alone in a difficult and predominately masculine world. Traffickers, as illustrated above, recognize and play upon these hopes and fears. These vulnerabilities are particularly exposed when young girls or women are first away from their communities to seek new opportunities or dreams, or are excluded from social networks through stigmatization such as divorce, abandonment, or perhaps just desperate to get away from violent or abusive families.

90. As women are targeted more effectively in poverty reduction programs it is vital to recognize that outcomes may include greater mobility and migration of women. Even as poverty is reduced, exposure to the risk of trafficking will increase for these women, unless there are accompanying programs to provide safe and secure transportation, access to food and shelter and services such as help lines, protection from law enforcers etc.

91. **Children:** The overwhelming majority of children vulnerable to trafficking are those belonging to poor families with no assets or skills; for example from landless rural families, or who along with their parents’ factories, or in informal sector. Those most at risk are:

   (i) Children separated from their families or with disrupted family backgrounds (e.g. orphans, victims of abuse, unaccompanied children, children from single-parent families, or from families headed by children),

   (ii) Economically and socially deprived children (unemployed, poor, rural, and those without access to education, vocational training, or a reasonable standard of living),

   (iii) Children from other marginalized groups (e.g. certain minorities, and internally displaced persons), and

   (iv) Children from the conflict areas themselves.

92. There have been few studies of those children most at risk in Bangladesh. INCIDIN (a research and services NGO) has carried out two recent studies: one in 1997 for Red Barnet / Danish Save the Children; and, a second in 2001 for ILO/IPEC, Rapid Assessment on Child Trafficking in Children for Exploitative Employment in Bangladesh, the findings of which have yet to be released. The former focused on urban street children, and identified that from the study’s sample, almost 70% of those already involved in commercial sexual exploitation migrated into Dhaka from rural areas, but about 57% of these arrived with either one or both of their parents. This illustrates how many children are moving around alone – in the most vulnerable conditions to being trafficked. The study also noted that even when children arrived with their parent(s), the pressure of urban life on new migrants overcame their tenuous family ties and these children ended up on the street alone. From the same study it was found that
almost all those children interviewed stated they moved in search of jobs, triggered in 40% of the cases by sudden disasters such as loss of land, death of parents, or divorce of parents.35

93. The 1997 study also identified that despite the disintegration of social ties, gender biases remained and often intensifies among street children. They noted a heightened intensity of violence against the poor urban girls.

From the very beginning of the street life, the girl children are considered as ‘fallen’. This put the girl at the extreme risk of sexual abuse/assault. For these children, the gender-biased division of labor makes no other job as accessible as prostitution. Thus, there exits a social pressure, generated from male-charged sexist social moral values, which concerns the street girls, makes them vulnerable to sexual abuse, reduce their choice of profession and thereby make them highly vulnerable to prostitution.36

94. There are few facilities available that can serve as shelters or temporary homes for street children. There are persistent problems with the quality of care provided in those that exist, especially in long-term homes where many children might end up being institutionalized for years. Alternatives to this kind of care need to be urgently tested and funded, as well as the development of professional standards among care givers. While there are only limited and often sub-standard facilitates available, many trafficked persons and children will prefer the option of remaining in exploitative or abusive living conditions under the control of traffickers, or returning to life on the streets.

3. Trafficking and Migration

95. As it has already been identified, trafficking is inextricably part of the migration process as “traffickers fish in the stream of migration”. It is in this context that the links between trafficking and migration can be seen as a supply factor, providing a stream of vulnerable migrants to be coerced and deceived by opportunistic and unscrupulous traffickers. Migration and movement, however, is the key dynamic in the trafficking cycle, and as identified above in paragraph 65, migration policies from outside Bangladesh also influence trafficking flows.

a. Understanding Migration

96. Migration is commonly understood to involve the voluntary movement of persons within or across borders in search of a better means of livelihood. Some researchers contest this definition as not all migration can be understood through an analysis of the supply and demand for work and labor. Differences in income levels and employment opportunities between regions and countries certainly accounts for much migration, and can be seen to explain how certain traffickers, for example, identify industrial sectors that have a high demand for exploitable labor which cannot be met by whether the local labor market or voluntary labor.

36 Ibid, page 17
37 This material is taken from summary of a selection of articles in Cohn, R. edited. Theories of Migration: The international Library of Studies on Migration, 1996.
Hence labor recruiters will resort to deception, coercion and force in the recruitment and transportation system. Origin areas of trafficking will be identified by particularly low incomes making people so desperate that they fall victim to the promises of a trafficker.\(^{38}\)

97. This explanation, however, fails to address why some people remain in poor areas, or why in some villagers many leave while in neighboring communities none migrate. It is important to understand that individual personalities play a role in taking up adventure, and in the case of trafficking some are more easily deceived than others. Family links and traditional ties between source areas and destination points also play a role – as identified in the case studies above, and in several recent reports there is generally a combination of reasons for migrating or leaving a community.

b. Links to Trafficking

98. Migration is linked with trafficking in several ways. A person may voluntarily choose to migrate but may be deceived about the kind of work they are subsequently expected to do. In this case, what started as migration has become trafficking. Or, a person may willingly migrate for employment but may be trafficked on from the initial employment site (e.g., a garment factory, or household / domestic worker). The initial process was not trafficking and no crime was committed until the second phase of migration occurred. Hence, while trafficking normally involves migration, migration does not always involve trafficking. This distinction is significant for potential anti-trafficking interventions. Given that trafficking may occur either in a person's original home base (often a rural community) or in a subsequent work-site (often an urban area), interventions should cover both locations. Interventions should also recognize that in each site, the factors that create the need or desire to migrate and the vulnerability to being exploited by traffickers during migration might be quite different.

99. Likewise, it is important that anti-trafficking interventions consider their direct or indirect impact on a person's right to mobility. Anti-trafficking interventions can easily (and sometimes inadvertently) become anti-migration interventions. However, it is difficult to distinguish voluntary migration from trafficking at the departure point since the deception, if present, has not yet become apparent. It is only after arrival at an unexpected and exploitive outcome that the crime of trafficking is apparent.

100. Both of the major international anti-trafficking networks, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), agree that interventions should primarily focus on addressing the abuse of human rights occurring during migration or at the workplace rather than on hindering migration per se:

> With the traditional subsistence culture no longer a viable means of livelihood, women often migrate for their own survival. It is therefore imperative that a woman's right to mobility not be impinged upon but rather that the human rights of those who choose to migrate be secured.\(^{39}\)

101. Another distinction arises with respect to legal and illegal migration. Where legal migration across borders is not possible (e.g., because people lack the relevant documents or where the process of obtaining these is inaccessible to the poor and illiterate), people may

\(^{38}\) Willie, C., op. cit. p15.

\(^{39}\) WOREC/CEDPA Advocacy Against Trafficking in Women -Training Manual, Nepal 1999, p41
migrate illegally. If these persons are trafficked and subsequently intercepted by state authorities, the focus is usually upon their status as illegal migrants rather than as trafficked persons and the crimes committed against them go un-redressed.

102. As pointed out in a Nepalese study by WOREC/CEDPA (Centre for Development and Population Activities) "a holistic approach must be taken to focus upon the social, economic and political circumstances that force a woman to migrate instead of targeting her as a criminal and blaming her for the discrimination she faces." 40 Furthermore, the right of adults to make decisions about their lives must be respected, including decisions to work under abusive or exploitative conditions, as these conditions might be preferable to other available options. However, even when migrants know the type of difficult and dangerous work they will be required to perform, they only become victims of trafficking if their passports are confiscated, they are held in confinement through coercion, and otherwise are deprived of their freedom of movement and choice.

103. In situations where labor conditions are no worse than those expected by the worker and the worker is not deprived of her or his freedom of movement or choice, the abuser or exploiter remains criminally liable for other crimes, such as assault, unlawful detention, and labor abuses and for appropriate civil offenses. The existence of consent to work under such conditions does not excuse the abuser or exploiter from being subjected to the full force of domestic laws that prohibit such practices. But these circumstances do not include all the characteristics of trafficking.

104. The following sections outline trends and patterns in migration in Bangladesh over recent years. This provides a backdrop to the causes and range of risks many migrants face. The cost of these risks in some cases can be the harm outcomes of being trafficked, while in thousands of other cases the outcomes are positive.

c. Trends and Patterns of Women Migrants in Bangladesh

105. In early 1970s after independence, the Bangladesh government did not allow professionals and highly skilled people to migrate to stop a “brain-drain”. The embargo was lifted in mid-70s. But, there is no comprehensive policy either to encourage or discourage female migration. Records suggest that female professionals (doctors, engineers, nurses) left Bangladesh for employment abroad. In early 1981, through a presidential order, certain categories of female workers were barred from migrating overseas for employment. The order allowed professionals and skilled women to migrate. But, despite the embargo semi-skilled and unskilled women continued to leave the country. The measures were justified on the grounds that protecting the dignity of Bangladeshi women abroad is vital. In 1988, the government reviewed the policy and withdrew the ban. Instead it imposed a restriction on the migration of unskilled and semi-skilled women. It allowed government to consider migration of semi-unskilled women on a case-by-case basis.

106. Further in 1997, following wider ministerial consultations, government re-imposed a complete ban on women migration except for those who were highly qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers and teachers. In fact this is the first time that a ban was imposed even on professionals such as nurses, secretarial assistance, garment/factories workers along with other categories of semi and unskilled workers. Many argued this was necessary in the

face of several highly publicized cases of abuse suffered by women outside Bangladesh. Conservative elements in politics and Bangladesh society still feel that women should be protected. Facing criticism though from the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) and civil society, government revised the order allowing a few categories of women to work as domestic help if the employer belonged to any of the following three groups:

(i) Bangladesh Embassy Staff,
(ii) Financially solvent Bangladeshis such as doctors & engineers, and
(iii) Foreign passport holders of Bangladeshi origin or descent.

107. This ban has now been modified under a 1998 Circular to apply only to domestic workers for non-Bangladeshis, but the potential for more restrictive revisions to be reinstated remains.

108. Prof. T. Siddiqui in her book Transcending Boundaries\textsuperscript{41} notes that an increasing sense of independence and empowerment for many women – some who have been members of NGOs or working in the garment sector – has encouraged in women a desire to take on greater challenges, and hence migrate. Others feel more compelled to migrate as sudden disasters or family breakups remove other alternatives for survival. Because of the government’s current position regarding semi- or unskilled women migrant workers, there is little or no support provided to them overseas. Labor brokers are less active in seeking out opportunities for women, even for skilled women. In the past domestic workers have been handled primarily by travel agents who do not have access to official licenses and hence have been either obtaining permits by paying another extra layer of fees or acting illegally to facilitate women’s migration.\textsuperscript{42} This sector is therefore operating in the underground, making women even more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

109. A recommendation was made at the RETA National Consultation workshop that the government look more closely at the links between migration, especially the inability for unskilled women to seek employment abroad in a safe and orderly manner, and trafficking. It was proposed that the newly founded Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment and Expatriate Welfare take up this topic and build on the existing studies to identify where such efforts could begin. Many stakeholders and donors are also expressing increasing interest in building safe migration messages into anti-trafficking activities as an integral part of prevention strategies.

110. The Bangladesh Thematic Group to Counter Trafficking has also encouraged a similar group to form to consider the broader implications of migration on Bangladesh development, without limiting these discussions to trafficking concerns. In particular there is a concern that anti-trafficking messages leave the impression that all migration is bad, rather than balancing these concerns over the harm trafficking causes with the potential migration has to contribute to development. The first meeting of this group took place in April 2002 with great interest expressed by a range of government agencies as well as NGOs and researchers.

\textsuperscript{41} Siddiqui, T, \textit{Transcending Boundaries, Labor migration of Women from Bangladesh}; University Press, Dhaka, 2001, page 181
\textsuperscript{42} Siddiqui, op cit, page 188
4. Factors Associated with Governance

111. Governance is the system of government policies and programs necessary to perform a number of vital functions:
   - make decisions and coordinate policies;
   - establish an enabling environment for private sector growth;
   - deliver certain critical sets of goods and services; and;
   - promote equity. 43

112. Good governance for poverty reduction requires public policies that encourage the inclusion of the poor and other vulnerable groups in the development process. This involves pro-poor public expenditures, social services that are nearer to the users and have more relevance for the poor, policies that generate equity and access to socio-economic assets and enhanced social relations – including gender equity and the improved status of women. To improve governance, it is necessary to empower communities, individuals, and groups so that they can participate in decisions that affect their lives.

113. The decentralization of government decision-making regarding planning and delivery of services to the District, Upazilla and village levels have the potential to enable communities to ensure that services are more responsive to their needs. Women elected officials now make up 33% of these decision-making bodies at all levels and extensive efforts are underway to empower these women to respond to the needs of other marginalized women in their communities. However, empowering women to seize these opportunities is a long term process, and as identified above, those women most vulnerable to trafficking are the least likely to participate in social mobilization and remain unable to access services and programs that would build their resistance.

114. Enhanced service delivery is the aim of most ADB projects, but as noted in the recent medium-term agenda and action plan for promoting good governance 44 “a key need … is to transform the orientation of public services from inward-looking … to allow customers a greater say in the coverage and quality of services delivered…In the absence of competition, consumers need to have a forum to voice their opinions about the services provided which, in turn, requires government to provide such forums for opinions to be expressed and grievances to be dealt with.” As these approaches are implemented, it is vital that those most marginalized are assured their voices are also heard and that the empowerment of elected women officials is incorporated. A key step in this process has been ADB’s support to decentralizing governance and women’s empowerment.

115. Another aspect of good governance is the capacity to extend protection from criminal acts such as trafficking. Despite the existence of legislation intended to extend such protection, many of the most vulnerable are not aware of or able to access adequate protection. As discussed earlier, few cases of trafficking are registered with the police compared to the number of women and girls identified as missing. For examples the number of girl trafficking cases registered with the police is very few compared to the number of girls identified as missing. Conviction rates are also low. Bangladesh National Women’s Lawyers Association (BNWLA) has recorded data from July 2000 to March 2002 of a total of 123 cases filed (mainly by BNWLA themselves through their rescue and repatriation work -see paragraph 186 below) but only 5

43 ADB, Promoting Good Governance, ADB’s Medium Term Agenda and Action Plan, October 2000
44 Ibid.
cases were prosecuted.\textsuperscript{45} CWCS in a 2001 report noted that from 1993 to 1997, only 53 cases were placed before the court, out of which 35 had to be dropped for lack of adequate evidence. Only 21 traffickers were convicted, the highest punishment being 10 years imprisonment.\textsuperscript{46} Cases are not reported for many reasons, several of which can be linked to social silence and connivance. Local government officials and decision-makers also may not be aware or exposed to the complexities of how to offer protection from traffickers and hence do not follow up on cases, or understand the leadership roles they could play in ensuring that legislation is more effectively enforced.\textsuperscript{47} For example, most cases filed government against traffickers are under the Passport Act rather than the Trafficking Act.

\begin{center}
\textbf{C. Demand Factors}
\end{center}

116. Trafficked persons are not aware of their rights or fear stigmatization by the community. Stories are frequent of trafficked persons suffering more during their detention by police and subsequent humiliation and revictimization by the judicial system. Traffickers play on the fears of their victims who know that reporting perpetrators is dangerous and will only bring more harm. Many community members are also unwilling to provide additional evidence or act against neighbors or other people in their family who may be involved in trafficking, leaving trafficker operating in some areas with complete impunity. Local government officials and decision-makers are often not encouraged to follow up on cases or to take leadership in ensuring that legislation already in place is applied effectively.

\begin{itemize}
\item [Saleh’s family was] overjoyed when their aunt Jayeda Begum came to visit them from India after 20 years. She wanted Saleh to go back to India for a visit with her and her (Jayeda’s) brother-in-law Ead. At first her mother was reluctant but later gave her permission. Saleha was overjoyed to get a chance to have some recreation away from her poverty stricken family. They took her to Rajasthan and sold her to a man called Nadda Sheikh for Rs. 7500. Nadda Sheikh was an active member of an International Trafficking Ring. He failed to sell her, as he could not get a satisfactory price. [Saleh was rescued by local police but had to wait one and half years to be repatriated with assistance from BNWLA].
\end{itemize}

\textit{Source: BNWLA, 2001 “Movement against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation” October Special Bulletin - page 19.}

\begin{itemize}
\item 117. The demand for trafficked labor comes from a wide range of sectors, including: commercial sex work, where trafficked persons are required to provide sexual services in Bangladesh or are transported to India or other destinations such as Pakistan, Gulf States etc. There is also a demand for CSWs in Bangladesh in sites other than brothels or dance bars, such as in tea shops along highways and in small communities. Camps where temporary construction workers live have also been identified as sites where trafficked CSWs are brought as well as children abused through commercial sexual exploitation.
\item 118. There is also a growing demand for trafficked labor in factories where trafficked persons become debt-bonded to factory owners or coerced into work under slave-like conditions. Asia has become a center for low cost, labor intensive, manufacturing operations. Competition between countries in South Asia has driven the cost of labor further down encouraging some employers to use illegal practices such as bonded labor to access cheaper and cheaper labor sources.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{45} Interview with BNWLA, RETA team 2002
\textsuperscript{47} See sections on levels of enforcement of existing legislation in RETA 5948 Supplemental Study on Legal Frameworks Relevant to Human Trafficking in South Asia.
119. There are also some anecdotal accounts of trafficked child labor used as domestic workers, but this sector has not been explored extensively. There is resistance in many Asian countries as middle class professionals are strongly implicated in hiring child labor in their homes, whether trafficked or not. Children are also trafficked into the control of begging syndicates, camel jockeys in the Gulf States and other sectors of entertainment.

120. Addressing these demand factors is as important as the measures to address push or supply-side factors. There has been some effort made to improve labor standards in Bangladesh. These efforts are most successful when involving private sector partnerships and increased corporate responsibility. The demand for CSWs can also be tackled, for example through links with HIV/AIDS programming and awareness raising among contractors and in construction camps in infrastructure projects.

121. **Finding / Recommendation:** There is remarkably little work carried out on the demand conditions for trafficked labor. As governments and international agencies are starting to pay more attention to illegal and irregular migration patterns, the demand conditions that create profits for human smugglers to turn to direct trafficking should be examined and understood more carefully. There is potential for ADB to play a role in these efforts as labor market conditions form a key area in poverty analysis and policy dialogue at regional and country levels.

122. Increased awareness among local level governance structures (e.g. Union Parishad and other local elected officials, religious groups etc.) can also play a role in shaming those using trafficked labor into changing their practices. Governance projects could take up these issues as areas where rule of law and respect for labor practices has the potential for longer-term outcomes of reducing the demand for trafficked labor. Working in partnership with the private sector (as encouraged in ILO projects) to strengthen corporate responsibility for implementing Core Labor Standards is another avenue for action. It should be noted, however, that some South Asian countries are suspicious of the rationale of some organizations to push strongly for enforcement of labor standards, as some developed countries have used this issue as a mechanism to limit trade from cheap labor areas.48

**D. Impacts of Trafficking**

123. Another area with little or no attention paid to research or data collection, is regarding the impact of trafficking. The following are general areas that could provide additional arguments for advocacy with government and other stakeholders to address trafficking concerns more vigorously.

1. **Social Impacts**

124. Trafficking in Bangladesh exploits and perpetuates patriarchal attitudes and behavior that in turn undermine efforts to promote gender equality and eradicate discrimination against women and children. However, there are conflicting aspects to the social impacts of trafficking, as for many women, trafficking episodes, while cause harm, also provided opportunities to remove themselves from otherwise oppressive circumstances. As stated in Blanchet's recent study for USAID,49 women who have returned remained silent about their experiences, especially concerning CSW, and brought home with them not only some savings, but also more

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48 See recommendations in the RETA Regional Workshop Report.
experience of the world. Some of these women have managed to turn these experiences into personal empowerment within their communities. These cases can be termed "self-integrating" trafficked persons without assistance from NGO or government programs. In many other cases, however, the return home has proved too restrictive and they return once more to a migrant life. These experiences again point out how safe (or less harmful) migration experiences can be empowering for women, and the need for more understanding of how this can be achieved.

2. Economic Impacts

125. Economic losses to communities and governments are enormous if considered in terms of lost returns on human or social capital investments. The cost of countering criminal trafficking activities puts additional strain on already limited government resources for law enforcement. Vast amounts of potential income from trafficked labor are lost in “hidden” sectors such as CSW or is expropriated by criminal traffickers and diverted out of the formal economy and sent out of the country. There are many sectors of the Asian and Middle Eastern economies that rely upon low cost and often trafficked migrant labor, but if reasonable returns could be made on this labor by the migrants themselves and mechanisms are put in place which facilitate remittance and reinvestment of such savings to improve livelihoods in a sustainable manner, poverty conditions could be alleviated and the vulnerability to trafficking (as an outcome from risky migration) could be reduced. As sending, transit and receiving countries seek to stem trafficking and human smuggling activities, the economic benefits of safe migration should not be ignored.

3. Health Impacts and HIV/AIDS

126. Trafficked persons have often faced extreme psychological stress that in turn leads to trauma, depression and in some cases suicide. A trafficked woman or child may have been exposed to isolation, fear, sexual abuse, rape and other forms of physical and mental violence. Emotional stress in usually compounded by constant fear of arrest and public stigmatization making the thought of returning home fearful. These harms are both short term and long term. Mental health experts understand more about the enormous impact of post-traumatic stress over many years that might influence the capacity of a woman to care for her family or negotiate through future emotional challenges once the original harm has stopped. These impacts reach beyond the individual, requiring resources to be used from already overstretched health services.

127. Women and children located in the commercial sex sector either trafficked or otherwise, face higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases. Mobile populations in general face greater risks of contracting STDs as their family community lives are disrupted. Many of the children most at risk of being trafficked, particularly urban street children, are also considered to be high risk groups for contracting HIV/AIDS through drug use, sexual contacts and other behaviors. Stakeholders seeking to combat trafficking and to address HIV/AIDS are therefore working with similar risk groups and there are many examples of combined programming or collaborative approaches (e.g. UNDP HIV and Development Program for South and Southwest Asia - see paragraph 229 below ) that have ensured women and girls are empowered to protect themselves from HIV infection and resist or exit from trafficking experiences.
128. Increased incidence of HIV/AIDS is also believed to have lead to an increasing demand for younger commercial sex workers, who have higher probability of being free of diseases. There remains strong resistance amongst many men to recognize they are HIV carriers. There have also been reports of myths circulating that having sex with a virgin will actually cure STDs. Tragically these false notions are creating a market demand for younger girls even below 12 years of age. There are many highly innovative programs already in place in South Asia seeking to change high-risk behavior, particularly among mobile male populations that have the potential to contribute to curbing demand for some of the most exploited commercial sex workers.

129. However, links between trafficking and HIV/AIDS have to be explored with caution. Many trafficking awareness-raising campaigns have inadvertently conveyed the message to fearful communities that all trafficked persons are infected with the disease leading to further stigmatization of all women returning to their communities.\(^5\) There is also often tension between the public health objectives of HIV/AIDS programming and attempts to combat trafficking. In some cases, the delivery of public health messages concerning HIV/AIDS risks among CSWs has been carried out by co-opting the support of pimps or brothel owners, who are also abusing and exploiting child labor. Forced testing of returning migrants as a public health measure has also considerably increased stigmatization as women have been humiliated by the procedures and attitudes of health officials.

\(^5\) At the RETA Regional Workshop, May 27-29, 2002, WOREC from Nepal provided an example of this occurring in Nepal from their own early programming to combat health concerns among migrant women. Bangladeshi participants at the Regional Workshop confirmed this experience as being similar to that of other stakeholders in Bangladesh.
V. CURRENT PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES: ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES

130. A large number of government bodies, NGOs, International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs) and other civil society organizations in Bangladesh are initiating anti-trafficking intervention programs. The following sections review government and NGO stakeholders and programming in prevention, interception / rescue and integration activities. The analysis is intended to provide guidance and recommendations for ADB to more effectively mainstream trafficking concerns into its operations and policy dialogue. The findings are also of relevance to certain objectives of the GOB NPA and to the SAARC Convention, particularly Article VIII. Anti-trafficking programming strategies have three basic components.

Figure 3: Anti-Trafficking Programming Strategies

A. Preventive Approach

131. The expected outcome of the preventive approach is that the number of trafficked persons will be reduced. To achieve this outcome preventive activities in Bangladesh have mainly targeted two components awareness raising among the community members, vulnerable groups, community leaders, government officials, police, lawyers doctors; and community empowerment through social mobilization, improvement of livelihood opportunities and safe migration initiatives.

132. Initially several Dhaka-based NGOs implemented preventive activities (rallies, consultation meetings, village level meetings, workshops, distribution of leaflets, brochures and
posters, staging roadside dramas, songs and advertisement through radio and TV etc.). Gradually they expanded their activities as their understanding of community needs evolved and they started working in the border and trafficking prone areas through networks of NGOs and grass-roots level organizations. Initially the preventive approach concentrated on raising the awareness of different stakeholders (both government and civil society) about the existence and harms of trafficking of humans and the scope of the problem in Bangladesh.

133. Until the government had recognized trafficking as a problem, it was very difficult for NGOs to work on this issue under the umbrella supervision of NGO Affairs Bureau of GOB. The increased scope of current government policies and programs indicates that it has now recognized the fact that children and women are being trafficked to India, Pakistan and the Middle East with outcomes of abusive and exploitative situations. In the Fourth Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh a separate chapter was written on the issue of trafficking and immoral movement of human being.

134. However these efforts are only a beginning, as many aspects of the complex area of trafficking have not been fully addressed. For example: the potential role migration management might play in combating trafficking and effectively reducing vulnerabilities to the risks of trafficking; and the challenge of monitoring comparative effectiveness of different approaches has yet to be achieved.

135. NGOs have been the pioneers in bringing this invisible crime into the public domain through continuous efforts such as conducting research and studies, and through advocacy and lobbying with governments. In 1997 BNWLNA and CWCS published their ground-breaking study findings that received extensive media coverage.

1. **Government Initiatives in Prevention of Human Trafficking Problem**

136. Several ministries have undertaken projects or activities to prevent trafficking of children. These include:

a. **Ministry of Women and Children Affairs**

137. A three year pilot project, Child Development: Coordinated Program to Combat Child Trafficking (CPCCT) supported by NORAD is being implemented by the Department of Women Affairs under the MWCA. The main objective of the project is to conduct motivational activities and to support the efforts of organizations working in the areas of prevention, rescue, repatriation and reintegration of survivors of trafficking. The Project Proforma (PP) was approved on June 26, 2000 and scheduled to start its activities in January 2000 but it actually started in November 2000 with the joining of the Project Director. Initial activities have included: 3 training of trainers (TOT) workshops for BDR, Police (CID) and Ansar –VDP were organized where 95 officials participated. Training Manuals and information booklets were developed by the project to increase the understanding levels of Law Enforcement Officials under Ministry of Home Affairs. A folder with anti trafficking slogans has been produced, as well as material for TV spots prepared.

138. The project has a Steering Committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary, MWCA (see Appendix 2 for the structure of the project) responsible for reviewing progress and addressing constraints to the implementation of the project. There is a 16-member Project
Implementation Unit including 4 NGO representatives that is responsible for the overall implementation of the project. The project has also established a National Task Force chaired by the Minister for Home Affairs. The task force is mandated to review actions under taken by the project including rescue of trafficked children and punishing the child traffickers. District and Upazila Task Forces are being set up to increase the awareness of law enforcement agencies related to anti-trafficking efforts and to implement decisions taken by the Steering Committee. NGOs are also involved in the implementation of the project, particularly rescue, repatriation, reintegration and creating social awareness.

139. The project is currently under review and the Project Proforma (PP) revised to strengthen some aspects of its implementation, particularly regarding coordination among different elements and agencies. It should be noted that this government project only focuses on children and does not include women. This tendency to focus on children has been reinforced through the adoption of the National Plan of Action to implement commitments made at the Yokohama Conference in December 2001, again to counter the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children only. There is a great need to undertake a comprehensive anti-trafficking program for all trafficked persons, women, children and men. There are many instances of men being trafficked while migrating either irregularly or legally.

140. MWCA is also implementing a project titled, “Empowerment and Protection of Children and Women” which was started in 2001 with the support from UNICEF. The project addresses children in especially difficult circumstances, including street children and trafficked children. The Ministry also received support for the preparation of assessment of progress on NPA since Stockholm Declaration for the Yokohama Conference. These activities included the preparation of some best practices as well as the draft NPA, which has since been approved by cabinet and is now under early planning stages of implementation.

141. In August 2001, a five-year initiative program also started jointly with the government, UNICEF and Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) a Child Rights apex body of 120 organizations, in which Bangladesh Television will show weekly a 25 minutes program on children’s rights to create greater awareness. Messages will include information about child trafficking and child sexual abuse of children.

142. MWCA is implementing a further 28 projects with direct links to poverty reduction, gender mainstreaming, micro credit policy, empowerment of women, capacity building etc. in rural areas. As identified by the Joint-Secretary in her presentation to the RETA Regional Workshop, these projects also contribute to preventing trafficking, and the MWCA welcomes ADB’s proposed approach to more explicitly incorporate trafficking concerns into its poverty reduction programs.

b. Ministry of Home Affairs

143. A special anti-child trafficking cell has been established in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Two other cells, one in BDR and the other one in Police (CID) have been formed under the supervision of Ministry of Home Affairs. The functions of the cells are to identify those involved in trafficking and arrest them and promptly rescue the trafficked persons.

144. Training for border police has been delivered by the Ministry of Home Affairs and two NGOs. However, sessions are organized only on an ad hoc basis. Trafficking issues were not covered in the existing training manual of the law enforcing agencies. Recently in the basic
course of Ansar-VDP a separate chapter has been included on trafficking issues. This is an important step as the Ansar-VDP has direct links with the community. Training and building awareness of how best to receive and process trafficked persons is a key as these enforcement officers play vital roles in combating trafficking of women and children.

145. IOM has completed a different one year pilot project, “Capacity Building of Law Enforcement Officials to Prevent Trafficking of Women and Children” in 2001 funded by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). IOM conducted 2 training workshops with 35 Master Trainers from police, BDR and Ansar-VDP for assessing training needs and developing a usable training manual. Four training courses were conducted for 107 law enforcement officials. These trainings dealt with improving the investigation and interview skills of the officials and increasing cooperation between government and NGOs to prevent trafficking and identify trafficking/illegal migration. Three hundred Bangla and 60 English versions of the training manual were produced and distributed among government officials and NGOs who are working on combating trafficking of women and children.

146. Existing and planned initiatives to train the police, magistrates and judges on child rights is expected to improve the implementation and enforcement of existing legislation. It would provide orientation to workers of both government and non-government organizations engaged at grassroots level on effects/consequences of trafficking so that they become aware of the issues and can create awareness among the communities where they work. Dissemination of information about trafficking to law enforcement officials and increased efforts to take strict action against law enforcement officials themselves involved in trafficking are expected outcomes. In recent years, the police have been more active in apprehending cases of border as well as internal trafficking and have arrested some traffickers.

c. Ministry of Social Welfare

147. The Department of Social Services, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, has been implementing a project, titled "Capacity-Building, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Livelihood of the Socially Disadvantaged Women and their Children", supported by UNDP. Under this project ‘shelter homes’ have been created for children of sex workers outside 5 brothels and for street-based sex workers in Dhaka. Crèche facilities offered for children aged 0-5 years, are available 24 hours a day as well as boarding facilities for adolescent girls and boys who may be most at risk of being sexually abused and exploited. Non-formal education, formal education, health education (including HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention), vocational training and other services are provided to women and their children. The project is implemented through some NGOs, such as Nari Maitree, INCIDIN Bangladesh and PLACT. There is potential for ADB urban infrastructure projects to links with these kinds of activities and drawn upon the technical experience of the NGOs and Ministry of Social Welfare to identify how trafficking concerns could be addressed. For example, where a shelter home could be constructed as part of other service delivery infrastructures to be managed and monitoring through existing anti-trafficking stakeholders.

148. A second Department of Social Services project, supported by UNDP is “Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children’s Environment (ARISE)”. This project has undertaken a holistic approach comprising 12 components, including: support to street children with drop-in shelters; non-formal education; opportunities for vocational training; health services and

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51 Interview with MWCA, 2000
counseling through partner NGOs and government partners. This project will contribute in addressing the need for safe shelter homes where non-formal education and vocational skills training can be offered, opening opportunities to the children to establish or integrate into mainstream society more fully. But the non-formal education primers used for the children under this project did not include human trafficking issues. All ongoing non-formal educational support system should include the trafficking issues as a social and economic problem.

149. Although these two projects are not specifically designed to address trafficking directly, they contribute indirectly to prevention. However these projects only target vulnerable street children not women or other vulnerable children living under difficult circumstances (e.g. in rural areas).

d. **Ministry of Information**

150. Ministry of Information in co-operation with the project CPCCT under MWCA has produced information material both for electronic and print media to raise awareness and build resistance to trafficking. Twenty Awareness Raising programs have been developed to telecast on all the TV channels. Short 5 minutes films have also been developed to play in 1000 cinema halls through the country. In addition, 48 radio programs will be broadcast under the project.

e. **Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment**

151. Very recently a new Ministry has been established with the mandate to promote orderly migration and protect the interest of migrant workers, in their country of origin and country of destination. Through this Ministry and agencies like BMET and IOM, it aims to provide prospective migrants with information that can help them resist preparing them as prospective migrant workers.

152. Moreover, the government, with the technical assistance from IOM, is working to develop a policy and National Plan of Action on Migration Management, including implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families 1990 (after it comes into force). Many stakeholders in Bangladesh argue that improve migration management and the dissemination of safe migration messages will assist considerably in the prevention of trafficking.

153. As a support to the government in preparation for these policy level initiatives, IOM commissioned five studies in relation to Migration Process, Use of Remittances, Migration Management system and situation of migrant workers and their families. Bangladesh Institution of Development Studies (BIDS) and Refugee Migratory Movement and Research Unit (RMMRU) of Dhaka University, helped IOM to conduct these studies. A consultation will be held under the leadership of new Ministry for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment. A project with IOM has also recently been approved to provide institutional support to this new Ministry.

2. **NGO Initiatives in Prevention**

154. In Bangladesh, a large number of national, regional and grassroots level NGOs have been actively involved in anti-trafficking activities. NGOs conducting Awareness Raising activities aimed at alerting persons through mass information campaigns, rallies, street theater, workshops, seminars distribution of IEC materials, peer education in the work place, education
during other social mobilization activities in the village. The main targets for these types of activities include community members, vulnerable groups, community stakeholders, government functionaries, law enforcement agencies, lawyers, journalist and doctors.

155. Community Empowerment is another activity through which some NGOs are working to prevent human trafficking covering three sub activities:
- Social mobilization through group formation with capacity building and community support systems for people in difficult circumstances;
- Improvement of livelihood opportunities through income generation, vocational training, micro credit, cooperatives; and
- Safe migration Initiatives through information support, health assistance for migrants.

156. The following sections present some activities of leading NGOs. Many hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are incorporating anti-trafficking and prevention messages in their work. Larger NGOs work with these CBOs to develop and disseminate materials. Action Against Trafficking Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC) maintains a list of NGOs/CBOs working in this area.

157. In building awareness, creating community vigilance, creating informal contacts and referral systems, the Association for Community Development (ACD), based in Rajshahi, has helped to protect and prevent children from being trafficked. While many police and NGOs working in this area have either no links to each other or adversarial ones, ACD stands out as they have positive working relationships with the police, encouraging them to bring lost and rescued children to the ACD Shelter Home. ACD has also developed positive relationships in the district with the local elected members of the Union Parishads and other leading community members.

158. ACD has also developed peer educators in their groups for adolescent girls, boys and young men who meet regularly. They discuss reproductive health, early marriage, dowry, divorce, polygamy, trafficking (the area is a popular transit point for cross-border trafficking and migration), sexual exploitation, etc. As a group, girls have identified a suspected trafficker and informed the Union Parishad Chairman. They also inform the ACD staff if they know a girl is going to get married to an Indian man (a common means of trafficking girls).

159. ACD is also implementing a prevention project with financial support from Save the Children Denmark and NORAD to combat Children and Women Trafficking. The preventive activities mainly concentrate on organizing trainings, workshops, seminars, rallies, courtyard meeting and the distribution of

Salma is the fourth among her five sisters. Salma did not go to school. She was a helping hand in the household activities and used to carry food for her father in the field. As she was growing a local [man] targeted her. He convinced her father to send Salma to India. The trafficker assured him that she will be arranged a nice job there. Salma was given a job in a Beedi factory in Maldah district in India. She was assigned to prepare 1000 pieces of tobacco sticks a day. Her failure ... appropriated ... severe beating. She had to work fifteen hours a day and many a times she was not given food. Salma cried in vain and many of her attempts to escape failed. After three months she was transferred to another factory but the treatment was the same.

When ACD started awareness raising programme in the area Salma’s father realized that his daughter had been trafficked and they contacted ACD Area Office to help to return Salma back to Bangladesh. ACD with the trafficker finally brought Salma back. She is now living at [ACD] shelter home.

leaflets, booklets and posters. Recently they have undertaken a project, with the financial contribution from IOM, to build capacity of 196 Union Parishad members and Chairmen of 15 Union Parishads to combat trafficking. These 196 members will form 15 Union level Counter Trafficking Committees to implement village based action plans to combat the problem.

160. **Bangladesh Women Lawyers Association** (BNWLA) a legal aid organization has been implementing its anti-trafficking projects since 1993. The active leadership role of the organization contributed a great deal to bring the issue into the mainstream. BNWLA continues to conduct meetings with the community people, social leaders, and law enforcement agencies to prevent trafficking in children and women. Under the project, “Protection and Legal Action against Women and Children Trafficking” it has set up 10 Focal sites in 10 districts. Some districts were selected as collection or recruiting area, some as transit and some as exit areas for trafficking. The main task of these 10 focal sites are to collect information through investigation of incidents, creating public awareness by organizing meetings, workshops with different stakeholders, maintaining liaison with police stations, jails, courts and journalists. BNWLA has published booklets, fact sheet, and posters on anti-trafficking issues. BNWLA is also updating a database on trafficked persons. NORAD, Save the Children Denmark, USAID, and ILO have been providing financial assistance for implementation of different projects in the area of anti trafficking and human rights issues.

161. Similarly **Rights Jessore**, a local NGO has been operating a mass information campaign in the Jessore district to mobilize different professionals to combat human trafficking. DANIDA has been supporting this activity for more than two years. Recently Rights Jessore organized a two-day dialogue session between the NGOs of Bangladesh border area and West Bengal. Seven NGOs from West Bengal participated in the dialogue session on collaboration between the two countries. (During these sessions, the need for a bilateral treaty with smoother mechanisms for repatriation is frequently identified - see paras. below for more discussions regarding rescue and repatriation.) Very recently Rights Jessore has also undertaken capacity building of local government representatives in combating trafficking of women and children. 196 Union Parishad (UP) members and chairmen received training on how to combat trafficking problems in their own constituencies, and formed 15 Counter Trafficking Committees with other influential social leaders from the same Unions. These CTC is also organizing rallies, meetings, and mikings at the local *hats*,\(^{52}\) as a part of their social actions against human trafficking.

162. **The Center for Women and Children Studies (CWCS)** has been working to raise mass awareness about trafficking since 1997. Presently, the Centre has been working especially in 8 northern districts namely Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonihat, Nilphamary, Rangpur, Panchagarh and Thakurgaon, to create awareness through campaigns, workshops and dialogues with members of the community, professionals, local leaders, law enforcing agencies and local administration at the district, upazila and village levels. Also in February 2002, CWCS facilitated a workshop funded by the World Bank to develop action plans and exchange programming ideas for trafficking prevention.

163. Similarly, **Dhaka Ahsania Mission** (DAM) has a Children and Women Trafficking Prevention Pogramme (CWTP), to raise awareness regarding different aspects of trafficking. DAM has produced different types of educational materials on trafficking issue based on community level consultations.

\(^{52}\) Market place or bazaars
164. **Action Against Trafficking Sexual Exploitation of Children** (ATSEC) a network of 15 NGOs, has been implementing two projects, one "Nationwide Campaign for Prevention of Trafficking in Children and Women" and "Combat Child and Women Trafficking". ATSEC mainly implements its projects in partnership with NGOs to raise awareness of trafficking of children among vulnerable populations, particularly rural women and border region communities. ATSEC has also developed a Resource Center to provide culturally sensitive information about counter trafficking issue. Recently with the technical assistance from Bangladesh Centre for Communication Programs (BCCP), ATSEC Bangladesh Chapter has been developing a large program (funded by USAID) to produce IEC materials and implement a comprehensive campaign nationwide. This project also seeks to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to build anti trafficking initiatives into their overall programming. Fifteen NGOs have received technical assistance for implementing some prevention activities in the 15 border areas. ATSEC is also creating some billboards with anti trafficking messages and slogans as part of its information campaign. ATSEC has also been updating a database on survivors of trafficking.

165. **Breaking the Silence**, an organization working on the issue of non-commercial sexual abuse of children has developed groups of adolescent girls (15 volunteers) and boys (10) who will begin imparting messages about child sexual abuse through a Child-to-Child approach. They inform their classmates and arrange discussions with adults in the Mirpur area where Social Counselor discusses the issue with mothers in the community.

166. **INCIDIN Bangladesh**, a research organization, has been implementing a project, “Misplaced Childhood” aimed at providing a drop-in-center support services in Dhaka City. Currently they have engaged 4 girls and 4 boys as peer educators, all of whom are ‘sex workers’ who receive training for disseminating information to their peers. INCIDIN Bangladesh aims to build up their skills and encourages them with training to find other non-exploitative jobs and employment.

167. **Karmojibi Kalyan Sangstha (KKS)**, an NGO in Rajbari had been supporting a primary school outside Daulotdia brothel for children of sex workers and local children. The school followed the government non-formal primary education from Class 1-5. The girls who feared that they too, like their friends, would be initiated into prostitution went to the KKS office and explained that they did not want to go back home. The mothers visited, but the girls wanted assurance that they could trust their mothers not to initiate them in sex work. The NGO has eventually had to build a proper ‘safe home’ away from the brothel.

3. **Research / Survey and Studies as a Prevention Approach**

168. Many researches, studies and surveys have been carried out in recent years on the issue of trafficking in women and children. Some are national surveys, while others have been done in pocket areas or based on media coverage of incidents being reported to the police or found during investigative report writing. There is no in-depth study of the issue of demand side.

- In 1997, with the financial assistance from Save the Children Denmark and UNICEF, BNWLA conducted a nationwide survey to present an overview of trafficking of women and children in the 46 districts of Bangladesh. CWCS has also carried out several studies, e.g. for CARE Bangladesh regarding sexual exploitation of children in brothels in Bangladesh.
• In 1997, with the financial assistance from Save the Children Denmark CWCS also carried out a study in two pocket areas to identify the dynamics of trafficking and its underlying causes.

• In 1999, Save the Children UK also carried out a study on the issue of family attitudes towards the girl child trafficking. In the year 2000, with the financial assistance from USAID, a network of NGOs ATSEC Bangladesh chapter also prepared a preliminary directory of NGOs working in the area of child and women trafficking and sexual abuse.

• In 2001 with the financial assistance from IOM, CWCS also scanned newspaper reports of the period from/of 1990-1999 on ‘Mapping Missing, Kidnapped and Trafficking of Children and Women’ and developed a series of maps based on these data. A synopsis of this data is presented in paragraphs 64-65 above. While these are far from accurate trends it does provide indicative maps of source districts, transit district and routes out of Bangladesh can be developed from the data. This is also a first initiative in the area of trafficking of women and children to use geographical information systems (GIS) technologies to present the findings.

• In 2001 IOM also provided assistance to an individual researcher, Ms Natasha Ahmed, to investigate the situation of Bangladeshi and Nepalese trafficked persons in India.

• Recently ICDDR has produced an extensive study on “Overview of Current Activities in Bangladesh” The initiative was financed by USAID. ILO/IPEC is also carried out a rapid assessment on child trafficking in Bangladesh, based on an ILO/UNICEF model, in 3 sending areas over a three-month period. A research organization INCIDIN- Bangladesh commissioned for this assignment and report has been finalized but has yet to be released.

• Therese Blanchet and Drishti Research Centre have also recently released a one-year study that was commissioned by USAID. In interviews with over 500 women migrants returned from or still located in Kuwait and India regarding their motivations to migrate and experiences. The findings provide more specific data regarding the way in which unskilled Bangladeshi women are migrating out of Bangladesh, despite current government policies and the wide range of risks to which they are exposed. The study also is significant in that it uncovers the complex range of reasons that compel women to remain in or return to situations of exploitation - these reasons are not all negative.

169. No studies have been carried out from the perspective of demand or pull factors that influence trafficking activities, beyond those carried out by ILO concerning child labor. ILO has also carried out a short-term study, which reflected that internal trafficking is much more than cross border trafficking. Very little study has been done on the scope and characteristics of internal trafficking issue.

4. Networking for Prevention of Trafficking

170. To address the need to work together for combating such complex and organized crimes as trafficking in Bangladesh, local NGOs have formed local, regional, national and international networks. There are several networks (ATSEC Bangladesh chapter, Traffic Watch Bangladesh, and Local Journalist group in the northern part of Bangladesh, Resistance, CATW, GATW etc.) that have been working mainly in the areas of prevention and advocacy / lobbying policy makers both at national and international levels. This has been done by increasing the understanding of
trends and politics of trafficking, building capacity at local, national and regional levels and working jointly to pressurize and influence policy makers and government by mobilizing community leaders and other important stakeholders. The nature of the networks in Bangladesh varies from one another. Resistance is a regional network, CATW and GAATW are international, Traffic Watch Bangladesh is in-country regional, the journalist group is local (only based in northern part of Bangladesh) and ATSEC- Bangladesh Chapter is national with links to similar or affiliated networks in India and Nepal. ATSEC is organizing a massive information campaign in 20 districts of the country. ATSEC Bangladesh Chapter also currently serves as regional secretariat for chapters in West Bengal, Delhi in India and Nepal and has close links with other networks outside Bangladesh (ECPAT, SAFAT etc.).

171. In Bangladesh, MWCA in cooperation with UNICEF has organized a core group to work on the issue of commercial sexual abuse and trafficking of children. At present this group is facilitating a collaborative approach among the broad range of stakeholders in Bangladesh to implement the recently approved NPA, which reflects commitments made by the GOB in the SAARC Convention and Yokohama declaration.

172. Action Aid Bangladesh Office has also encouraged its local partner NGOs to work jointly on anti-trafficking issues. Before the general election, for example, this local partner groups organized a ‘Consultation Meet’ with the major political parties in Bangladesh to encourage them to incorporate trafficking issues in their political manifesto and to express their commitment in combating the problem.

5. Analysis / Findings

173. As poverty is identified as a leading cause of trafficking, a slogan for trafficking preventive interventions could be “combat poverty to combat trafficking”. The NPA does identify key aspects of poverty reduction activities, which could be used to guide the incorporation of human trafficking concerns into its major poverty alleviation programs and ongoing projects. It has been reflected in many studies conducted by NGOs, that the issue of poverty, lack of livelihood security, lack of employment opportunities and unequal access by women to resources, play a significant role in accelerating trafficking. Combating trafficking could be more consistently considered a cross cutting social and economic issue.

174. Understanding who is most vulnerable to trafficking, and combating the risks faced by those most vulnerable can contribute to effective targeting of poverty reduction programming. Such targeted programs would therefore address issues such as social exclusion and contribute to the rebuilding of social and human capital for those most at risk to being trafficked.

175. The following types of activities could be built into poverty reduction operations:
   
(i) Government run non-formal education support services for vulnerable groups, such as adolescent girls. The present primers in use by different non-formal education institutions or organizations (both government and NGOs) do not include reference to trafficking issues. The Directorate of Nonformal education, under Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, has been implementing a project, “Family Life Education” (FLE), with the financial assistance from UNFPA. This FLE primer has incorporated the reproductive health issues, negative effects of early marriage and a good family life situation. Similarly the issue of trafficking as a health, social and economic risk could be
incorporated in the primers. This information might help women and children to tackle the risk they may be exposed to in their communities or during migration.

(ii) Some NGOs like ACD in Rajshahi, SHISUK in Sirajgong and Comilla, Resource Bangladesh in Dhaka, Nari Maitree and TCSD in Dhaka, BITA and UDDIPAN in Chittagong have incorporated child and women trafficking issues together with their non-formal education services. Bilateral and multilateral development partners who are supporting non-formal education sector in Bangladesh should also promote inclusion of such messages.

(iii) Governments, in cooperation with NGOs, can provide mass information campaigns to prevent human trafficking. Campaigns could not only provide information about causes and consequences of trafficking, but also include how the community and civil society can play much more constructive roles in combating trafficking in their respective trafficking prone areas. This information might cover how elected Union Parishad members of local government, police, BDR, Ansar-VDP under Ministry of Home Affairs can take leadership in combating trafficking in their communities and be more accountable for providing protection to those vulnerable to these criminal activities.

(iv) Community participation is a key to effectively reduce trafficking. All programming that promotes the empowerment of women and children has the potential to reduce their exposure to trafficking risks, and provide tools to build resistance. Community solidarity is also required to overcome the environment of impunity from prosecution in which many traffickers operate. Increasing the understanding of the harm caused by trafficking to a community needs to be reinforced and accountability for the protection and safety of those most vulnerable, particularly children needs to be strengthened.

(v) In such circumstances, community policing can be introduced to increase the vigilance by police, in partnership with local communities and local level administrative bodies. Community surveillance has raised awareness of who might be at risk among a broader group and can also increase commitment to limit traffickers operations in their communities. However, care must be taken not to equate all women leaving their communities with trafficking and hence have community surveillance become a mechanism for controlling women and girls. Similarly, naming and shaming tactics taken up by some community vigilance groups has tended to increase suspicion of all strangers and marginalized new migrants.

176. Prevention activities can be considerably strengthened if the demand for trafficked labor is reduced. Labor standards legislation and regulation can be improved, with more effective enforcement encouraged through capacity building with appropriate government agencies. HIV/AIDS awareness activities among truck drivers have in some cases changed behavior to reduce the number of sexual partners. These programs could also be used to raise awareness of trafficking activities. These types of behavior change can be reinforced through government regulation of work practices. For example, improving working conditions for truck drivers in

54 Examples were provided from Bangladesh and Nepal at the RETA Regional Workshop, Manila May 27-29, 2002
Maharashtra in India has had an impact on the demand for CSWs along the highways to the extent that the previous focus of the State HIV/AIDS prevention programming on this high-risk group has been reduced.

177. At the same time, networking among the government and NGOs is also essential for wider dissemination of information on issues like trafficking. NGOs working on trafficking in Bangladesh have been organizing national, regional and international networking to share information and experiences. Moreover, given the magnitude of the problem, it was felt that more concerned efforts are needed of many organizations. Networking has thus enabled these organizations to play supportive roles particularly in the processes of awareness raising, rescue and rehabilitation.

178. During the period of 1996-97 MWCA experienced working in a coordinated manner with other Ministries while they developed “National Action Plan for Advancement of Women”. Twelve Ministries worked together under the coordination of MWCA for carrying out Sectoral Need Assessment (SNAT) follow up of Beijing Platform for Action (PFA). A core group was formed with the memberships of different ministries, external experts and donor agencies. CIDA, DANIDA, NORAD, WB and UNDP financially contributed in the whole process. As a result of this coordination effort the National Plan of action and The National Women Policy were adopted in the year 1997. Similar initiatives can be initiated as the National Plan of Action against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, including Trafficking is implemented under the coordination of MWCA.

179. Care has to be taken so that anti-trafficking initiatives do not discourage voluntary migration for better livelihood options. The newly established Ministry for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment and the Labor Ministry should take necessary steps to strengthen safe migration management for mutual benefits of the migrant workers and the countries of origin and destination. Bangladesh should participate fully with its human resources in the globalizing labor market. To participate policies and mechanism should be introduced to prepare potential workers for these markets, such as safe migration information for those most vulnerable. This will also help also in prevention of irregular movement as well as trafficking.

180. After the Yokohama Declaration and the signing of SAARC Convention on Trafficking, MWCA, in cooperation with UNICEF and ILO has been finalizing a National Plan of Action for Sexual Abuse of Children, including Trafficking. But there is a strong need to have a concrete policy and action plan for combating trafficking in women and children. It should be noted here that trafficking in women is often conflated with trafficking of children despite the differences in causes and consequences.

181. Additionally, Bangladesh and India can look at the relationship between natural disasters and trafficking, and work towards a strategy for disaster preparedness from the point of view of trafficking of women and children. Building social capital through community-based activities can help ensure that physical and social dislocation does not lead to vulnerability to trafficking, especially for women and girls. Disaster early warning mechanisms can also incorporate anti-trafficking and safe-migration messages as communities and individuals plan for possible displacement.

B. Interception / Rescue

1. Government Initiatives in Interception
182. The CPCCT project of Women Affairs Department under the MWCA provides for setting up temporary shelters in 25 Upazilas and one Rehabilitation Center for rescued children. However, it is not clear if this component will be continued once the revised PP is in place. The project has encountered difficulties in locating suitable premises, and there is concern about the capacity of the agencies to provide adequate standards of care. As identified above, there is an ongoing need to review and rethink how temporary shelter is provided to children, and the potential to adopt more innovative ways of caring for trafficked persons without inflicting more harm or stigmatization. These are difficult issues to address given the funding constraints for MWCA.

183. The actual operation of rescuing trafficked children falls within the mandate of the Home Ministry while the MWCA undertakes programs and activities for prevention and rehabilitation. The main current activities are in the area of training, communication, management of information system, repatriation, providing temporary shelter and rehabilitation to rescue children. In addition, the Ministry is responsible for imparting awareness training to journalists, lawyers, teachers, youths, health and family planning workers and the employees of the Department of Women Affairs.

184. The Local Government Division, under the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperative, has attempted to enforce registration of all births, deaths and marriages. The objectives of these efforts are to strengthen the registration system, collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated vital statistics and to establish the right to identity of children including girl child and to facilitate protection of the rights of married women. Target groups are women and girls. As per the Local Government Act now in the process of being drafted one of the major responsibility of the Union Parishad (UP) is enforcement of registrations of birth, death and marriage, to simplify the registration procedures and take it close to the people and prepare simple messages for the general pubic on the importance of birth, death and marriage registration and procedures for such registrations. There is also provisions for orienting UP members, local NGOs and women’s organizations and government functionaries such as FWAs, FWVs and marriage registrars to the importance of this legislation. LGD plans to undertake public education program (seminars, workshops, drama, kabigan (folk song) etc.) by UP members jointly with local NGOs women’s organizations, government functionaries in their respective constituencies, use of the media (radio, TV) to create public awareness on vital registration and monitor the registrations. While, the main objective of these programs is to reduce child labor and early marriage, NGOs like Khan Foundation and ACD in Rajshahi, with the financial support from NORAD, have been organizing training courses for empowerment of local government elected female members of UPs to introduce anti-trafficking messages into these birth and marriage registration campaigns.

185. Local Government should review the mandate of Chairs and elected members to incorporate obligations to work for social and economic justice as well as the delivery of services, such as distribution of wheat under VGD program and re-excavation of ponds and
water bodied. Oxfam UK has argued\(^{55}\) that elected officials - particularly women - in local government should be encouraged to take leadership on trafficking issues and assist trafficked persons in taking out cases against traffickers. Elected women have potential to assist trafficked victims in seeking justice through the local Salish systems, as this lowest level of government is the most accessible form of justice to most poor community members. Oxfam is focusing much of its anti-trafficking efforts on awareness raising and capacity building at this level of government.

2. **NGOs initiatives Interception / Rescue**

186. **BNWLA** is the pioneer national NGO that started its work rescuing trafficked victims and providing them with legal assistance. It now also initiates legal action against traffickers and works with its counterparts in India to help trafficked victims return to Bangladesh. They currently run one of the largest shelter homes in Bangladesh. After identifying victims of internal trafficking through extensive investigation in brothels and police stations by its Field Officers and Investigators, BNWLA rescue and release survivors of trafficking from various confinements with the assistance of law enforcing agencies. For cross border trafficking cases they organize repatriation of survivors with the assistance of partner organizations and concerned government departments of both India and Bangladesh.\(^{56}\)

187. BNWLA has a comprehensive recovery program for trafficked persons. The program includes providing safe shelter in a home equipped with requisite facilities, medical treatment, psycho-social counseling support, formal and non-formal education, recreational and vocational training on various trades including computer training etc.

188. At the beginning of the recovery process, the concerned psychologists and counselors of the organization make an assessment of the degree of trauma of the survivors and decide the nature of counseling and treatment for the particular survivor. Medical treatment and psychosocial counseling play an important role in their recovery from a traumatic psychological situation. The psycho-social rehabilitation and medical treatment of BNWLA aims at restoring the trafficked persons to a healthy state and reducing harm, to enable the survivors to be as free as possible of the negative physical, psychological and social repercussions of the abuse to which they have been subjected.

189. The program aims to improve the pre-existing situations, by trying to increase physical well-being, elevating self-esteem and respect and providing self protection, to a level not previously experienced. The counselors try to identify the potentials and strengths within the child and build on them, promoting their innate flexibility or equipping them with techniques to enhance it. Under its rehabilitation process BNWLA also arrange psychosocial counseling for the families and community to encourage positive attitudes towards survivors.\(^{57}\) BNWLA also provides legal aid support by directly taking on the cases of survivors and by organizing the arrest of perpetrators of trafficking. Nearly 1,000 women and children have received shelter home support services over several years.

190. Another important aspect of their work is giving legal support to the survivors of trafficking. BNWLA have established throughout the countrywide investigation network to

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\(^{55}\) Interview with RETA team.

\(^{56}\) BNWLA Special Bulletin 2001

\(^{57}\) BNWLA Special Bulletin 2001
identify survivors of trafficking in women and children who need legal support and take necessary measures in this regard. It also provides legal aid to the survivors of cross border trafficking. From this stage the rehabilitation process begins. The organization has its members and panel lawyers at almost every district in the country to utricle down its legal support even at the grassroots level. They provide legal assistance to the victims and maintain liaison with the head office. The field officers located at district level gather information from different sources like newspaper, local communities, police stations, courts, etc., and consult with the concerned persons in the head office for further action. Legal cell of BNWLA then undertakes initiative for proper legal action against the traffickers and perpetrators.

191. BNWLA has built a bridge between society and survivors. In this context the organization sometime involves the members of the law enforcement authority in building the bridge to ensure rehabilitation of the survivors of trafficking.

192. ACD, with the financial support from Save the Children Denmark and NORAD, has been implementing interception projects in the northern part of Bangladesh. They also run a shelter home for the children of trafficked victims or sexually abused children. They also receive the rescued children from the police custody to keep them in a child friendly environment. ACD have rescued 44 children and have been providing basic amenities through its shelter home support services.

193. Dhaka Ahsania Mission are providing support services in communities for awareness raising, rescue, repatriation, rehabilitation or reintegration of the victims of trafficking, does courtyard meetings with the village community and has a shelter in one of the border areas for rescued victims.

194. INCIDIN Bangladesh works with boys and girls engaged in street-based prostitution in Dhaka, to improve their health (both physical and psychological), and provides opportunities for alternative forms of employment. It seeks to link up with other NGO and government interventions for improved service provision to children, better coordination and rapport building. Through direct interventions with the General Post Office, it has been possible for children to open savings accounts with taka 5 deposit.

195. Aparajeyo Bangladesh similarly offers drop-in centers for street children. It recognizes that integrated efforts are required to combat children’s lack of trust, low self-esteem, and shame (particularly if she or he has been sexually abused and /or exploited). Some children are extremely traumatized and may require more psychosocial care and services than others to help them recover.

3. Analysis / Findings

196. Local initiatives, through the direct and meaningful participation of the target community, can be an effective way of enhancing all stages of surveillance. Locally based knowledge is vital and social punishment for the perpetrators is harsher than the legal one. Care has to be taken, however, that the right to mobility of those choosing to leave a community is respected, and those in danger from their own families are not forced to remain in harmful situations by community sanction. Shelter homes or safe houses for abused children or women, for example, would be required to provide alternatives to flight from insecure situations if community

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58 Ibid.
surveillance is to be effective in addressing the root causes of need to move to safety in the first place. As mentioned in paragraph 175 (v) above, these vigilance programs should also resist singling out newcomers to communities, or be used to further marginalize those already under suspicion for other reasons.

197. If trafficked persons are rescued before they have been harmed too severely the probably of being accepted back into their communities is much higher – if that is the choice of the trafficked person. This tactic also means the traffickers can be identified and cases pursued immediately. Often though, the traffickers involved in the transportation of trafficked persons are small players in networks and are unaware of who is brokering the process at the destination point. Interception at the border areas is another point of activity, however, such interventions require careful analysis of the situation to avoid encroaching upon an individual's right to mobility.

198. As no bilateral treaties exist between Bangladesh and the two major destination points for trafficked victims – India and Pakistan – rescue and repatriation activities are severely limited. The existing networks of NGOs and international alliances could work as catalysts and advocates for promoting an enabling environment to convince government and concerned agencies to start this process. Lessons can also be learned from experiences of other countries and regional actors where the trafficking of women and children has been a serious problem, for example in the Greater Mekong Region. It is anticipated that the signing of the SAARC Convention will raise this as a priority issue among South Asian countries.

199. The issue of trafficking is considered within the scope of MWCA, as most victims are women or children. But in reality MWCA have very little scope to work for rescue, repatriation, recovery and integration. Other ministries such as Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs are mandated with responsibilities associated with rescue and repatriation. Home Affairs is responsible for police and immigration officials, while any repatriation must also involve Foreign Ministry officials.

200. An inter-ministerial body could be formed to address as a high priority to regularizing of existing legislation and management of development of new legislation under the new commitments made by the Bangladesh government to the SAARC Convention and UN Protocols. This process would strengthen the governance processes, and could be supported through many channels within South Asia. Liaison among counterpart agencies in SAARC region would be required to ensure exchange and coordination as the process goes forward.

201. Where there is very limited registration of births, many of the children and young women have no way to be officially identified, limiting the actions of the police. The registration of children in communities with high incidence of trafficking would be a first step towards creating a database from which to rapidly retrieve, verify, crosscheck and disseminate statistics on trafficked persons and other missing persons at border points.

202. Gender sensitization training for law enforcement agencies, especially those working at the border areas and police station is essential. In this regard, programs are underway to provide a forum where the police and the members of the community can have an open

59 At the RETA Regional Workshop informal meetings between representatives of all three RETA governments met to discuss next steps in implementing these aspects of the SAARC Trafficking Convention based on the experiences of the Exposure Visit, and meetings to disseminate these findings have been held in Dhaka in June and July, 2002 lead by Government of Bangladesh Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and Foreign Ministry.
dialogue to deal with sensitive cases. At the same time, law enforcement mechanisms could be strengthened to penalize offenders, the procurers and traffickers, and other illegal service providers such as travel agents and manpower brokers. A network between police, departments of justice, government agencies and NGOs in sending and receiving countries should be established and existing networks strengthened to rescue and repatriate victims of trafficking. Community accountability is important in improvement law enforcement, and can be strengthened through many different types of social mobilization activities.

203. Rescue programs require a very complicated series of activities, especially when working with government of other countries where regulations may be different and enforced in an unpredictable manner. There are complicated issues of identity and nationalities are involved when minors without papers or proof of nationality are involved. Again birth registration campaigns could go a long way to simplifying some of these issues, as a child’s identity could be officially verified. Absence of papers and proof of nationality often causes delays for repatriation, and in many cases, as trafficked persons are held in prisons or sub-standard shelters, delays cause more harm. It is often asserted by some stakeholders that after a “rescue” operation, trafficked persons are detained and treated under conditions worse than those experienced in brothels or domestic work.

204. Standards have been developed by GAATW for the handling and process of non-nationals under these circumstances, but there are challenges for enforcement agencies to comply with these standards. Linkages with networks of NGOs have been an important feature of improving these situations and challenging police and border officials to revise legislation and regulations. International treaties and conventions are helpful but can only go so far when implementation is restricted by lack of awareness and resources on the government side. Efforts have also started to build regional cooperation among SAARC countries and stakeholder combating trafficking, for example this RETA has supported an exposure visit to Thailand to explore the process currently underway to negotiate a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding between Cambodia and Thailand which sets out procedures and standard practices for the repatriation of trafficked persons.

In January 1999 GAATW published a set of Human Rights standards for the treatment of trafficked persons. These guidelines provide a definition of trafficked persons, outlines the responsibilities of the State regarding trafficked persons, including: respecting the principle of non-discrimination; providing access to justice and to private action and reparations against traffickers and others who may have exploited or abused them, irrespective of their immigration status; providing adequate resident status prior to repatriation to ensure such criminal or civil cases can be taken out; provide health and other services (shelter, counseling). This document is available on the GAATW web-site: www.gaatw.org.

205. Planned training in psychosocial counseling for staff both government and NGO shelter homes would enhance the limited arrangements for counseling support services, which exist at present. Quality of care needs to be improved and counseling professionalized and recognized.

C. Re-integration

206. Once a trafficked person has been rescued, they are faced with a new set of challenges. In many cases return to their places of origin is difficult if not impossible. It may be difficult or impossible to find out where the trafficked persons comes from, particularly in the case of
children who may have been living away from their families for several years or from an early age. Many trafficked persons left in the first place because of abusive or insecure circumstances in their home or community. Thus, if reintegration there is proposed, it becomes necessary to change the situation in their homes and communities before they would be comfortable to consider return. Social stigma from their families and communities is enormous, even if girls or women have not been involved in CSW, as any migration may provoke marginalization.

1. Government Initiatives

207. Bangladesh government does not have any specific program or project responsible for integration of trafficked victim children and women. Under MWCA two shelter homes have been established; one is Nari Nirjatan Protirodh center and other one is One Stop Crisis Centre. These two shelters are mainly dealing with women victims of violence. There are some facilities for building skills that mostly concentrate on tradition trades. The vocational and skill development activities are for poor vulnerable women but not specifically for trafficked victims women and children. The main constraint in this sector is that government does not have any mechanism to rescue the trafficked children, therefore no records or comparative studies on the effectiveness of different approaches for integration of women and children are available. The CPCCT project, under the MWCA, has the provision to strengthen the integration of trafficked victim children. But there is no report on activities to date.

2. NGOs Initiative

208. BNWLA, ACD, Dhaka Ahsania Mission and ASK have worked in the field of integrating the trafficked victim children and women they have assist to return to Bangladesh. It appears from their work that personal influence, community acceptance, and high regard for the NGO are critical for ensuring community acceptance, and trust to encourage integration.

209. The main trend of integrating trafficked victim children and women is to engage them into non-formal or formal education systems, and organize special vocational training for developing skills. Vocational skill training is also a feature of many NGO interventions for children who have been sexually abused and exploited or who are at risk of being sexually exploited. While some NGOs admit they would prefer girls to acquire non-traditional skills, they admit they need to do more to challenge gender stereotypes and encourage girls to explore other skills.

210. For example, girls living in the BNWLA shelter home learn embroidery, painting and tailoring. Recently BNWLA has started providing computer literacy training course to 12 semi literate girls in its shelter home. The Institute of Digital Technology, a local computer institution has designed the special training package of 6 months, taking into consideration trainees understanding ability and level. BNWLA has also organized some 4 marriages for the adolescent survivors, as part of the integration approach. Some children have been returned to their parents. BNWLA also encouraged other NGOs to open non-exploitative job options for the survivors of trafficked children and women. They have sent some girls to different NGOs offices e.g. BRAC also provided a job for one. Thirty children have received skill training on different trades. Twenty-five children have been providing education by establishing a school where special curriculum is being followed. A further 77 children have been integrated under different projects of BNWLA.
211. In the Adolescent Girls’ Hostel of Aparajeyo Bangladesh, several girls who did not pursue higher studies are garment workers. The girls working in the garment industry may not earn much, but none are compelled to go back to the street or sex work. The efforts to build street children’s awareness, pride and confidence in themselves means that many girls want to forget their past life.

3. Analysis / Findings

212. Reintegration of women and adolescent girls into their own community is very complex and challenging. Welfare-based approaches to “rehabilitation” with traditional ‘vocational training scheme’ have not proved effective in offering sustainable alternatives for a sustained livelihood. The counseling methods adopted by some NGOs offers little respect for the rights and dignity of the trafficked persons.

213. Short-term needs to be addressed to support survivors include: immediate shelter and protection; reproductive and general health care, psychosocial counseling and care for trauma. Skill training is usually offered to provide different livelihood options, as well as literacy and, for children, education opportunities. There is increasing concern that some of the counseling services provided in the shelters is of poor quality, and that the types and levels of psychological harm done to survivors is not well understood. Efforts are being made to professionalize these services, and create standards of care to ensure that there is no further abuse of survivors in the shelter system. CPCCT, ILO and Unifem Regional Project have started this process by supporting assessments of the current situation and developing pilot activities. Alternatives to institutionalized care also need to be explored especially for children.

214. There has also been some criticism that the skill training in some cases is not appropriate to the types of employment available to survivors, to create their own income generating activities. Women and girls are offered stereotypical. While many of the activities are planned with the best of intentions, it is suggested that if careful follow up and monitoring of survivors once they leave the shelters would provide valuable information to the NGOs on what worked and what did not. Programming could then be adjusted accordingly and more appropriate skills identified.

215. Longer term needs and interests of survivors include: programming that is built on the intended outcome of increasing life options, rather than simply to return the survivor to their original home or family. Options need to be considered for longer-term integration – return to home environment, different community, remain with fellow survivors in community living situations etc. Support to the survivor should be continued as she or he decides through his or her own choice. Working with children in this regard is more challenging, but again the causes for the child’s vulnerability to trafficking in the first place needs to be considered as their future is planned, as they may have no desire to return to their families.

216. Awareness raising is also required in the communities where survivors settle to ensure that revictimization does not occur. Assisting families of survivors to link with economic development programs available in their community, or literacy programming for girls and women might provide greater stability to the family, and increase the probability of acceptance of the survivors especially if they return with some economically viable skills themselves. It is also necessary to monitor post-traumatic stress symptoms. Clinical experience has
demonstrated that the trauma many of the survivors have suffered causes long term psychological and physical harm, and few services are available in the mainstream health services for these effects of trafficking.

217. Combined approaches to provide income-generating skills, and other self-esteem building opportunities, as well as counseling to overcome post-traumatic mental health problems are required. One approach to address livelihood issues would be to encourage poverty reduction programs to offer groups of trafficking persons access to development resources through mainstream project activities. This approach requires sensitivity, however, to ensure that survivors are not further stigmatized by mechanisms that single them out.

218. More consideration should also be given to reintegration of migrants into development activities in general. For example, services for returning women migrants to assist in rebuilding family cohesion, especially if she has been absent from her children for long periods. Programs for reinvestment of remittances in more sustainable income generating activities, or building these savings into other micro-finance programs can assist in building more sustainable livelihoods for the whole community, and spreading the benefits of migration more effectively.

219. Community awareness regarding the specific circumstances and needs of migrant women can also help reintegration and foster empowering project outcomes. Trafficked persons can also be incorporated into these programs, but without the label of being “victims”. They could become part of the mainstream of returning migrants without further stress on their circumstances that leads to further stigmatization. These kinds of programs could be built into existing development activities, such as community-based micro finance activities.

220. Again, exchange of good practices among organizations and government departments implementing such programs would increase understanding of the circumstances from which some migrants may be returning.

221. The effectiveness of reintegration activities is not clear as there is limited monitoring of existing activities. More documentation and monitoring are urgently needed to help assess the relative effectiveness of different kinds of intervention. More information is required and feedback into program design and implementation through improved monitoring mechanisms. Furthermore, appropriate indicators have not been identified even for shorter-term outputs from community development based programming, let alone those required for longer-term assessment of factors such as community behaviors and attitudes towards traffickers and trafficked persons. There is interest from the Population Council to take the lead in encouraging a group of stakeholders in the region to develop indicators and to build monitoring and evaluation capacities among activists and service delivery organizations.

D. Initiatives taken by some International Agencies

222. International Organization for Migration (IOM) - In 2001 IOM initiated a project on "Development of Conceptual Framework and Mapping out Intervention Strategies to Combat Trafficking." The main objective of the project is to contribute to developing effective policy guidelines and program intervention strategies to combat trafficking in Bangladesh. A group of more than 20 representatives of different national and international NGOs, researchers, donor agencies and representatives from MWCA meet monthly to carry out thematic and analytical

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60 RETA Team Interview with at the Population Council Regional Office in Delhi, India.
exercises to "map out" different elements of human trafficking. Analytical thematic position papers on four themes related to counter trafficking: a) conceptual clarification of definition; b) prevention; c) recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration; and d) prosecution will be developed to provide policy guidelines on intervention strategies for government and NGOs and will help the different stakeholders to strategize their activities based on a shared understanding of the issues. The materials developed by this group will be published and widely circulated in the region later in 2002.

223. **CARE-Bangladesh** - CARE-Bangladesh is currently undertaking an in-depth ethnographic study focusing on a sample of 50 sex workers from both sides of the border. This qualitative study is an effort to explore details of lifestyle patterns and the lived experiences of women who are engaged in sex work. Detailed research is also being conducted to analyze individual and family circumstances and needs, which contribute to the causes of trafficking. This research aims to assess vulnerability patterns livelihood compulsions affecting the trafficking of women and girls. CARE is also documenting case profiles of women and girls affected by trafficking for the purposes of education and advocacy.

224. **European Commission** - under its Human Rights program has funded a three-year project from September 2000 on Advocacy to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children in the eight northern districts of Bangladesh to be implemented through networking and awareness raising workshops at district, thana and village levels.

225. **World Bank** - World Bank under its Small Grant Program has provided financial assistance to hold two Regional Workshops at Jessore and Rangpur, followed by an International Seminar on Strategizing to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children in February 2002 at Dhaka.

226. **Unifem** - South Asia Regional Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children - The Bureau of South Asia Affairs funded the UN International Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), through USAID, to implement the Bureau’s South Asia Regional Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children that was developed in 2000. UNIFEM is implementing these programs through local NGOs in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. These programs include the following data collection on the magnitude and exact nature of the trafficking problem within and between South Asian countries, support for shelters repatriation, education and awareness campaigns, vocational training and health care. Several Bangladeshi organizations are members of Unifem’s South Asia Federation Against Human Trafficking (SAFAHT), a network made up of the organizations that have been funded through the Unifem South Asia regional trafficking project.

227. **ILO-IPEC Program to Combat Trafficking in Children for Exploitative Employment** - ILO/IPEC has a two-year program on trafficking for the period June 2000 to May 2002. It supports a capacity building programs for government personnel, rehabilitation program and prevention program in the region. In Bangladesh, the program would cover four districts namely Dhaka, Dinajpur, Panchagargh and Thakurgaon. Research, rehabilitation, awareness campaign through the media, training program on psychosocial trauma treatment, workshops, seminars and meetings would be the key activities of the program interventions.

228. **Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka-South Asia Sub-regional Program to Combat the Trafficking of Children for Exploitative Employment** - The ILO’s international program on elimination of the child labor, with funding from US Department of Labor (USDOL), seeks through these program to address the trafficking of children for purposes of prostitution,
domestic work, boded labor, sex tourism and entertainment, pornography, begging, criminal activities, marriages and false adaptation. The project aims to rescue and provide rehabilitative services to 650 children and help prevent to additional 13,000 children being from trafficked. The project further seeks enhance the capacity of government and governmental organizations to address this problem and to increase sub-regional cooperation and joint action on this issue between the South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) countries.

229. **Regional Initiative of UNDP. Addressing the Problem of HIV/AIDS and Trafficking**
The UNDP HIV and Development Program for South and Southwest Asia has been one of the UN agencies promoting responses and partnering with NGOs and CBOs in pilot projects. The efforts to address trafficking in the South Asian region under the UNDP regional program have been focused, concerted, effective and yet diverse and distinct. The responses have been modular with different partners implementing activates jointly or separately. Underlying premises include that:

(i) Minors have to be rescued, rehabilitated and repatriated with their families,
(ii) Older women must have choices in decisions regarding their lives and livelihoods,
(iii) Both HIV/AIDS and trafficking are issues that need to be dealt with at the structural level women and girls should be empowered to protect themselves, and
(iv) Migration is a livelihood alternative and the right to mobility of women has to be respected.

230. The UNDP-SSWA Project on HIV partners in the six pilot projects are STOP-India, SHDS-India, WOREC-Nepal, OPSE-Sri Lanka, Maiti-Nepal, CARE-Bangladesh. The common aim of the six pilot projects is to combat trafficking and reduce vulnerability to HIV infection. Most of the projects are also involved in research work, which analyses linkages between Trafficking and the increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.61

231. In Bangladesh, UNAIDS has been funding some local NGOs for working in this areas. The organizations are mainly smaller NGOs such as Nari Unnayan Shakti, Nari Maitree and SHISUK. SHISUK has been operating its activities in Comilla and Sirajgonj districts on prevention and combating of HIV/AIDS. SHISUK has selected their target groups mainly from the migrant workers families and neighbors. IOM is also one of the co-partners of UNAIDS in this initiative.

232. **Save the Children Alliance:** Save the Children Alliance has undertaken a regional study on reviewing the existing laws and gaps in legislation and its implementation. In Bangladesh, BNWLA has been commissioned to carry out the study and the draft report has been prepared.

233. **Action Aid:** Action Aid do not exclusively focus on the trafficking in children, but deal with the constituency of children as it comes across trafficked persons who are less than 18 years of age. It assists ECPAT and Save the Children worldwide to combat child trafficking, by bringing value added to their efforts. In Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan detailed Situation Analyses were carried out in 1999. The Country Programs are now in a position to draw up their own plans of action - in the areas of prevention, mitigation, and rehabilitation. The CPs also identifies the importance of understanding internal trafficking, and other sites of trafficking

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beyond brothels. For example, garment industry, fish processing industry, and domestic work are the other trafficking sites in Bangladesh.
### Table 5: Activities Undertaken by Agencies to Combat Trafficking in Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches</th>
<th>NGOs</th>
<th>GOB</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preventive</strong></td>
<td>ATSEC (a network of 14 NGOs), ACD, ASK, BSAF, BNWLA, BITA, CWCS, CCDB, DAM, Rights Jessooer, Nari Mukti, Resource-Bangladesh, TCSD, UDDIPAN, etc. (All are not doing every thing)</td>
<td>MWCA, Ministry of Homes Information Ministry, Local Government Division</td>
<td>Action Aid –Bangladesh, Asia Foundation, British Council, CIDA, DANIDA, DFID, EU, ILO-IPEC, IOM, NORAD, Save the Children Denmark and UK, USAID, UNICEF, WB, UNAIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interception</strong></td>
<td>ACD, ASK, BNWLA, DAM</td>
<td>MWCA</td>
<td>SIDA, NORAD, USAID, Asia Foundation, Save the Children Denmark, UNESCO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong></td>
<td>ACD, BNWLA, DAM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. INTEGRATING ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES INTO ADB’S OPERATIONAL STRATEGY IN BANGLADESH

A. Relevance of Trafficking to ADB

234. Previous sections of this paper have demonstrated how a complex range of factors influences the dynamics of trafficking. In recent years ADB has developed and adopted an array of policies that provide both the mandate and instruments to engage more effectively in addressing many of these issues:

- **Policy on Gender and Development** provides guidance and measures to adapt operational designs to improve the status of women and girls and in so doing, amongst many other benefits, build their resistance to the risks of being trafficked;
- **Social Protection Strategy** sets out specific considerations that may need to be built into ADB operations to ensure that vulnerable groups can be protected from factors that cause and sustain their poverty - and their risks to being trafficked. The Strategy also identified how labor markets can also be used to strengthen social protection through implementation of Core Labor Standards, which will have additional impacts on the demand for trafficked labor;
- Guidelines contained in *Promoting Good Governance, ADB’s Medium Term Agenda and Action Plan*, October 2000 provide opportunities to improve the effectiveness of anti-trafficking initiatives as well as other programs to combat poverty;
- **Policy on Involuntary Resettlement** and accompanying guidelines such as the *Handbook on Resettlement* that provides guidance on limiting vulnerabilities and risks of those living in and around project areas as well as stressing the importance of building or maintaining social capital to limit risks, such as trafficking; and
- **Handbook on Poverty and Social Analysis** all provide guidance on ensuring that project impacts do not increase vulnerability to being trafficked and identifying opportunities to prevent, minimize and mitigate development induced risks.

235. However, if ADB is to make a contribution to combating trafficking specific measures have to be taken within its operations. The following sections outline where the links exist between ADB operations of different kinds (Poverty Partnership Agreements, Country Strategy and Program (CSP) development, project preparation, policy dialogue etc.) and potential entry points to address trafficking. Factors to be taken into account in basic analysis, where partnerships with other organizations can provide technical expertise required incorporating trafficking concerns into other operations, and some suggestions of further actions that could be taken to demonstrate leadership and commitment to addressing these issues are also provided. The sections follow the cycle of operations from the preparation of the Country Poverty Analysis and Poverty Partnership Agreement, country programming exercise, and project-level poverty and social analysis. There are also guidelines for different sectors and areas of policy dialogue appropriate for Bangladesh. Overall, ADB operations have the potential to address trafficking in the following five key ways:

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(i) **Target those most vulnerable to trafficking** – in many cases a sub-group within those targeted for poverty reduction as relative and absolute poor. Ensuring that this sub-group have their basic needs met to limit migration or mobility under stressful and hence most vulnerable situations – for example for families who send away children / girls who then end up being trafficked.

(ii) **Assess the impacts of ADB operations** - ensure that ADB supported activities do not push people into migration and hence vulnerability to trafficking. As identified in the ADB **Handbook on Poverty and Social Analysis** and **Handbook on Resettlement**, ADB operations have opportunities to prevent, minimize and mitigate development-induced. Clear links can be made between involuntary displacement and its associated risks of being trafficked once moving.

(iii) **Emergency loans and assistance in post-conflict reconstruction** - these activities usually take place among mobile populations, such as refugees or in areas where communities are returning from involuntary displacement. It is important that ADB activities provide adequate scope to rebuild social and human capital through community-based activities to ensure that physical and social dislocation does not lead to vulnerability to trafficking, especially for women and girls, in already high-risk situations. Disaster early warning mechanisms can also incorporate anti-trafficking and safe-migration messages as communities and individuals plan for possible displacement.

(iv) **Encourage safe migration** – reduce the risk of being trafficked of those already mobile through various policy or social protection measures:
   - Access by migrants to basic needs e.g. urban improvement schemes take special measures to identify specific needs of migrant communities where social and community networks do not exist.
   - Social protection measures extended to migrants (e.g. insurance schemes, social security schemes). This is challenging as migrants generally work in the informal sector and many are squatters without official residence status.
   - Governance strengthened to ensure entitlements to protection from criminal activities extended to those migrants most vulnerable to being trafficked; specific activities to increase community and government accountability to protect children, women, labor force etc.

(v) **Stem demand for trafficked labor**
   - Core labor standards implemented and monitored in partnership with private sector, ILO etc. particularly among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and in the informal sector.
   - Encourage activities with indirect impacts in key areas of demand, for example monitoring effects on demand for CSW along highways of changed behavior of transport workers through implementation of safety standards such as reduced driving time, days away from home etc. These kinds of activities also have links with HIV/AIDS prevention activities.

B. **Recommendation**

236. The Country Poverty Analysis, development of the CSP and other analyses undertaken during the programming exercises and the project preparation process consider the potential to address, both directly and indirectly, trafficking issues. While all outcomes of ADB operations
that contribute to reducing poverty can be **indirectly** linked to reducing vulnerability to being trafficked, there is ample scope to incorporate specific measures that can have more **direct** impact on reducing risks. The practical approaches adopted by ADB in the *Handbook on Poverty and Social Analysis* to guide the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy provides ideas and *Handbook on Resettlement* provide guidance for identifying opportunities to incorporate trafficking concerns and entry points. Appendix 4 provides additional guidelines and information on links between trafficking and ADB operations, including tables that identify where links to combating trafficking can be identified based on the approach to poverty reduction set out in the *Handbook on Poverty and Social Analysis* and *Handbook on Resettlement*.

237. Furthermore, if mainstreaming trafficking concerns into ADB’s operations is to be successful, it will also be necessary for staff with appropriate expertise to assist in preparing analysis of vulnerable groups and specific risks as well as designing specific components that directly or indirectly address trafficking concerns to provide leadership and take up these issues - these would include social development, social protection and poverty reduction specialists.

238. The legal implications of strengthening codes of conduct and other contractual arrangements with ADB-financed contractors and suppliers also need to be investigated by Office of General Council (OGC) staff. These mechanisms could be used to curb the use of trafficked or child labor. Monitoring indicators also have to be developed and assessed over the time and there is potential to link with the work already underway by ILO. Support from the Project Coordination and Procurement Division (COPP) will also be required if these approaches to limiting and monitoring the demand for trafficked labor are to be effectively implemented in ADB operations. Specific technical support and guidelines will be needed if these areas are to be fully effective. There is increasing interest among many experts to understand how these and similar mechanisms can be used to address trafficking as several ADB member countries have already put in place legislation or conditionality in their development assistance policies related to child labor and trafficking issues. For example under the United States Government’s *Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000*, beginning in January 2003, the President may authorize the suspension of non-humanitarian, non-trade-related assistance to any country that does not meet certain minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with these standards. These efforts include curbing the use of trafficked labor.

239. The following provides a brief overview of steps that can be taken to mainstream trafficking concerns into ADB’s operations:

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65 See additional discussion of this mechanism in the RETA 5948 Legal Frameworks Report, 2002 page 12
**Steps for mainstreaming trafficking into ADB operations:**

- Where possible, flag the issue of trafficking in subregional strategies (e.g. Subregional Cooperation Strategy and Program - SCSP) and country analysis and strategies (e.g. country poverty analysis, CSP and CSP updates and country gender analysis and strategy);
- Include the analysis of groups that are particularly vulnerable to trafficking in IPSA and PSA. In particular, include mobile population into the analysis as well as women and children;
- Develop project designs that would directly and indirectly combat and reduce human trafficking;
- Identify and work with partners (e.g. Ministries, NGOs, private sector including contractors, donors etc.) to develop and implement anti-trafficking project components;
- Where non-lending products and services (e.g. TAs and sector and thematic works) provide opportunities, consider addressing trafficking and
- Raise awareness among relevant ADB staff including dissemination of findings of the reports produced un the RETA through various means such as: a) publication, external website, and relevant committees and networks; b) developing pilot projects with the initiatives of Regional Departments in collaboration with RSPR; and c) developing guidelines and good practices on contractors’ codes of conduct and loan covenants in collaboration with COPP and OGC.

**C. Country Programming**

1. **Country Poverty Analysis and Poverty Partnership Agreement**

240. The Country Poverty Analysis is a diagnostic tools used to provide a set of strategic options to assist in determining the mutually agreed goals of ADB assistance with a partner Developing Member Country (DMC) as set out in the Poverty Partnership Agreement and used to guide the ADB CSP. As such, this analysis identifies the characteristics and causes of poverty in a specific country as well as opportunities and constraints for poverty reduction initiatives. The findings also assess where there are gaps in information and suggest where specific studies can be carried out or areas where government might be required to develop and provide additional information.

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241. This process provides an opportunity to bring trafficking issues into the analysis as potential outcomes from vulnerabilities faced by the poor - particularly women and children. The interplay between policies such as trade, labor and migration / mobility issues can be incorporated into the overall assessments (for example in the labor market profile) as well as the risks and vulnerabilities profiles suggested in the Handbook on Poverty and Social Analysis and Handbook on Resettlement. Despite the scope of trafficking and its harmful impacts on the development process in Bangladesh, the government does not ordinarily establish these links in its own policy process, and ADB’s analysis could provide leadership in mainstreaming trafficking into this type of overall poverty assessment.

242. The following table identifies some of the high vulnerability groups associated with different types of risk areas that could be incorporated into the Risk and Vulnerability Profile. Quantitative and qualitative data regarding these groups should be incorporated into the analysis of the incidence of risks by population group as well as by type of risk, together with some linkage to the dynamics that drive the trafficking cycle in Bangladesh (macro policies, economic, social and governance factors - see analysis in sections above).
### Table 7: Identification of Risks and Vulnerabilities to Trafficking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Risk to the Poor</th>
<th>Sub-set associated with risks/vulnerabilities to trafficking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lifecycle</strong></td>
<td>• Street children with no guardians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adolescent girls, adolescents in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children from families in crisis (e.g. alcoholic parents, traumatised from war or civil conflict)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Single women with children (unmarried, divorced, widowed or abandoned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Single women (often traumatised through stigmatization e.g. rape victim, suspicions regarding morality etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Women/girl migrants – either alone or with families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td>• Family that cannot meet basic needs e.g. large number of dependents without assets; female headed households; families where one or more member out-migrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Livelihood based on arduous labor, especially for women and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High unemployment or long term under employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sudden economic shocks e.g. climatic, erosion, market driven, change in prices of basic needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indebtedness of family – girls living in communities where dowry payments required upon marriage that divert scarce resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Income disparities between rural/urban or between countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental</strong></td>
<td>• Long term lack of sustainable livelihood from erosion, drought etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sudden disaster victims e.g. cyclones, earthquakes, floods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social/Governance</strong></td>
<td>• Social Capital: recently arrived migrants have few if any social contacts and cannot benefit from, or may be excluded from, existing social capital; development initiatives and projects may disrupt existing social capital networks and fail to build replacement mechanisms; some groups or individuals may be excluded or marginalized and unable to benefit from existing structures - see blow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Security: those living in violent or abusive families/households; living under conditions of civil unrest or war; children living without parents or guardians; street children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Status: women and girls unable to control their lives or seeking other options outside their communities as conditions are limiting – often results in women choosing to remain in highly exploitative conditions following trafficking episodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stigmatization: women abandoned, divorced, raped; pressure of community following inappropriate behavior but not necessarily illegal or immoral such as inappropriate friendships, seeking to challenge traditional inequalities etc.; difficulties for women migrants or trafficked persons returning to communities where stigmatized leads to re-victimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Emotional stability: dysfunctional families from addiction or war / civil conflict trauma; absence of caring guardians etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adventurers: new technologies, access to information and education and improved transportation systems facilitate migration of those dreaming of better life, but still at risk when have few assets or experience with outside world; traffickers use returned migrants to demonstrate validity of false promises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
243. The Poverty Partnership Agreement (PPA) formalizes the joint commitment to effective poverty reduction between ADB and a particular partner government. A PPA has been signed with Bangladesh that identifies among its priorities social development and good governance - both areas that have potential to be linked to reducing trafficking. Even if trafficking is not identified as an explicit development objective in the PPA, ensuring that vulnerable groups are specifically targeted, such as women and children, will provide entry points for more direct efforts as the CSP is developed.

244. In the recent Cambodia PPA, both parties specifically pledge to end illegal human trafficking as an objective under the Human and Social Protection sector. “Control trafficking of women and children” is identified as a mutual agreed objective, with indicators/targets of “Implementation of National Five Year Plan against the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children by 2004” with annual monitoring through the Ministries of Labor (MOSALVY) and Women’s Affair’s (MWVA). This issue is also linked to improving labor conditions and protecting those vulnerable to negative impacts from development and policy reforms. Similar links could be established in Bangladesh in the context of increased vulnerability of retrenched garment factory workers to trafficking as they seek alternative employment. Many of these workers are young women, and sole income earners from rural families, who are now forced to migrate to seek work under highly insecure circumstances.

245. The PPA also identifies monitoring indicators to assess progress against the shared objectives. Social and human development indicators that provide information on changes associated with risk factors - narrowing gender gaps, education, health, available housing and shelter, migrant / mobile populations - for both poverty and trafficking, can be used for future analysis. Such indicators are basic building blocks for increasing understanding of the dynamics of the impacts of trafficking on development in Bangladesh.

2. ADB’s Country Strategy and Program in Bangladesh

246. ADB’s current goals of the Country Strategy and Program (CSP) in Bangladesh are to promote sustainable pro-poor economic growth, support inclusive social development and improve governance.\(^67\) These goals will be achieved through support for the following thematic priorities:

(i) Pro-poor economic growth,
(ii) Human development,
(iii) Gender and development,
(iv) Good governance,
(v) Private sector development,
(vi) Environmental protection, and
(vii) Regional cooperation.

247. Based on ADB’s previous experience and comparative advantage, and the priorities of GOB, ADB’s 2001 CSP has identified the following seven sectors for operations:

(i) Agriculture and natural resource,
(ii) Transport and communications,
(iii) Energy,
(iv) Social Infrastructure, and
(v) Finance and Industry.

248. While combating trafficking is not articulated as a specific objective in the current CSP or within any project, as discussed in the preceding sections, strategic approaches to poverty reduction can make effective contributions through: targeting those most vulnerable to trafficking and ensuring they benefit from project activities; ensuring that ADB operations do not contribute to pushing people into migration and hence vulnerability to trafficking; encouraging safe migration; and, assisting in efforts to stem demand for trafficked labor. Achieving progress on all three goals of the Bangladesh CSP will reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking identified in this RETA – particularly a reduction in the degree of social exclusion faced by women and other disadvantaged groups.

249. Project implementers might not have the technical capacities or contractual flexibility to add components suggested in the sections below. NGOs specializing in combating trafficking are active in many areas of Bangladesh, however, and can be approached to use ADB projects as a platform for awareness raising activities or to assist project implementers in identifying who is the most vulnerable to trafficking within a specific community. Section V above identifies stakeholder organizations already involved in combating trafficking. These organizations can be approached to contribute to an understanding of trafficking dynamics in a particular region of Bangladesh. ADB project components can be used as a platform to broaden the scope of existing activities without additional funds required. Government counterpart agencies and departments can be encouraged through dialogue with ADB to consider potential links with trafficking, and how these concerns can be mainstreamed into their operations.

D. Project-Level Poverty and Social Analysis

250. Some general guidelines can be applied during the project preparation process to ensure that links to trafficking and safe migration and any potential to contribute to combating trafficking are identified. The TA Fact-Finding stage of project preparation provides an opportunity to incorporate trafficking concerns in the Initial Poverty and Social Analysis (IPSA). Page 73 provides examples of the types of projects or initiatives, with potential to contribute either directly or indirectly to combating trafficking. Additional information and data under the risks and vulnerability profile should be incorporated concerning those most exposed to trafficking. This will point to areas for more detailed investigation during the full Poverty and Social Analysis (PSA) during the project design stages.
Project with Potential to Contribute Directly or Indirectly to Combating Trafficking:

- Urban infrastructure project, including small and secondary towns,
- Poverty reduction project covering known source areas for trafficking,
- Large scale infrastructure projects that would cause the influx of outside construction workers and opportunities to build facilities to assist anti-trafficking efforts - information booths, shelters,
- Cross-border road corridor project that develops new routes and incorporates improved border facilities that might include safe migration and anti-trafficking information booths etc…,
- Social protection projects targeting the population vulnerable to being trafficked,
- Women’s empowerment projects,
- Legal awareness raising / legal reforms,
- HIV/AIDS projects,
- Governance/ policy reforms / capacity building of local and national government, and
- Regional cooperation.

251. Trafficking issues can be incorporated into the PSA by:

- Vulnerabilities and risks of beneficiaries and communities where project will be implemented are fully investigated.
- Monitoring indicators that will track changes and impacts of project activities are developed.
- Links and partnerships with trafficking NGOs and other experts are investigated - not necessarily as direct components of the project, but analysis of links might provide insights into how ADB project components could be used as platforms for anti-trafficking messages or initiatives e.g. HIV/AIDS prevention awareness might be extended to include trafficking and safe migration messages; social mobilization activities could be linked to trafficking prevention activities.
- If direct contributions can be made to combating trafficking, partnerships can be developed with other funders or through INGOs to identify how these components might be supported and how they would link into ADB operations. Alternative sources of funding might also be available for example, Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR).

252. Guidelines that cover ADB-supported sectors of the CSP in Bangladesh with potential for directly or indirectly addressing trafficking concerns are attached in Appendix 5. These sectors are:

- agriculture and irrigation,
- transport and communications,
- energy,
- social infrastructure - education, urban and water supply,
- women’s empowerment, and
- social protection.
253. These guidelines provide examples of how sector-based ADB supported activities in Bangladesh might contribute to combating trafficking and facilitating safe migration, including suggestions for specific components often incorporated into each sector of activity. These potential contributions can be considered during the feasibility and preparation stages of projects, or links can be made with NGOs or government programming already under way in areas where the project is being implemented. Other donors are also actively involved in many similar activities where ADB is already implementing operations. Components to combat trafficking might be directly linked to existing project activities.

E. Policy Dialogue

254. Policy dialogue concerning trafficking and safe migration can also be incorporated into thematic priority areas for Bangladesh:

1. Gender and development

255. As identified in the analysis of the dynamics of trafficking, the low status of women and their exclusion from development opportunities intensifies the risks women face. Any support that is provided by government or other development programs to increase women's access to and control of assets and other resources can contribute to reducing their risk not only to trafficking but also to many other harmful situations – for example gender-based violence.

256. ADB could take leadership in demonstrating how poverty reduction programming that is built on women’s empowerment can have impacts that include reducing risks to harms such as trafficking. This could be done by tracking trafficking risk indicators in ADBs loan projects and bringing this information into policy dialogue on many issues. Links between women’s empowerment in the work place, safe migration policies that facilitate women’s migration without negative impacts such as trafficking and poverty reduction can be made.

2. Private Sector Development

257. Improving corporate governance and corporate responsibility for labor conditions within their operations could be incorporated into capacity building and policy development in these areas. This has already been identified in the recent ADB/ILO RETA on Labor Standards. As identified in the sections above, while many agencies and organizations are investing a great deal of funds and efforts in preventing trafficking and address its effects on the survivors, few are seriously addressing the demand for trafficked labor. ILO is working with their private sector partners to reduce the use of child labor, and trafficked labor is a specific category in their campaigns and awareness programs.

258. Support to ILO from ADB would contribute to combating trafficking, especially associated with ADB projects supporting SMEs. Increasing an understanding of mechanisms that could be used to discourage the use and exploitation of trafficked labor in the informal sector and among SMEs could contribute significantly to combating trafficking. Leadership can be taken by ADB by visibly monitoring codes of conduct incorporated into contracts with construction contractors and other supplies for ADB operations. These examples could be used to illustrate how other mechanisms might be adopted to strengthen corporate responsibility to limit illegal labor exploitation and to build capacities among appropriate government departments to monitor
these issues in sectors such as export processing zones, garment and carpet manufacturing etc. Skill training in non-traditional areas for women can also provide additional opportunities to ensure that women can enter expanding sectors through formal entry points rather than being forced to take low-skilled, casual employment opportunities in informal sectors.

3. Governance

259. The ADB’s continued support for the implementation of the decentralization process offers great potential to build accountability from all levels of government to address human trafficking. Support could be extended in areas such as:
- Capacity building for women elected officials at local and national government levels to encourage their leadership in combating trafficking and understanding links between poverty reduction and building resistance to trafficking;
- Capacity building with municipal government to develop and implement measures to ensure migrant and mobile populations have access to services and economic opportunities and hence reduce their vulnerability to risks such as trafficking;
- Implementing government sponsored programs to increase birth and marriage registration - a key step in enabling rights of children to be protected, to improve delivery of basic services and to track and monitor population movements; and
- Promoting improved enforcement of existing legislation to combat trafficking.
Other funders are supporting police training, awareness among community political leaders, but the ADB could reinforce these efforts by raising human trafficking concerns at higher levels in discussions regarding accountability and transparency of local government mechanisms.

4. Regional Cooperation

260. Links exist between objectives in the south Asia region for the ADB. These include the impact of improved road networks across borders between Bangladesh, India and Nepal, along which the vast majority of trafficking women and children travel. Some of the road corridor improvement project activities already underway in Bangladesh have considered additional activities such as including information booths at bus shelters close to the border for those seeking help to return home. Other activities like this could be considered along the Bangladesh India border crossings.

261. Some activists argue that improving road connections actually drives traffickers further off to rural and remote roads, so the assumption that if the road and transport services improve, so will the flow of traffickers does not necessarily hold true. However, ADB might consider carrying out a more detailed analysis of what the impacts might be along these major transportation corridors.

262. Consideration also needs to be made of the impacts of freer movement of labour, along with greater access to markets on the trends of human trafficking in Bangladesh.
263. Support can also be provided to GOB, through policy dialogue at a regional and sub-regional level, for the implementation of the recently signed SAARC Trafficking Convention. ADB’s recognition of this step in combating trafficking has already been recognized through the RETA facilitating the Exposure visit to Thailand for government representatives from each of the three countries. Continued communication with these same Ministries regarding progress since the Exposure Visit would assist in maintaining momentum.

5. Aid Agency Cooperation

264. At the recent South Asia Regional Consultation prior to the Second World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Yokohama in 2001, many stakeholders raised the importance of development programming – at national levels and among donor agencies – targeting of poverty reduction programming to areas known to have high incidence of trafficking, or to address the specific needs of those most vulnerable. One way to improve a targeted approach is to increase Aid Agency Cooperation. As has been demonstrated in Bangladesh through the IACG on Trafficking, the exchange of information is an important first step in this direction.

265. ADB could participate more fully in this forum, and in identifying aspects of the NPA for Bangladesh it could support, not necessarily through stand-alone anti-trafficking projects, but through the linking of existing poverty reduction programming e.g. rural credit programs, water and sanitation projects etc. Other agencies and INGO/NGO networks could assist ADB in identifying NGOs with capacities to bring ongoing anti-trafficking activities to project areas and to coordinate with project implementers on suitable timing and locations for activities.
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