

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Research and Action Project on Traffic in Women in the Mekong Region, in short the RA-project, aims to jointly review the process & methodology and its findings and effects.

The project, which was implemented between 1997 and 2000, was a response to the growing concern about the increasing commercialisation of sexual exploitation of women and children in Cambodia and Vietnam in the late eighties / early nineties. At that time, knowledge about and actions against traffic in women (TiW) were still limited. The project aimed to systematically investigate the situation and bring forward recommendations for prevention and support to affected women, at (various) policy- as well as community-level(s).

An essential component was that these recommendations should be based on the methodology of feminist participatory action research (F-PAR), as applied in a similar project in Thailand. Introducing and applying this methodology was therefore more than just a means.

The Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA), the Youth Research Institute (YRI) in Hanoi and the Women's Union (WU) in Ho Chi Minh City and Tay Ninh Province implemented the RA-project. The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) acted as co-ordinating and facilitating agency. The Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Hanoi provided financial assistance.

This report intends to present lessons for all concerned, both Implementing Agencies (IAs), GAATW as the Facilitating agency (FA) and the RNE, as well as (non-) governmental agencies that implement or plan to carry out similar projects in the region.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation has been conducted in November-December 2001. A team of two persons (one external person with a background on the issue of trafficking, the other the former international co-ordinator of GAATW), together with staff of GAATW, visited field-locations in Cambodia, South Vietnam and North Vietnam, studied documents and met various persons involved. Focus group discussions were held with members of IAs and the FA, a sample of members of women's groups and local authorities. Separate interviews and meetings were organised with key stakeholders who are working on the issue of trafficking of women and children in the two countries. An internal validation meeting with agencies directly concerned and an external presentation cum-de-briefing session for representatives from other agencies involved in the issue completed the process.

THE PROJECT

The RA-project consisted of two phases. During phase 1 (1997-1998) the IAs systematically investigated the situation of trafficking in the selected areas. Activities basically consisted of training by GAATW on the F-PAR methodology, field research and two special studies; on the general national situation and on laws relating to trafficking of women. During phase 2 (1998-1999, extended to 2000), the IAs developed local actions to assist trafficked women and help prevent trafficking. Activities focused on a 2nd training by GAATW, organising activities with women in the community and exposure/study trips.

The formulation of strategies and policy recommendations for improved government measures and improved co-ordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations would be based on the results of each phase. For that purpose, after the 1st phase, in each country meetings and seminars were held at local and national level. Proper documentation of the processes and results of the two phases were essential components for sharing and policy influencing.

RESULTS

The RA-project was implemented in the historical context of an emerging or absent civil society, including independent women's organisations. Besides that the issue of trafficking is complex and full of controversies as it encompasses aspects of illegality, stigma, morality and women's rights.

In this context, the F-PAR methodology turned out to be an appropriate tool for research on and action with different groups in the community.

One tangible outcome is the model of a community- and rights based approach for assisting women and preventing trafficking. This approach is potentially sustainable and can be replicated (provided it is properly documented).

In quantitative terms the outcome of the action phase is small to medium sized. So far 4 groups are established in North Vietnam, 13 in South Vietnam and 70 groups in Cambodia. The groups are more or less independently sustained. Various seminars, workshops and meetings have been held. Some very successful information, education and communication material is produced, some material is applied with mixed results.

Qualitatively speaking the experiences, esp. in Cambodia and North Vietnam, indicate that the instrument of women's groups for prevention and/or support is an appropriate strategy to address the various psycho-socio and economic problems of individual women and promote their re-integration process in a holistic manner. These groups also contribute to the prevention of traffic in women at the community level in such a way that affected women themselves can actively participate. This is an important component in their de-isolation and re-integration process. Local authorities play a very important role in this process. Appropriate information, education and communication material is indispensable.

By and large the introduction and application of the F-PAR methodology in the RA-project has also altered the perception of researchers toward the issue of trafficking and of local authorities towards affected women.

In Cambodia the work with prostitutes changed in such a way that the Cambodian Prostitutes Union was formed, which is now an active ally in the fight against TiW and the promotion of the rights of women in prostitution.

In South Vietnam, work with women who marry Taiwanese men now focuses more on the protection of women's rights, incl. their rights to make informed choices to migrate. Researchers could build trust and develop more horizontal relations with affected women.

In North Vietnam and Cambodia notably, local authorities no longer see trafficked women as lawbreakers, but as women who need support and should be actively reintegrated in the community.

LIMITATIONS

Despite the various achievements, the RA-project clearly shows that socio-political and cultural constraints affect the validity and reliability of research. For example when the researcher is not aware of her/his role and position and when the analysis and recommendations have to be stated in conformity with state policies. This is most visible in Vietnam.

The competency of researchers, both in applying the F-PAR methodology and in understanding the issues, is also a crucial factor in the outcome of the research. In this respect, unfortunately, there were limitations in the training and the facilitation by GAATW. The training was too short or not focused enough and the monitoring on the progress of the project was either not intensive enough or the FA did not have adequate authority and capacity to guide the process of data collection, analysis and the process of report writing.

The assumption that the results of the investigation and action would lead to effective policy recommendations at different (even regional) levels would have been realistic had the IAs been adequately equipped to work at policy level and provided a strong national basis would exist. This turned out not to be the case, due to the fact that the issue was a relatively new subject for some IAs. There also was a lack of actual staff capacity (in Cambodia) or limited (partially self-imposed) mandates (in Vietnam).

In the given context, to contribute to policy changes, requires specific and clear recommendations as a result of the research, and lobby skills. These turned out to be largely absent as well.

The RA-project could also have made a more significant contribution in setting the agenda at national level etc., had it been done in a shorter period. The initial implementation period of the project of 2 years got extended to about 4 years. In combination with the fact that the output in terms of reports, etc. was not optimal -to say the least-, such a period is evidently too long. This affects the relevance of the data. These might not catch up with the current situation and policy developments nor encompass new forms of trafficking in women

FINAL REMARKS

The RA-project was an exploratory, multidimensional and rather open-ended project. It was conceived in a time when the issue was considered politically sensitive. Seen from that perspective it helped to set the agenda of (non-) governmental and law enforcement agencies, raised national debates and contributed to policy and law improvements. It did create 'ripples in the water'; and it is a challenge for the three IAs, for GAATW, the RNE and other major stakeholders in the region to try and let these ripples evolve into waves of change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For immediate action

- ◆ IAs should finalise and/or revise the reports and work towards optimisation and replication of the models that have been developed and the activities implemented. The report gives various recommendations.
- ◆ IAs should systematically document and/or further develop the community- and rights based approach. See detailed recommendations. Only on that basis, there is scope to replicate this approach at a wider, even nation-wide scale.
- ◆ To the extent possible, IAs should work more actively for policy changes and the setting up of a national platform on TiW. The report gives various recommendations.
- ◆ IAs should initiate and/or lobby to investigate the situation in countries of destination, esp. Taiwan (and China).
- ◆ GAATW should co-operate with the IAs in putting these recommendations into action. The RNE should consider financial support.
- ◆ GAATW should systematically document and/or adapt the modules of the F-PAR methodology on the basis of the experiences with the RATW in Thailand and the RA in Cambodia and Vietnam. This includes more attention for the roles and position of the researchers, the socio-political context and skills for lobby and advocacy.

For future application of research on TiW and the F-PAR methodology

- ◆ The full participation of affected women and local authorities is essential to effectively assist women and prevent trafficking at the local level. A horizontal, instead of a vertical approach, encourages the participation of different stakeholders and civil groups. For this the F-PAR is an important methodology.
- ◆ Approaches that emerged from the action phase of the RA-project, help to de-isolate and re-integrate affected women and regaining their rights. Other programmes should learn from the strengths and weaknesses of the various experiences and the different levels of women's participation and empowerment.

Subsequent training programmes and project designs should build on these results.

- ◆ The formulation of national policies and new laws should be done in partnership with affected women, to guarantee that these would not jeopardise their vulnerable situation and violate their basic human rights.
- ◆ A regional project has to build on an existing basis of knowledge and experience at the national level and awareness of the differences and similarities between the various countries.
- ◆ Exposure visits are an essential component of the F-PAR methodology, provided these are used strategically and include NGOs as well as people at community level.
- ◆ The set-up of a regional project like the RA-project needs to have a clear common conceptual and institutional framework with in-built flexibility, realistic objectives, a clear structure and full time commitment from all concerned.
- ◆ For a common framework, before designing the project and have realistic expectations, a systematic assessment is required of the conceptual understanding and the socio-political and cultural context in the implementing countries and the capacity and mandates of agencies involved.
- ◆ The FA should (be able to) conduct proper orientation and in-service training, ongoing monitoring and periodic internal evaluation from the co-ordinating agency. This requires adequate training needs assessments.
- ◆ Measures should be formulated and articulated clearly in the contracts and MOUs between different IAs and the FA to ensure proper accountability and transparency. The FA should have a mandate and capacity to properly guide and constructively intervene in the implementation of the project activities to ensure the quality of the research and the expected outcomes of the project.

1 INTRODUCTION- THE RA-PROJECT AND THE EVALUATION

Start of the RA-project

In 1994, the Foundation for Women in Thailand organised an international workshop on International Migration and Traffic in Women to disseminate the findings from the national Research and Action on Traffic in Women (RATW). The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs funded the project. The workshop brought about at least two concrete outcomes. The formation of GAATW (the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women) and the conception of the Research & Action on traffic in women in Cambodia and Vietnam. The CWDA in Cambodia and the Centre for Family and Women Studies in Hanoi, Vietnam, in collaboration with FFW/GAATW, proposed the RA-project for financial support to the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Hanoi. The project was approved in 1996 and started in 1997.

CWDA was one of the pioneering agencies on the issue of traffic in women and children in Cambodia and as such it was justified to support their initiative for the RA-project. CWDA was active on the issue of sex work mainly from a health perspective (H/A awareness through peer educators). The growing magnitude of sex industry during the time of the UN Peace Keeping Forces in Cambodia urged CWDA to pay attention to the problem of trafficking. In 1995 they actively participated in a conference held in Phnom Penh on the issue. They also published a report with testimonies of affected women and children. In 1997, CWDA was involved in a joint survey with GAATW and IOM, on the situation of trafficking of Cambodian women and children in Thailand.

In Vietnam the Youth Research Institute (YRI) of the Youth Union in Hanoi was initially not involved in the RA-project. The initiative was taken by a sociologist, who is one of the leading persons in Vietnam for work on the issue of prostitution and TiW. At that time she worked at the Centre for Family and Women's Studies in Hanoi. After the start of the project she went abroad for one year. The YRI, whose mandate is conducting research for policy recommendations, took over the responsibility for implementation. Since in 1995/1996, trafficking in women was considered a sensitive political issue, it was difficult to get agencies interested. YRI was therefore an appropriate implementing agency.

Simultaneously, due to the distance between North and South Vietnam, after the approval of the project, it was decided that the research in the South should be conducted separately by organisations located in that region. The Women's Union of Ho Chi Minh City agreed to participate in the RA-project. They invited the VWU of Tay Ninh Province to take charge of research in the rural area.

The RA-project consisted of two phases, firstly a research-phase and secondly an action-phase. The content of the latter was to be developed on the basis of the results of the 1st phase. This format was based on the RATW in Thailand. In brief, like the RATW-project, the RA-project aimed to prevent the expansion of traffic in women and develop appropriate services for legal, social and health support to victims and potential victims of trafficking at local and national level. It was already clear that cross border trafficking from Cambodia went to Thailand, whereas in the Vietnamese

context, Cambodia was one of the receiving countries. Hence it was a logical step to focus at the regional level too and give recommendations for a regional policy to combat TiW.

In a way the national framework of the RATW-project was transferred to a regional level and became a common framework. FFW, later GAATW, as the 'founding mother' of the RA-project became the co-ordinator of the regional project. GAATW acted as the contract partner to the funding agency.

Activities in the RA-project aimed to

- ◆ Systematically investigate the situation in Cambodia and Vietnam based on the mode of the RATW project in Thailand;
- ◆ Formulate strategies and policy recommendations for improved government measures and improved co-ordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- ◆ Formulate appropriate actions in partnership with women in the community;
- ◆ Document forms of human rights violations of traffic in women.

A changing scenario

The socio-economic and political transformation in Cambodia and Vietnam in the late eighties and early nineties affected many groups of people, in particular of women and children. The political open-door policy and the emergence of a market-oriented economy were accompanied by a growing commercialisation of sexual exploitation of women and children. Impoverished women and children in urban and rural areas with limited means to improve their livelihood were forced economically into the growing sex industry or trapped into local and cross-border trafficking networks. The illegality of prostitution in both countries made it difficult for trafficked women and children to pursue redress and justice. Trafficking of women in both countries is not confined to the purpose of forced prostitution only, but manifested in different forms and purposes. It refers to a migration process with various ways of deception that finally brings people into slavery-like conditions within and beyond national boundaries.

Despite a growing awareness on the problem, a national policy and practice to tackle the problem effectively was lacking. In many cases local or national government officials were actively involved in the trafficking process. During the finalisation of the research proposal in 1996, it was clear that human trafficking was a sensitive topic that needed to be addressed carefully in order to avoid potential conflicts with the state authorities.

The low political priority for TiW is in stark contrast to the present-day situation. With the growing concern of the international community about the alarming magnitude of the traffic in women and children in the Mekong region and beyond, international pressure to put the problem into the national agenda has increased. The Dutch government as a pioneering funding agency to support programmes that address TiW in the region is now accompanied by various other organisations,

bilateral as well as international agencies. They all involve in several activities to prevent and combat trafficking of women and children in Vietnam and Cambodia.

In Vietnam, MOLISA (the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs) and the Vietnam Women's Union are co-ordinating agencies for the implementation of activities with the international agencies. The UN-Interagency initiative (through UNDP) collaborates with MOLISA to formulate a national plan of action to combat trafficking of women and children. In this context a visit of high-ranking Vietnamese authorities to Cambodia was facilitated. In the context of another regional programme, the IOM is working in 14 provinces with the (Research Department of the) WU. In practice IOM focuses mainly on traffic in children. Unicef has the same focus. Other initiatives are taken by ILO/IPEC, who came to Vietnam especially for the issue of TiW.

International NGOs are active as well. Action Aid, who is already running a project for poverty alleviation in Quang Ninh province, wants to integrate support to victims of TiW into it. With the WU of Tay Ninh Province they plan to launch an awareness raising campaign on trafficking in women and children as well as marriage to Taiwanese men. The Save The Children-Alliance has just completed a research in 6 countries of the Mekong Region on laws related to TiW, in which they approached trafficking in the context of migration.

The situation in Cambodia is akin to the one of Vietnam. International agencies such as IOM, UNDP co-ordinate activities to prevent trafficking and assist trafficked persons, in particular children. They work in collaboration with GOs (esp. The Ministry for Women and Veteran Affairs) and local NGOs to develop policies, raise community awareness and repatriate victims and let them rebuild their lives. The political climate that allows the existence of NGOs has stimulated a process in which different civil organisations tackle the problem as well.

In this changing scenario the RA-project has been implemented. The project was developed in 1995-1996 and implemented between 1997 and 1999 end. In Cambodia and South Vietnam the project-implementation got even extended till mid or late 2000. This is much longer than expected. Initially the duration was one year for each phase, so two years in total. Due to various reasons, the implementation became more open-ended. By the time of the evaluation, some planned activities like the storybook by the VWU in HMCM and the comparative analysis report by GAATW, were yet to be finalised.

After the first phase, the implementing agencies were to organise internal self-evaluations and after the 2nd phase, an external evaluation was foreseen. It took till the end of 2001 before this could commence.

The evaluation

Purpose and methodology

The main objective of this external evaluation was to enable all parties involved and women who were part of the project, to jointly review the process & methodology and the findings and effects of the research and action project against the intended objectives. It also planned to draw lessons learned, for GAATW as the Facilitating

Agency (FA), the Implementing Agencies (IAs) as well as for other agencies implementing or planning to carry out similar project in the region. GAATW prepared the ToR (see the annexe) after which the RNE gave its approval.

Inputs for the evaluation were visits to the three regions (Cambodia, South and North Vietnam respectively), reading of background documents (for an overview, see the annexe) and (joint) discussions in Bangkok with GAATW and the IAs.

In the course of the project some additional activities have been implemented (both within the budget- framework and with funding from other agencies), which have been kept outside the purview of this evaluation. These are the training and survey on the situation of TiW that is conducted in Laos PR and the translation and launching of the Handbook from GAATW, 'Human Rights in Practice' into Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao.

The evaluation applied a participatory methodology by having discussions and interviews with various stakeholders, e.g. affected women, other community members like village leaders, national policy makers, researchers and other staff of the agencies involved, the Netherlands embassy, as well as other agencies working on the trafficking issue in the country. IAs were actively involved in shaping the evaluation process in their own region and arranged for the various visits. At the start of the evaluation, we held a meeting with them for fine-tuning the evaluation, the ToR and the process. For the detailed timeframe, see the annexe.

As part of the evaluation process, sections of the draft report which were based on the visits, have been shared with GAATW and the IAs in a one-day debriefing and validation workshop in Bangkok (on 11th December) and some follow-up sessions. Factual errors could be corrected and additional information could be included.

On 14th December, GAATW organised an external meeting in Bangkok to present the RA-project and the preliminary findings to other agencies. Representatives of the RNE in Bangkok, Australian Aid, the Ministry of foreign affairs in Thailand, the Vietnamese embassy, and some INGOs like Forum Asia were present. IOM, the UN-interagency project and some others, could not attend but asked for the written documents.

These internal and external meetings were a very useful part of the total evaluation process. It helped IAs to better express and present the results and the effects of the RA-project. The evaluation process as a whole enabled the GAATW and the IAs to look back and generate and formulate ideas for follow-up.

In that sense we feel that the evaluation served an important purpose to give a kind of joint ending to the RA-project (despite the fact that there is still quite some work to do [see the various recommendations] and 'work in progress'). For us as reviewers, the meetings were an indispensable part of the evaluation process as it helped sharpen our analysis as well.

The final report has been presented to the RNE, GAATW and the IAs simultaneously.

Focus and limitations of the evaluation

The long duration of the RA-project and the fact that it was (more or less) finalised by 2000 had its advantages and disadvantages. It enabled us to get an idea of the effects and impact and sustainability of the project. The disadvantage was that the attention for the project among the IAs or other persons involved had shifted, that people had moved on and that certain details of information were difficult to recall. This was quite a hindrance, especially as we were handicapped by the fact that the substantive project documentation, esp. of the 2nd phase in Cambodia and South Vietnam was incomplete, even virtually absent. Therefore it took us quite some time to understand the focus and purpose of the activities planned at local level. In this context we have decided to include the more descriptive parts in the report, to make it easier to comprehend for relative outsiders. This implies however, that the report is rather extensive and detailed.

In this respect it was a pity that the comparative report of the whole project by GAATW was not ready yet in November 2001. This report is partly prepared in response to the limited output (in terms of written documentation) of the project in two locations. Due to various reasons (esp. lack of staff capacity), this is delayed. The report is to be completed in January 2002.

Although the time for the whole evaluation process may seem adequate, in retrospect not enough time was kept to prepare for the different visits and read the background information. The visits focused on the activities at local level and less on the organisational and financial management of the individual organisations. As this is a summative evaluation, we focussed more on lessons learned for the project as a whole.

This evaluation does not give an overview of the social and legal situation of TiW in the two countries. For this we refer to the documents that are (being) prepared by GAATW and the IAs. In this context we did not attempt to check the (reliability of) the quantitative data that have been given in the reports (in general this is very difficult for the subject of TiW). Nor did we consider it our task to assess whether all the criteria for data collection (e.g. the choice and number of locations for the research and the action phases, interviewees, etc.) were 'scientifically correct'. We only partially comment upon the perspective chosen in the research. We prefer to focus on the qualitative aspects of the project and how the whole RA-project could play a role in the process for policy changes and adequate support to women victims.

In general, most of the information shared by the IAs and interviewees about their own project has been taken at face value. Sometimes we could probe to get more details of opinions or facts given. In many cases, due to lack of time, we were not in a position to countercheck the significance of the information. Another limitation was that we could not have discussions with local women without participation of IA-staffs. In some cases this negatively influenced the contribution of the women that we talked to.

Structure of the report

The report is structured according to the different phases of the RA-project and not according to the three regional sub-projects. That allows for a better reflection on the results and effects of the project as a whole.

Chapter 2 focuses on the first part of the ToR, the organisation, methodology and implementation of the RA-project. Some remarks are made about the cost-effectiveness. In Chapter 3 and 4 we look into the 1st and the 2nd phase respectively, its results and effects. The information is presented in line with the regions and the different aims and activities of the IAs in each phase.

Some overlap may occur in the information; which is unavoidable as content and organisation of a project are always closely linked. Each chapter contains various conclusions and recommendations. These are presented in bold.

Chapter 5 tries to give some overall conclusions and recommendations, but these have to be understood in addition to the ones presented in the preceding chapters.

2 ORGANISATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND F-PAR METHODOLOGY

2.1 ORGANISATION OF THE RA-PROJECT

2.1.1 Mandate And Implementation By The IAs

Mandate

The three IAs that were involved in the RA-project are quite different, in terms of history, the context in which they work and their capacity and mandate to execute the research.

Cambodia-CWDA

CWDA started in 1993 as one of the first NGOs in the country, when the Women's Association of Phnom Penh (PP) municipality (a government institution) decided to become an NGO. CWDA is basically a project-based organisation with its base in Phnom Penh municipality. CWDA's financial basis consists of funds for different projects. They implement programmes in the area of awareness & literacy, health and HIV/AIDS awareness. In the economic domain they arrange vocational training, saving and credit activities, rice and cow banks. CWDA as an organisation is working from a participatory and women's empowerment perspective. As mentioned earlier, before the start of the RA-project CWDA was already involved in programmes on prostitution and TiW and worked with sex workers. The RA-project on TiW was conducted with additional, temporary, staff.

Vietnam - YRI and VWU

In the context of 1996, there were virtually no NGOs in Vietnam. Civil society, understood as a countervailing power in society, is underdeveloped. Two (mass-) organisations of the communist party, the YRI and the VWU, implemented the RA-project. The YRI, the Youth Research Institute in Hanoi, is a policy related research institute under the Youth Union. Participatory action research and the issue of TiW were new to YRI. For the RA-project, regular researchers were involved.

The VWU is a social and political mass-organisation for the advancement of women in Vietnam. It works at different provincial and local levels. All (community-based) programmes for women in Vietnam are implemented by or in collaboration with WU at the respective level. Programmes are implemented in areas of awareness, health, economic support, etc. The VWUs collaborate with MOLISA in the 'rehabilitation' of ex-prostitutes and prevention of H/A among prostitutes. Each WU has its own working area. All the international agencies working in Vietnam for women, collaborate with and work through the WU. For this reason they are sometimes 'overburdened' with implementing joint programmes. For the RA-project, regular cadres and staffs who implement development programmes were involved. The VWU did not have any experience with participatory methodologies and approaches in their work.

Implementation of the project

Human resources

In general we saw a high level of commitment from researchers and the IAs to the project. They were interested in the issue of TiW and also in the methodology that has been applied, which created more understanding between the researchers and the women affected. The number of staff of the three organisations in the RA-project has been sufficient. In the original plan, there would be three to four researchers each (plus co-ordinators, support staff etc.). In practice, in Cambodia there were 11 researchers (incl. assistants). North Vietnam employed 9 persons (incl. assistants and management staff of the YRI). In South Vietnam, there were 6, later 10 researchers / staffs involved.

Despite individual and organisational commitments, the project implementation and completion sometimes suffered due to institutional and personnel problems. It is not clear whether all the staff worked on full-time throughout the research project whereas the staff capacity in qualitative terms was sometimes inadequate. Also staff changes had its effects.

In Cambodia, the project faced a set back when the research co-ordinator left in 1999. As the RA-project was supposed to be ending soon (although there were more than adequate funds), CWDA did not appoint a new person. Her tasks were taken over by existing personnel. However, due to various internal reasons, the completion and follow-up of the work on TiW suffered, i.e. the finalisation of the report of the 1st phase, the documentation of the 2nd phase as well as follow-up work at the national level for policy changes.

In South Vietnam, inadequate staff capacity resulted in a lack of analytical depth in data collection and documentation. After the 1st phase, some of the researchers changed including the research co-ordinator, whereas women who run regular activities now implemented the action phase. This may have been the reason for the improperly documented actions in the 2nd phase and the incomplete report of the RA as well as the delay in the publication of the book on the lives of trafficked women. In North Vietnam the project initiator was absent for one year and assumed the responsibility for action in the 2nd phase and in writing the final report. The subsequent changes in co-ordination effected the validity of the final report.

In South Vietnam and Cambodia the researchers did not have sufficient academic training and/or practical experience with doing research. Efforts have been made by the IAs and by GAATW to rectify this deficit by additional training, consultations and exposures. In South Vietnam a research co-ordinator from the Department of Sociology was invited to be research co-ordinator for the 1st phase. She provided on the job training and close monitoring of the researchers. In Cambodia, other staff of CWDA provided further training on the research methodology.

Another limitation was the inadequate English language skills among the IAs. International communication plays a crucial role in implementing a regional project and in the RA-project funds were allocated for English training courses and interpreters and translators for communication and documentation. This was only partially sufficient. Inadequate language skills and, sometimes even the translation, effected the quality of communication between IAs and GAATW and, in the case of South Vietnam, of the reports in English. To some extent these kinds of problems are unavoidable, and are lessons for the future.

For GAATW, see below.

Financial resources

The total budget available for the project was US\$ 668.323, of which by February 2001, US\$ 600.095 has been spent. These financial resources have been quite sufficient: the project could be extended from 24 to 50 months in a budget neutral manner. Additional funds have been provided by the funding agency for unplanned activities like an exposure trip for researchers to Thailand and Cambodia.

After mid or end 1999, the Vietnamese IAs covered the salary-components themselves, whereas CWDA could make use of RA-funds for this purpose till at least 2000 end.

From the RA-overall budget CWDA has roughly spent 40 % of the total expenses. The Vietnamese teams spent roughly 43 % (of which the YRI and the VWUs each, roughly 50%) and GAATW spent some 14 to 15 % for (facilitating) training, regional meetings and co-ordination. The remaining funds are contingencies. The imbalance between the three teams is due to the separation of the Vietnam project. As a result the available budget for the research in Vietnam was split into two divided for the YRI and WU, for the first and second phase. The revised budget was approval by the funding agency. At this stage it is impossible to indicate whether the results of the project would have been different, if each Vietnamese team would have had the same budget as CWDA. At least it may have smoothened the interaction between GAATW and the Vietnamese IAs on certain activities (e.g. IAs in Vietnam complained that too little funds were available for the national workshop).

Roughly speaking, because of the different starting situation, throughout the project CWDA had more than twice or even trice as much funds to spend on personnel and office costs compared to YRI or the VWU. On programme activities, in the 2nd phase, CWDA spent relatively large funds on material & media-productio^l and training of the local women and meetings. In Vietnam in the 1st phase, relatively more funds were spent on meetings and workshops. As a whole, YRI spent relatively more funds on capital investments and on fieldwork for the intervention module and the report / book.

Although the different patterns in expenditure largely reflect the activities (see Chapter3), it is impossible to draw any conclusions about the implications of the different funding levels. It seems that in Vietnam some personnel costs have been covered under programme activities or that (e.g. with the VWU) researchers were regular staff. As such these IAs were probably more flexible in covering personnel or office costs than CWDA. A comparison of cost-effectiveness among the 3 IAs cannot

be made either. Activities were implemented under common budget items, but they were executed in a very different manner. GAATW's financial reports indicate that funds for Cambodia and South Vietnam were spent in line with the approved budget. The expenditure pattern in North Vietnam caused more concern.

Did GAATW have enough financial resources? This is difficult to assess. The budgets and reports on the part of GAATW do not distinguish between programme costs for training, regional workshops & meetings and publications and direct staff and organisational costs for organising, administration, office facilities and salary for the project co-ordinator. The total budget for GAATW was about 14-15%, but for direct co-ordination & administration, our calculation shows that a little less than 8% was available for GAATW for 'overhead'. This is at the lower side, compared to regular standards for overhead in Development Co-operation (8-13%). It seems that for phase II the amount was even less, compared to the fact that Phase II was extended without a comparative budget increase for co-ordination. For the future, a distinction between programme costs for facilitation and overhead costs for co-ordination is required and an increase of overhead costs is justified (see also below).

2.1.2 ROLE OF GAATW

Institutional

The RA-project was a project with independent partners. GAATW performed various roles, related to content as well as organisation and management. They facilitated the formulation of the two project proposals that were implemented by three organisations. They also acted as the contract partner to the funding agency, they were responsible for programmatic and financial monitoring and reporting, co-ordinated the different activities and provided various kinds of technical assistance.

Technical assistance GAATW	Meant for / participation by		
	Cambodia	North Vietnam	South Vietnam
1st phase			
Training for co-ordinators and ATF members	x	x	x
Training for researchers	x (2 wks)	x only 3 days	(x) only indirect
Consultative meeting for report writing	x	x	x
Workshop for comparative analysis (in Siem Reap)	x	x	x
Individual support in finalisation report writing		x	x
2nd phase			
Orientation training (local)		x	x
Study tour to Thailand	x	x	x
<i>(Extension phase)</i>			
Meeting for women groups (in Hanoi)	x	x	x
Exposure to Cambodia			x
Training on group dynamics			x

For these tasks, GAATW involved a separate project co-ordinator and external consultants for specific assignments. For direct project implementation, national research co-ordinators were appointed by the implementing agencies. To give proper guidance at the national level in terms of directions, legitimacy, etc., local Advisory Task Forces (ATF) were formed. Separate funds were allocated for this purpose. GAATW was not in a position to provide this close accompaniment.

The actual set up of the regional project was not free from institutional tensions. Although GAATW formulated specific contracts with all IAs, its enforcement was not really done satisfactorily.

From the perspective of GAATW, technical assistance and an advisory capacity to autonomous implementing agencies had to be combined with direct accountability towards the funding agency. What does this imply for the necessary ownership? Where lies the main accountability? At times GAATW felt they could not influence the local organisations enough. They felt at a loss when e.g. co-ordinators left and the agency did not replace the person (because the project was expected to end soon), or appointed someone who was not competent to assume the necessary responsibility.

GAATW felt that the members of the ATFs were not actively (enough) involved and fulfilled the tasks expected from them. This is reflected in the low to zero budget expenses for the ATF in Cambodia and North Vietnam. In South Vietnam this role seems to have been played by the (internal) Project Management Board. This brings about the question of the formation of the ATFs and the criteria of selecting its members.

One possible solution to these institutional tensions, GAATW sees, may be to participate in the selection of a national co-ordinator who should work on a full-time basis with a clear job description and close liaison with GAATW. This person could then have close interaction on organisational issues, give on the job training if required, etc. E.g. in helping develop communication material or other needs or activities that are being identified. Such a person could also play a role in necessary co-ordination among various (I-)NGOs and funding agencies (NGO, bilateral, e.g. embassies or multilateral).

For implementing agencies closer monitoring and interaction would have higher priority; and this was an area where they felt that GAATW could have played a more effective role.

<p>An example is the issue of the flexibility of the work plan. A regional, and in this case exploratory, pilot project has to be flexible enough to allow for unexpected matters like a changed political situation, has to take into account that more time is required for co-ordination, correspondence, etc. Implementing agencies felt that on the one hand there was proper flexibility, e.g. to accommodate the wish for extra training, for exposures, etc. On the other hand some of them felt that at the same time a more detailed work plan and time frame would have been helpful in project implementation.</p>
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According to IAs, this can be done through proper follow-up of visits, i.e. confirming in writing the agreements and recommendations made to IAs, of various actions planned and when e.g. deadlines are not met. Then necessary action can be taken more quickly, like giving clarification, providing assistance, etc. This strict follow-up was lacking or not strictly adhered to. IAs felt that at times the information and notification about certain activities was insufficient, e.g. too close to the dates. That made it difficult to properly prepare, allow staffs to participate in certain meetings, etc.

One of the reasons for these problems might be that at times GAATW was understaffed. The project co-ordinator did not work on a full time basis for the project all the time. Besides, in the course of the project, there were internal staff changes that affected the work. As a result the role of GAATW in facilitation and co-ordination was not optimal. We could not check whether this might be because GAATW did not get enough additional funds for co-ordination, whereas the project implementation got prolonged, or that due to lack of overall staff capacity, GAATW allotted the co-ordinator with other tasks as well. In any case we think that at the time of the project formulation, the complexities of the more than triple role of GAATW were underestimated. The monitoring work was more complex than anticipated beforehand, and relatively more time had to be spent on administrative matters.

In terms of financial monitoring, the RA-project had its own complexities. Adherence to the contract was not a strong element in the relation between GAATW and individual IAs. Institutionally speaking, the special character of the RA-project (2, later 3 IAs, research processes at different paces) and the inexperience of FA and IAs with such kind of regional project, caused quite some problems. The system and format for financial monitoring appeared to be inadequate, reports were delayed, and/or incomplete, covered different periods, etc. Lack of financial transparency led to irritation and even distrust with one of the IAs. All this hindered a smooth financial monitoring by GAATW.

Content

The implementing agencies highly regarded the enthusiasm and commitment from the side of GAATW, compared to other agencies they relate to. Also the various inputs in the area of technical assistance that were provided were considered as very valuable.

Nevertheless, as a whole, not all the facilitation was carried out to the desirable extent. Sometimes this was beyond GAATWs control (see below, para 2.2). One area of attention refers to the ability to respond to the different local situations, despite the common framework adopted in the project. IAs emphasised that IAs and FA alike have to be flexible and experienced enough to adapt the concepts and framework used into their own situation. In this respect it was felt that at certain times, especially in the beginning in the 1st phase, not all GAATW staff had enough experience on the issue (e.g. on the methodology, the kind of research planned, the concepts of TiW) or that the staff did not receive enough guidance.

Within the common framework adopted, clarity and agreement on concepts used, was a complex issue. The project proposals, which were developed in consultation with GAATW, partially clarified the concepts used, like trafficking, prostitution, migration. At that stage, there were no common internationally agreed upon definitions for trafficking whereas the issue of prostitution is rather controversial. It was somehow clear that the IAs had different starting points in terms of experience and mental frameworks on the issues and other positions in society. From GAATW's position, i.e. working from a rights-based approach and promoting the rights of trafficked women and sex workers, even when this might create conflicts with the authorities, there were mainly differences with Vietnam. In training, meetings, etc., GAATW shared its perspective and experiences on the phenomena and indicated that separation between TiW and prostitution and between voluntary and forced prostitution is required. That TiW is basically a migration process, and that apart from prostitution, other purposes of TiW also need attention.

Implementing agencies partially accepted and integrated this input in their research. But only after the data collection and interviews in the 1st phase, it became clear that more focus had to be given to spell out (and come to terms with) the conceptual matters. Common definitions were provided, but this appeared insufficient. For various reasons the implementing agencies in Vietnam did not (want to) critique the official state policy and practice on prostitution. That looks at this illegal activity as a moral and social evil. The authorities see trafficking as intrinsically linked to prostitution and (therefore) all women in prostitution as victims of human trafficking.

These differences got recognition, but from their perspective the IAs felt that (rightly or wrongly), GAATW did not agree to disagree on this issue. As a whole, the differences in conceptual understanding were addressed, but looking at the outcome (see Chapter three) apparently not at the right stage (before or at the very start) and without reaching a satisfactory solution.

This does not deny the responsibility of IAs. They have not been very timely in submitting draft chapters of reports, in pro-actively requesting for more material on e.g. TiW, migration or laws. A more appropriate facilitation also depends on clear and honest feedback on the input by GAATW and e.g. the limitations of the (esp. the first phase') training. The possibilities for effective input from GAATW depends on this kind of 'discipline' and feed back as well.

Could closer monitoring have helped to find out earlier these differences and needs of the implementing agencies? Or the idea of a common framework revised, in the course of the project? There is not one answer to this, but in retrospect GAATW as the facilitator could have recognised this issue more explicitly and try to come to terms with them. That would have avoided misunderstanding and frustration at later stages.

2.2 APPLICATION OF THE F-PAR METHODOLOGY

One important role of GAATW was to give input on the use of the methodology for Feminist Participatory Action Research (F-PAR). This was initiated first in Thailand in the RATW. After the RATW closed, the methodology was reviewed but there was

no substantial change. The review was shared in the first training for co-ordinators and ATF members, and there was no specific alteration for the RA-project.

The *training* for the 1st (and 2nd) phase tried to introduce these concepts and understanding of doing research and working with women. Basically it means to be a bottom-up approach for research and action, in which the voice of women can / should be heard and their rights be promoted. The training for the 2nd phase was initially not planned and included later on.

According to the three research teams, the application of the F-PAR has resulted in some significant changes in the approach of their work. Some details and effects of the joint training facilitated by GAATW in the 1st and 2nd phase are presented in the box.

Cambodia

The training in the 1st phase took place as scheduled for 2 weeks, in which a checklist was prepared for the interviews. Given CWDA's background and experience with participatory ways of working, the researchers could relatively easily be introduced to the F-PAR. But as the training by GAATW was referred to as too theoretical, an internal follow-up training was necessary.

What effects did the training have? Afterwards CWDA shifted its focus from women to a gender-equity approach where the focus includes men and other members in the communities. Besides, the rights-approach used in the training changed the approach towards sex workers. From being addressed only from a health point of view, where sex workers are basically implementers of health messages designed by others, now CWDA works with them as 'full fledged partners' who have the right to express and represent themselves.

As CWDA has already experience with planning and implementing developing activities they did not participate in the training for the 2nd phase, only in a study tour to Thailand.

Vietnam

In Vietnam, the two-week training for researchers for the 1st phase by GAATW would be combined. Unfortunately, the training was limited to 3 to 4 days only by the Vietnamese counterparts. The reason given was that the political tense situation at that time between China and Vietnam, made it too sensitive to have a long workshop-like training with foreigners involved. The lack of adequate first hand training-input for the research phase was partly addressed by further internal training. The YRI in co-operation with the Centre for Family and Women's Studies organised an internal follow-up training for researchers from North Vietnam and the South-research co-ordinator for two weeks. After that the team in South Vietnam was trained

For the 2nd phase, the two Vietnamese teams were given some practical orientation on a participatory methodology in project formulation etc. A manual how to develop projects was translated into Vietnamese, and this served as a good basis for the development for actions. The tool of a problem tree (to jointly identify causes, manifestations and solutions to a problem) was introduced

Despite the limitations in training on the research methodology, in Vietnam we were repeatedly told that the introduction to and especially application of the participatory research methodology has been a real eye opener for the people involved. In the Vietnamese context this was considered of great significance. For the team in North Vietnam this training was decisive, they said. As they were inexperienced with PAR and implementing community-oriented actions, they were apprehensive how this would work out. Knowledge and

experience gained was also input for new researches. Currently, they are applying the PAR methodology in a research project on garbage children. They feel more confident to do so this kind of research.

In South Vietnam, people appreciated the combination of theory and practice in the RA-project. 'We have had quite some training on participatory methodology, but never before we could apply it in practice'. For the 2nd Phase, the tool of the problem tree was repeatedly mentioned as very useful. It enabled researchers to go from a 'top down' to a 'bottom up', more interactive, approach in relating to local women. In the initial phase it was difficult, researchers said, to build trust, and accept the women as they are, but afterwards, women could 'share their feelings' and 'give ideas'. 'Now we understand women more'. One researcher remarked: "women were eager to come to our meetings". It was felt that groups had become more self-confident. The WU transferred the positive experiences with the methodology in other programme. One example given to us is the focus on self-management of credit groups.

GAATW also facilitated exposure visits, to Thailand for all teams and to Cambodia for the South Vietnamese team. Besides GAATW organised a meeting in Hanoi for representatives of the women's groups that have been formed. The visits to Thailand and Cambodia were additional to the original plan. The meeting in Hanoi was organised instead of the planned regional policy meeting. The meetings were all very useful (see the box), for the IAs as well as the local people, for it is they who (have to) spread the messages.

Study tour to Thailand

As part of the 2nd phase preparation, GAATW organised a study tour Thailand for the three teams. IAs could generate ideas and visit some 'best practices' in terms of application of the F-PAR methodology in the RATW. This experience was very positive. IAs said they could e.g. learn more about NGOs, about the positive results of a participatory approach in addressing social problems (e.g. how women and children can be put in the centre and participate in problem solving instead of being 'objects' only). All the participants could learn how different activities could be implemented to address multifaceted problems (instead of applying one kind of approach). They also could deepen their understanding of the importance of a 'group' as a mechanism for mutual support and awareness raising. It also broadened the scope of work. In South Vietnam e.g. after the study tour Thailand the approach towards women relating to Taiwanese men, was no longer based on the premise that the VWU should try to stop women from migrating. Instead they enable the women to make informed choices and protect their rights.

Of course experiences have a different significance for each researcher. All pick up different things. From the feed back we got it seems that some more or less replicated what they had learned whereas others adapted the experiences and developed ideas that fitted their own context. E.g. in Tay Ninh, the idea to form a mother's groups and set up a hot-line (see Chapter 4).

Exposure to Cambodia & Training on group dynamics

In April & May 1999 an exposure was organised for the South Vietnam-team to Cambodia to that they could learn more about the situation of Vietnamese women in Cambodia and understand more about awareness raising through women's groups. This was followed by a training-request on group dynamics, as they realised the difference with the group they had seen in Cambodia. The latter were found to be more dynamic. The WU realised they had problems in building up trust with the local women. Although, the WU mentioned that the techniques and methodology that they learned were know to them, they appreciated it a lot as they could further reflect and exchange on the earlier input.

Exchange in Hanoi

Representatives of the women's group in the three locations, together with researchers, met in Hanoi in August 1999. This meeting was found important for further sharing of experiences between the different groups of women, the relevance of the groups and understanding each other's commonalities and differences.

To what extent could the F-PAR methodology be fully applied in the RA-project? For this we have to look at the input by GAATW and the way the methodology was applied. Looking at the outcome of the RA- project, certain aspects could be addressed more explicitly. We mention some important aspects.

Although this was given attention in the exposure, modules how to work with local authorities and make them part of the solution, would have been important. For the 2nd phase, examples for community and rights based and action could have been developed and selected more strategically, i.e. that they are in line with the aims of GAATW in the areas of prevention and support. E.g. why and how NGOs in Thailand work with sex workers, why and how cross border co-operation can /should be promoted.

Last but not least, it is important to address the socio-political context of a project and the position of the researcher / development worker, including how to gain the confidence of and interview women in a trafficking context. We like to clarify this last point. F-PAR is based on the premise that often there is a (huge) gap between the voices of women affected and the male dominated ideology and machinery of the state that frames and implements policy. However, as this RA-project clearly shows, all research is done in a given socio-political context and this resultant framework defines a large part of the outcomes. In South Vietnam e.g. the researchers together with a local staff of the VWU did the interviews. The reasons given were that the local representative of the WU knows the situation and women to be interviewed quite well. However, as the WU is known to provide certain services and have a certain position of authority, this may have influenced the women's attitude towards the WU. In comparison, the staff of the YRI who were new and neutral, may have had some difficulties to initially approach women, but in the end their relationship has developed in a different direction. In this sense, it has e.g. all kinds of pros and cons when women already know the researcher. Especially with the sensitive issue of TiW, self-expression is not easy to accomplish as it deals with (il-) legality and morality. The interaction between researcher and the person to be interviewed is a decisive dimension. The researcher had to be aware of her or his own -personal- perspectives, values, and her / his position in society (as higher educated, higher-class etc.) and that they do not override the views of women. This requires an atmosphere of trust and a high level of self-reflection from the part of the researcher to distinguish between facilitating and influencing women self-expression. From reading through the various reports and the discussions, it became clear that at times there was a thin line between facilitating and influencing women self-expression. Sometimes there was quite a gap between information from raw data and the written report. Sometimes the line became very blurred. As a result the necessary space to have women's (deviant) voices heard and represented in the analysis became rather limited.

Of course, GAATW can only facilitate training and meetings and does not control the follow-up. E.g. the shorter training in Vietnam had negative implications. As the

report of the follow-up training was not available in English, it was not clear for GAATW how the F-PAR methodology was further introduced. Conceptual unclarity on the issue of TiW and on the F-PAR remained. The academic experience of the YRI could easier make up for the short duration of the training input by GAATW.

The team in the South had more difficulties catching up. Their data collection and documentation is far less analytical. And although they were very positive about the participatory approach that does not mean that it was fully implemented in practice. We find it e.g. difficult to believe that cash payment to women for their participation in meetings (as we could experience in the South), reflects a spirit of ownership, commitment and active participation.

2.3 THE RA AS A REGIONAL PROJECT

Through the process of working together, GAATW wanted to help creating more awareness and understanding on the issue of TiW so that the organisations could take subsequent action. Another aim was to strengthen regional co-operation, with a focus on national governments and regional policies. We have to realise though that two of the three IAs were relatively new to the issue, also because the issue in the region as such was new.

After the 1st Phase, it was realised that by and large the data collected and the proposals for policy change were too general. Therefore they did not justify as yet, trying to influence governments at the regional level. To a large extent this sub-optimal result was also due to the in-experience of the IAs, at least in Vietnam, in influencing -as independent bodies- the national and regional policy. Besides other regional projects were emerging (e.g. the UN-interagency project and the IOM-project) which focused on governmental levels.

Instead, GAATW decided to give more focus to the participants in the RA-project itself, the researchers and the newly formed women's groups. In this context, the exposures and exchange meetings were arranged for sharing of experiences, further shaping the programme and generating ideas. As already referred to, this worked very well. These experiences were actively applied in their own project in the action phase.

The study tour to Cambodia for the South Vietnam team tried to stimulate actual cross border co-operation as well. It turned out that this was not easy to realise, as legal and institutional contexts were not conducive yet. E.g. there is (still) no official policy in Vietnam to arrange for smooth repatriation (and subsequent support) of women trafficked to Cambodia. (It may be useful to mention that in 1997, GAATW, CWDA and IOM jointly prepared a report on the situation of Cambodian women in Thailand. This has (in-) directly resulted in the formulation of the (not yet signed) MoU between Thailand and Cambodia about the repatriation of trafficked women.)

2.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the context of an emerging civil society and of women's organisations, or the absence of it, of a lack of experience with participatory methodology and / or with

doing research, we think the RA-project and the application of the F-PAR methodology has rendered important results.

The RA-project was certainly a complex project. There were many differences to deal with, in the conceptual understanding of TiW and its linkages to migration processes and prostitution, with different socio-political contexts, with different (institutional and/or individual) capacities for implementing the project. Fortunately, sufficient flexibility was there, e.g. when additional training input was needed.. The study tours and exposures were a very valuable addition to the training, as it gave more examples and ideas, especially to the Vietnamese groups.

The actual success in aiming for policy changes depends on many factors. A government that is conducive and a strong civil society make things relatively easier. In all cases, to realise change, the organisation has to have sufficient capacity and contacts for a successful lobby and advocacy. In that respect, the programme goals could have been more at par with the capacities and strengths of the IAs. In this project, either capacity changed (e.g. Cambodia) or the mandate was not in accordance to the task defined (e.g. South Vietnam).

For a similar regional project to increase the chances to achieve the different aims and execute the tasks accordingly, we give the following recommendations.

Organisation

- ◆ For all agencies involved, organisational commitment should be reflected by full time engagement of staff involved, if so planned and budgeted. Adequate financial resources are but one factor for achieving results.
- ◆ For the FA, co-ordination (and at times some extra help for specific organisational tasks) and more close interaction, i.e. frequent 'field visits' is required by a person who has experience with managing regional projects and 'masters' the issue from the first start.
- ◆ Elaboration of the contracts with MoUs that govern the institutional relationships and ensure mutual accountability should spell out in detail the various roles & responsibilities between the different parties involved. A tailor made system for financial monitoring is required. Adherence to these contractual arrangements has to build on mutual trust and transparency.

Implementation

- ◆ At the start of the project (or even before), the FA should properly assess the mandate and the existing in-house capacity and orientation of IAs and/or come to a prior agreement with the partner-organisations about the perspective and approach of the different parties.
- ◆ The possibilities and limitations of a common (institutional and/or ideological) framework should be explicitly addressed. This refers to contextual 'limitations', different starting points and strengths and weaknesses of the IAs.

- ◆ Basic capacity for research and for applying a participatory methodology is required, if that is the case, specific (training needs) assessments are required in terms of existing capacities, concepts, language skills etc. to identify the necessary inputs.

F-PAR methodology

- ◆ GAATW should analytically document, further analyse and publish the F-PAR methodology as has been applied in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. So that the combination of research and action in the context of trafficking and migration, can be replicated in other localities
- ◆ Further improve the training and subsequent monitoring on F-PAR. Describe the training content and revise and update the modules. This includes testing and feed back from agencies what works or not. (Some crucial aspects refer to concepts of 'participation', different dimensions of women's empowerment, a rights based approach work in the context of TiW / migrant women & prostitutes, as well as the socio-political context of any project, how to work with local authorities, the role of and position of the researcher, etc.) The FA should take enough time to guide the IAs in identifying local activities, by discussing and probing to what extent the activities are put into a rights context, and see whether the conditions and circumstances are appropriate for implementing the same.
- ◆ Continue with organising exchanges for people at community level apart from officials or 'professional' people from NGOs. Put visits in its proper context; as an important tool for learning and discussions. Ensure that participants have a clear understanding on the issues and goals of exposure and exchange visits. Accompaniment should be provided for follow-up and the development of ideas for future activities. Optimise that participants can apply the learning in their own context.

Regional focus

- ◆ Only work on regional co-operation and joint formulation of proposals when a proper national basis exists. Give separate attention to the cross-border dimensions and co-operation of a regional project. It would have to build on intimate knowledge and understanding of the two realities and an adequate basis of existing national support systems.
- ◆ When co-operation between two neighbouring countries is promoted, first of all facilitate exchange and exposure of initiatives to prevent TiW and support potential women victims. Time is needed for understanding and reflecting upon the similarities and differences and for designing a suitable follow-up. Adapting experiences to the own context is more fruitful than mere replication of certain projects.
- ◆ GAATW should further study and analyse, and on that basis lobby with respective governments in specific countries how repatriation from a rights based approach could be developed.

3 PHASE I: RESEARCH AND POLICY

Phase I of the RA project was meant to investigate systematically the situation of TiW in Cambodia and Vietnam as a background for policy related work. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were to be used. Interviews with affected women in

various areas would be a source of information, an entry point for data collection on forms, patterns, etc. of TiW and -later- action. Like in Thailand, two special studies were planned: one (quantitative) overview to put the qualitative information into a national perspective. Secondly a study on laws was foreseen as an overview and critique of the current legal context and as input to advocate change.

As a preparation, GAATW organised an orientation workshop for the research coordinators, whereas for the researchers a two weeks training was planned on the principles and elements of Feminist Participatory Research (F-PAR); a method that for the first time was used in the RATW. As part of the training, concepts and the focus of the research were discussed and checklists developed for the interviews. As explained in the previous chapter, this training did not materialise as planned.

About one year later, a consultation meeting and a workshop were held for the three teams to compare the results and discuss the reports. To facilitate a certain commonality, GAATW suggested the structure of the reports. The Vietnamese teams were given guidance on report writing as well.

3.1 CAMBODIA

Research

The research phase in Cambodia was carried out between January and September 1997, with some interruptions due to the political situation in the country. The objectives were to investigate and get a comprehensive overview of the situation on TiW. The focus was on internal and cross border trafficking for the purpose of prostitution. Information was gathered from government (representatives of civil and military authorities) and NGO sources. Field research was done in 5 provinces, i.e. in 10 villages as well as 17 brothel areas. Interviews were held with 311 sex workers, according to a checklist. Besides this 95 women who had returned from either Thailand or cities in Cambodia have been interviewed as well.

Entry points for the interviews with women in brothels was HIV/ AIDS awareness (the researchers were engaged in this as part of their ongoing work with the Department of WVA). In the villages where CWDA has its ongoing activities, i.e. in Phnom Penh municipality, there existed a basis for information gathering through the regular literacy and /or economic activities. In other villages, contacts were made through the researchers.

More than 300 interviews have been held; a rich source of information. However, the interviews served first of all as raw data for a survey. From this it appears that the -qualitative- research has been combined with the special study of the overview. This was not an easy task. Due to lack of time, the only data that were processed and used as a basis for the -quantitative- analysis in the report, were the interviews with sex workers and women in brothels. As a result the report is incomplete. Information related to trafficking for other purposes, like construction work to Thailand, does not get due attention in the analytical part. (Some qualitative information is presented on mail-order brides to Taiwan, but CWDA informed that after two illegal agencies were curbed down in 1998, this -potential- form of TiW was not significant anymore.) As a result it is not clear whether any patterns exist for other purposes of

TiW, apart from prostitution. Information from the villages is only referred to in a general way, related to the section on impact on the family and community.

This puts limits to the relevance of the report for the purpose it was meant. Besides, due to various reasons, neither CWDA nor GAATW have been able to fully use the qualitative material from the overwhelming number of interviews that have been held for more in-depth analysis.

Raise public & political awareness

With the research, CWDA planned to raise public & political awareness on the issue in Cambodia.

To this end, the (English) situation-report was made available to other NGOs and the government. The report has also been translated into Khmer. The preliminary findings were shared through a national workshop in March 1998. Eighty participants from the government and NGO-sector participated. Key speakers were the (vice-) governors of Phnom Penh & some provinces. Besides this, at start of the 2nd Phase, provincial workshops were held with the same purpose of dissemination and discuss relevant activities. Last but not least, CWDA shared the findings through community meetings where both local people as well as village authorities participated.

Due to one-time character of these events and the long period passed, the direct effects of these workshops at the national and regional level are not possible to identify. Given the position of CWDA we can anticipate that it has contributed to increased awareness on the issue in Cambodia and the respective provinces. In the communities the meetings were used for gathering input for relevant actions as well, and as such they have created a favourable climate for acceptance and involvement of the activities by CWDA.

At present in Cambodia there is more knowledge and awareness among decision-makers and as such the information from the research part is not unique (anymore). Nevertheless, it is a pity that the English version of the report itself only exists in a draft version. Therefore it is not easily accessible. This omission might be one of the reasons why till date, various organisations ask funding to do research on TiW. That may be useful, but there is the danger of reinventing the wheel or duplicating the same when the results of the RA project are not easily available.

Review & influencing of national policies & laws

As said before, apart from the interview-part, a review of national policies & laws on TiW was planned. In 1996 a new law on TiW has been passed. The research report makes some references to this, but a comprehensive critique and recommendations are absent.

One of CWDA's policy-related aims for the RA-project was to help improving the co-ordination between government and NGOs to support trafficked (or high risk) women. No specific activities have been reported in this direction till 1999, but CWDA informed that currently (2000-2001) they are among the NGO-participants in a working group under the Ministry of WVA on issues of TiW, prostitution and

domestic violence. Amendments are being prepared to the existing law on TiW. These relate to victim protection and a broader definition of TiW, to include not only prostitution, but other forms as well.

Of special interest to mention is that CWDA has taken an active stand on the issue of prostitution. As a result of the input from the RA project, the organisation has developed a more clear position on human rights in relation to prostitution. Now they are in favour of decriminalisation, in order to protect the rights of sex workers. Between 1998 and 2000 CWDA organised a series of forum-discussions to discuss whether prostitution should be legalised or not. Despite the fact that it is still illegal, it seems that partly due to these efforts, the government is slowly changing its attitude towards prostitutes and acknowledges that women's rights have to be protected. When we met the Deputy minister for WVA, she referred to the discussion and indicated that it had created a big debate.

By 2001 end, the ministry was preparing new policy guidelines against the sexual exploitation of women and children. These do not criminalise sex work(-ers); which is in accordance with the Cambodian law. Instead, the guidelines propose strict law enforcement and regulation of places where sex-services are provided. (The gap between paper and practice became directly clear. After our visit we learned that the implementation of the guidelines has resulted in a closing down of kara-oke bars and the arbitrary arrest of sex workers in Phnom Penh. Members of the CPU (see chapter 4) organised protests at the ministry of WVA).

Conclusions & Recommendations

The research part did serve a good purpose as a basis for further policy-discussions in Cambodia. Especially CWDA has taken a strong position on prostitution and women human rights. As a basis for information per se this phase did not render as many results as planned. CWDA was not as equipped to process all the data for the (unintended) purpose of a survey. Besides, the report is incomplete and unpublished.

Depending on their plans related to work on TiW and the current policy needs we recommend CWDA to

- ◆ Promote the establishing of a national platform, including a kind of 'clearing house' for overall co-ordination on the issue of TiW (by the ministry of WVA). This can serve as a locus for information and experience sharing on past and present activities by various GO and NGO agencies (research, policy and activities) that are undertaken on the issue of TiW.
- ◆ Complete and publish the study on policies and laws related to TiW. This will provide a strong back up and input for ongoing discussions related to TiW, prostitution and women's rights.
- ◆ Prepare an overall report of the whole RA-project. The findings and experiences will be beneficial for further developing appropriate strategies to prevent TiW and protect the right of women.

If so required CWDA could involve external support for these two tasks.

3.2 NORTH VIETNAM

Research

The Youth Research Institute (YRI) conducted research for phase I in four provinces: Lang Son, Quang Ninh, Hai Duong and Hanoi. The interviews were held between April and September 1997. Traffic in women is seen in the context of prostitution and cross border marriage to Chinese men. Hanoi was considered a destination place for national trafficking, the other provinces were places of origin for TiW to China.

Probably because trafficking was considered a taboo topic and given the political situation with China at that time, the YRI could not obtain official permission beyond the Youth Union to conduct the research during the first phase. The permission from higher level was obtained only after February 1998 when the 2nd phase started. This somehow affected the F-PAR training and the research in the field areas. Researchers could not be open about the exact topic of their work. In the first three months they found it difficult to gather information and contact women since the local authority did not want to have an open discussion on the problem. Also women themselves were hesitant, as they (or their daughters) had been engaged in illegal activities (crossing the border without official permission) or they felt ashamed as they had had to suffer various forms of humiliations, or had not succeeded to fulfil their dreams. In total 57 women could be interviewed, and 130 others (relatives, in case women were still in China, local authorities etc.)

Another obstacle the researchers faced was gathering statistical data. They managed this by getting access to the registration records of local authorities. Together with 'circumstantial evidence' information about cases and trends were identified.

Unfortunately, the information gathered in the field and the findings of the research in Hanoi are not clearly reflected nor systematically integrated in the report. It appeared that primary fieldwork has not been done in Hanoi. The reason given is that researchers were too busy in the rural areas, but this (also) a matter of choice. The findings presented are based on earlier work on the situation of prostitution in Hanoi. As such they do not completely reflect the national situation of trafficking in women to Hanoi from rural areas. Furthermore, the report does not clearly distinguish between those who enter prostitution by force and deception or by choice. The report does not clearly make a distinction or presents different opinions on prostitution versus TiW. Similarly, women with Chinese husbands were all considered as trafficked persons regardless to their choice of (illegally) crossing border to marry Chinese men. GAATW's definition on trafficking in persons was quoted but there was no clear example how the elements of trafficking in the definition were applied in the analysis of the different cases. During our discussions, according to the researchers of the YRI, about 60% of the total cases of (temporary) border crossing is (regular) migration, the remaining is TiW (deception). Inclusions of this kind of information in the analysis, how 'soft' it might be, would increase the quality of the report and make the recommendations more convincing and reflect the reality.

As of now, it seems that the national policy vis-à-vis prostitution has affected the data analysis and the report writing as well as the policy recommendations.

Dissemination of the research findings and impact on policy changes

After completing the first phase, YRI, together with the WUs from HCMC and TN organised a three-day national meeting in March 1998 in Hanoi to disseminate the findings of research from North and South Vietnam. Participants among others were representatives from MOLISA, the Ministry of Justice and Supreme People Inspectors.

Recommendations from the Hanoi National Meeting 1998:

- Formulate consistent programme for actions within and between agencies.
- Set up national focal point to co-ordinate actions and disseminate information related to trafficking.
- Revise the penal code to make harsher punishment for traffickers and provide guidelines for legal actions.
- Increase co-operation with China on the issue of trafficking of women

The findings of the research have contributed to the discussion on TiW in Vietnam and enhanced the understanding on this problem; which was once considered as a taboo subject. In concrete terms, it contributed to a discussion on legal amendments in a big conference on laws relating to trafficking which was organised by the Ministry of Law in 1999. According to the YRI, as result of the data gathered in the RA project, the laws related to TiW have been improved. From January 2001 on, e.g. the crime penalty is increased. YRI could present their views and other recommendation of the RA-project in other workshops as well, but more action has to be taken by the different stakeholders to put these into practice.

According to YRI's Director, one of the reasons for not being able to effectively influence the national policy on trafficking of women and children might be due to the small scale of the fieldwork and the limited number of copies of the information, education and communication materials (IEC). The research report, which combines the findings during the research and action phases, has been published in 2000 by Lao Dong Publishing House in English (200 copies) and Vietnamese (300 copies). It is out of print now, but as we could experience ourselves, is still in demand from local and international agencies.

Even though the RA-project has been completed, the research co-ordinator - in her own capacity- is still involved in the issue at different levels. In November 2001, she was invited as a resource person on trafficking of women and children in a parliamentarian committee's conference on violence against women in South Vietnam. She shared the findings from the RA-project and it seems the committee is open to support the expansion of the community-based model from the RA project. A national conference to find solutions to stop trafficking and violence against women is now scheduled for 2002 in Hanoi. YRI also hopes to expand the community-based module by proposing to local authorities to have youth volunteers working with returnees and high- risk groups in the village.

The special studies

Initially it was decided that the YRI would be responsible for the special study 'overview of the situation of trafficking in VN'. Later they became (also) responsible for the study on the laws relating to trafficking that was initially planned to be carried out by the team from South Vietnam. For various reasons the final reports of the two special studies are not available at the time of evaluation. Some related information is included in the report, but this is not complete.

This is a pity, as a written document would increase the possibilities for doing lobby to shape the direction of the national law and regulations relating to trafficking of women.

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of the research from the 1st phase have given a good basis for further policy influencing and related changes in Vietnam. Due to some limitations, the report(s) that were planned as an output of the 1st phase, have rendered fewer results and effects, than initially planned. The recommendations are rather general and could be improved upon. The present context in Vietnam provides a good basis and favourable circumstances for further follow-up to the various recommendations. The YRI as a research policy institute is in a good position to shape national policies on trafficking in women and children.

In order to effectively influence the national policy and generate more public discussion on the issue, we recommend the YRI to:

- ◆ Review and rewrite certain chapters in the current report on the RA-project and go for a second publication. GAATW could offer its co-operation.
- ◆ Develop a more concise (simplified) version of the research findings in order to inform and create awareness of people in the community and general public.
- ◆ Finalise the special study on laws relating to trafficking in co-operation with legal institutes, such as the Lawyer Association. The aim should be to systematically review the relevance and effectiveness of existing laws in tackling the problem of trafficking in women and children, and formulate the recommendations for legal amendments.
- ◆ In co-operation with the VWU of HCMC and TN, further follow-up the recommendations that apply to the national situation in Vietnam.

3.3 SOUTH VIETNAM

Information gathering

The research in South Vietnam was carried out in 2 districts in HCMC and in 4 districts in Tay Ninh province, for 4 months between June and September 1997. In HCMC and TN province, in total 110 women were interviewed, plus 56 others. Women included those who had returned from Cambodia or China (22 women), women who had been married to Taiwanese men (32) or ex-prostitutes who had returned from the education centres (35) (who are considered to be victims of internal TiW by the VWU). The checklist developed by the YRI served as a basis for the interviews. The process of interviewing was monitored by the external research co-ordinator. Interviewees were identified through various local WUs. Their representatives accompanied the researchers during the interviews. Due to the limitations of the VWU in doing research (see the previous chapter) the reliability of the report is not that high. Raw data of the interviews are not always reflected in the findings and conclusions.

The VWU-HCMC informed that the report has been sent to different authorities and to IOM. The report is available from the VWU in HCMC.

In the course of the process, the VWU realised the growing trend in South Vietnam of suspected cases of TiW to Taiwan for marriage purposes. Some general information could be included in the research report. However, during the extension phase, the VWU made an additional survey with 854 women in HCMC and 102 women in TN province. This was a useful addition to the RA-project. A report is available. The report reveals that in several cases it seems that the label 'trafficking' is not really applicable. It indicates there are many dimensions to the process of (decision making for) marriage to foreigners.

The findings from this survey broadened the understanding of the VWU on the complexities of the issue of migration and trafficking. They have been used as input for organising some groups of women returnees, training and communication on the issue by the VWU (see Chapter 4).

Improvement of government measures to combat TiW

After finalisation of the research, a workshop was organised with local authorities for information sharing and 'agenda' setting. The findings were also presented in the national workshop in March 1998, together with the results of the research in North Vietnam. Initially it was planned that the team from the South would conduct the special study on laws, but this has been carried out by the YRI. See further under the section for North Vietnam and the second phase.

Conclusions & Recommendations

As mentioned before, the VWU has not been involved in designing the research. They worked as mere implementers in the project. The research has certainly been a positive learning process for the VWU. However, their capacity for doing feminist and participatory research was not really adequate as they lacked the (academic) background and /or proper training by GAATW, the rights-based approach and a previous orientation for applying a bottom-up approach. As a consequence, the quality of the output could certainly be improved upon. To give one example, it was positive that in the course of the project, the marriage of Vietnamese women to

Taiwanese men was tackled in a more rights based -and realistic- approach that promoted the informed choice of women. It is regrettable that such complexities have not been reflected in the report. Nor did they form a basis for policy recommendations.

Besides this, the WVU did not really have the proper mandate for the promoting of national policy changes. This limited the results and the effects of the 1st phase as a whole.

We recommend the VWU to

- ◆ Follow-up the recommendations formulated from the RA-project and that apply to the current national situation in Vietnam.

3.4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase I, the research part, aimed at providing a systematic investigation of the situation of TiW in Cambodia, North and South Vietnam. Like the preceding RATW in Thailand, it was supposed to serve as a basis for further action: to put the subject on the national agenda, and for identifying relevant entry points for further local action with women's initiatives. In general research on this issue is very complicated. It is difficult to collect reliable data as TiW refers to human rights violations, to illegality, to shame about loosing face when economic improvements do not materialise and to stigma about sex work. Provided interviews are held with an open mind and interpreted in a feminist right-based approach, the findings can be an important source of information. The training by GAATW was meant to sensitise the researchers about all these aspects. Unfortunately the training had its limitations (see Chapter 2). Besides, the socio-political context was not conducive enough to get the most out of the interviews.

Nevertheless it must be said that at the time of the research, the process of interviewing contributed to breaking taboos and increasing awareness about the issue among local authorities and families. Researchers shared that local people realised that this was not a normal risk in migration, of bad luck, but that women affected were victims of various violations that need support.

GAATW staff acknowledged that the raw data contains a wealth of information, likewise we could also conclude that the individual reports are rich and contain various important recommendations. In this respect it is regretful that the presentation of information is not always accurate, conclusions drawn do not always follow the findings nor articulate the concerns of affected women. Many recommendations are of a very general nature, which weakens their potential relevance and use. Besides, some reports are not finalised, the analyses either do not reflect all the interviews held or are based on different, previous, information, and, for Vietnam, are kept in line with the official state policy.

As a whole, the quality of the reports could be improved upon, but this general statement is not meant to disqualify individual reports, the efforts made and the positive learning experiences in doing the research.

The special studies were meant to broaden the understanding of the researchers on the issue and to support the actions for lobby & advocacy for better laws, law enforcement, etc. But in the three locations, the studies were either not carried out or the reports not completed. This is regretful, as it limits a comparison of the trafficking situation prior to the RA-project and the effectiveness of the policy oriented and strategic work at national level. The reports could have enhanced the understanding on the changing situation and law enforcement at the local and national levels and serve as input and background for influencing policies.

One factor that leads to these critical conclusions is that the IAs apparently underestimated the task of the research. As a whole it seems they ate more than they could chew. Especially as the qualitative research has partly been interpreted as a survey and the interview part was combined with the special study of the overview. Besides, the IAs were not equally capacitated to undertake the special studies. It should also be acknowledged that although -to our knowledge- the three IAs had an official mandate to lobby for changes in the law or other policy changes, for various reasons their actual ability or interest to strongly do so was limited or even absent (see also Chapter 2).

Another issue to mention is that although the IAs strictly followed the checklist and framework for the data analysis as jointly agreed with GAATW, the outcome shows some limitations. In Cambodia the analysis focussed on TiW for prostitution although data collected include on other purposes as well, e.g. construction work. In Vietnam the analysis did not (always) distinguish between migration, TiW and prostitution. The inclusion of ex-prostitutes among the interviewees is justified, but many of them came from the same area or did not indicate -according to the raw data- that they were deceived or forced other than by general poverty. This fixed conceptualisation limited the interpretation of the data and guided the final analysis in such a way that the findings and recommendations confirmed the official state policy.

Such (un-) conscious biases or constraints lead to blurred, sometimes confusing information or misinterpretation of raw data, which may devalue the relevance of the information and the quality and reliability of the research as a whole. From the perspective of GAATW this undermined the focus and transformational potential of the RA project.

We need to acknowledge that these internal or external limitations were not really identified at the start of the project. Apparently, GAATW conventionally assumed that the research findings would bring in a new perspective to look at the problem. At least the strong influence of the socio-political context was underestimated. With hindsight it is self-evident that a project that sees women's voices as countervailing expressions against state- and male domination, can only function in a context where researchers can act as facilitators or catalysts to bring these to the fore. When research is meant to reflect official opinions and politics, this becomes quite complicated or even impossible.

From their perspective, the IAs were satisfied with the outcome of the 1st phase, but in line with the overall framework, GAATW preferred reports that would reflect the interests of women and the current situation of trafficking that appeared to encompass other purposes of trafficking as well. The comparative report that

GAATW is in the process of writing, becomes then an important addition to ensure the validity and quality of the research.

Despite our critical reflective notes, the respective organisations in Cambodia and North Vietnam have actively used the findings in further promoting the issue at the national or regional agenda and to lobby with authorities for changes they deemed necessary related to TiW and / or prostitutes' rights. In South Vietnam, local level workshops have been held on the issues and the survey related to marriage to Taiwan, served as input for training and communication at local level on the issue. The national and provincial workshops were all one-off events but have served its purpose at that time in raising awareness and agenda setting and preparing the ground for the 2nd phase.

In a situation and context where very little information is available on the subject, every report that is published or public meeting that is organised on TiW helps putting the issue on the agenda. However, efforts to get e.g. adequate media coverage are important to make it known to relevant instances. Also clear recommendations and action plans and a concrete plan for follow-up are a must.

Recommendations

In addition to the previous recommendations we suggest

- ◆ Each of the three agencies to undertake more efforts to share the findings and the results of lobby and advocacy with the general public and with specialised groups, like affected women and (local) authorities.
- ◆ To finalise the studies on relating laws to human trafficking in Vietnam and Cambodia so that it can serve as a useful tool in the lobby for better laws related to TiW.
- ◆ In the two countries a national platform on TiW to establish or strengthen for better co-operation among GO, NGOs, and between donor- and local agencies. Its role could be to provide situation updates on the magnitude of the problem and the current national policies/actions including agencies involved, as well as 'best practices' and (stimulate) further development of appropriate laws and policies that follow a rights-based approach.
- ◆ The comparative report prepared by GAATW should as much as possible encompass the current situation of trafficking and initiatives taken by different agencies at national and sub-regional levels.

4 PHASE II - LOCAL ACTIONS FOR PREVENTION OF TRAFFICKING AND SUPPORT OF WOMEN

Phase II of the RA-project aimed at developing actions in partnership with women affected and local communities for prevention and support. In line with the participatory approach, the actions were only to be developed at the start of the 2nd phase, i.e. after in the 1st phase a proper basis had been established. A separate budget was approved by the funding agency accordingly. We describe and review the actions as they were aimed at by the three agencies. The various sections refer to the planned activities and objectives as presented by the three agencies to GAATW. The description is rather extensive, as, apart from North Vietnam, there was little documentation available about the activities and results of the 2nd phase. We have tried to make the information more accessible by presenting more descriptive parts in boxes. We close the chapter with a reflection on the different group approaches that have been developed, in the perspective of a rights based approach of women's empowerment.

4.1 CAMBODIA

Strengthen local women's initiatives in addressing problems related to TiW

After the research phase, CWDA consulted with various stakeholders (women, community, provincial and local authorities) about the most relevant activities. Prevention was the most important activity they wanted to focus on. In line with CWDA's general approach, in 7 villages, 70 women's groups were formed. They perform two functions in the community: surveillance and assisting women.

CWDA's work also focused on prostitutes and they developed awareness material. For the review, we visited one village and the prostitutes' rights organisation in Phnom Penh municipality. In Battambang and Kampong Som we visited four villages and two brothels in total.

Surveillance groups

For surveillance, the groups serve as a channel for awareness raising, information sharing and direct action at the village level. The focus was on prevention of TiW through information and awareness (see below), on literacy and the decrease of economic vulnerability through savings. In the area of Phnom Penh municipality where CWDA has its regular activities, the RA project was implemented through existing women's groups. In other areas new groups were formed.

The village groups consist of group leaders, whose group consists of 5 to 15 families / women living in their direct neighbourhood. In this way, most of the women from the village are involved. The women group-leaders meet once or twice a month, under the leadership of a community volunteer, whom the local women select.

For the surveillance role, the group leaders provide information to group members, keep active check on developments related to migration, etc. The members keep track of unknown faces in the village and report these to the authorities. They also discuss with women and men who plan to migrate and warn them of the possible risks. They advise e.g. neighbours to consult with the village authorities (who otherwise would not easily come to

know about this when an offer comes.) In one village we were informed of three cases where women successfully could be brought back, after they had gone to other places and their family got suspicious. We were also informed that (suspected or potential) traffickers can also be relatives from other regions (e.g. in Kampong Som, which is a transit area), who come to stay in the village with unknown women. Women from the group mentioned they check whether these women are aware of the risky situation they are in and that they might be trafficked. In several cases the women returned home and 7-8 times the group even collected funds for their transportation costs back home.

Support to women-returnees

Apart from prevention through the general women's groups, a separate group of women returnees in at least one village has also been formed. Unlike the general group, this consists of directly affected women only. One group leader is in charge. We did not check how the group is formed, i.e. which woman among the returnees became a member. The women involved are members of the general groups as well. We were explained that the reason for forming this separate group is that it enables the women, who are in an economically vulnerable situation (they are highly indebted when they return home), to share about the practice of migration and exploitation. This helps to overcome their emotions and to identify strategies for improvement. Through the group leader, information about their migration process and vulnerable situation is shared in the general groups. This then becomes a tool for information sharing for prevention.

CWDA had indicated that in the context of the RA-project, they referred women returnees to other agencies for service to victim abuse and trauma. To our understanding, this refers to economic aspects only. In the village we visited, TiW refers more to construction work in Thailand and the women who had returned were said to suffer less stigma or mental problems for which counselling would be required. But special support is still required to help them overcome their problematic situation. As CWDA does not regularly work in this village, one woman was referred to another NGO working in the same geographical area for financial assistance.

Influencing migration?

The surveillance groups are meant to stop victimisation in migration. During our visits we asked whether and how the women's groups thought they contributed to the decrease of TiW, in the sense that fewer women were deceived. The women's groups and the community leaders were all convinced that due to the groups, TiW had decreased. We feel this statement needs some qualification. When asking for examples e.g., some cases in which women who were deceived were brought back, took place before 1997 (when the RA project commenced). Hence, it cannot be said that villagers were totally unaware of irregularities in migration before the group started. Besides, migration is a complex process not influenced by awareness alone. In the village near Phnom Penh e.g. regular migration has decreased or even stopped after 4 years ago a garment factory was opened nearby, where about 300 village women (aged 18-30 years) are employed.

One aspect needs careful attention by CWDA. This refers to the group members' 'authority' in warning others of the risks involved in migration. It seemed the active members of the village group all belong to the less poor: poorer women have less time to come for group meetings, as they have to engage in economic activities. Furthermore the community volunteer has slightly more education than her peers. As a whole the women themselves have little experience with migration. So why would others believe them when they tell them not to leave the village? When we discussed this, women indicated that appropriate information material and

especially the 'real life' experiences that group members can sometimes share from women returnees in the village, are essential for them.

However, women also acknowledged that stopping migration as one means to prevent TiW is not always desirable or realistic. In many instances economic alternatives are insufficient. In that respect they emphasised that migration should be possible in a safe way and with appropriate information (see below). This is in line with a rights based approach, acknowledging women's right to migration and promoting their right to information, help preventing coercion, violence, economic exploitation, etc.

Sustaining the activities

From our visits we could gather that the co-operation between the women's groups and the local authorities is quite good. This is reflected by the acceptance of the groups and their sustainability. Village leaders could recall the work of the group and informed that the group is invited to speak on various occasions. In some cases group-members have become a member of local Village Development Committees (VDC).

The issue of sustainability has been a focus of CWDA's approach throughout the project process; and the success of it is probably positively influenced by the fact that the researchers are government staffs on deputation. Of course the effectiveness of the co-operation depends on individuals, but the groundwork done by CWDA seems to have rendered good effects. In some cases however, the village authorities were unaware of the IEC-material, which is a pity as it decreases the effectiveness of the project. One chief of the village knew little on TiW, even though the village was a high-risk community. On the other hand he was an appointed and active member of the newly formed child labour group (in the context of an ILO initiated programme). This difference might be due to the set-up of the group. Women were involved in the activities without any formal structure in which e.g. local leaders act as advisors or committee members. The level of their participation depends highly on their individual commitment on the issue of TiW and migration. The current approach on child labour has a formally set-up local committee comprising of all stakeholders in the community. This seems a more suitable approach for TiW as well.

After the RA-project officially ended, the issue of TiW is somehow integrated in CWDA's current activities. For instance, the IEC-material is now also used in the literacy-activities. We do not know in which way. In communities in Phnom Penh municipality, where CWDA implements regular activities, the groups integrate the awareness and the surveillance function as part of their other activities, like economic activities, health-related work and literacy classes that are organised by CWDA. From the point of view of CWDA this is preferable, as at local level TiW has to be addressed through economic and information/education means. For this reason, the former researchers in Battambang and Kampong Som suggested that CWDA should expand its prevention work in these domains to enable a holistic / integrated approach on the prevention of TiW in the area. We feel this may not be realistic, as CWDA does not seem to have the capacity to implement community based development work in all the regions where the research has been carried out. (An evaluation of CWDA, conducted in 1999, identified the scope for further strengthening the effectiveness of its existing programmes towards women's

empowerment. In this respect and in the context of (prevention of) TiW, it may be necessary to see whether saving and credit could be more directly linked to specific viable (!) income generating activities, in which book keeping, technical training, marketing etc. are an integral aspect.

In case the women's groups are separately set up for the RA project, they still meet, even though the project is finalised. This is certainly due to the various training by CWDA that the groups and the volunteers have been given, e.g. on communication skills, on roles and responsibilities of volunteers & group leaders, on programme planning and management, on human rights and trafficking, on literacy teaching and on women and AIDS. Nevertheless, the monthly meetings have become less regular, which related to the lack of funds for ongoing activities and the agricultural season. But the previous researchers, who are no more with CWDA, still keep in touch with the volunteers and the groups from time to time, outside their official capacity of the provincial Department for WVA. They discuss developments and problems or e.g. the need for more IEC-material. In some cases the members of the group are (also) working as volunteers of other NGOs, or joined the local Village Development Committee. This helps in spreading the attention for the issue of TiW.

Support to women trafficked into prostitution

Part of the research and subsequent actions focused on women who work in prostitution.

CWDA was already directly working with sex-workers in PP (the Toul Tork brothel area) from the early nineties on as part of an H/A awareness programme. Sex workers were trained as peer educators. This linkage enabled CWDA to implement the RA-project in brothels in Phnom Penh. In the other brothels, similar entry points of H/A awareness were used. This was possible as the researchers were already involved with this work.

In Phnom Penh, the RA-project changed the relation between CWDA and the sex workers. Women said they became aware of TiW and the (human) rights perspective on sex work. Before they were only addressed from a health point of view. (This is what most other NGOs at present still do, the sex workers said). Now they came to know about TiW and about their rights. The (end-) result of this interaction is that the Cambodian Prostitutes Union – CPU was formed.

CPU

Of the 400 women working in the area, 200 of them are said to be members. I.e. they are involved in a savings programme. At the start in 1998, there were 10-15 women. The CPU would like to expand its work to other cities as well. CWDA basically facilitates that CPU can implement their activities and is instrumental in financial resources and the administrative set-up to perform their work.

The activities of the CPU range from: A (past) survey on HR violations of sex workers, the promotion of awareness among sex workers (and how to take action) about their rights, the invitation to other women to join CPU, literacy for children (of sex workers and the neighbourhood). CPU members also give information and education to brothel owners on Human Rights, laws on TiW (and they threaten that legal action can be taken by HR-organisations who can provide legal aids to sex workers). This occurs 1 time per 1 to 3 months. CPU also lobbies towards the state and the general public for the human rights of sex workers, the recognition of sex work as work and to put an end to TiW.

It has to be acknowledged that the women who are member of the CPU belong to the category of more 'free' sex workers. This enables them to speak more freely and advocate for their rights. In the brothels in other provinces, the situation is different. The sex workers who (are forced to) remain in the brothel are quite under control of brothel owners. Their freedom of movement is quite restrictive. After the research phase, researchers tried to maintain a link and after a positive response from women and brothel owners, they offered literacy classes in the brothel or a nearby location. After some time the brothel owners became non-co-operative as they could less control the women. As of now, there is little contact with the women.

In the research phase, women in brothels outside Phnom Penh had identified health as a priority in terms of work needs, but we understood from CWDA that, despite the general idea and practice, this turned out not to be an easy entry point either. This is mainly due the control of the owners. During our visit, women expressed they would like to have training in a foreign language and other vocations. This would enable them to develop other alternatives so that they could leave the sex industry. We learned that the Provincial WVA is offering some vocational training to ex-prostitutes. They were reluctant to include brothel-based women, as they would not be able to offer them security they feel, and offering training outside the brothel would lead to conflict of interests with the brothel owners.

Apart from the difficulties with brothel owners, we had the impression that the attitude of the teachers was not always non-judgmental towards sex workers. This is an issue that deserves attention.

In general it is also a big challenge for the CPU to expand their right-based approach activities to this particular group of sex workers. In this respect it is important that, according to CWDA, CPU-members have started to visit sex workers in other provinces to share about their work.

The inclusion of sex workers as allies in the issue of TiW is a challenging one, especially as many outsiders consider sex workers as mere (passive) victims only. However, as the sex workers said, themselves, 'some of us know too well, what it means to be trafficked'. With respect to the alliance building, it was interesting to note that the CPU was hoping that common women would not discriminate against them as 'bad women', as every woman could be trafficked or become a prostitute. CPU-members pointed e.g. to the fact that the garment industry is vulnerable for women to be trafficked or enter into prostitution, as women may be laid off very easily. In a different discussion, others also indicated that many traffickers could be found around the garment factories.

In this context it was significant that during our village-visit, women commented that in case a woman would be deceived into prostitution, she would be more accepted upon her return, compared to a woman who would been doing sex work on a more or less voluntary basis. It seems that the advocacy work of CWDA / CPU is not yet reflected in their work in the villages.

Information, education and communication material

In the context of the action phase, CWDA has also developed information, education and communication (IEC) material. A lot of the written material is accessible in the villages through a reading room that is managed by the women's group.

The IEC- material

A flip chart about the tricks of traffickers, which was developed in consultation and the active participation of women in the villages (they gave input for the content and the design) and a calendar about the laws related to TiW. Furthermore karaoke songs. These are a popular medium, which can have a good impact, provided the quality is good and the performer is popular. Also six TV. spots for awareness creation have been made. These have been broadcasted on TV. After that they are shown in the community on video. Lastly, T-shirts have been developed in consultation with village women and the PCU.

The reading room varies from a corner in someone's house to a separate construction in someone's backyard with a list of the books available. The separate building is made from locally available low-cost material and constructed by the women's group. They are also in charge of management (1 person /1 day). The reading rooms have various materials available on women's and (other) development issues. The reading room serves a useful community purpose, as we saw several children reading in the room. In one village we were told that about 4 persons a day come to read and / or borrow material.

From among the various materials developed, the flip charts and the calendar seem the most relevant and widely used.), although women requested the IEC-material to be based on real life experiences, with e.g. photographs on the situation in the other country. Unicef and various NGOs use the material as well in their programmes (ILO provided funds for reprinting to Unicef). Whether or not the groups use the material in an effective manner depends on the strength of the women's group, the role of the community volunteer and whether proper explanation is given how to use it. This varied in the villages we visited (in one village the flip chart was kept in someone's house).

The karaoke songs apparently could not be used as CWDA did not have (or budgeted for) funds to get it on air regularly. In the absence of this, they could not manage to get it waived from the radio station either. This was a lost opportunity. The T-shirts developed focus on issues of trafficking, HIV/AIDS and sex-work(-ers). The last one the text: "sex work is work". The CPU mainly uses this one for its campaigning work.

The amount of material in the reading rooms and the maintenance depends on the group. Earlier GAATW's staff had stimulated that the material should not be limited to TiW material only. On TiW, women suggested that apart from the present flip charts, picture books to be developed with real photos or videos on the situation on the other country. One women's groups asked for more material (e.g. on health, women's rights, domestic violence, employment opportunities, vocational skills training etc), which the previous researcher said she was willing to facilitate. As several people pointed out to us, the issue of domestic violence and sexual abuse is closely inter-linked to TiW, as it increases the vulnerability of women (and children) to deceitful migration. Such awareness raising material is highly relevant as well.

In our discussions the researchers emphasised that (the use of) the community-based material has more impact than mass meetings or general information, like posters. Reference was made to the present IOM-communication programme and activities of a particular NGO in 1998/99. The large-scale campaigns have a wide coverage (in Kampong Som e.g. 1500 people attended one meeting), but a low impact. Put by us in other words, they can raise attention and general awareness, but the women's group and discussions with the help of specific material like the flip chart (if done properly) helps changing attitudes and even behaviour (e.g. women warning others, collecting funds for transport back home to women). The question for CWDA is how to overcome the dichotomy between a high impact in a small area and a large area-coverage with low impact.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Despite the general limitations of awareness raising as a means to influence behaviour, the model of the 'surveillance' group provides a relevant and interesting model for prevention of victimisation in migration. The groups are quite sustainable, as they are integrated in the local community and receive active co-operation from village authorities. Their representatives are recognised as being knowledgeable on the issue and invited by village authorities to speak at village and other meetings. They are considered 'authorities' on the issue. The combination of a general group with a focus group of returnees seems to work well. It increases the credibility of the information and the speaker on the issue and combines awareness with direct support. It is important to optimise the knowledge and role of the group to increase its effectiveness in influencing behaviour. For this they require sufficient backing by the community and relevant as well as reliable information to share to others. Some more formalisation may be required.

The IEC-material is very relevant and used by others as well. It serves a good purpose. Care has to be taken that the material is adequately applied and used in an effective manner. The reading room has the potential to become an excellent community information centre. These community-focused initiatives seem more effective than providing training to NGOs or GO (only). It helps local people to gain their right to information and make informed choices.

TiW is related to (women's) human rights, to issues of poverty, domestic violence, marginalisation of 'deviant' women, lack of information and lack of freedom of movement. Therefore TiW can and should be linked to and integrated in other development activities. It is important that surveillance groups exist throughout the country, but at the same time the function of 'surveillance' cannot be the only agenda for a group to sustain. Nor can they be applied as 'stand alones' by CWDA.. This is a task that goes beyond CWDA capacity. They cannot just expand their work and develop a 'holistic' approach among all the groups that are formed in the course of the RA-project.

The surveillance function can be integrated in all sorts of groups that are being established by NGOs in Cambodia. As we could experience, in villages where CWDA does not work on a regular basis, women could be referred to other NGOs working in the same geographical area for (financial) assistance. That seems a suitable way of performing complementary roles and mutual co-operation.

It may also be advisable to continue the work in co-operation with the Ministry of WVA, which is now the focal point for the trafficking of women and children. CWDA can transfer their knowledge by training the MWVA-staff at provincial and district levels. By this approach the activities can be implemented nation-wide and through the formal involvement of community leaders.

Working with sex workers and in brothels has to be planned carefully. A simple welfare approach has to be avoided or welfare measures, as an entry point should be applied strategically. The collaboration with the CPU against TiW is very challenging and in the spirit of a feminist participatory approach. Further, we feel that the virtual slavery-like conditions of 'live-in-brothel' sex workers are a challenge to all parties involved. It needs concerted effort to bring affected women out of that situation and take measures against the brothel owners.

There is scope for CWDA to further discuss with staff and women's groups, about sex work as work. These would offer possibilities to help breaking the barrier between different categories of women. This would be a significant contribution to lower the stigma and isolation for sex workers and strengthen the fight against TiW.

Recommendations

- ◆ CWDA should document and publish its experiences and model of women's 'surveillance' groups, for further application.
- ◆ To facilitate reintegration, surveillance groups need to facilitate that women receive necessary support from existing NGOs or GO-programmes. For this purpose, technical support for group-leaders on counselling and referral services seems relevant.
- ◆ Develop the reading rooms into broader community information centres where various information materials (from NGOs and GO) can be brought together. The women's 'surveillance' groups in co-operation with the local authorities could be in charge of management. A kind of focal point at provincial level could ensure that new material is provided to the groups. This focal point can also train community volunteers on the use of the IEC-material (on TiW).
- ◆ Participatory material development on TiW seems a good 'niche' for CWDA to specialise on and make this available through other NGOs. Some form of training to NGOs on how to use the material should accompany the distribution of the material. For this purpose, prior agreement with the top management of the NGOs is required, to avoid local staffs facing conflict of interests. To effectively achieve this CWDA can also team up with other organisations, in further disseminating and developing IEC- material and link it with other forms of human rights violations against women and children, like domestic violence and sexual abuse of children.
- ◆ CWDA should further systematise and promote the inclusion of information on TiW in literacy programmes. As CWDA already plays a leading role on NFE in Cambodia, they should promote that awareness on TiW, laws, rights of women,

migrants, etc. is getting systematically integrated in all NFE material for adolescents and adults.

- ◆ CWDA should work together with the CPU to continue advocating the rights of sex workers and enable them to be an active ally in the fight against TiW and strengthen that they play a role in establishing contacts with sex workers in other cities. This could start with brothels where the owners are a bit more open and co-operative. The entry point for working with sex workers in brothels should be strategically defined.
- ◆ CWDA should establish more contacts between the different groups they work with, to reduce isolation and stigmatisation of sex workers. It seems relevant for CWDA to have more discussion with staff / facilitators on a rights-based approach on work and migration and the development of an open and non-judgmental attitude towards sex workers.
- ◆ In terms of national policies and action, CWDA should continue the active lobby from women's organisations for law changes, law enforcement and support to women who are victims of TiW. A rights based-approach should be strongly promoted in the discussions with Ministries and e.g. IOM.
- ◆ It is necessary to identify whether further co-ordination between GO and NGOs is possible on TiW at regional and local level E.g. similar to the way child labour is being addressed in Cambodia. Representatives of women's 'surveillance' groups should be active members. The government could take the initiative on this. (There seems to be some co-ordination in some provinces related to the situation of women in brothels, but this seems mainly focused on HIV-AIDS prevention -a programme for 100 % condom use).

4.2 NORTH VIETNAM

The action phase in North Vietnam was implemented during 1998-1999 in 4 communes: Mai Pha in Lang Son town district and Hop Thanh in Cao Loc district, Lang Son Province; Trang An in Dong Trieu district, Quang Ning Province and Kim Xuyen in Kim Thanh district, Hai Duong Province. For this purpose, two researchers stayed for about 2 weeks per month in each commune. They were involved in the formation of women's group in these four communes, they also organised a 'solidarity trip' for group members and produced IEC-material.

We made visit to two communes: Hop Thanh and Mai Pha in Lang Son Province. According to the researchers, the situation is similar in Trang Anh and Kim Xuyen. Following is the description of the actions and their impact on women and community.

Develop support services for the victims and potential victims of trafficking

As referred to in the previous chapter, it was not easy for the YRI as a research policy institute to provide direct support to women, but they applied the F-PAR as far as possible to achieve this aim. The researchers shared with us that the application of

the 'problem tree' helped them mobilise women to form a group and later to initiate other activities relevant to their needs.

Formation of Women's Groups (WGs)

All stakeholders (returnees, family members, local leaders and researchers) participating in our discussion agreed that before the implementation of RA project, due to their unawareness local authorities did not have a high opinion about women who married Chinese men. They considered women returnees as law-breakers. For fear of punishment and stigma, women as well as families did not contact local authorities and lived in isolation. Discussion with group members revealed that the stigma not only affected the women, but also their families and children born from Chinese fathers. Village leaders informed that the action research transformed their attitudes and could bring women and their children and the affected families into the public life. It seems that YRI e.g. urged local law enforcers not to punish women upon their return, built women's trust so that they would be willing to speak out to the local authorities and seek help.

In order to achieve this the YRI approached the individual women returnees and families with daughters who remained in China, as well as women considered as high risk e.g. marginalised women, to join a group that was named a '*group of women in difficult circumstances*'.

As an entry point to attract women to become members, a total loan package of VND 43 million was provided to the women's groups in the four communes. Each woman received a loan of about 1 million VND to raise animals, or run small business. They need to pay an interest of 0.6 %/month. The women have a collective monthly saving scheme of about 5000 VND. The chairperson of the group keeps the saving that can be used for social security and emergency loan to members. Loan was given to 53 women in the four communes.

Economic activities were an entry point to attract women joining the group, and partly ameliorate their livelihood, but women realised that they gain more from working in the group. The activities of the group differ from those organised by the local Women's Union. The group also provides space for members to share their life experiences in the monthly meeting. Members expressed that they can now share their "happiness and sorrow" in the group and build up spiritual solidarity to help each other. They said they could overcome their feelings of inferiority and gain confidence to talk about their problem. They consider this as spiritual activities that they never experienced before and help strengthen affected women in the community.

From what we saw, the group approach seems to be a good method not only for improving women's economic condition but also for psychological recovery of returnees and affected mothers to help them regain self-worth and having mutual assistance. From a few home visits we also have the impression that the loan could provide economic alternatives to returned women, an more extensive analysis would be needed to properly assess the sustained increase in livelihood.

To achieve these positive results, regular visits and monitoring the activities of group members are required. It might not be possible for YRI -due to the character of the organisation- to expand this approach in other areas. Therefore it is important that they facilitate training to local leaders of the mass organisations to perform this role.

Transformation of and assistance from the local authority

In the context of Vietnam it is not possible to work in local communities without the sanction of local authorities. Thereby while forming the women's groups, YRI worked with the local authorities and the local women's union to enhance their understanding on the situation of women in order to de-stigmatise the women and their family. The local authority expressed that the RA-project and the YRI's researchers brought change to their perception on the women with Chinese husbands. Instead of looking at them as law-breakers who needed to be punished, they now consider them as women who need assistance.

As of now, the local authorities in Hop Thanh and Mai Pha have adopted a pragmatic approach towards the problem of illegal migration. After people have been provided with necessary information and in case they still want to migrate to China, people can still go, but they need to follow the law, which requires proper travel documents, they said. This position reflects a realistic understanding that one cannot prevent cross-border migration, but it needs to be done in a lawful way in order to avoid deceitful migration and trafficking of women.

With the formal approach the groups gained recognition from the local authority and the women's union. They can get access to local resources, for instance to hold their monthly meeting in the office of the People's Committee. Their children, who were born from a Chinese father, got registered and can now go to school and some women received a small plot of land in the commune. Women also participated in the community activities as citizens and as resource persons to share their difficult life in China.

As such the women's groups also function as a platform, not only to reintegrate once isolated women into the community but also to enable them and their children to reclaim civil rights and get access to local assistance. They are not only beneficiaries, but also actors in preventive activities at the local level. Women also gained self-confidence to express views different from the local authority. Both in Hop Thanh and in Mai Pha, a few members of women's groups were elected into the Commune People's Committee. And in Mai Pha all members have become members of women's union whereas in Hop Thanh the women's group has been seen as a part of the local women' union.

We feel that in a hierarchical structure of the local community it is a big step forward for women in difficult situations to gain this level of confidence and feel empowered. It is thereby interesting to test this approach in other areas and see whether it will reach the same results if implemented by local leaders who have received adequate training from YRI.

The 'solidarity trip'

The organisation of a solidarity trip was seen by YRI as a method to build up group spirits as well as broaden women's understanding on trafficking; make them aware that this problem is a societal and not an individual problem. To us it seemed that the main concern of the women is finding economic alternatives. Some women for instance expressed that such a trip should provide an opportunity for them to learn more about modern technologies on farming and husbandry. Since many women (i.e. the mothers and the 'high risk' group) never visit other provinces in the country, the 'solidarity trip' was one means to enhance their understanding on their problems and absorb new ideas to improve their livelihood. However, the educational

component of such trip, in particular the link with the trafficking issue, must clearly be articulated and implemented so that the trip is not just only for leisure or only for income-generating purpose.

Sustainability of the group and replication of the model

Women expressed that at the beginning some were reluctant to join the group to avoid any stigma and discrimination from community, but now many new women applied for membership.

In Mai Pha the group accepted 2 new members. It is clear that the existing groups cannot encompass women and families that newly applied, since they live afar from the current groups. At present, group members are only those who live in the same cluster, not far from the Commune's office. Women suggested the expansion of the group by forming a new (sub-) group of women who live in the same neighbourhood. They were however firm not to change the name of the group "in order to remind us of our past difficulties."

Women insisted that they would also continue to work as a group, whether they have a loan from YRI or not, because "we need one-another." According to them, they will not have problems to return the loan, provided the YRI informs them a few months in advance. At present, women can get access to different loans such as from the bank for the Poor and other credit schemes. The rules and conditions seem less favourable. For expansion of the groups, however, a loan may need to be an entry / starting point. The present groups proposed YRI to enlarge the credit loan to facilitate this process. However, if YRI wants to respond to this request and sustain the groups' activities, it should formulate a clear policy on the part of the economic support. As of now, the terms and conditions of the loan are not clear. YRI considered this as a grant to the women's groups, even though women needed to sign a contract and pay 'interest'. It may be necessary that current members start returning the money so that it can be used for new members. YRI also should facilitate helping women getting access to other available credit schemes.

Women also want to have YRI continued the support to the group which includes organising solidarity trips to broaden their understanding and gaining new ideas to improve their livelihood. However, we feel it is also important that YRI facilitates the regular supply of new materials and information on trafficking and migration. The groups should continue their work in the prevention of trafficking of women and not narrow down only to economic activities.

Should YRI want to continue their work in the local areas, they need to clarify their mandate and capacity; whether it is appropriate for them to be an implementing agency at the local level. We would suggest YRI to mobilise local and women-leaders and help build their capacity to implement activities for the prevention of TiW and assist women and their children by applying the same methods and approaches. This is also a way to test the appropriateness of the method to work in partnership with women and see whether this feasible for a more broad or even nation-wide implementation.

Contribution to the prevention of TiW

In the meeting women said that they are willing to participate in local meetings to talk about their experience in China so that others can learn and prevent themselves from being lured to China. According to the women and local leaders in Hop Thanh

and Mai Pha, after the formation of the women's groups, there are no new cases of women and children being trafficked to China. Through our discussions we were informed that this decrease was also because local authorities pay more attention to the problem of cross border trafficking/migration and enforce stricter border control. Despite all this, we learned that in November 2001 a truck was stopped and more than twenty Vietnamese women were rescued. Besides, according to the President of the Women's Union in Lang Son Province, there are 80 communes out of 220 in Lang Son that face problems similar to Hop Thanh and Mai Pha. This indicates a need to continue prevention activities in the same way as in Mai Pha and Hop Thanh. And women members of the two groups can play a significant role in doing this.

Development of information, education and communication materials

YRI produced information, education and communication materials (IEC) for awareness raising in the community. However the production of such materials i.e. leaflets and storybooks, although based on individual histories of these women, was not done in consultation with the group. We could not get clear information how YRI disseminated the IEC materials and how the process of involving women in the information sharing took place. We also felt that women, who want to inform others on trafficking, could not use IEC materials effectively. According to them, the best communication method is via personal interaction, which they have done at public events like weddings and funerals. Printed (i.e. text) materials have limitations since many women in the community are illiterate. They suggested that posters with clear pictures are more suitable for local women.

There is also a need to up-date information in order to catch up with the new tricks/traps of traffickers as well as the current forms of cross-border trafficking and migration. The pragmatic approach as shared by local authorities (see above) can be applied only with women's informed choice. We feel there is a need to develop more appropriate materials informing women about the rules and regulations on emigration and immigration laws of Vietnam and China, marriage and family law, as well as their rights as foreign wives and how to seek assistance in times of difficulties. First-hand experiences of group members can be an asset to commence this task.

For an effective local strategy to prevent trafficking of women by sharing information, YRI as well as other involved agencies, need to seriously consider women as important partners who can help create appropriate IEC materials for advocacy work. We found for instance that some members of the group in Mai Pha who are ethnic Tai had composed songs in their language telling about their hardship.

“ I had a hard trip to go to China, after arriving there I missed so much my parents in Vietnam. Had I been a bird I would have opened my wings and flied back to Vietnam. But I have no wings so I have to suffer here and miss my family and country. “ (Song composed in Tai by a member of the women's group in Mai Pha village)

These songs can be reproduced and disseminated in communities akin. Likewise, women who have gained a position in the Commune People's Committee could get a more active role in raising public awareness on TiW and transforming the attitudes of the authorities on the affected women and their families.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The actions taken by the YRI during the action phase have reflected at least two effective processes i.e. the empowerment of women, and the transformation of local hierarchical relationships. In our view, the formation of the women's groups by the YRI has a function in the cycle of reintegration of victims and prevention of trafficking. The positive effects of formally involving local authorities while working with affected women, confirms that the community-based approach needs to be implemented in close consultation with local leaders. This facilitates women's access to the local resources and services and decision-making bodies. The attitudinal transformation of and the support gained from the local authorities in the four villages can be used as examples of action to be taken in other trafficking prone communities. The local leaders from the four areas can play more active roles in disseminating information how to prevent and assist women affected by trafficking and/or deceitful migration at provincial and national levels.

The results from the intervention by the YRI also show the different levels of women's empowerment that can be focused on. These varied from welfare support, facilitating access to and control over resources and services and facilitating their participation in public decision-making. If properly documented, these results can be used as examples to better understand the concepts and different dimensions of women's empowerment (in the context of TiW).

In terms of sustainability of the groups, congenial relations between the women's groups and researchers continue whereas in institutional respects there is still an outstanding 'loan' from YRI to the Women's groups. If YRI wants to continue the work on TiW, they should develop plans for the replication of the model to other areas, as well as develop mechanisms (among others for the financial basis of the group) with the groups in the four areas to ensure their institutional sustainability. The YRI as a research institute is not in a position to implement on a large scale the model they have developed. Replication of the model should therefore focus on enabling implementing organisations to apply and integrate it in their work. At present the formation of the groups is not systematically documented as a model yet. YRI needs to take up the task to share the model with other agencies currently involved in the reintegration of returned women. It seems worthwhile to involve the WU in the respective provinces in this process.

The development of the IEC materials could be done in a more participatory manner. Since there are many more agencies working on this issue in Vietnam, there is a need to survey all available IEC materials and assess their relevance and impact to targeted audiences. YRI might not have the capacity to further involve in this area. But their experiences, as reflected in the experiences of the women in the four areas, can be an asset for other agencies to develop more appropriate materials.

Recommendations

- ◆ To ensure the sustainability of the four existing groups and their continuing commitment in the advocacy campaign against trafficking of women and children, YRI should develop a follow-up plan. They should also formulate a

clear policy on the loans provided, so that the seed-funds can facilitate the expansion and formation of new groups in the community.

- ◆ In co-operation with GAATW, YRI should systematically document (as a step-by-step process) the F-PAR methodology that was applied in different villages and resulted in the model for 're-integration and rebuilding the life of women in the community'. This can then be used as a handbook for other agencies working on the issue. This would enhance the understanding and effective application of the methodology into practical actions in partnership with women.
- ◆ To enable women to effectively participate in the advocacy work and assist women in other communities, YRI can provide training to group members how to perform this role.
- ◆ More development of IEC-materials should be done in consultation with women in the community to promote local culture and ensure the relevance of forms and messages.
- ◆ YRI as a policy research institute to work with MOLISA and the Women's Union should explore the possibility of expanding similar working methods in other communes to assist women and for preventing trafficking of women and children
- ◆ In order to consolidate actions and avoid duplicating activities in the same target areas/groups a co-ordination platform of GOs and INGOs currently involved in the issue should be developed.

4.3 SOUTH VIETNAM

In South Vietnam, activities in the 2nd phase were implemented from 1998 on and extended to 2001. The nature of activities is similar to those in the North e.g. formation of women's groups, production of IEC materials. For the purpose of the review, we were able to visit only one group in HCMC, in District 4. In the other district in HCMC and in TN province, only meetings with individual women were arranged. As a result we were unable to witness much concrete outcome and get adequate information about the functioning of the groups. In Tay Ninh, the reason given was that the women live too far away from each other. Somehow the debriefing session in Bangkok on the review (see the annexe) brought about a clearer picture on the activities during the 2nd phase.

Assistance to women returnees & expansion of the model for self-management of women's groups

The VWU in HCMC and TN planned to assist women returnees "in wiping out their (inferiority) complex", have a stable economic life and be accepted by the local community. A selection of the women who had been interviewed was invited to join support-groups.

The groups were designed on the basis of the study tour that was undertaken to Thailand, in June 1998. The focus of the groups is on mutual sharing and support in economic terms (loan provision, collective saving as a buffer for social / health expenses, sharing on their small business) as well as emotional ways. The group's basis is the principle of 'self-management' (self-selection of leaders, scheduling activities, and putting forward loan proposals to the WU). This was different from dominant model of a top-down approach that applies to other, previous, groups established by the VWU. Membership of the groups is voluntary and consist of women who have returned from Cambodia, China or Taiwan or women who have returned from the 'education & vocational training centres for women', as the centres where (ex-) prostitutes are brought, are called.

Initially the group members were stimulated to share about their past experiences, i.e. the reasons why they are in the group. After some time, the focus is on issues like prevention of TiW and of H/A. From the fact that we were asked not to ask a woman about her past, we have the impression that the women still feel ashamed, or that the VWU thinks they do. This left the question about the function of the group beyond providing individual solace. Apart from providing direct economic assistance, the VWU helped women to get back their registration card in the commune / ward and to put them in the category 'poor'. This is a condition for them to get their children to school and as said before, to be entitled to receive a loan from the Bank for the Poor. Besides birth certificates were arranged for their children. From our individual interactions with women in Tay Ninh, we did not get the impression that the groups in that province provide strong mutual emotional support. Based on meetings with two women, we concluded that there was a clear need for trauma counselling. This kind of service and area of work seems underdeveloped in Vietnam. This is an area for further consideration.

As part of their information work, group members did influence other women not to go (back) for prostitution, which is seen as one 'route' or way of being trafficked. The fact that in the South several group members are ex-prostitutes poses several questions. Of course, all women can be potential victims of TiW. However, it seems that from the (official) perspective of the VWU all prostitutes are victims, and/or that prostitution and TiW are closely inter-linked, whereas to us it was not clear whether the women concerned consider themselves a victim of trafficking or not. (Admittedly the criteria of being a victim partly depend on which criteria are selected, the relative weight given to each of them and whose perspective is chosen).

From the women's point of view, we understood that the principles of self-management under the RA-project were a positive reason to become a group member. For the ex-prostitutes the loan provided under the RA-project was largely a substitution for the economic support they would normally be entitled to get from MOLISA. But in this case, the conditions were more favourable

Some group members in HCMC were already in a group before the 2nd phase started. There were 5 women who had returned from the education & vocational training centres for women, who were mainly involved in peer education on H/A awareness. Under the RA-loan, members e.g. did not have to have their official registration in the commune / ward (this is normally a condition for people to get a loan from e.g. the Bank for the Poor.) All of them could get a loan till their economic situation is more stable, but not all women needed it and were interested. In other cases, women were members of more (loan-) groups at the same time. Despite the fact that group members under the RA-project make loan-proposals themselves, in some cases we understood that the husband used a loan. In another situation, it seems a woman was

able to follow a vocational training mainly because of the political connections of her family member and not that she needed it badly for economic reasons.

We have the idea that the criteria for receiving a loan or monitoring its use could be more systematic. From what we could gather, the economic support in TN is provided on an individual basis. It was said that the geographical distance between the women does not allow for some joint economic activity (like collective saving). As a whole the economic support to the women in TN does not seem to be so successful in terms of providing economic alternatives or provide recovery to traumatised women.

The WU-HCMC has decided to adopt the 'self-management' model for all its S&C groups. According to the plans for the 2nd phase, the VWU in the South wanted to expand the model to more southern provinces as well. However, due to the limited mandate of the WUs this can only be done if the Central WU adopts this model. Apart from this the Central WU, together with the IOM and Unicef have started to work in the Southern provinces with the various WUs. As a result there was less reason for the WU-HCMC to pursue with their initial plan.

For expansion within their area of operation, the VWU-TN expressed a wish to receive more training to improve the effectiveness of their work on the issue and more funds for key persons to work in all the districts of the province. Both VWUs mentioned that lack of funds is a major barrier to expand their work. We think that activities to prevent TiW and support women can also be continued or expanded when existing programmes of the two WUs (and funds) that are supported by different funding agencies, can be streamlined.

Information sharing and advocacy work

To share the results of the research phase, some workshops were organised in HCMC with local authorities and women affected. These meetings also served as a basis for the formation of women's groups. The meetings did not really result in advocacy for improved measures to relevant authorities, although this was planned and IEC materials were initiated. As explained elsewhere as well, we have the impression that the WUs have not attempted to do so. We understood that the WUs have a rather restricted mandate in terms of promotion ideas and /or sharing experiences and information material to other WUs. They cannot undertake independent action. The WU of HCMC e.g. can only share ideas etc. if so invited by the Central or provincial Women's Unions or when they facilitate study tours to their programmes.

The same restrictions related to advocacy apply to the VWU of TN. But within their mandate, various training sessions were held in communes (450 women and commune leaders), while 10 training courses (3-4 days each) have been organised for various groups, *inter alia* journalists. Overall it seems that the VWU -TN has been quite active in giving follow-up to the RA-project. (Since there are other agencies supporting the VWU-TN to implement activities related to TiW, we do not know whether the training and other activities mentioned to us are a direct result of the RA-project or not.)

Communication for prevention of TiW - through 'peer educators'

The VWU in the South also planned to further communicate on the risks of TiW, basically through its 'peer educator' programme and a storybook. From our discussions we understood that prevention on the issue of TiW through the peer groups and the use of communication material is only partially successful.

The peer educators get a monthly remuneration and basically work on H/A among local prostitutes. We have the impression that apart from H/A, the focus seems mostly on attempting prostitutes to give up their job. Either group members did not know about the communication material on TiW (a leaflet from the WU-HCMC and a booklet from the Central WU together with IOM) or did not use it. Since women themselves had not participated in producing and designing it, the ones who had - partially- read it, found the material not very attractive: 'too many (difficult) words, not enough drawings'. Some remarked that some fellow-women are illiterate. This seems an area for the (Central and regional) VWUs to further look into.

Information and communication on marriages to Taiwan

As a follow-up of the survey about (mail order) brides to Taiwan that was implemented in the extension phase, the VWU organised training and communication sessions.

Several workshops and discussions were held with women concerned and local authorities on tricks in the process, informing about the situation of women living abroad. Women were stimulated to share their experiences, and/or join the groups for returnees, they were also invited to share their stories in public with others. Some information (e.g. from the court) is distributed through the Women's Newspaper that is published by the VWU.

A joint initiative from the VWU with the Taipei Cultural Office in HCMC, to organise a 'preparation' class (with certificate) for prospective spouses and as such become a reliable go-between, met with little success. The idea was later abandoned.

In TN province, interactive information meetings have been held for women and men on marriages with Taiwanese men. Information was given on laws of the different countries, cultural customs in Taiwan, etc. We were told that a support group has recently been formed of mothers whose daughters are in Taiwan, this is mainly for the purposes of mutual support and warning about risks.

The efforts of the VWU-HCMC have contributed to a decreased rate of deception in the marriages between city women and Taiwanese men. Basically, the focus related to this issue is on information sharing and not trying to stop women from going. This may be due to the fact that marriage to a foreigner is legal, that about 60% of the marriages are said not to be problematic, and it continues to be a growing trend. In TN province as well the purpose was to enable women to make informed choices and be aware of risks and vulnerabilities in the process. It is important to actively monitor the trend and influence the process. The total rate of (mail order) marriages between Vietnamese women and Taiwanese men is still very high. As the rate for

marriages increases very fast in the rural areas of other southern provinces, the extent of deception increases likewise, if no action is taken.

Hotline

Initially not planned, but apparently as a result of the exposure trip to Thailand, the VWUs in TN- province started a hotline in the areas where the RA-project was implemented. (In HCMC the WU did already operate a hotline at city level).

The idea of the hotline was that people could report on cases of various forms of violence against women and children, like domestic violence, TiW (for various purposes) and/or sexual abuse of children. In TN the hotline existed for 2 years (i.e. till the end of the RA-project). In HCMC it is still functioning. The results are mixed: in district 4 in HCMC there are hardly any calls, only 2 in 2000, in TN there have been 37 calls. The reason may be that unlike in TN province, in HCMC similar services already exist. Besides, we were told that at city-district level there is closer interaction with the WU-office.

As the experiences with the hotline are mixed, WU-HCMC may consider discontinuing the district hotlines. The VWU-TN on the other hand would like to re-establish and expand the hotline and upgrade the services to improve the outreach. This seems a very relevant suggestion.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The groups formed under the RA-project are quite different from the dominant model of the VWU (see the annexe for details). However, even though the actual groups were new, they were integrated in the ongoing programmes of the WU (saving & credit, peer education for H/A awareness for prostitutes). As a whole, the focus remains mainly on individual (through a group approach) economic support (more so in Tay Ninh than in HCMC). By and large the function of the groups is not particularly related to the issue of TiW. A history of trafficking is the criteria of selection, but we have the impression that this does not play a strong role in the functioning of the groups itself, apart from influencing women not to go for prostitution. TiW seems almost a kind of subsidiary reason for membership. For the majority of the groups a more important reason is a history of working in prostitution.

It was not clear how the groups support women regaining her life in non-economic ways. If this happens, it seems a mere positive side effect instead of a purposeful action. Furthermore, it is important to involve trafficked women collectively in prevention activities as well, so that they can overcome their status as an 'individual victim'. The plan in Tay Ninh province to set up a group of mothers, whose daughters went to Taiwan, can be an interesting development.

For proper support to women, it is important to have a good understanding of the different forms and manifestations of, what is clubbed together as, 'TiW'. TiW refers basically to a migratory process, e.g. (cross border) migration for the purposes of marriage, labour, prostitution. In this context, the survey by the WU on marriages with Taiwanese men has been a good initiative. It reveals the complexities of the

issue and has provided a basis for a changing attitude what are the most effective strategies to deal with this phenomenon. In the same line, TiW and prostitution require different strategies and solutions.

Recommendations

The reports of the 2nd and the extension phase contain many relevant recommendations for further follow-up and action. Unfortunately, they are of a very general nature and /or not presented in a concise manner. That limits their chances for follow-up.

In the present context of Vietnam, organisations like VWUs seem to have a strict mandate to operate, what they are supposed and allowed to do. Against this background, we give some suggestions that may help increasing the effectiveness of local, provincial and may be even national activities to prevent TiW and support victims. These are largely based on information and suggestions that were provided to us in the course of the review. It should be noted that several of these recommendations are also given by the VWU, but they are sometimes 'hidden'.

- ◆ In general the VWU should prioritise and strategize the various recommendations and develop a detailed plan for follow-up; and streamline different activities on TiW that are implemented through the VWU at a particular level. In HCMC and in TN province e.g. the various activities that are carried out with the help of e.g. Action Aid, IOM, Caram-Vietnam, and possibly others, may then reinforce each other and create synergy. This would also enable the various WUs to rationalise the funds that are available to them for the issue. With the same money, more results could then be achieved.
- ◆ In the area of prevention, VWU should develop appropriate information material for the prevention of victimisation in migration, incl. information on rights, laws, what to do in case of problems, etc. This material should as much as possible be related to and reflect the local situation.
- ◆ Further, leaflets / information material should be developed in such a way that it can reach illiterate or semi-literate women. Participatory ways of developing the information and design would be beneficial. The material should include information in the real situations in the other country, including photos. Songs and plays (as planned) by the VWU-HCMC and WU-TN are potentially relevant forms.
- ◆ The information campaign on 'mail-order brides' for women and their families, as is being developed by the VWU-TN, should expand and further systematise.
- ◆ The re-establishment, expansion and increased professionalism of the hotline, as developed by the VWU-TN should be supported.
- ◆ In the area of assistance, women who are victims of TiW should receive in a more systematic manner necessary social / emotional and economic support. The latter could first of all be done by tapping support from existing programmes of the WU, e.g. for saving & credit or otherwise.

- ◆ The S&C programmes in general (by GO or INGOs) should be promoted to enable trafficked women to get access to financial assistance, if so required.
- ◆ The VWU should facilitate that the support groups of women returnees could play a role in prevention, i.e. that women could overcome their trauma and can speak out about their experiences to other women.
- ◆ On the issue of (deceitful) marriage to Taiwanese men, VWU can develop referral centres for legal and social information and support at the provincial or district level for women who plan to marry foreigners, and for their family members.
- ◆ The initiative of the support group of mothers, whose daughters are in Taiwan, could be linked to this and further expanded.
- ◆ VWU can promote government departments and ministries involved develop ways to identify and regulate or control marriage agencies. The WU can help monitor these measures.
- ◆ They can initiate a survey and publish the findings in the situation of foreign women in Taiwan, who come for marriage purposes; and identify organisations in Taiwan that can support foreign women in case of difficulties.
- ◆ On the issue of (deceitful) labour migration to Cambodia, VWU should develop collaboration with organisations in Cambodia, to share information on e.g. legal matters related to TiW that can be used in case women return via the border.
- ◆ The general training and information at provincial / district level must go hand in hand with concrete discussions how co-operation between the VWU and e.g. the border guards related to repatriation can be made most effective and in support of women's rights.

4.4 REFLECTIONS ON APPROACHES FOR PREVENTION & SUPPORT

In the course of this review we identified the following approaches or 'models' that were developed by the IAs and used in the second phase to provide support to women and prevent trafficking in women.

Individual welfare approach

This approach was used mainly by the WU in the South Vietnam. This approach targeted mainly returned women and the 'high risk' group, i.e. ex-prostitutes. Economic support through loan provision was used as an entry point to attract individual women to become group members under the guidance of the WUs staff. This is a kind of 'victim-only' approach, which, according to a Cambodian participant in the meeting of representatives of the various women's groups in 1999, enforces the stigma on vulnerable women and hampers their active participation in other community activities.

As mentioned before, we could not clearly see the role the group members play in the prevention of TiW, though we heard they shared their experiences in different meetings. The process in which women can regain their confidence and self-worth was not well articulated in our discussions with the WU. The (effects of) psychological trauma that we could experience with at least two women, made us realise that in this welfare approach, the main focus is on economic aspects and not on the holistic well being of individual women.

This might be a necessary first step, as it can provide emergency support to women returnees, but it should not focus on the economic welfare of individual group members alone. It should be more comprehensive and holistic and address other dimensions of women's individual and collective well being and empowerment as well. Essential aspects of these are women's ability to regain self-confidence so that she can take control over her life again, that she can participate in social and cultural activities, e.g. in prevention of TiW through awareness raising at the community level and can take part in decision-making at different levels.

Community-based approach

In Cambodia and North Vietnam the focus was more on a community-based approach. In Cambodia, the women's community-based groups focused their activities on the preventive aspects of trafficking. They basically perform a role of peer-educators and surveillance of trafficking (though in one village there was a group for assisting returnees). The group leaders felt confident to talk and approach authorities since they did not have a stigma from trafficking/migration. This method of open and loosely organised group activities and the surveillance function seems to be quite effective, but it lacks the active participation of affected women.

In North Vietnam the community-based approach has two functions: one is to help women re-integrate and rebuild their lives. The other is to facilitate the participation of women in community activities by increasing the understanding and support from local leaders on the issue of trafficking and on the plight of these women. The community-based approach started with individual welfare assistance, but it was combined with other activities that help women gain confidence and feel empowered. The group-based empowerment process helped women overcome their stigma and isolation and enabled them to participate as full citizens in other community activities including in local decision-making bodies such as the people's committee.

This inclusive approach of bringing women into the public/community life has led to some local policy changes, such as a lenient policy towards women returnees and their children. As such it seems quite effective to tackle the problem of trafficking. Before it can be developed as an appropriate strategy and expanded to other localities we think this model needs further follow-up and strengthening and systematic documentation.

The advocacy and collective-rights approach

In Cambodia, the human rights' education for sex workers made them aware of their rights. As a result the CPU (Cambodian Prostitutes' Union) was formed: to protect the basic rights of sex workers and assist trafficked women in brothels. By doing a

survey on the violence against women in sex work, members of the CPU made a demand for national policy changes on prostitution. They want the government to review the existing labour laws, so that women in the entertainment- and sex-industry can be protected. They also want law enforcement for the elimination of corruption and abusive practices of authorities.

The formation of the CPU and their demands is a big challenge to Cambodian society. The battle of sex workers is an uphill task as it goes against public morality. But it is a good starting point to have a public debate and shift the paradigm in the discussions from a moral to a right-based discourse.

It is interesting to note that from all the groups that were formed in the action phase of the RA project, the only clear demand for a national policy change came from the CPU with the support of CWDA.

The support to strengthen the CPU would enable them to expand their work in other areas where brothel-based sex workers are under full control of the owners and unable to exercise their freedom of movement and association. To support their demands and for an effective influence on policy changes, the CPU needs support in documenting the broad-based human rights violations of women in sex industry.

Conclusions and recommendations

The three IAs implemented activities in the 2nd phase in two main areas: assistance to individual women by forming a group and production of IEC materials for the prevention of trafficking. The level of participation of affected women and community depends highly on the understanding of F-PAR methodology and its application by researchers. In Cambodia this was highest, where CWDA already used a participatory approach in their work. The fact whether researchers permanently stayed in the village or not, was not the most decisive factor. More so whether researchers were able to assist women to express their own needs and generate their own ideas, even if this differs from the (initial) perspective of the researchers (see also Chapter 2 on F-PAR).

The review indicates that in terms of strategies to address TiW, the formation of women's groups is the best entry to approach individual women who have been entangled in the process of trafficking. But the group formation should not be confined to economic activities only. A mere individual assistance and women-only focus cannot empower and bring women out of isolation either. Emotional and social support for women-victims, who have to overcome their shame, trauma or have to face legal problems, should be linked to helping them understand their rights as a citizen. The way to address to women's problems needs to be done in the context of the community and her citizen's rights. It seems that the community-based approach that combines the activities with women with addressing community leaders, i.e. by increasing their understanding and stimulating that they take their responsibility, is the most appropriate strategy in solving the problem of individual women, and preventing trafficking of women in the community. Moreover, the involvement of the wider community will ensure the sustainability of women's groups and enable them to get access to different forms of local support.

From North Vietnam it is clear that the re-integration process should and can be done in a holistic manner. The formation of the CPU in Cambodia somehow reaffirms the feminist assumption that after women are more conscious of and understand that their problems are socially constructed, they will be mobilised and are ready to take action to change their situation.

In assessing the strength and weaknesses of the different groups and the application of the particular concepts underlying them in a different context, it is important to keep in mind that various variables play a role in the way they function at present. The history and character of the organisation, the particular kinds of women that are members, etc. play a role. In North Vietnam e.g., the researchers of the YRI worked for the first time with a group, the women in 'difficult circumstances'. This was a special very focused group that got and still gets a lot of special care and attention from the YRI. In South Vietnam on the other hand, the VWU 'integrated' ex-prostitutes and women who returned from abroad, in their existing activities. As far as we know they did not get very special attention, compared to the other groups. These variations have their related strengths and weaknesses in terms of their contribution to address the issue of TiW in the context of the RA-project. It would go too far to try to analyse the different factors that contribute to the success or relative failure of these approaches.

Nevertheless, in terms of variations, the actions in Cambodia and North Vietnam reflect that the F-PAR methodology is an appropriate tool to tackle the problem of trafficking in women and prostitution. The methodology has brought about a transformation in two areas. One is in the approach of the implementing agencies, the other is in the attitudes of local authorities toward women.

Recommendations

- ◆ In order to share the outcomes and lessons learned from the RA's action phase, GAATW -as a co-ordinating agency- should work with the IAs and members of the women's groups to analyse and publish the different approaches and the resulting changing situation of women returnees and their families.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The different chapters of this report contain specific conclusions and recommendations. We first of all refer to those sections. Some general and final reflections and recommendations on the RA-project are presented in here.

Overall results, effects and impact

The RA-project was conceived in 1996 with the aims to prevent the expansion of traffic in women and develop appropriate services for legal, social and health support to victims and potential victims of trafficking at local, national and regional level in the Mekong region by:

- ◆ Systematically investigating the situation in Cambodia and Vietnam based on the mode of the RATW project in Thailand;
- ◆ Formulating strategies and policy recommendations for improved government measures and improved co-ordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- ◆ Formulating appropriate actions in partnership with women in the community.
- ◆ Documenting forms of human rights violations of traffic in women.

Underlying were the following assumptions.

For the investigation and action part:

- ◆ Only through active participation of affected women and their communities, the sharing of information and improved understanding of the traffic in women at a local, national and international level, will the research process allow for the development of efficient and effective positive strategies of action; (Cambodia)
- ◆ Effective measures and strategies to prevent further spread of the problem of traffic and exploitation of women, and the victims, need to be grounded in facts and in an analysis of relevant issues that are the patterns and process of trafficking within Vietnam and across the borders of neighbouring countries. (Vietnam)
- ◆ By gathering and (jointly) analysing factual information, training, the sharing of ideas and exposures, in the context of a common framework, IAs will further develop a participatory and rights-based approach in working with trafficked women. In that light they will change their existing approach on the issues of TiW and prostitution (GAATW).

For the policy part:

- ◆ The results of the investigation & action will lead to relevant policy recommendations at different levels.

The evaluation process indicates that the IAs' assumptions of the need for a participatory approach and factual groundwork for effective policy changes are correct. Seen from the context of 1997-1998, when at local level the issue and mechanisms of TiW were little understood or taboo, where affected women were mainly seen as lawbreakers, greedy or bad women, the RA-project has rendered important results. Local authorities changed their perceptions towards women and their families and took favourable actions so that some women or their families could regain their citizens' rights; affected women have been given a chance to speak out and to be heard. Community oriented models are initiated which enable affected women and/or their families to improve their individual situation, take active part in addressing the issue at community level and advocate for a right-based approach on the issue of TiW. Initiatives for policy change at local and even national level are taken.

Contributions to policy change

The investigations in the 1st phase, served as important input for policy meetings to set the local and national agenda and create a climate of change. The different and emerging manifestations of TiW could get more serious attention from authorities and communities. The RA-project also contributed to some amendments in laws relating to trafficking in Vietnam.

Reliable data are essential, either not to under- but also not to overestimate the whole phenomenon. Furthermore a clear and (in the context of the regional dimensions of the project, common) conceptual framework how to interpret the data is required. From what we could gather from GAATW and the IAs, the primary data that have been collected throughout the whole process contain a wealth of information. It gives more insight into the mechanisms of TiW, of women's (lack of) agency in migration processes, human rights violations, etc.

As mentioned before, such reliable data in the context of TiW are hard to get. Given its importance, it is regrettable that not all the primary data have been used as a basis for the analysis and action as meant in the project proposal. This was to such an extent that it somehow effected the reliability of the reports. The reasons are either a lack of staff capacity (the data were too many as in Cambodia), the given socio-political context limited the autonomy of the researchers or there was a lack of clarity and agreement (to disagree) on the conceptual underpinning of the RA-project (as in Vietnam). The different parties could not come to terms with e.g. differences of opinion on the link between TiW and prostitution or different ideological views on prostitution and prostitutes. Despite the fact that the introduction and application of the F-PAR methodology was a success and that GAATW tried to share its views and experiences on the issue, it turned out impossible to arrive at the same wavelength. Also as the concepts related to TiW were under strong international debate at that time. In that sense, the RA-project has helped GAATW to sharpen its own focus as well. At the time of the RA-project, GAATW could not come to terms with or underestimated the influence of the socio-political context and ideological

underpinning with which the IAs, especially in Vietnam, work. Due to their role as a mere facilitator, language barriers and lack of time, they were not in a right position to have adequate influence on the reports.

Looking at the special studies (an overview of the situation of trafficking at the national level and a study on laws relating to the topic), it is a pity that in both the countries, these could not be completed as planned before the commencement of the action phase. Researchers could have used the information as a background to enhance their (and of the communities they worked with) understanding of the situation and the (lack of) law enforcement at local and national level. They could have been used in the policy-related activities.

As a whole, more and concerted efforts at national level are required to address the issue of TiW at strategic and policy level. The assumption that the results of the investigation & action would (automatically) lead to effective policy recommendations at different levels has not been realistic. IAs were not always adequately equipped to do lobby work at policy level. May be at local level, but not at national, let alone regional level. The socio-political context and /or the capacity and the (self-imposed) mandate of IAs were not conducive to achieve the effects as intended in the proposal. Therefore many of the policy recommendations were too general or IAs were not in a position to lobby for the suggested changes. The possibilities and limitations for any IA to work for policy change have to be taken as a starting point in developing a programme.

Seen from the perspective of the Mekong region, it would therefore be recommendable that GAATW, as an international alliance, would play a more active role towards policy changes at this regional level.

In view of the need for reliable data and concerted action for policy and law changes, we feel there is a strong need to (re-) build a national platform in the two countries for information sharing on current activities and optimise co-ordination of all these activities. More effective co-operation (e.g. through a data-bank) will enable all partners, foreign as well national focal points and local NGOs to maximise the usage of available resources, to avoid duplication and overlapping of activities, and more importantly, to draw lessons and build up activities based on each other (previous) experiences. This will lead to more effective and efficient methods of tackling the problem and providing assistance to trafficked persons as well as ensure the necessary transparency between different actors.

Towards better prevention and support

The research part was an important entry point for the action phase, in terms of identification of women to be involved, and /or activities to be developed and implemented. To a certain extent the project resulted in appropriate actions in partnership with women in the community to provide support and prevent trafficking. Unfortunately, the level of women's participation in the various stages of the action phase (planning, implementation and monitoring various activities) was not optimal across the board. In Cambodia this was highest. Where the participation was merely partial, this somehow limited the local acceptance and effectiveness of the different interventions, first of all, for affected women as the primary stakeholders. Nevertheless, the project resulted in various suggestions how women's

human rights as citizens can be further protected. First of all, by not considering trafficked women as law-breakers (only), but as women who need support to regain their legal rights and assistance. This includes arranging for housing registration and birth certificates for children of mixed nationality, softening loan conditions, or improving the working conditions of prostitutes. In this context, methods for trauma counselling, for regaining self-confidence and participation in the public life should be further developed as well. Unfortunately, these social and legal measures and initiatives for reintegration and support are still ad hoc and 'incidents'. They should be systematised much more. Yet, seen from the given socio-political context, the actions that have been developed serve as an important addition to ongoing GO or NGO-activities (Cambodia) and/or a change of perspective compared to the dominant interventions of the state and state-organisations (Vietnam).

In the context of protecting women's rights, it is important to de-victimise and de-isolate trafficked women. I.e. emotional and social support for women as victims (who have to overcome her shame, trauma or have to face legal problems) should be linked to helping them understand their rights as citizens. E.g. by involving women in a participatory way in community-based activities for prevention and support to other women. In this respect, it is important to foster contacts between prostitutes, trafficked women and other groups of women at local level.

At present in the Mekong region, the issue of prevention of trafficking and assisting trafficked women and children gets a lot of attention from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. Many current initiatives and actions focus primarily on collaboration with state agencies or the judiciary. Programmes aim at legal reform, training and sensitising law enforcers and strengthening and/or capacity building of state officials. The results of the RA-project clearly show that a community-based approach, which brings affected women and their communities in the centre, is an essential component as well. Awareness of the push- and pull factors and mechanisms of TiW and behavioural change for prevention and support begins and ends with women and the local community. The challenge is how to convince state agencies to work in partnership with women and community. We think that the models developed in the context of the RA-project are important reference points for strengthening the role of civil society in addressing TiW and gaining wider impact at local, national and regional levels.

In general women's groups turn out to be effective means to assist and re-integrate trafficked women in the community or address potential victims. It is the best entry point to approach individual women (either would be migrants, high-risk or returned women). However, group activities should not be confined to economic welfare alone. The single focus on economic assistance and on women-alone cannot de-isolate women and address the various dimensions of women's empowerment. The formation of the CPU in Cambodia reaffirms the feminist assumption that after women are conscious of and understand that their problems are socially constructed, they can be mobilised and take action for change in their situation and position. A rights-based approach is required to provide a broader concept in tackling the issue of traffic in women and related issues such as prostitution. The solution to women's problems should also be seen in a gender perspective and a community-context.

This is a slow process and it requires more efforts to sensitise local (women's) organisations and authorities on the principles of (women's) human rights and a gender perspective on the issue. However, women alone should not be held responsible to 'solve' the problem of TiW. The way they are treated by men, other women and the community as a whole (as reflected by community leaders) is an important factor in the whole process of TiW at micro-level. Therefore, an inclusive community-based approach, in partnership with women, is an appropriate strategy to solve the psycho-socio-economic problems of individual women, address the re-integration process in a holistic manner and prevent traffic in women at community level. Moreover, the active involvement of the community at large will ensure the sustainability of women's groups and enable them to get access to different forms of local support as well as participate in the decision-making process.

In quantitative terms, the outcome of the action phase is small to medium sized: 4 women's groups in 4 villages in North Vietnam, 9 groups in 2 districts of HCMC, 4 groups in Tay Ninh Province in South Vietnam and 70 groups in 7 villages in Cambodia. In qualitative terms, the results are more significant, although the activities implemented and the models of the surveillance groups for prevention and the groups for reintegration and prevention, that have been initiated still have a rather pilot (small scale) or exploratory character. They are "ripples in the water" as the director of CWDA said. For these ripples to develop into waves of change, more consistent follow-up is required. The 'models' have to be further described, shared and, after that, replicated by other agencies and /or integrated into other development activities. An integral element of sustaining the models is to further develop ways how to involve and work with local authorities, in the way described above, i.e. that they can become part of the solution, instead of being an obstacle for effective approaches. This includes training them on the practices of TiW, laws and policies and most important to having them interact with affected women.

Likewise awareness and women's rights to information is an important component of improved strategies against victimisation in migration. The RA-project has shown that participatory material development for semi- or illiterate women, community-information centres like the reading rooms in Cambodia, information meetings and referral centres are all important means to inform women (and men alike) about their rights, risks and vulnerabilities in migration. The challenge is not only how to develop the material, but also how to keep the flow of information alive and effective. The village based surveillance groups are an important example how local people can be empowered in this respect. However essential the local level, the issue of TiW should also be tackled by e.g. controlling and regulating agents and brokers in migration (e.g. for marriage purposes, work abroad, etc).

The F-PAR methodology

The F-PAR methodology in the context of TiW is still evolving. Experiences from the RA-project make us aware of the possibilities and the limitations of the F-PAR. In Chapter 2 we have described these more extensively.

In short, its application brought out clearly the important role of civil society in taking action against social problems. F-PAR turned out to be an appropriate tool for research and action with different groups in the community. Particularly in

Cambodia and North Vietnam the methodology helped women to realise their potentials and change the view of local authorities towards these women. In South Vietnam it also changed the method of working with local women from a vertical to a horizontal approach. The application of the F-PAR-methodology has brought about some changes in the perception and understanding of researchers, particularly in Vietnam, on the issue of traffic in women in the context of sexual exploitation i.e. prostitution and cross-border marriage. Also in Cambodia, the understanding towards prostitutes changed.

But F-PAR is not a panacea; it has its limitations if certain aspects are not adequately included. Different concepts (esp. empowerment, participation, prostitution), the vested interests and/or positive involvement of different stakeholders (e.g. community, state) and different socio-cultural and political circumstances need to be explicitly addressed. The question is to what extent F-PAR can and should be applied in different contexts. The RA-project has shown that sometimes the constraints in applying F-PAR are such that the quality and reliability of the research is affected. E.g. in Vietnam the analysis had to be done in conformity with state policy, the framework of (il-) legality and a social evil paradigm. That makes it difficult to explicitly recommend the protection and promotion of the women's basic rights and to challenge the national policy and practices that violate the human rights of women in prostitution. This poses a dilemma for researchers. Their academic autonomy and freedom and the validity of their research might be at stake. But if findings and recommendations would differ too much from the official policy, the security of a research team needs to be considered as well. While affirming the principles of the F-PAR, social and political diversity should be taken into consideration while designing a sensitive training curriculum.

From the evaluation, it became clear that the concept of empowerment, which is crucial in the F-PAR methodology, was not commonly understood among the various IAs. This was one of the reasons for the differences in focus of the actions in the 2nd phase. In North Vietnam the empowerment process brought about changes for individual women and the community. In Cambodia, the participation and representation of women in prostitution resulted into demanding their basic rights and shaping national policy that affect their existence. In South Vietnam, actions in partnership with women were limited to the notion of economic empowerment. It is very important to include the concept of empowerment in the F-PAR-methodology training of GAATW. This will enable IAs to reach a more common understanding and at least clarity when applying this method in action with women.

A similar in-depth dialogue is required on the controversial issue of prostitution. The rights-based approach with the representation of affected women should replace the focus on morality and the criminal code that jeopardises the vulnerable human condition of women in prostitution and denies them the right of citizens and women. It is interesting to observe the process in Cambodia that emerged from the RA-project, which enabled sex workers to join the alliance in fighting against trafficking of women and children. The present demand of the CPU to fight TiW and protect the rights of women in prostitution has generated an important debate in Cambodia that could bring changes to the national policy.

In sum, as the F-PAR methodology in the context of TiW can be a totally new concept for some collaborating agencies; sufficient training is required to ensure a proper

knowledge and understanding of the method and objectives of F-PAR before starting the research. To start with the components and modules of the F-PAR should be properly documented. Language barriers might be a hindrance in the training, so either an extensive training for key actors or a ToT should be developed as well. They will then be able to organise a kind of 'echo' training in the country with assistance from external trainers.

The RA-project can be considered as a process of transferring knowledge and skills in doing research on trafficking in women to the IAs. Also for GAATW their body of knowledge on F-PAR has increased. A further assessment of the F-PAR methodology in the context of the RA-project can contribute to a better understanding of F-PAR as a tool to tackle the problem of human trafficking and develop strategy in partnership with affected women and community. GAATW is in a good position to take a leading role to advocate the achieved results from the RA-project and continue to provide training on the F-PAR.

Replicability of the RA-project

Regional dimensions

In chapter 2, we have analysed the organisational dimensions and constraints of the RA-project. These should be properly addressed while designing similar (regional) programmes. In addition to this, we want to share the following.

If we look at the common framework, this turned out to be a complex dimension, both organisationally as well as conceptually. In terms of a joint understanding of the issues at stake, and the way the various parties co-operated, the implications of the various mental or ideological frameworks and socio-political contexts, the different staff capacities and organisational mandates and dynamics were underestimated. In that sense, a regional project is more than just adding up two separate national ones. In the case of the RATW, the FFW was in full charge. In the RA-project FFW/GAATW were merely facilitating, although GAATW was also co-ordinating and monitoring. The RA-project was not easy to handle, especially due to different ideological basis of the parties involved. Apart from that we just need to realise that GAATW had just come into formal existence when the RA-project started. The experience with the F-PAR methodology was relatively new and the understanding of the complexities of the TiW-issue was very diverse among staff of GAATW and IAs alike.

Duration and structure

Finally we focus on the duration and structure of RA-project, which divided it into two phases, and some of its pros and cons. The total RA-project was implemented over a period of 4 years instead of the planned two years. Ideas were developed in 1994/1995. The implementation started in 1997 and the extension phase lasted till mid 2000. There are various (valid) reasons for this extension, but the fact remains that this is a long period, especially when we realise that the situation re. TiW is so fast changing. The same goes for concepts and actors. E.g. new forms develop, like the phenomenon of mail order brides to Taiwan. Besides, many other agencies are now working on the issue, which creates a certain dynamic of its own. There is a need for 'tangible results', 'lessons learned' and best practices, but when these are not

properly shared and documented, the specific findings do not get adequate recognition. Due to the long duration of the project, at this stage, the 'lead' on the issue is not necessarily with the IAs (anymore).

For various reasons, it seems relevant for similar projects to shorten the duration, so that results of a project can be made available more quickly. In the RA-project, the total research phase preceded the action phase.

For various reasons we think that similar projects could now be done in a shorter period (and hence with less funds). First of all, as these could build on the body of knowledge generated and the achieved output from the RA-project.

Was the RA-project cost-effective? This is a valid question, not only in terms of cost-benefit of the project as such, but also for possible replication of the activities. Cost-effectiveness however can only be assessed when some kind of benchmark exists. In this case, a comparison cannot be made, as there are no similar regional projects to the RA-project as an exploratory multidimensional project, with a flexible work-plan and time frame. Besides, despite the common organisational framework, there were two, later three implementing agencies involved, each working in a different socio-cultural and institutional context. Benchmarking from among the three is not possible either.

The 'models'

It was very positive to notice that during our meetings, different stakeholders (e.g. chairpersons of WUs in Vietnam, (I-)NGOs in Vietnam and Cambodia, funding agencies) clearly requested for the expansion of the community-based activities. In chapters 3 and 4 we have already indicated the conditions for the further replication of the models that have been developed. In brief we think there is a lot of scope to replicate them, provided some more care is taken to analyse them and create the right conditions.

Recommendations

General

- ◆ A research design on an inter-country project similar to the RA-project on TiW needs to develop a common framework with clear objectives and definitions that articulates clear elements and different purposes of human trafficking. There must be a strong co-ordinating body to oversee and provide technical support during the project period. Proper mechanisms are necessary to ensure mutual accountability and effective implementation of the project according to the agreed-up framework. The co-ordinating agency must have a clear mandate to control the implementation of the project.
- ◆ It is important to take more time for the preparatory and planning stage, and ensure that the preconditions for a common framework and for a complex project like this one are met. This includes qualified and full-time staff capacities and proper country co-ordination, a sufficient level of involvement in designing the project, so that the different capacities and mandates of IAs can be taken care of.

- ◆ During the implementation, regular monitoring visit should be done that involve all stakeholders for up-dating information and assessing progress. Systematic feed back from the FA for further improvement, regular joint meetings between FA and IAs and/or exposure visits should be organised to enhance mutual understanding on the project implementation and data analysis. If necessary, the aims & objectives of the project should be revised accordingly.
- ◆ What should not be compromised is that the research and action components should be seen as synergetic. It must be clear that the action-component is part of the total research and needs to be systematically documented and treated as part of the total analysis. Participatory research at micro-level is important to gather primary information, establish contacts, identify possible issues, etc, as input for the action phase.
- ◆ The community-based approaches for reintegration and prevention of human trafficking can be used as starting points for action in other localities. With the experiences gathered, the first phase at local level could consist of a customised rapid appraisal of the community (for which appropriate tools have to be developed) and then start the action in partnership with women and community. The action should have two functions: gathering more in-depth information and facilitate activities initiated by women and community.
- ◆ Research as a more broad based sociological kind of survey can be de-linked from the action. Data can be collected separately or along side the action phase.

To GAATW

- ◆ Provide assistance to CWDA and WVU to finalise the RA reports, which includes findings and analysis of the research and action phases;
- ◆ Assist YRI and CWDA in developing models on the community-based actions in partnership with women, as lessons learned from the RA-project;
- ◆ Review current policies and programmes in the Mekong region and organise a regional meeting to advocate the strategies of working with women in the community and a rights-based approach to tackle TiW and the issue of prostitution;
- ◆ Collaborate with IAs to analyse the application of F-PAR in the RA-project and build up a body of knowledge on this methodology to be shared with other agencies/networks and in GAATWs training.

To CWDA

- ◆ Complete the report of the RA-project, which includes findings and the analysis from the research and action phases;
- ◆ Work closely with the MoWVA to advocate the nation-wide replication of the model of women's surveillance groups;

- ◆ Play a more active role in the national focal point committee on trafficking in order to promote a right-based approach in policy formulation, legal amendments and law enforcement;
- ◆ Work with CPU to strengthen their capacity in advocating their rights and extending activities with sex workers in other provinces.

To YRI

- ◆ Develop a follow-up plan for activities to ensure the sustainability of the four local groups;
- ◆ Re-revise the report and include the situation of trafficking in Hanoi for the second publication of the report;
- ◆ Collaborate with GAATW in developing a step-by-step model for community-based assistance to women and prevention trafficking;
- ◆ Establish linkages with national policy making and implementing agencies to promote the nation-wide application of the RA's community-based model.

To VWU

- ◆ Complete the RA's report which includes findings and analysis from research and action phases;
- ◆ Advocate the application of F-PAR methodology in the programmes of the Central WU;
- ◆ Establish contacts with groups in Taiwan to survey the situation and provide assistance to women married to Taiwanese men. The results of the survey can form a basis to further develop appropriate policies on the issue of marriage to Taiwanese men.

To the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Hanoi

- ◆ Consider additional funding to facilitate the completion of the tasks as recommended above;
- ◆ Provide assistance to organise a forum to share lessons learned from the RA-project.

ANNEXES

Terms of Reference Evaluation Research & Action Project on Traffic in Women in the Mekong Region (Cambodia & Vietnam) GAATW, 2001

Background

The Research and Action Project on Traffic in Women in the Mekong sub- region, co-ordinated by GAATW with financial assistance from The Netherlands Ministry of Technical Development Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has now been completed. The final comparative analysis report, now being prepared, will be submitted to the Embassy in May 2001.

A mid term evaluation of the project was done after the completion of the first phase and the report was incorporated in the progress report submitted to the Embassy. We had also specified in the original proposal that a final in depth evaluation would be done on completion of the project.

We are now proposing the final evaluation of the project. The objectives of the evaluation, a detailed work-plan and budget are given below.

Objectives of the proposed evaluation

The main objective of this evaluation is to enable all the parties (i.e GAATW, Implementing partners in Cambodia [Cambodian Women's Development Association], North and South Vietnam [Youth Research Institute, Vietnam Women's Union] and women who were part of the project)

- ◆ To jointly review the process & methodology and the findings and effects of the research and action project against the intended objectives.
- ◆ It is also planned to draw lessons learned, for GAATW, the Implementing partners as well as for other agencies implementing or planning to carry out similar project in the region.

Specific aspects of the evaluation

The organisation, methodology and implementation of the project

1. What has been the planned and actual capacity for the execution of the project (in terms of human resources, staff skills, relational capacity etc.)?
2. What were the planned and actual divisions of tasks and responsibilities incl. decision making process and procedures between the facilitating agency, GAATW, and the Implementing partners?

3. What has been the planned and actual inputs and role of the facilitating agency (methodology training workshop, organisation, other).
4. To what extent was the project design and methodology feasible, acceptable and applicable for the stakeholders in the different countries? (How) has the project design and the actual implementation of the project been changed? If so, what are the specific effects and how have GAATW / the Implementing partners reacted to these changes?
5. Did GAATW/Implementing partners work with the women that were originally envisaged in the project document? To what extent did they participate in the planning, monitoring and implementation of the project?

Results, effects and impact of the project

1. What has been the significance of the research findings of the project for the various stakeholders. Do they regard the findings as relevant to the needs and demands the project initially wished to fulfil?
2. What has been the quantitative and qualitative output of the action component of the project and its effects on different stakeholders (the different target-groups) in terms of change?
3. Where there unintended or unforeseen results? How do they compare with the objectives, and why?
4. Did the assumptions underlying the project design turn out to be correct?
5. What is the expected long-term effect (impact) of the project on the various stakeholders and their environment in terms of technical, economic, socio-cultural and institutional factors? (Impact may be expected at both the individual and household level as at community and national level)
6. What is the expected level of the sustainability of the action component of the project in terms of
 - ◆ Institutional viability
 - ◆ Long-term financial viability
 - ◆ Socio-cultural acceptance.

Efficiency

1. Is there an acceptable relation between the benefits and results of the project and its cost? What are their implications for a possible further replicability of the project?
2. To what extent women involved in the project find alternative to migration?

Conclusions and recommendations

Based upon the findings for each of the areas looked into, specific lessons learned for all the stakeholders and conclusions and recommendations will be formulated and presented in the report. The focus will be on:

- ◆ Major strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project in view of
 - a) the findings and its effects,
 - b) sustainability of the action component
 - c) the way the project was organised / facilitated by GAATW and implemented by the local partners.
- ◆ Recommendations for future projects of a similar nature in terms of change/ improvement of the project design, methodology and implementation.

Approach and methods

- ◆ The evaluation will apply a participatory methodology by in depth focus group discussions and interviews with all stakeholders (local women, local community, policy makers, researchers, staff of the agencies involved, the Netherlands embassy, as well as other agencies working on trafficking issue.
- ◆ At the start of the review in each country, a meeting will be held with the implementing partner, for fine tuning the evaluation, the ToR and the process.
- ◆ To the extent relevant, the qualitative findings will be supported by quantitative data.
- ◆ Documents related to the project will be studied (proposal, monitoring data, reports, etc.).

Evaluators/ facilitators (background of the evaluators is in annex 1)

- ◆ GAATW proposes to have two evaluators / facilitators: Ms Nelleke van der Vleuten from the Netherlands and Ms Siriporn Skrobanek from Thailand. Both have been involved in the designing of the 1st phase of the project. While Ms. van der Vleuten had no role in the actual execution / implementation of the project, Ms. Skrobanek had some involvement in the early stage of the project. This included finalising the selection of implementing agencies in Vietnam, participating in the orientation workshop for research co-ordinators and in the Comparative Analysis Workshop and visiting the project sites in Vietnam and Cambodia. She also advised GAATW project co-ordinator on the carrying out of planned and adjusted activities during the first two years of the project.

GAATW recognised the limitation of Ms. Skrobanek to act as an external evaluator for the project due to her above-mentioned involvement in the project. We have tried to seek other alternatives but an appropriate person who would be also available to take on the task cannot be identified. Providing the time constraint and the urgency of this evaluation, GAATW considers Ms. Skrobanek to be the most suitable person to be a co-evaluator for this project. Her

qualification and the wealth of knowledge on the Mekong sub region will be invaluable for the evaluation process. Due to Ms. Skrobanek's involvement in the project, certain aspects of the evaluation will be the principle responsibility of Ms. van der Vleuten. In addition, Ms. van der Vleuten will act as an independent team leader who has the final responsibility over the presentation of the evaluation. In case of having differences of opinion between the two evaluators, it will be pointed out in the report. Ms. Skrobanek and Ms. van der Vleuten will share the responsibility of report writing as well as other workload.

- ◆ One GAATW staff member will accompany the evaluators.
- ◆ The Implementing partners will be actively involved in the execution of the evaluation in their country (see under Methodology). They will also arrange for an independent interpreter, logistics and administrative support.

Reporting and debriefing

- ◆ The team will prepare a draft report, which will be shared with GAATW and the Implementing partners in a two-day debriefing workshop in Bangkok. Factual errors and differences of opinion will be pointed out. Factual mistakes will be corrected, possible differences of opinion will be presented in the final report (in the main text or an annex)
- ◆ The final report will be presented to the embassy and GAATW / the Implementing partners simultaneously.
- ◆ Copies of the report will also be made available for other interested agencies.

Planning

Indicative time frame:

Review of relevant documents	2 days - BKK
Meeting with GAATW:	1 day - BKK
Visit project sites	7 days in Cambodia (Phnom Penh, Battambang and Kampongson)
	11 days in Vietnam (both North and South)
Reporting:	10 days
Sharing draft report	2 days - BKK
Finalising report / evaluation	<u>3</u> days
Total	<u>36</u> days

Overview of days necessary for the review

Activity	BKK	Cambodia	VN - South	VN –North	Total
Review documents	2				2
Meeting GAATW	1				1
Project locations: City		2	2	2	6
Countryside		5	3	4	12
Reporting	10				10
Sharing draft	2				2
Finalisation	3				3
Grand total	18	7	5	6	36

TIME FRAME REVIEW

Wed. 7 Nov	Bangkok	Preparations for the review, overall planning, logistics. Review of documents
Thurs. 8 Nov		Meeting with GAATW-staff – overview of project, major issues of implementation and results.
Fri 9. Nov		Preparations for the review & report. Review of documents
Sat. 10 Nov	Phnom Penh	BKK -> Phnom Penh P.M. Briefing / meeting with CWDA (discussion with Director)
Sun. 11 Nov		A.M. visit Phum Kvet – rural part Phnom Penh municipality. Meeting with community-volunteer, village chief and deputy commune-chief. PM – Meeting with PCU – project site Toul Tork, Phnom Penh
Mon. 12 Nov	Kampong som (Sihanouk-ville)	AM -> Kampong som (3 hours by car) P.M. briefing by researcher. Visit to Phum Tumnup Rolok, fishing village. Meeting with women and village chief. Visit to brothel in ‘New Village’, interaction with sex workers.
Tue. 13 Nov	-> Phnom Penh	A.M. visit to Phum Ou Bei (new group) - meeting with group leaders and village chief. Visit to Phum ... Interaction with group leaders. PM: return to Phnom Penh
Wed. 14 Nov.	Battambang	A.M.: Depart to Battambang (0,5 hour by plane). Meeting with researcher, PM: visit to Phum Korahal. Meeting with group leaders and community volunteers. Visit to Aphivat Satee, local women’s organisation
Thurs. 15 Nov		A.M.: visit to Phum Prey Totoeng. Meeting with group leaders, community volunteer and village chief. Meeting with previous researcher, now Dy. Director for women’s affairs in Battambang province. PM: visit to brothel in O’char, Battambang city.
Fri. 16 Nov	-> Phnom Penh	A.M. Return to Phnom Penh Meeting with Lourdes Autencio, Project co-ordinator, TiW, IOM-Mission Cambodia. P.M. Meeting with Mrs. You Ay, Secretary of State, Ministry of Women’s and Veteran Affairs
Sat. 17 Nov		A.M. meeting with Janthon, Director CWCC (women’s organisation) P.M. meeting for clarification with CWDA.
Sun. 18 Nov	Ho Chi Minh City	Travel to Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC)
Mon. 19 Nov		AM: Meeting at Women's Union with project team (research co-ordinators, researchers from phase I and II who worked in HCM City) PM: Individual discussion with 4 researchers

Tue 20 Nov		AM: District 4: meeting with women's group at WU's office, visit to two individual women. P.M. District 1: visit to two individual women, visit bookbinding workshop.
Wed 21 Nov	Tay Ninh	AM: -> Tay Ninh province (3 hours by car) Meeting at the Women's Union with president and researcher / co-ordinator of RA project, Tay Ninh. PM: Visit Hoa Thanh district, visit 2 individual women.
Thur 22 Nov		AM: Visit Ben-Cau district, visit 2 individual women. Interaction with representative local Youth Union. AM: Visit Go Dau district, meeting at WU office Go Dau. Also policeman present. Evening: return to HCM City
Fri 23 Nov		AM Meeting with IOM, Unicef Lunch / P.M. closing meeting with VWU - HCMC. Evening: travel to Hanoi.
Sat 24 Nov	Hanoi	11.00 - 16.00 Meeting representatives YRI
Sun 25 Nov		Whole day: Meeting with team of researchers at YRI
Mon 26 Nov	Lang Son	AM Travel -> Lang Son province (near Chinese border) PM: visit Hop Tanh commune, meeting with local authorities and Women's Group.
Tue 27 Nov		PM: visit Mai Pha commune, meeting with local authorities and Women's Group. AM Travel back to Hanoi
Wed 28 Nov	Hanoi	AM: preparation for external sharing PM - meeting with I-NGOs (AA, SCF-S), IOM and UNDP/MOLISA on activities related to TiW in VN.
Thur 29 Nov		AM Clarification meeting with YRI PM meeting at the Netherlands Embassy
Fri 30 Nov	-> Bangkok	Travel back to Bangkok -SS
Sat 1 Dec		Travel back to Bangkok - NvdV / Report writing
Sun 2 - Mon 10 Dec		Report writing
Tue 11 Dec		Sharing of report in internal meeting (GAATW, CWDA, YRI, VWU)
Wed 12 - Thurs 13 Dec		Finalisation of report, preparing for external meeting
Fri 14 Dec		External sharing, i.e. dissemination meeting Departure NvdV

LIST OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RA-PROJECT - Consulted by evaluators

Proposals

- ◆ GAATW
- ◆ Vietnam
- ◆ Cambodia

Reports by implementing agencies (i.e. substantial reports)

- ◆ The Research and Action Project on Traffic in women in Ho Chi Minh City and Areas of the South, Luu Phung Thao, October 1997 (2 versions)
- ◆ The Second phase report of The Research and Action Project on Traffic in Women in the Mekong Region, Vietnam Women's Union of Ho Chi Minh City, 1999
- ◆ Report of the Extension Phase Research and Action Project on Traffic in Women in District 8 and 11, Ho Chi Minh City, 2000
- ◆ Prevention of Trafficking in Women in Vietnam, YRI, 2000
- ◆ Report in the situation of Trafficking in Women, Cambodia, CWDA, 1999

Proceedings of the workshops and meeting

- ◆ Proceedings of the Orientation workshops for Research and Action Project in Traffic in women in the Mekong region, 13-17 January 1997
- ◆ Proceedings of the comparative analysis report, 9-19 November 1997

Semi-annual and final reports by GAATW

- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 1 (for November 1996 - June 1997)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 2 (for July- December 1997)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 3 (for January - June 1998)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 4 (for July 1998 - December 1998)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 5 (for January - June 1999)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 6 (for July - December 1999)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 7 (for January- June 2000)
- ◆ Semi-annual narrative report - 8 (for July December 2000)
- ◆ Final Report (November 1996 - February 2001)

Various financial reports from IAs to GAATW and from GAATW to RNE

TABLE & TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITIES RA-PROJECT

(Prepared by GAATW as annexe to final report to RNE)

Description of Activities	1996		1997											
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Phase I Project Preparation ♦ Contacts with implementing Agencies and setting up project Structure	x	x												
Orientation workshop for Project co-ordinators			x											
National training for researchers ♦ Cambodia ♦ Vietnam ♦ Localised Training			x	x	x									
Field research ♦ Cambodia ♦ Northern Vietnam ♦ Southern Vietnam					x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Consultation meeting											x			
Comparative workshop (Siem Reap)													x	

Description of Activities	1998											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
National workshop ♦ Cambodia ♦ Vietnam			x x									
Self Evaluation			x									
<u>Phase II</u> Training and Planing workshop in Vietnam			x									
Study Trips to Thailand ♦ Cambodia Team ♦ Southern Vietnam ♦ Northern Vietnam					x	x			x			
Implementation of local activities ♦ Cambodia ♦ Southern Vietnam ♦ Northern Vietnam				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Field visit by GAATW			x								x	x

Description of Activities	1999											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
PROJECT EXTENSION												
Local activities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Study trip to Cambodia				x								
Training for Researchers in Southern Vietnam					x							
Meetings of core group members of Women's groups (Hanoi)								x				
National meeting in Vietnam								x				
Survey on situation of women married to foreigners in southern Vietnam									x	x	x	x

Description of Activities	2000-2001														
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb ->	-> Dec
PROJECT EXTENSION															
Implementation of local activities during project extension in southern Vietnam	x	x	x	x											
Field visit (by GAATW) to Vietnam in preparing for Comparative Analysis Report and Story Book								x							
Writing of the Analysis Report and compilation of Story Book (by GAATW)										x	x	x	x	x	x

PRESENTATIONS OF VWU AND YRI FOR EXTERNAL MEETING ON 14 DECEMBER 2001

(Transferred from Power Point to Word)

Experience in pilot research in prevention of TiW, By Dr. Le Thi Quy, Youth Research Institute

Project overview:

Duration: 1997 - 1998

Phase 1: Research (R) Jan. 1997 - Dec. 1997

Phase 2: Action (A) Jan. 1998 - Dec. 1998

Coverage:

3 provinces: Quang Ninh (Trang An)
 Lang Son (Mai Pha, Hop Thanh)
 Hai Duong (Kim Xuyen)

General Objectives:

1. Conduct a research on the TiW situation in North Vietnam
2. Research and pilot-test measures to prevent trafficking in women and children in Vietnam
 - ◆ Law improvements
 - ◆ Support for women returnees in community reintegration, including formation of groups of women in difficult circumstances
 - ◆ Expansion of communication, advocacy for women in prevention of TiW
3. Contribute to regional and international actions against TiW

Experience in formation of groups of women in difficult circumstances

Objectives of women's groups:

- ◆ To facilitate swift reintegration of women returnees into community
- ◆ To enhance awareness of women and communities in TiW
- ◆ To expand and strengthen local programmes to combat TiW

Process of formation of groups

1. Members:

- ◆ Women returnees
- ◆ High risk women
- ◆ Mother of trafficked women
- ◆ women's groups have been established with 55 members
- ◆ Experience in formation of groups of women in difficult circumstances

2. Operational principles:

- ◆ “3 S” principle
 - Self-esteem
 - Self-confidence
 - Self-effort
 - (3 T in Vietnamese: TU NGUYEN, TU TIN, TU LUC)
- ◆ Consolidation, mutual assistance in developing family economy, organising activities to improve cultural and spiritual life, facilitating women’s community re-integration
- ◆ Communication and action to prevent and combat TiW

Main activities of women’s groups

A. Economic activities

- ◆ Apply for loans to develop family economy, help one another to improve production, husbandry and other economic economy (total loan package: 43 mil. VND)
- ◆ Transform the production

B. Cultural and spiritual activities

- ◆ Enhance solidarity, share feeling and protect one another, help other people save family happiness
- ◆ Organise cultural, musical events to improve the spiritual life
- ◆ Visit one another in family context, help them in illness, wedding parties, funeral or other big family events
- ◆ Organise solidarity trips to other provinces

C. Communication

- ◆ Information and communication to enhance understanding among women, and being better warned to protect themselves against trafficker’s tricks and cheats and prevent TiW
- ◆ Communication and distribution of leaflets and flyers with content on preventing TiW among local people
- ◆ Training to improve knowledge and communication skills of members

D. Community development activities

- ◆ Strengthen linkages with local authorities to help women resolve their problems (getting permanent resident status, birth certificates for children, etc.)
- ◆ Support from such local political and social mass organisations as Youth Union, Women’s Union for activities of the women (Quang Ninh Provincial WU has given Trang An women’s group loans amounting to VND12 mil.)
- ◆ Facilitate women access to health care and informatin services
- ◆ Solidarity and support programme of Ba Dinh Education Section for women’s groups.

Local actions to support women and prevention of trafficking at communal level

Experience in working with local authorities

1. Provide local authorities with information on TiW and call for their responsibility for the issue
2. Collaborate with local authorities to help address urgent needs of women returnees
3. Clarify project objectives and call for further cooperation

Support of communal local authorities

- ◆ Local authorities have clear and detailed policies to prevent TiW.
- ◆ Local authorities issue a decision to facilitate the formation of the women's group and its management board.
- ◆ Local leaders participated in group's meetings as guest speakers and encouraged the members to improve spiritual life, conduct more group activities, expand their cultivation and husbandry to improve their livelihood.
- ◆ People's Committee (PC) offered venue for group's monthly meetings. Local leaders joint the management board to better follow up their activities, understand and submit their requirements to the PC3. Contribute to regional and international actions against TiW
- ◆ Local authorities submitted proposal to competent agencies to issue birth certificates for mixed children.
- ◆ Local authorities worked with rector of primary school to arrange schooling of mixed children.
- ◆ Some women received land sharing.
- ◆ The PC's chairman of Mai Pha proposed the group to open a shop selling fertilizers and promised to help them contact potential business partners and choose a location for the business.

Support of Women's Union (WU)

- ◆ Provincial WU (Quang Ninh) provided more loans to women's group (totalling up to 12 mil. VND)
- ◆ Group of "women in difficult circumstances" became part of local WU

Support of Youth Union

- ◆ YU members help women mend their kitchen and animals' sheds.
- ◆ YU leaders' board help groups carry out their activities, especially their music and song meetings.

Support of Communal

- ◆ The communal police are ready to cooperate with local people to maintain social security, identify phenomena and prevent TiW on time

Results

1. For women's groups:

- ◆ Enhanced awareness of TiW
- ◆ Women's participation in communication activities against TiW as peer educators
- ◆ Improvements of their own capacity, self-confidence, independence, community re-integration;
- ◆ Participation of women in decisionmaking process for themselves and the communities (women empowerment);

- ◆ Understanding of how to use loans to develop family economy;
- ◆ Understanding of how to work in group to provide practical mutual assistance;
- ◆ Improvements of economic life;
- ◆ Improvements of family happiness;
- ◆ Empowerment of women: A few member of women's group were elected into the Commune People's Council and WU leaders' board.

2. For country and local communities:

- ◆ Contribution to the Government's law improvements in TiW;
- ◆ Publication of 1st book on prevention of TiW in Vietnam;
- ◆ Coordinator and researcher of R.A projects participating as resource people in various national conference on TiW, including those organised by the National Assembly;
- ◆ Transformation of attitudes and actions related to TiW and re-integration of women returnees;
- ◆ Provision of with knowledge and skills to local communities to facilitate trafficked women's reintegration;
- ◆ Local mass organisations provided with knowledge and skills to involve women and organise their activities in prevention and combat against TiW.

3. For researchers:

- ◆ Improvement of knowledge and skills to conduct research and pilot action against TiW;
- ◆ Improvement of their field conduct, especially in social work, community development and communication;
- ◆ Provision of skills on management and development of a research project.

VWU - Project overview By Mrs. Tran Thi Xuan Hai, Vietnam Women's Union - Ho Chi Minh City

Duration: 1997 - 1998

Phase 1: Research (R) Jan. 1997 - Dec. 1997

Phase 2: Action (A) Jan. 1998 - Dec. 1998

Coverage:

2 city/ province: Hochiminh City (2 districts)
 Tay Ninh (4 communes)

Extension:

- 6 more months in Hochiminh City (District 8 and 11) and Tayninh
- Communication only
- Targeted at women married to foreigners

Target group

- ◆ Women who were cheated and trafficked in the form of marriage with Taiwanese men
- ◆ Women who were cheated and trafficked in the form of prostitutes at locality
- ◆ Women who were cheated and trafficked to Cambodia and became prostitutes

General Objectives:

1. Conduct a research on the TiW situation in South Vietnam
2. Research and pilot-test measures to prevent trafficking in women and children in Vietnam
 - ◆ Law improvements
 - ◆ Support for women returnees in community reintegration, including formulation of groups of women in difficult circumstances
 - ◆ Expansion of communication, advocacy for women in prevention of TiW
3. Contribute to regional and international actions against TiW
 - Specific objectives
 - ◆ To support community re-integration and livelihood stabilisation of trafficked/cheated women upon return;
 - ◆ To make recommendations to the local authorities to make policies and provide support such as getting residence registration, birth certificates for children, schooling arrangement, register books for free health care for women in difficulties;
 - ◆ To enhance women's confidence, involvement in project's and communities' activities.
 - ◆ To provide loans, job creation and help generate income.

New methodologies for research and actions

1. Access and gather information

GAATW supported a 2-day training workshop for researchers after study tour to Thailand

2. Develop problem tree

3. Organise group meetings

4. Evaluate

5. Write report

Problem tree

New methodology, 1st time to be used

- ◆ Women express their own wishes, needs and concerns
- ◆ Women participate in decision making process
- ◆ A capacity building process for women
- ◆ Women are provided with information on TiW, health care, prevention of HIV/ AIDS and become active peer educators of Women's Union

Groups' activities

- ◆ Researcher access and persuade the women to join groups
- ◆ Women develop problem tree, discuss their problems, prioritise them and mark out the biggest problems
- ◆ Women elect their own group leader.
- ◆ Researchers train group leaders on different topics such as TiW, drug abuse, family planning, HIV/ AIDS. The leaders come back to group and facilitate group meetings.
- ◆ Member share their experiences and life stories, enhance mutual understanding and assistance
- ◆ Form groups of mothers whose daughters married Taiwanese men. Through which others are better aware of the risks when their daughters get married to foreigners or leave country to work.
- ◆ Provide loans, help create stable jobs for women
- ◆ Women pay monthly savings, through which they
 - > women learn to save money
 - > interest used to help members in illness, family problems

What are the differences between Women's Union (WU) general activities and RA project activities?

- ◆ Participation of women in decision making
- ◆ Capacity building for women in making their activities
- ◆ Giving information as key to prevent TiW

R.A project activities

Group members

- ◆ form their own group
- ◆ develop their own problem tree and discuss, identify the priority issues (poverty alleviation, improve spiritual life)

elect their own leader

Group activities

- ◆ Provide loans, share experience/ personal stories
- ◆ Information, health care, family planning, capacity building --> women know and can help one another member facilitate group meetings and recover loans on their own

WU general activities

WU officers

- ◆ choose members and form the groups
- ◆ identify problems of women
- ◆ choose group leader

General activities

- ◆ focus on provision of loans
- ◆ WU officer facilitate group meetings and recover loan

Lessons learnt from R.A projects

For group members:

- ◆ Enhanced self-confidence through participation in decision making
- ◆ Group member are invited to share their stories/ experience with young women
- ◆ Facilitate their swift community reintegration
- ◆ Practical support such as birth certificates and schooling for children, support in illness, family problems
- ◆ Women learn to save money through introduction of group savings.
- ◆ Help local authorities to identify phenomena of TiW and prevent the bad practice.

For Women's Union

- ◆ Trust is important. WU must trust group members and empower them.
- ◆ Researcher learned new methods and applied them in general WU activities. PAR is very useful.
- ◆ Expand communication activities to prevent TiW.
- ◆ Recommend policy changes and harder measures/ punishments to prevent TiW to local authorities.

For local authorities

- ◆ Transformed their attitude and improved understanding on TiW
- ◆ Gained their support for women and their families upon their return.
- ◆ Local authorities take measures to prevent TiW and apply harder punishment against traffickers and types of violence against women.