

**“Counter-Trafficking Interventions in  
Prevention, Protection and Prosecution for Victims  
of Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh”**

**End Project Evaluation Report**

**Funded by:**

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# CTI Project Areas and CIC



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# Glossary of Terms

BDR	Bangladesh Rifles
BNWLA	Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association
CIC	Community Information Centre
CID	Criminal Investigation Division
CTI	Counter-Trafficking Initiative
CBO	Community Based Organization
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DIO	District Intelligence Office
DISA	Development Initiative for Social Advancement
FSA	Foreign Service Academy
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LEB	Locally Elected Bodies
LETI	Legal Education and Training Institute
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoI	Ministry of Information
MoLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OC	Officer-In-Charge
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
SP	Superintendents of Police
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TMSS	Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## The Report

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This report presents the findings of the end project evaluation of the USAID/Bangladesh funded project 'Counter-trafficking Interventions in Prevention, Protection and Prosecution for Victims of Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh' implemented jointly by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The evaluation has been carried out to assess the project achievements and outcomes as well as its strengths and constraints, and to determine if the lessons learned could point a way forward for designing future counter-trafficking interventions.

The methodology for the evaluation consisted of literature review, interview of key stakeholders in the field and in Dhaka, interview of the CTI team and partner NGOs, and input from USAID/Bangladesh.

## Executive Summary

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) has become a priority issue of governments and many development partners. Bangladesh is a country of origin and has been implementing counter-trafficking measures since 2004 with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB).

The 'Counter-Trafficking Interventions in Prevention, Protection and Prosecution for Victims of Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh' (CTI) was a 3-year project launched jointly by MoHA and IOM in September 2005 with funding from USAID/Bangladesh. The overall goal was reduction of trafficking in persons from Bangladesh through fulfilling the objective of strengthening counter-trafficking interventions in the country.

The project, implemented in 18 districts, aimed to provide support to trafficked victims through raising awareness of communities, training for capacity building of officers-in-charge (OC) of police stations and lawyers from the selected districts, and provision of legal, medical and psycho-social support including skill training and business support to victims of trafficking. The project also saw some additional activities during its later half. These activities included some important research studies; study tours to observe shelter homes in India and Nepal; support for the cyclone Sidr affected people initiated in four districts; training of land port immigration officials; and training of inspector level police officials.

The project also initiated two activities for the first time in Bangladesh: inclusion of the TIP issue in a disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation effort, and the establishment of the Community Information Centre (CIC) which has been set up under the Sidr reconstruction activity/component of the project.

The main outcome from the project is that there is greater awareness\* now of the TIP issue. The issue is discussed at the Union Parishad (UP) monthly meetings in all the project districts and many unions committees have been set up to protect the areas against traffickers. As a result of the local level meetings, law enforcement and local administration officials appear to be more willing to provide support to victims of trafficking. There are fewer incidences of TIP now as awareness has increased.

Capacity building is also a very important outcome of the project. Through CTI there has been capacity enhancement of local administration, participants and resource persons of the lawyers' training program, law enforcement officers and NGO-partners. A direct outcome of the CTI lawyers' training programme is the legal aid clinic that has been set up by the Bar Council. The training manual for lawyers that was developed under the project is a widely referred and used document on the issue.

Local law enforcement in many of the areas is also showing signs of improvement in terms of better cooperation and some willingness to accept responsibility in safeguarding communities against traffickers.

From the beginning to the end of the project, its biggest strength remained the unique collaboration between the Ministry of Home Affairs and IOM. Strong support from the government made it possible to fulfill the project objectives successfully. USAID's support has also been very strong. Their willingness to reduce the number of victims for support from 975 to 400 was a timely decision that resolved the issue of identifying such a huge number of trafficked victims in the limited project period.

In short, the CTI project was very well organized and owed its uniqueness to the successful blending of the three Ps, Prevention, Protection and Prosecution, into a single remarkable project.

# CTI Project at a Glance

## Prevention:

- More than ten million people are aware about the issue of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) from 240 TV spots and 835 radio shows.
- 103 meetings were organized in the 63 districts with different stakeholders covering 2,422 stakeholders.
- A total of 7,964 bazaar committee members are aware about the issue due to the 540 meetings held in 18 districts.
- A total of 8,144 members of the Community based Organisation (CBOs) of 18 districts are aware about the issue.
- About 15, 75,577 general people are aware about the issue from the 270 pot songs and stage dramas in 18 districts.
- A total of 1080 meetings were held in 18 districts covering 14328 local elected bodies (LEBs) to sensitize them on the TIP issue and organize them against traffickers.
- A total of 47,274 students, parents and teachers from 18 districts received awareness programme.
- 540 community meetings were held in 18 districts with religious leaders, local elites, etc. for making 9671 people aware about the issue.
- A total of 5,761 (4,561 men & 1,200 women) Union Parishad Chairmen and members were sensitized about the issue of human trafficking and their role in preventing human trafficking.
- The Community Information Centre (CIC) set up under the Sidr reconstruction activity/component of the CTI project is the first of its kind in Bangladesh.

## Protection:

- 548 traffic victims/survivors/rescued persons from harmful situation received physical and mental treatment, psychosocial counseling, shelter, legal aid, entrepreneurial skills development training.
- 410 out of 548 victims received skill development training and support for business set up.
- A total of 30 staff of local project related NGOs received training in providing psychosocial counseling, care and legal aid and referral.

## Prosecution:

- A total of 520 Officers-in-Charge of 588 police stations received training to handle trafficking survivors in a humane manner.
- 156 more inspector level officials trained.
- A total of 1,352 Bar Council members, Public Prosecutors and lawyers in 18 districts received training.
- A Legal Aid Clinic has been set up by the Bar Council.

## Sidr reconstruction activities

- 11,574 parents were sensitized about the issue.
- 200 meetings were held to organize 2,611 LEBs against traffickers.
- 50 bazaar meetings were held to raise awareness of 18,669 bazaar community people.
- 80 video shows were organized for sensitizing 43,002 people.
- Adolescent meetings, stakeholder meetings and journalist meetings were held covering 391 adolescents, 125 stakeholders and 89 journalists.
- 51 vulnerable/potential victims received vocational training.
- A Community Information Centre (CIC) has been established to promote safe migration and to provide information to potential migrants.

**Studies:**

*Five studies have been conducted under the project:*

- Study on review of existing laws and regulations related to migration in Bangladesh.
- Study on complaint mechanisms concerning abuses and exploitation in the labour migration process in Bangladesh.
- Study on the nature and trends of abuses and exploitations in trafficking in persons and in labour migration processes in Bangladesh.
- Study to review the capacity of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) with regard to facilitating and managing labour migration from Bangladesh.
- Study to understand and analyze the internal trafficking situation in Bangladesh with special focus on children.

**Other Publications/Outputs:**

- A training manual 'Enhancing Capacity of the Law Enforcement Agencies (ECLEA) to address Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh'.
- Shelter Home Management Manual.
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) products:
  - DVDs
  - TV spots
  - Talk shows
  - Radio programs
- Media workshop
- Program for government officials:
  - Foreign Service Academy training program
  - Labour Attaché training workshop
  - Orientation training for land port immigration officials
- National events co-organized:
  - National Action Forum (NAF) Conference
  - Counter-trafficking workshop (with Terre des Hommes Italy and Concern Universal)

# 1: Project Background & Description

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Trafficking in Persons (TIP), whether in terms of trafficking of men, women and children within the country or across borders, is a priority issue today of governments and many development partners. As a country of origin, Bangladesh has been implementing counter-trafficking measures since 2004 with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) taking the lead.

In September 2005, the 3-year project 'Counter-trafficking interventions in Prevention, Protection and Prosecution for Victims of Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh' (CTI) was launched jointly by MoHA and IOM with funding from USAID/Bangladesh. The project aim was to provide support to trafficked victims, including men, women and children. Activities were mainly implemented in 18 districts<sup>1</sup> and included raising awareness of communities, training for capacity building of officers-in-charge (OC) of police stations and lawyers from the selected districts, and provision of legal, medical and psycho-social support including skill training and business support to victims of trafficking. The project's geographical coverage was determined focusing on the border districts of the country which are the collection, transit and exit points for TIP.

For facilitating implementation, there was a Project Implementation Committee (PIC) formed by MoHA with representatives from other relevant ministries, USAID/Bangladesh and IOM. The other relevant ministries were the Ministry of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the Ministry of Information (Mol), the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD), Ministry of Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA). The Convener and Focal Point for coordinating PIC activities were nominated from MoHA. PIC was responsible for monitoring the project, providing guidelines for smooth implementation of activities and helping IOM to take up necessary program support. It met every three months to be appraised of project progress and to give decisions for the future.

The CTI project team at IOM consisted of two National Programme Officers, a Legal Advisor, a Project Coordinator, two Project Assistants and a Finance Officer. Seven local 'partner' NGOs were selected to carry out field activities of the project, namely the activities of the awareness raising campaign. There was also an MOU signed with the Legal Education and Training

Counter-trafficking initiatives in Bangladesh include:

- Relevant laws;
- Institutional arrangements such as, country-wide special tribunals for cases related to trafficking in women and children;
- Committees at different levels such as the inter-ministerial & inter-organizational committee at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA);
- District committees headed by Deputy Commissioners for monitoring the formulation and implementation of anti-trafficking measures;
- A Monitoring Cell at the police headquarters to combat the problem of trafficking of persons in Bangladesh;
- Technical assistance to GoB counter-trafficking measures provided by USAID, IOM and UNICEF.
- As part of the GO-NGO cooperation, NGOs assist in community awareness-raising and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking.

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<sup>1</sup> Rajshahi, Chapai Nawabganj, Naogaon, Kurigram, Jaipurhat, Nilphamari, Satkhira, Chuadanga, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Kushtia, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Munshiganj, and Dhaka

Institute (LETI) under the auspices of the Bangladesh Bar Council for imparting training to lawyers and public prosecutors.

The overall goal of the project was reduction of trafficking in persons from Bangladesh through fulfilling the objective of strengthening counter-trafficking interventions in the country. It was designed to reach victims/ survivors/ rescued persons from harmful situations; school children, parents and teachers; locally elected bodies (LEB) and local elites; government officials including police; NGO officials; Bar Council members, public prosecutors and lawyers; and community people. The project strategy comprised the 3 'P' approach: Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution.

Monitoring of activities was conducted from various levels. Quarterly monitoring was done by the PIC and a Monitoring Committee of the project. The CTI team visited the field every month for monitoring purposes. The partner NGOs also submitted a monthly monitoring form to IOM with reports on community and school campaigns.

A number of outcomes were expected to be achieved by the end of the project period. Firstly, it was expected that the advocacy meetings would bring about some favorable policy changes to better facilitate victims and survivors of trafficking and that the prosecution system would be improved in the 18 districts. Secondly, a social movement would arise against trafficking in persons. Thirdly, victims/ survivors/ rescued persons from harmful situations would become economically active and empowered through skill training and business support. Fourthly, there would be ownership of the project at the district level particularly by Deputy Commissioners (DC), Superintendents of Police (SP), LEBs and local leaders. Fifthly, the general public, local level committees, elites, LEBs and students, parents and teachers would be mobilized through media, community and school campaigns. Lastly, Bar Council members, public prosecutors and lawyers receiving training under the project would be sensitized and motivated to expedite human trafficking cases in special tribunals and public prosecutors would seek punishment of traffickers and support the cause of victims/ survivors.

The end project evaluation has mainly looked at whether these outcomes have been achieved.

The 3 'P' approach was intended to achieve the following:

*Prevention:*

- Raise awareness about trafficking in persons among the general public and target groups;
- Assist in creating income generating opportunities for victims/survivors/ rescued persons from harmful situations.

*Protection:*

- Strengthen the capacity of LEBs, law enforcement agencies and NGOs to better identify and assist victims of trafficking.

*Prosecution:*

- Strengthen the capacity of police officers including Thana Officer-in-Charge, prosecutors and lawyers to manage trafficking cases.

## 2: Additional Activities

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A few additional components were added to the project's activities in the later half of the project period. These activities included five research studies; two study tours to observe shelter homes in India and Nepal; support for the cyclone Sidr affected people initiated in four districts; training of land port immigration officials; and training of inspector level police officials.

### Research studies

The idea for carrying out the five studies had stemmed from the realization that there was a need to prevent abuse in the labour migration process. When CTI was started in 2005 it was focused on the traditional trafficking of women and children. Awareness and rehabilitation centered around trafficking of women and children. Subsequently, it was realized that men were also trafficked in labour migration process. Therefore, prevention of abuse in the labour migration process was taken on as a new component of CTI in 2008 in collaboration with MoEWoE.

The activities of the component were specialized, and in a small pilot scale. One of the major activities involved forming an inter ministerial committee headed by the Joint Secretary of MoEWoE and included representatives of MoHA, MoFA, MoWCA and other related ministries and government organizations. The responsibility of the committee, formed in January 2008, was to chalk out what to do with regard to addressing labour trafficking and to spell out an effective monitoring mechanism for the labour recruitment process.

In keeping with the objectives of the project, the committee recommended for five research studies which were then carried out by IOM. Findings of the studies are expected to be used in designing activities for future interventions against labour migration abuse.

One of the studies was on a review of the laws of Bangladesh, government circulars, etc. related to migration, to assess their relevance and effectiveness towards labour migration. Another study was on determining the effectiveness of the procedures and mechanisms for complaints (for victims of exploitation or deception in the migration process) as stipulated in the Emigration Ordinance of 1982 and other migration related laws. The study looked into what was happening in practice to the complaints lodged, whether they were being addressed, and whether a better mechanism could be developed. There was also a felt need to see what motivation there was for people to migrate legally or illegally. There is a hypothesis that the poverty level of those returnee migrants who have been deceived becomes worse than when they left.

The benefit from the research studies could be weighed in the light of the following considerations – up until now understanding of labour exploitation issues was based on guesswork, but now the studies have given some concrete findings to work with. The findings could be helpful in determining what the government measures should be as labour migration is an important sector for Bangladesh: in 2007 government estimates put labour migrants at 832000 while remittance for the 2007-08 fiscal year was estimated at USD 7.94 billion.

There was a study to investigate how the society and family members receive these people when they return and to review the capacity of MoEWoE and other subsidiary organs. An assessment study was also conducted to find out the capacity of MoEWOE and BMET in relation to facilitating and managing labour migration from Bangladesh and to develop an Action Plan to enhance the capacity of those two institutions. Another significant study was conducted to assess the situation of internal trafficking in persons with special focus on children. This was the first ever study to be conducted on internal TIP in Bangladesh which investigated the extent of internal TIP as well as the mode of recruitment for such trafficking, the causes and consequences and the policies and legal instruments (or lack thereof) for addressing the issue. While there is no doubt that this pioneering study was an important contribution in the overall debate relating to trafficking, it is not clear why this study was not carried out in the first place under this project, the scope of which is only limited to cross-border phenomenon of trafficking.

## **Study tours**

The decision to conduct two study tours to India and Nepal was made to ascertain if the shelter homes for victims of trafficking were humane and efficient. Each study team comprised two government officials and representatives from partner NGOs working with shelters in Bangladesh. The objectives of the visits were to look into the facilities and type of shelter home support given in those countries, compare how each country managed their respective shelters and to gather new ideas.

Some of the recommendations that emerged from the visits were:

- The government, NGOs and other stakeholders could work on developing a structure for a proper reintegration and repatriation system of victims of TIP.
- Opportunities could be created for dialogue among stakeholders of own country and neighboring countries on addressing the issue of TIP, easing the process of repatriation and ensuring victim care and support with a more holistic approach.
- Need based training could be given to survivors with alternative livelihood options to empower them and foster a feeling of self sufficiency.
- Methods could be adopted to involve children or survivors in various operational activities of the shelter homes. An atmosphere could be created to give the feeling that they were living at home with a big family and thus build confidence to become integrated into the society. Also, one of the organizations visited in India (UNODC) shared their plan to implement six model government run shelter homes which would have set required standards of care and support. This could be replicated in Bangladesh.

- NGOs and stakeholders could create action oriented public opinion through opportunity research outcomes and facilitate creation of public opinion on issues like TIP and victim support and care.

## **SIDR reconstruction activities**

Through this activity the TIP issue was included in a disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation effort for the first time in Bangladesh. The overall objectives of this intervention was to prevent trafficking of the cyclone Sidr affected people, make the vulnerable communities aware about the techniques traffickers use and the outcome of trafficking, and provide immediate livelihood options. The activities covered 4<sup>2</sup> of the 31 most affected districts of Bangladesh.

The strategy was to implement the activities in partnership with the two NGOs, TMSS and Rupantar that had previous experience in working both in cyclone affected areas as well as with the TIP issue. The NGOs have their own staff for each district. In all, six types of activities were conducted under this component.

- **Campaign and Advocacy**

Partner NGOs have identified the areas where people are mostly affected and vulnerable to trafficking. Awareness raising meetings were held for parents and guardians as well as school going children. Bazaar meetings are also organized in the most affected areas. A series of radio programs (spot, drama serial) were broadcast to warn against the techniques traffickers use and on the best course of action against trafficking. In order to sensitize district administration, civil society members, journalists, lawyers, NGOs, religious leaders and stakeholders, district level meetings are held for better coordinated interventions in the Sidr affected areas. Meeting with LEBs were also organized to involve them in the process. There were video shows and 'pot' songs (local folk songs) to make the community aware about the issue.

- **Community Information Centre (CIC)**

The Community Information Centre (CIC) set up under the Sidr reconstruction activity/component of the CTI project was the first of its kind in Bangladesh. Sidr affected people, who are destitute and desperate for employment, are easy prey to unscrupulous recruitment agents and misinformation. In this backdrop the CIC was established for promoting safe migration and for making vulnerable people aware about the dire consequences of trafficking in persons. Information materials were disseminated from these centres to potential and vulnerable migrant workers on safe migration process, unscrupulous recruitment agencies, brokers, fake or corrupt employment agencies as well as genuine

On 19 June 2008 three children in Dumuria thana, Khulna was rescued with help from the CIC.

The children were on their way to a park when a man, known to them as 'uncle', approached them offering work in Dhaka. Fortunately, one of the children called his father from a cell phone shop, but he hung up at his father's protests. The children then set off with the man, little knowing that he was actually taking them to Noapara, Jessore instead of Dhaka. When the worried and deeply upset father called back, the shopkeeper informed him that he had seen the children get into a microbus. The conversation was overheard by one Mr. Mohsin who had recently attended a program on counter-trafficking organized by the partner NGO *Rupantar*. He immediately called the CIC Coordinator who made some calls to the OCs of a few police stations around the district. Within a short time the children were rescued.

<sup>2</sup> Khulna, Satkhira, Patuakhali & Barguna

employment opportunities available outside the country and the correct procedure to follow.

The project officer arranged monthly awareness raising meetings and was responsible for forming CIC Sub-committees composed of adolescent volunteers to work as peer educators of school children and adolescents.

Training of local print media journalists and electronic media journalists was arranged to properly report trafficking cases for raising awareness of the general public through news coverage and stories in different newspapers. A follow up training was also conducted in September.

- **Media workshop**

A media workshop was held for leading journalists of the Diplomatic Correspondents Association of Bangladesh and reporters from other electronic and print media. The objectives of the workshop were to increase their understanding of migration and counter-trafficking issues in Bangladesh; reinforce the importance of ethical and responsible reporting on the issues and strengthen partnership on addressing the issues.

- **Livelihood options**

Vocational training was arranged for the vulnerable people to enable them to earn a living once again.

- **Capacity building**

The newly recruited staff for the intervention received training before starting the field level activities. The partner NGOs also received training from the CTI team on the running of the CIC. Furthermore, the CTI team organized a material development workshop in Dhaka for developing information material for the CIC.

## **Monitoring and Coordination**

IOM monitored all the project activities through a supervisor (supported by an Intern) in consultation with USAID and in coordination with relevant ministries and district administration.

## **Synergy with other USAID supported Projects**

IOM works with other USAID/Bangladesh's funded projects to bring synergy between the CTI project and other USAID supported projects.

IOM worked with USAID's partner Rupantar which has expertise in conducting Pot songs (folk songs) and dramas, which were among the most successful ways that the CTI project was able to reach communities with messages. Their expertise was used in the project to raise awareness of communities on the TIP issue. IOM also worked with another USAID funded project, SUCCEED, implemented by Save the Children USA. Through this project counter-trafficking messages were disseminated to school students, parents, children groups, teachers and children learning centers. IOM trained all relevant IOM and Save the Children USA staff on the TIP issue.

SUCCEED and IOM closely worked in the advocacy and communication aspects of TIP and jointly developed stories and materials on counter-trafficking. SUCCEED developed a session plan for integrating the issue in their parenting program. Around 90 staff, 360 teachers, 7,000 parents and 7,500 children were part of the awareness campaign. IOM and SUCCEED jointly monitored school campaign activities in the Jessore area. Regarding health care and support for victims of trafficking, IOM and USAID partner NGO Service Delivery Programme (NSDP) worked together to support victims of trafficking with health benefit cards and other medical facilities.

NSDP has thirty NGO partners and the CTI project had seven NGO partners. The NGO partners signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU). According to the LOU NSDP partners will provide health care services, including general health check-ups, immunization, treatment of sexually transmitted infection (STIs) and minor sickness, and reproductive health and family planning to the victims of trafficking referred by the USAID sponsored anti trafficking entities. Trafficking victims would also be provided health benefit cards to get free services including medicines, lab tests and immediate medical care through their satellite clinic called "Surjer Hashi" (the sun's smile).

### 3: Review of Achievements

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The CTI project has been able to reach its targets without experiencing any major obstacles. The mid-term review that had been conducted one and a half year after the project revealed that all activities had been carried out successfully up to that period. There was over 100% achievement in field activities which indicated that at times more was achieved than the original target. The community response in project areas was high: religious leaders/imams of mosques were observed to take a proactive role in disseminating the project messages; Union Parishads were actively involved in the campaigns; and many people were found volunteering to take measures through counter-trafficking committees and watchdog committees to protect their own areas from traffickers. By the time the mid-term review was conducted, already 520 OCs of the 588 police stations in Bangladesh had received a two-day basic training in trafficking and victim care and support. The lawyers' training was also well underway. Bar Council members and government officials from the policy-making level were involved in the training as resource persons.

Some new activities were added after the mid-term. These were included: orientation-training for Inspector level police officials, study tours to observe shelter homes for victims of trafficking in India and Nepal, training of Foreign Service Academy (FSA) officials, Bangladesh labour attaches, and journalists, five research studies including situational analysis of internal trafficking, round table discussion with MoFA and other government officials, programme in the cyclone Sidr affected areas including establishment of community information centres, a docudrama, a new radio drama serial and many more TV and radio shows as well as staging of pot songs and dramas.

#### Achievements

All the projected targets of the project were met.

- 108 advocacy meetings with DCs, SPs and other officials at district level were held. All 107 community awareness programs were also completed as well as all 540 meetings (each) with LEBs, bazaar committees, local leaders and CBOs.
- The target of 540 meetings (each) with school students, parents, teachers and school management committees was also met by June 2008.
- 240 TV spots (original target 168) were aired in different TV channels and 835 radio broadcasts (original target 120) were made. Strong media monitoring was conducted

#### Activities

##### *Campaigns:*

TV and radio shows for nation-wide reach; docudrama, advocacy meetings, bazaar committee and CBO meetings organized by CTI partner NGOs, and pot songs and dramas; awareness raising of students, parents, teachers and school committee members.

##### *Training:*

Training of OCs of police stations, Inspector level police officers; lawyers and prosecutors; land port Immigration Officials; FSA officials; NGOs on shelter home operational management; and skills training as well as counselling to victims of trafficking for reintegration into society.

##### *Research:*

Five research studies on review of the legal framework relating to migration, social aspect of labour migration, situation analysis of internal trafficking and review of MoEWOE and BMET capacity in relation to facilitating and managing labour migration from Bangladesh.

##### *Study tours:*

Two study tours to observe shelter homes in India and Nepal.

##### *Intervention in cyclone Sidr affected areas:*

Activities included piloting of Community Information Centre (CIC).

to achieve media activity target. A radio drama serial was also developed and an 18 minute advocacy docudrama was produced under the project.

**Documentary-drama**  
***Ami Shei May (A Journey from Darkness to Dawn)***

The docudrama, produced under the CTI project, is about the different activities of the project jointly implemented by MoHA and IOM. The plight of victims, the government's response and CTI's activities in addressing the TIP issue are all interwoven in the story of a girl rescued from traffickers.

- The original target for victim support was 975 but given the difficulty in locating victims the number was reduced to 400. There were two reasons why it proved difficult to find victims of trafficking. One was the organized force working behind the trafficking business that both influence and eludes law enforcement and the other was the unreliability of the information source for locating victims. However, the difficulty was somewhat overcome by further intensifying efforts and by including previously traced and located victims of trafficking. So by the end of the third year, it was possible to locate and support as many as 548 victims of trafficking, exceeding the revised target of 400.
- With regard to training activities, the orientation training for land port Immigration Officials (target: 2), training workshop with Bar Council members, public prosecutors and lawyers (target: 54), training for NGOs on shelter home operational management (target: 6) and capacity building training for OICs (target: 20) have all been achieved. A significant achievement was the timely completion of the training manual used for the 1352 Bar Council members, lawyers and prosecutors who were trained under the project. The manual is widely accepted as one of the most comprehensive documents on the issue of TIP for legal practitioners. It is being used in other counter-trafficking programs of IOM, including by IOM Missions elsewhere.
- There were also a few additions in terms of 8 orientation training for 200 Inspector level police officials. Two training programs were also held for Foreign Service Academy (FSA) officials along with a discussion meeting to sensitize them about the TIP issue and to provide an overview of the rights of migrants, policies and instruments and role of Bangladesh missions abroad on CT response. A training workshop was also held for labour attachés serving in GoB Missions abroad to enhance their understanding of the TIP issue, share their

The reintegration aspect of the Protection component was a significant achievement. Through an effective advocacy and awareness raising programme, the community was convinced that if employment opportunities could be created through CTI, trafficking would be reduced. They were explained that the government was working for poverty reduction while CTI was creating economic opportunities (by helping to set up small businesses) for victims.

experiences on overseas employment administration and service provision, review their roles and functions and identify their key challenges and priority actions.

There were some recommendations from the mid-term review that were useful in addressing in the later half of the project period. Media campaign was stepped up significantly as was the community campaign in terms of holding advocacy meetings in all districts instead of the 18 districts only. The project can also claim to have succeeded in creating mass social awareness in the intervention areas – there are now numerous examples of local people becoming catalysts and of community and local administrative initiatives in counter-trafficking.

In response to the recommendation for more training of police, 200 more inspector level police officers from the Detective Branch, District Intelligence Office (DIO) and Criminal Investigation Division (CID) received training in addition to the original 520 OCs trained. Moreover, in response to the recommendation for continuing motivation of lawyers as well as raising awareness in the different ministries, it was ensured after mid-term that most of the panel discussions during the lawyers' training were attended by secretaries/heads of various ministries and government departments.

Use of peer educators for school children, which was another recommendation from the mid-term review, was seen in the form of 15-member CIC sub-committees of adolescents. These adolescent groups were mobilized to promote the CICs among adolescents in their areas and to talk to school children about the trafficking issue. According to Mithun Gain, Secretary of the Dacope Upazila CIC Sub-committee, their group was able to influence school children to such an extent that the students in one girls' school had even made a commitment to form a 5-member team to raise awareness in their own locality.

It is evident from the account of all these achievements that the project was able to fulfill targets and strengthen activities.

## **Outcomes**

The project has achieved a number of outcomes largely due to the increase in geographical coverage as well as stepped up activities of the project. The outcomes may be grouped as follows:

- ***Awareness***

Awareness increased much as a result of the intensified interventions in the later half of the implementation period. The main outcome from the project therefore is that people are now aware of the human trafficking issue. According to the partner NGOs and other stakeholders in the field, people could not tell

what trafficking was in the initial stages of the project. They were familiar only with the concept of kidnapping. Now they say that they have heard about the issue and can identify a trafficking event when it actually occurs in their own community. In Kurigram for example, TMSS staff report that if any family is approached about sending their daughters or sons away from home to work as domestic helpers, they ask for the employer's address and other details.

As the public has now learnt through the media campaign that there is a 24 hour hotline for information, a huge number of telephone calls are received with queries related to trafficking issues and even about unrelated issues. As a result of the local level meetings, law enforcement officials and local administration officials are more willing to provide support to victims of trafficking. Imams of mosques are taking a proactive role by disseminating CTI messages before Friday prayers (before the imam delivers the *Khutba*<sup>3</sup>) and also using mosque loudspeakers. Information about victims are collected and passed on more easily between different levels. The issue of trafficking in persons is discussed at the Union Parishad (UP) monthly meetings in all the project districts and families also inform the UP when any relatives are missing or suspected to have fallen victim to trafficking. In many unions, committees have been set up against traffickers.

#### ▪ **Commitments**

An important outcome of the project is the commitments made by the different stakeholders. The commitments were made based on the realization that each stakeholder had something to do about the issue. Sincere interest in becoming involved in counter trafficking measures was expressed by district administration officials, social welfare officials, primary school teachers, lawyers and public prosecutors, and local leaders.

1. The trafficking issue is now formally a part of the Union Parishad monthly meeting agenda. UP chairmen in project areas made a commitment to keep vigilant for protecting their unions against human trafficking.
2. DCs of the 18 districts gave a standing instruction to their officers to support counter-trafficking initiatives in their respective districts. A circular was issued from the police central headquarters to all district police stations to provide support to TIP victims and witnesses at the request of the CTI team.
3. Women administrative officials pledged to discuss counter trafficking issues with women groups.
4. PIC members made a commitment to come up with a mechanism for information dissemination to ensure safe

#### Main outcomes:

- Communities are more aware about the trafficking issue as well as the dangers of irregular migration.
- Communities are taking measures to protect themselves.
- More people are coming forward to register trafficking cases.
- Local administration is becoming more involved in counter-trafficking initiatives.
- The police is more cooperative now.
- Local NGOs are working in coordination with each other over trafficking issues.
- Social reintegration of victims is now easier as attitude of neglect and blame is changing.
- Government support for victims in the form of legal aid and shelter more visible/accessible.
- Stakeholders are more committed to take on responsibility to prevent trafficking and support victims.
- The capacity of local administration, members of the legal profession, police and NGOs has been enhanced to be responsive to the counter-trafficking measures.

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<sup>3</sup> Recitation/discussion from Holy Qur'an before Friday prayer in the mosque

migration and prevention of labour trafficking. They also expressed the intention of revitalizing the different committees at the district level.

5. The Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Establishment made a commitment to issue a circular to ensure that lawyers are included in district level committees.
6. The Social Welfare Secretary made a commitment to improve efficiency of the government run shelter homes and to encourage relevant NGOs to do the same. Social welfare officials also made a commitment that they would take rescued victims to shelter homes.
7. Primary school teachers gave their assurance that the trafficking issue would be discussed during assembly at school.
8. The lawyers and public prosecutors covered by the CTI lawyers training program have all made a commitment to disseminate the program messages in their various platforms of work and to family, friends and domestic helpers.
9. A direct outcome of the CTI lawyers' training program is the legal aid clinic that has been set up at the Bar Council. Lawyers and prosecutors could benefit from membership at this clinic where they may seek advice on legal matters related to TIP.

IOM received Letters of Commitment (to work with CTI) from Save the Children UK and from the partner NGOs TMSS, Rights Jessore, ACD, Rupantar, and BNWLA. All the letters expressed keen interest in the partnership with IOM over CTI and pledged the respective organization's skills and commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities in the project.

One significant outcome of this programme was the realization of the fact that trafficking is not limited only to women and children, but involved men as well. However, the relevant laws of the country at the moment only apply to victims of trafficking who are women and children. Although it is not yet a formal commitment, the stakeholders are beginning to shift their focus towards the development of a more comprehensive law that protects men too.

#### ▪ **Local initiatives**

Another major achievement of the project was the interest and willingness of the community to come up with their own solutions to the trafficking problem. A social movement has been created prompting people to take action to protect their communities against traffickers.

1. UP chairmen (in project areas) instructed their members to stay vigilant about strangers in their midst. They were also asked to report all untoward incidents to the UPs, and if necessary, inform the police.
2. Many of the UPs in project areas keep a record of reported trafficking cases in their unions and do follow up. For example, UP Chairman Abdur Razzak of Chachra Union, Jessore claims that their Union Parishad stays with a case

until it is taken over by the CTI partner NGO/relevant authorities.

3. An information cell has been set up at Raghunatpur Union Parishad, Khulna. Rupanter, the CTI partner-NGO working in that district supports the cell with necessary information on trafficking, labour migration etc. There is also a committee set up under the UP to keep track of labour migration from that union.
4. The UP chairman of Roshunia union under Munshiganj district provided registers to 9 wards and instructed the caretakers to monitor and maintain a daily record of new additions to the community or community members migrating from the union or any strange incident in the community.
5. In some areas communities are coming up with innovative ideas in counter-trafficking. For example, in Mominpur union of Chuadanga district, members of the Nilmonigonj bazaar committee produced a cassette with songs interspersed with messages on trafficking. Ice vendors play the cassette on loudspeakers when they go around selling ice.
6. Identity cards are being issued for children in many of the schools covered by the school campaign. The card is different from the school identity card in terms of having some additional information such as, the student's photo, address, parents' names and a counter-trafficking message.
7. The CTI partner-NGO DISA incorporated the trafficking issue in their organization's policies in terms of linking up with their micro credit groups comprising 15,000 members. The credit supervisors discuss the issue with them at the weekly meetings.
8. TMSS reaches its 900,000 group members with CTI conveyed TIP information at their weekly micro finance meetings.

There is a spillover effect of CTI interventions from project unions to non-project unions. UP chairmen mobilized through CTI activities motivate the chairmen of other unions when they interact at meetings. For example, some UP chairmen contacted NGO partners (such as Rights Jessore of Jessore District) asking why the pot songs and dramas were not held in their unions. They also asked for suggestions about how to set up committees for counter-trafficking.

Lovely was 18 years old when she became a victim of trafficking and abuse. For nearly four months after being rescued, she lived in a shelter-home run by TMSS where she received treatment, psychosocial counseling, food, and clothing. She also received training in tailoring along with logistic and technical support for setting up her own shop. When she returned home, she opened up a small tailor shop near her house. Lovely now earns Tk. 2000-2500 every month. She has been able to rejoin her family and community where her living conditions as well as quality of life have improved with a steady income and renewed self-respect.

Local law enforcement in many of the areas is also showing signs of better cooperation and more willingness to accept responsibility

in safeguarding communities against traffickers. Although the improvement is not significant in most areas, partner NGOs still report an overall positive tone in the attitude and cooperation of law enforcement that was previously absent. They report examples of police officers admitting that the responsibility of protecting the community against traffickers was mainly theirs. The NGOs also report that the police had taken prompt action when alerted about possible trafficking incidents.

- ***Capacity enhancement***

Capacity building is an important outcome of the project. Through CTI there has been capacity enhancement of local administration, participants and resource persons, law enforcement officers and NGO-partners.

In a sense the project has built the capacity of the country's district administration by covering the 63 districts through the advocacy meetings. The district administration demonstrates a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities are in counter-trafficking initiatives. The lawyers' training program was intended to make lawyers and public prosecutors aware about the issue of trafficking, but the program has also raised awareness of resource persons like the Secretary of MoWCA, Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare and many other high level government officials. Capacity building of law enforcement officers, principally the OCs has been in terms of not only making them aware of the issue, but also in bringing them a sense of responsibility and cooperation.

IOM had an agreement with the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) and the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) over the issue of victim rehabilitation and training. The understanding was that CTI would arrange training for those victims successfully brought back to the country by BNWLA and DAM within the project life.

NGO partner capacity has been enhanced in terms of time management, fund management, coordination and reporting. Some partner-NGOs have adopted ideas from CTI into their own projects, for example TMSS has replicated the good practices from CTI, such as the idea of school meetings. The NGO DISA acknowledges having benefited from the project in terms of contact established with MoHA. In their opinion, just as this project had benefited from their previous contacts/ acceptance/access in the community, DISA too has benefited in terms of access to avenues beyond the purview of its other projects. Even though CTI has been concluded, they feel they still have access to those avenues for other projects.

## 4: Project Analysis

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The achievements and outcomes indicate that there was good planning of project activities. The decision to address the issue from three fronts, and consequently the strategy and approach of the three 'P's – Prevention, Protection and Prosecution, have proven to be quite effective. There is always scope for improvements and adjustments in any endeavour, but at the end of the day results are all that matters. And the results of the CTI project are as close to expectations as possible.

A concern at mid-term was whether the project would be able to reach the general population with its messages when the thrust of the interventions was mainly in 18 districts. This concern cannot be resolved without a baseline survey. However, the project did manage to reach a large segment of the population towards the later half through intensifying media campaign and extending advocacy to all 64 districts.

There were some other concerns, such as the need for more focus on women, more comprehensive approach to reaching the police, and improvement of the project monitoring system.

Although the recommendation for courtyard meetings could not be formally incorporated into the activities, discussions with UP chairmen<sup>4</sup> in the field revealed that some courtyard meetings were held by project partners to take messages to the household level. However, there was no particular mention of women being the focus of attention in those meetings or the response of women to the messages. This indicates that although it had not been possible to come up with specific interventions for their inclusion, women were not altogether left out of the awareness raising process.

With regard to the concern about police training, although the number of trainees was increased from the initial total, the course was still not extended to posts higher than the inspector level or to the sub Inspector level. Extending the course to other levels could have given the program a more comprehensive form, but to be fair it could not have been possible to make such an extensive modification to the nature and schedules of the course with only a few months of project life left.

Direct observation was the monitoring methodology for the project. But in order to strengthen the system a new monitoring form was introduced after the mid-term period. Previously when there was any field visit from the central level, findings were recorded and submitted according to individual styles.

In the prevention component the drama campaign was the most effective of all activities. The dramas are interactive so it was possible to feel the pulse of the audience. The direct interaction between the audience and the actors gave indications about the community attitude and experience, and what potentials there were to explore.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, according to Abdur Razzak, UP Chairman Chachra Union, Jessore, the partner NGO organized courtyard meetings at ward level.

This new form was developed for the sake of consistency in reporting and the CTI team found it a useful monitoring tool for compiling information. Nevertheless, specific indicators related to specific expected outcomes could have better aided assessment of project achievements.

## **Challenges**

Generally, the CTI team and partner NGOs felt there were no significant challenges. Still, one issue remained unresolved to the end.

Shortage of staff was a challenge from the very inception of CTI. There was only one project coordinator instead of the required two. Also, some staff left with better opportunities and scholarships for higher studies and so the management was obliged to train/work with different project assistants every alternate year.

Monitoring too was an important challenge due to shortage of staff. There was a monitoring mechanism for feedback from the field, but it could have been even better with an exclusive monitoring officer.

A new activity in the form of research studies was included in the later half of the project period. This additional activity on top of staff shortage, time constraint (as project deadline remained 21 September) and the rush to complete the other activities, proved to be a significant challenge for the team.

At field level, the challenge was in monitoring and follow-up. In fact, partner NGOs regret not having the scope to do follow up of LEB meetings to assess outcomes. Here too the main reason was shortage of staff. According to the partner-NGO DISA, it was difficult for one person to organize the meetings, make the necessary logistics arrangements, travel all over the district and do monitoring and reporting.

## **Strengths**

In spite of the shortage of staff and time constraints, the project rose to the challenge and achieved its main objectives. The strong support of the PIC and USAID, good team spirit as well as good coordination with partner-NGOs, have contributed to the successful completion of the project.

The ownership and commitment of the PIC, including MoHA, MoEWOE, MoFA, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, and Ministry of Social Welfare were instrumental in fulfilling the project objectives. The collaboration between MoHA and IOM proved to be stronger than any other experienced before by development partners, including IOM. Since the beginning, MoHA's assistance had made it possible to carry on with the community drama campaign in spite of restrictions on public

Situations change by the time a project goes from the design to the implementation phase. When a project is first conceived, the planning must take into consideration the possibility of changing situations over time or decisions about adding on further activities as the need arises. So it should have been with CTI – more flexibility in some of the activity completion dates (e.g., research studies, advocacy meetings and police training) would have been welcomed by the implementers.

gatherings imposed by the emergency situation in the country. Deputy Commissioners were directed by MoHA to extend cooperation to the project and to ensure cooperation and participation of everyone concerned for the district level advocacy meetings. According to NGO-partners they were able to mitigate negative situations in field level meetings by the mere reference to MoHA's support and involvement in the project.

USAID's support lay particularly in their flexibility to readjust project terms. Their willingness to reduce the number of victims for support from 975 to 400 was a timely decision and led to a more focused response to victim support and assistance within the project period.

The interest and involvement of the Bar Council, and by extension LETI, in the lawyers' training program also lent significant support to the project. The success of the training program was largely due to their interest in sustaining the activity.

The project benefited much from the commitment of the CTI team. Their ability to respond to field requests with immediate solutions allowed timely implementation of activities. The team members each came with their own expertise as well as the dedication to work all hours and often through the week without break. Coordination was also a strong point as there was almost daily interaction with all the partners, who proved their worth at every stage of the project. Close supervision by the RR and active involvement in the project's activities also contributed to the overall achievement of the project's goal.

An important lesson from the CTI project was that the most difficult of targets can be made easy by working in cooperation and in coordination with multi-stakeholders.

## **Lessons**

The project has left some lessons for future consideration:

- Effective prevention activities lead to more people being protected against trafficking.
- It is easy to implement project activities if there is government cooperation and support. Access to different places is made easy with support from relevant organs of the government.
- Careful and (as much as possible) accurate budgeting is important. Under budgeting is better than over budgeting, not because of lack of cost heads, but because there may not be enough time to spend an ambitious amount.
- It is possible to run and manage a project like CTI with foresight and good planning.
- Local NGOs are the right advocates to reach the community given their acceptability and credibility in the locality
- Meetings with local leaders are effective channels for reaching communities to enlist cooperation and participation in project activities.
- Messages disseminated through songs and drama shows can easily reach audiences.
- Adolescents make good peer educators.

## 5: Conclusion

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The CTI is described by many of the stakeholders to have been a very well organized project. What makes it noteworthy is that it was a single project with a blending of the three Ps.

It is not possible to do impact analysis of a project whose lifespan was only 3 years, but conclusions may be drawn in terms of achievements and some immediate outcomes. In the area of victim support the project has achieved much success as it supported as many as 574 (till September'08) people, well over the revised target of 400 (by 143.5%). The preventive aspect was noteworthy as well, as it created widespread awareness about the issue. Communities in project areas are now talking about trafficking of men, so there is already a change in perception regarding the issue. People of those areas are looking deeper into the implications of labour migration – they are asking about the details of destination, nature of service contracts, adequacy of remuneration, and very importantly, if they were being cheated or deceived. They are aware of the adverse consequences of irregular migration.

However, it is not just the awareness, but the grounds and the facilities created altogether by the project that have brought about the present response to the issue. It may be assumed that if the advocacy meetings are discontinued, much of the momentum will be lost. Because there are specific contact addresses (i.e., focal points of partner-NGOs, hotlines, CICs), people are finding it easy to avail referral services for rescued victims.

In fact, this 3-year project may just have been a beginning to see what the response would be – response from partner organizations, from communities, from the different groups trained, and very important, the government. A process has been started where many players appear to be not just waiting for project inputs, but are ready to take the initiative. They are looking forward to many more things that might not necessarily be limited to what projects can initiate but something further based on the CTI experience. Yet, organized project activities will still continue to be needed to lend direction to the fledging and sporadic individual/community initiatives.

Sustaining community awareness about trafficking is the main concern now. Project interventions are not the ultimate and only answer. Local change agents must be created so that understanding of the issue is absorbed by the community into the community.

Migration pressures and incentives will continue to be a driving force in Bangladesh in the years to come. There are various manifestations of the migration phenomenon, trafficking being one of them. Awareness raising, capacity building, economic reintegration, legal support – all interventions for prevention, protection, and prosecution for counter-trafficking should be continued for long term behaviour change and vigilance in communities all over the country with the objective of promoting safe and regular migration and preventing trafficking.

## Recommendations

The experience of the CTI has brought out some points of consideration for future interventions in counter-trafficking:

### Prevention

- More awareness raising activities are required. There are still many areas of the country where awareness is low. A 'crash program' might be the answer here, meaning the focus could be more on reaching every ward, union and upazila of a district instead of taking the interventions nation wide all at once.
- Considering how effective the CIC is already proving in reaching communities with TIP information, these centres could be set up in more districts.

### Protection

- Private sector support could be enlisted for creating better employment opportunities for victims of TIP. Efforts are needed for creating a strong public/private partnership for their better social and economic reintegration.
- Due to a lack of coordination among organizations there is duplication of activities in many areas. Ideally, if one organization does LEB meetings in one area, another should do bazaar or other meetings. This sort of coordination is needed. There are now different government initiatives as well. At the district level there is a District Anti Trafficking Monitoring Cell which is a committee chaired by the DC, and attended by local NGOs and other government officials. There are also Police Monitoring Cells in 42 districts. These should be strengthened to ensure better coordination among organizations.
- Advocacy is needed for legal reform. There is currently no law for prosecuting cases of trafficking of men or to extract compensation from the trafficker, nor any protocol for the protection of witnesses of TIP in Bangladesh<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> However, there is a Regional Victim/Witness Protection Protocol to Combat Trafficking, Commercial Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Women and Children in South Asia. The protocol has been developed by the Regional Action Forum on Improving the Implementation of Laws Protecting Women and Children, supported by the South Asia Regional Initiative (SARI)/ Equity Support Program. The Protocol is a collective effort of the entire membership of the Forum and its National Core Group members to establish norms for victim witness protection commonly acceptable in the region.

- The issue of men falling prey to traffickers is another concern that needs to be addressed. Initiatives are necessary for setting up temporary shelter homes for men who are rescued from traffickers and repatriated.
- As revealed in the findings of the study, Internal trafficking issue also need to be addressed. More importantly, the problem needs to be recognized by the policy-makers and mainstreamed in the overall policy discourse relating to trafficking.
- In addition to intensive awareness raising activities in remote border areas it will be necessary to design a strategy exclusively suited to border belts providing for linkage with the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), the Coast Guard and customs officers.

### **Prosecution**

- Training should be continued for capacity building of the police and lawyers and prosecutors. The mid-term review contained some recommendations in this respect. Firstly, follow up was recommended on incorporation of the TIP issue in police training curriculum. It was also recommended to hold training for posts higher than the inspector level and for Sub Inspectors. It was further recommended that lawyers' training be extended to the Bar associations in different districts.
- Another training and orientation programme are required also for other government departments such as MoFA, MoWEOE, BMET, Information, etc.
- A database linkage could be set up with the Police Monitoring Cells and the CT cells in MoHA and PHQs for quick and effective information dissemination and remedial interventions.

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