



FINAL INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION:

Enhance Government and Civil Society Responses to Counter Trafficking in Persons in Bhutan (BHUZ13) October 2018

Country: Bhutan

Duration: 05/12/2013 to 30/09/2018

Budget: US\$ 750,000

Donors: Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Implementing agencies: The UNODC Regional Office for South Asia, Programme Office Bhutan (POBTN)

Associated agencies: Department of Law and Order (DLO), National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC)

Evaluation team: Dr. Gana Pati Ojha (lead evaluator) and Mr. Chhimi Dorji

Full report:



data was collected from 77 persons (40 female and 37 male) representing participants of awareness camps, government of Bhutan, NGOs, UNODC project staff, and donor. Methods used to collect the primary data were focus group discussions (FGD), individual interview and survey. The secondary data were derived from 44 internal as well as external documents.

MAIN FINDINGS

The project was **designed** on the basis of findings of a situation analysis and recommendations of a TIP workshop. But in actual design national stakeholder involvement was limited to providing feedback, not adequately engaging them in designing the project.

The project was **highly relevant** as it aligned with the Bhutan's constitution, laws, policies and strategies; UNODC's programme for countering transitional organized crime and illicit trafficking; UNODC ROSA's Regional Programme 2013-2017; and commitment of donor (J/TIP) to support government and civil societies around the world to combat trafficking.

The project was **not efficient and effective**. Though activity implementation speeded up in the later part of the project, **it produced only two out of five outputs and one out of four outcomes** as of June 2018. Taking long time to understand the project by national agencies, change in the project team and change in the lead government agency adversely affected timely implementation of project interventions. However, the project products contributed to curbing TIP, to some extent, through increased knowledge of both duty-bearers and right-holders.

The project established strong partnerships with government agencies such as NCWC, DLO, Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) related NGO specialized in protection of victims of domestic violence. However, strong partnership with UN agencies could not be found as **UNODC was not an active member in the United Nations Development Assistance framework (UNDAF) 2014-2018** as UNODC made no resource

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The project BHUZ13 was designed to address the emerging concerns of human trafficking in Bhutan. It was initially planned for three years from 2014 to 2016 and extended two times to September 2018.

The overall **objective** of BHUZ13 was to strengthen government and civil society initiatives to counter trafficking in persons (TIP) in Bhutan. The BHUZ13 attempted to meet this objective through its four outcomes. These are: (1) Bhutan authorities take measures to improve criminal justice system responses to trafficking in persons (2) Strengthened cross border and inter-agency collaboration and partnership in countering TIP (3) Increased awareness by stakeholders on preventing TIP and (4) Protection mechanisms for trafficked victims strengthened.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used mixed method, gender-responsive and participatory approach. Data collection took place through (i) an in-depth desk review and (ii) field-based data collection involving visits (July 19 to August 4, 2018) to Thimphu, Phuentsholing, and Gelephu where project activities had been concentrated. The primary

commitment for the UNDAF and the project was not a part of the UNDAF.

The project has **not yet generated quantifiable changes** that have long-term implications. However, **some of the changes** that have occurred at individual and institutional levels are **likely to contribute to the long-term changes**, including contribution to the attainment of SDGs 5, 8 and 16.

Though there was some capacity developed in both duty-bearers and right-holders, their **capacity was not adequate to sustain and replicate the project interventions independently**. There was improved legal and policy framework in place but it was not sufficient to continue and replicate project initiatives.

Human rights and gender issues were integrated into the project design and implementation. The issues were well reflected in the training programmes, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, and awareness raising camps. But **involvement of women was especially low (27%)** compared to men (73%) in awareness/sensitisation camps.

The project **targeted several vulnerable groups** such as potential future jobseekers, third gender and dancing girls. However, some other highly sensitive geographical areas and important institutions were not included.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Create a mechanism for regular monitoring, supervision, and oversight of shelter home** involving representatives from DLO and other suitable government and non-government agencies (Project management (MP), POBTN)
- **Involve more women than men in awareness raising/sensitisation camps** in all future projects related to TIP as women are more vulnerable than men to TIP. Collect and manage sex disaggregated data for each activity (PM, POBTN).
- **Include missing relevant institutions and other vulnerable geographical areas** in the activities of future projects (PM, POBTN)
- **Develop a strategy for efficient management**, especially in delegating authority of decision-making to POBTN and disbursement of funds in time (UNODC ROSA).
- In future projects, **involve national stakeholders in the actual design of the project** rather than limiting their involvement to providing feedback (PM, POBTN)

- Prepare a list of TIP activities that need to be included in the 12th Five Year Plan and **form a group of influential persons for lobbying** to include these activities in the plans (PM, POBTN)
- **Use mass communication** for information dissemination by developing awareness programme materials and air on local Televisions and Radio in future projects (PM, POBTN)
- **Be an active member of UNDAF** by making resource commitment and strengthen partnership with key stakeholders including government, UN agencies, CSOs, and academia to contribute to SDGs implementation (UNODC ROSA)
- Include **advanced training activities** in future projects to strengthen the capacity of government, CSO staff, particularly the TOT participants (PM, POBTN)
- In collaboration with DLO and OAG, **continue lobbying for the amendment of section 154** of the penal code to refine the definition of human trafficking to conform with the 2000 UN TIP Protocol (PM, POBTN)

LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICE

- **Unless specifically targeted, participation of women in development endeavour is low.** Only 27% of the participants in project activities such as awareness camps were women in spite of the fact that these awareness camps were supposed to target highly vulnerable population, which largely comprises of women and girls.
- **More robust design of the project is necessary to leave no one behind.** Otherwise, some important stakeholders will be left out.
- If data are not properly disaggregated and managed by the project, its contribution to vulnerable population does not come into the picture.
- A substantial amount of time and resources are necessary to convince the key stakeholders while introducing an innovative project/programme before its implementation.
- **Efficient management is critical for timely delivery of the outputs** and for creating good image of the project/programme. Conversely, inefficient management and delay in payment to collaborating partners affects timely implementation of activities and project image goes down in the eyes of the stakeholders.

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