List of Publications and Paper Presentations in Conference/ Seminars
THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA
From Antiquity to Modernity

AUTHOR COPY

Edited by:
Manjari Biswas (Bhaumik)

ABHIJEET PUBLICATIONS
DELHI-110 094
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.</th>
<th>Women’s Participation in Gramsansad: A Case Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Anil Kumar Biswas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Importance of Horticulture Education in the Development and Empowerment of Tribal Women of North Bengal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—P. Deb, C.P. Suresh and S.K. Ghosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Women: Education and Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Gopa Majumder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Crime and Violence Against Women in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Dr. Subhabrata Dutta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—P.K. Bandyopadhyay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Trafficking of Women and Children in North Bengal: Role of the NGO’s: Some Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Ratna Roy Sanyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Vulnerabilities Leading to Trafficking in Women for Prostitution in the District of Darjeeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Pemü Tshering Lepcha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Modern Information Technology and the Trafficking of Human Beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Dipanwita Dasgupta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Tourism and Trafficking: A Social Stigma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Tanali Mustafi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Social Attitude Towards Women Trafficking: An Empirical Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Sampa Samanta Bag, Ankita Dey and Tania Sarkar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Women Trafficking: A Brief Hierarchical Analysis with Special Reference to West Bengal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Dr. Khakan Kumar Bag and Piyal Basu Roy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS: Role of Civil Society Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Taranath Dhamala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Creating Awareness: An Insight into the Problems of Indian Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Chhanda Chakraborty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Trafficking of Women: Before Birth and ..... for Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Manika Saha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Violence Against Women: Undignified Unfairness to the Fair Sex: An Indian Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Arnab Dasgupta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Domestic Violence: An Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Mridul Srimany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Social Attitude to Trafficking in and Violence Against Women in India with Special Reference to West Bengal and the District of Coochbehar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Mr. Jitendra Nath Mistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Institutional Support Service for Women: Can it Protect them from Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Anil Kumar Biswas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS
Role of Civil Society Organizations

Taranath Dhamala*

Introduction

Human Trafficking is a global industry generating an estimated five to seven billion U.S. dollars each year. Human trafficking is a serious threat to human security and development. Of the million women and girls who are trafficked each year, an estimated 300,000 to 450,000 are trafficked within Asia, more than half in South Asia alone.

Trafficking in West Bengal is related to gross poverty and the poor position of women in the social construct. Feminization of poverty, the lack of social dignity and informed choice, right to self-determination and lack of choice in migration are some of the factors that ensure women’s vulnerability. According to some studies, the volume of trafficking has increased considerably due to the radical economic downturn in the tea gardens and rural areas of North Bengal.

NGOs active against trafficking increasingly face the reality of HIV/AIDS, with one out of every three rescued victims testing HIV-positive. Both serious concerns, links between human trafficking and HIV/AIDS show similar causal and consequential factors. Efforts to address the issues adequately at policy or programmatic levels show development organizations, regional bodies and national governments have now begun working on programmes, policies, new laws and regulations to combat trafficking & HIV/AIDS.

Human Trafficking

"Trafficking is the illegal moving and selling of human beings across and within countries and continents in exchange for monetary and/or other compensation."

According to the 2002 SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children, The United Nations’ defines human trafficking as “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation”.

"Trafficking is the illegal moving and selling of human beings across and within countries and continents in exchange for monetary and/or other compensation."

Trafficking is a complex development issue. It is an economic problem, as the vast majority of women seeking to escape poverty are lured into trafficking by the false promise of economic gain. It is a health problem, as trafficked women and children are most at risk from HIV infection. Trafficking is a gender problem, as unequal power relations reinforce women’s secondary status in society. It is also a legal problem,

* (MSW), NET, PhD scholar Coordinator (Districts) Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) Plot No. 127 (G>F), Kerani Para, Jalpaiguri-735 101 (West Bengal).
as its victims are stripped of their human rights and lack any access to redress for the crimes committed against them.

In South Asia, trafficking is a result of numerous economic and social factors such as forced marriage, forced labour, domestic service, organized begging, camel jockeying, circus work, illicit adoption, pornography production and organ trafficking for the transplant market. Most of those trafficked are women and girls, but boys are also trafficked, in particular as camel jockeys or forced labour, for adoption and in some areas as sex workers.

An estimated 150,000-200,000 people from South Asia are trafficked annually.

Studies across the globe have clearly pointed out that low prioritization of social development cost by the government have lead to increasing poverty and surplus labor in the poorer countries. Hence populations have been left with little choice but to leave for newer areas and regions in search of livelihood.

West Bengal is referred to as the Corridor of Trafficking. Trafficking in West Bengal is related to gross poverty and the poor position of women in the social construct. Feminization of poverty and the lack of social dignity, right to self-determination and lack of informed choice in migration are some of the factors that ensure women’s vulnerability.

According to some studies, the volume of trafficking has increased considerably due to the radical economic downturn in the tea gardens and rural areas of North Bengal. The study reveals that the girls being trafficked are mainly from poor families.

Though there are existing laws for redressal, punishments for perpetrators of the trade under a few sections such as 407 and 394 of the Indian Penal Code and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, lack in severity such as in the case of a punishment of up to only 6 months to 2-3 yrs imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 2000-20000 if it’s a case related to prostitution. Another major hindrance in curbing trafficking is the lack of evidence which is difficult to produce and validate.

Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS

The trafficking network, widespread geographically from origin to destination calls for a greater network of resources as well as a multi-pronged strategy and approach to effectively address the issue. Issues of cooperation and coordination issues persist from within the society as everyone in that community becomes directly or indirectly attached to the network/syndicate of trafficking operations.

Trafficking for sex trade means an almost inevitable death sentence for the victims. Enslaved victims are subjected to multiple partners, violence and forced sex. Vulnerable to dangerous sexual practices and unable to insist upon condom use, injuries and abrasions sustained during sexual contact heighten physical vulnerability to AIDS transmission. Young girls with physically immature bodies are most vulnerable to injuries, significantly heightening their risk of infection.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS threatens human security and human development in South Asia. There are currently some 2.8 million people in the region living with HIV. Infection rates and the presence of high-risk behaviours are both growing. Unless vigorous and timely action is taken, some South Asian countries run the risk of experiencing the devastating social and economic impacts as witnessed in some sub-Saharan African countries. Overall prevalence remains relatively low, but the region’s large population means that the absolute number of those affected is high. Currently, it is estimated that about 2.5 million people in India are infected with HIV; this is one of the largest populations of people living with HIV in the world. A mere 0.1 percent rise in the prevalence would thus increase the national total of adults living with HIV by about quarter of a million. The epidemic has progressed to the ‘generalized state’ in six of India’s 28 states.

Socio-Economic Factor Leads to Vulnerability of HIV/AIDS in India

- Extreme Poverty.
- Low levels of literacy.
• Porous borders.
• Rural-to-urban and intrastate migration of male populations.
• Human trafficking.
• Stigmas related to sex and sexuality.
• Structured commercial sex and casual sex with non-regular partners.
• Male resistance to condom use.
• High prevalence of sexually-transmitted infections (STIs).
• Low status afforded to women, leading to an inability to negotiate safe sex.
• High mobility within and between countries in the region.
• Prevailing gender norms, values and practices that disempowered.
• Women and girls.
• Weak public health infrastructure.

NACO states that for the year 2005, in India, women accounted for around two million estimated cases of people living with HIV/AIDS, constituting 39 percent of all HIV infection. Out of this number, 100,000 HIV infected pregnant women give birth every year and one out of every three passes the infection to their offspring. Biological, Socio-cultural and economic factors make women and young girls more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. The HIV virus is more easily transmitted from men to women.

In India, the low status of women, poverty, early marriage, trafficking, sex-work, migration, lack of education and gender discrimination are some of the factors responsible for increasing the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV infection. There are several ways in which HIV and violence overlap in the context of women’s lives. One coercive sexual intercourse may directly increase women’s risk for HIV through physiological trauma. Violence and threats of violence may limit women’s ability to negotiate safe sexual practice.

HIV/AIDS and Human Trafficking: Linkage

At the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2000, witnessed a critical turn in the awareness of the international community around the centrality of gender inequality and discrimination to the pandemic. The fact that HIV/AIDS poses a greater threat for women and girls, their lives and their futures, is now undisputed. This change reflects the fast-growing understanding that gender inequality and power imbalances between women and men in every society heighten women’s vulnerability to infection and leaves them with heavier burdens when HIV/AIDS enters households and communities.

The patriarchal system widely prevalent in the country and the resulting unequal status of women, render the latter vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking and HIV. Unequal gender relations leave girls and women with little choice or decision-making powers regarding education, occupation and marriage. It also means that they have no power to negotiate safer sex practices, which increases their risk of HIV infection. The world is also gradually acknowledging that women and girls have limited access to HIV/AIDS-related information, prevention, treatment, care, support, commodities and services.

Though the percentage of HIV transmissions that can be attributed to trafficking is not clear, it seems highly likely that the millions of instances in which girls and women were coerced or forced into violent, unprotected sexual acts with multiple partners is a significant factor in the spread of the AIDS pandemic. The consequences of trafficking can be gleaned from the significance of commercial sex transactions in the national AIDS epidemics in two of the countries where trafficking is most prevalent, Thailand and India. At the height of Thailand’s AIDS epidemic, more than 80% of HIV/AIDS cases could be attributed to women in the sex industry and their clients. Commercial sex work is one of the driving forces behind the AIDS pandemic elsewhere, such as India,
where HIV levels among sex workers in Mumbai exceeds 50%.

Role of Civil Society Organizations

CSOs active against trafficking increasingly face the reality of HIV/AIDS, with one out of every three rescued victims testing HIV-positive. A few CSO run programmes for the care and support of HIV positive survivors of trafficking include the treatment of opportunistic infections, referral services and the provision of temporary shelters. Additionally, in some states, preventive messages on human trafficking and HIV/AIDS have been integrated and endorsed by celebrities. UNDP has implemented the ‘Trafficking and HIV/AIDS Project’ (TAHA), in 11 states of India in collaboration with NACO and the Department of Women and Child Development. The main component of the project is to mainstream HIV/AIDS and trafficking and strengthen the linkages between the two to support a coordinated response by NGOs and GOs involving prevention, care, support and advocacy, including policy formulation and change.

Most anti-trafficking organizations have responded to HIV/AIDS in crisis terms rather than in a planned manner. There is a need to look beyond present interventions which only seeks to create greater awareness of HIV/AIDS and/or provide care and support services in communities like commercial sex workers or migrants. These responses need to be expanded to reduce overall social, economic and gender inequality and violence.

Even though a number of civil society groups have been addressing issues of trafficking in the region, there has not been any significant change at the community level – women are still vulnerable to being trafficked and social taboos still exist around the social mainstreaming of trafficked women and children with dignity and security. The existing laws and judicial systems have also not been able to address this issue adequately, one of the major institutional constraint being cited as the lack of adequate disposable resources to take effective action due to the lack of accurate database to track and identify the flourishing trafficking network which is spread across a large geographical expanse.

The dual vulnerabilities of women and girls in the region to trafficking and HIV demand urgent attention. Trafficking is a multi causal effect, it is deep rooted and multi faceted that any interventions face the risk of its getting diluted. Governments, international organizations and civil society are devoting considerable efforts to counter it, but there is still an information deficit about its extent. Only by understanding its depth, breadth and scope can adequate policies be designed to combat it.

Efforts to counter trafficking have so far been uncoordinated and inefficient. Strong institutional mechanisms and concrete interventions are required through the active involvement of police, panchayat, administration and civil society to combat the interlinked issues of HIV and Trafficking.

Interventions on HIV/AIDS and human trafficking may be divided into four general areas: (i) Prevention, (ii) treatment, care and support, (iii) rehabilitation and (iv) Advocacy. The following urgent steps have to be taken by civil society organizations.

- Educating and empowering vulnerable sections by extending various welfare, development and anti-poverty schemes of the Government of India, such as, Swadhar, Swayamsidha, Swa-Shakti, Swavlamban, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP), Kishori Shakti Yojana, NREGA etc.

- Generating awareness and spreading legal literacy on economic rights, particularly for women and adolescent girls, informing them about the risks of illegal migration (e.g. exploitation, debt bondage and health and security issues, including exposure to HIV/AIDS) as well as avenues available for legal, non-exploitative migration.

- Giving focused attention to the adolescents, who are both potential victims and clients. Dissemination of appropriate information on issues related to ‘sexuality’
and 'reproductive health' will be beneficial in view of the growing evidence of increased pre-marital sexual activity among adolescents and the looming threat of HIV/AIDS within this group.

- Initiation of coordinated networking between the judiciary, police, government institutions and non-governmental organizations and civil society groups with regard to prevention and combating strategies. This kind of a government-public network will invoke responsibility and watchdog action on traffickers and exploiters.

- Special provision for access to legal, medical and counseling services should be provided to all trafficked victims who have contracted HIV/AIDS in order to restore their self-confidence and self-esteem.

- Lobbying for recruiting adequate number of trained counselors and social workers in institutions/homes run by the government independently or in collaboration with non-governmental organizations.

- Lobbying for setting up Anti-trafficking cells/units at the Centre, State, Block District and Village levels to facilitate and monitor the process of rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation.

**Initiative under West Bengal Civil Society Support Programme**

The West Bengal Civil Society Support Programme (WBCSSP) was launched on 30th August 2007 with the objective of enhancing the role of civil society in achieving pro-poor development in West Bengal. The programme targets effective implementation of pro-poor policies in eight of the poorer districts of West Bengal through people's direct participation. One of the major objectives of the programme is to develop and maintain district level civil society platforms for pro-poor advocacy.

**The purpose of the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) is to support a more accountable civil society that influences government policy and practice to ensure better access to quality services by the poor.**

"SANGVEDAN"—collective forum of civil society organizations in Cooch Behar & "UTTARAN"—collective forum of civil society organizations in Jalpaiguri have undertaken major initiatives towards empowering and strengthening the knowledge of women. The most significant manner in which the platform was able to mark its individual identity among stakeholders was with the campaign held on women’s day (8th March 09). The campaign addressed issues of women’s health, trafficking of women, and the entitlement of women under the various Government schemes at Cooch Behar. Similarly on 29th May at Jalpaiguri, a campaign: “Prevention of Human Trafficking” was conducted to sensitize and empower vulnerable social groups in the vulnerable pockets on the issue of trafficking and the need for community level prevention to empower women on issues of violence and the resulting vulnerability of women towards trafficking and to assist other community based civil society groups, Panchayati Raj Institutions and the administration to develop an interface with vulnerable communities and women to work out a mechanism to address violence and issues of violence and trafficking of women at the community level.

A platform of civil society organizations is like a stage which allows multi-hued individual thought processes, varied in language, experience and expressions. It is a symphony of the common man’s voice brought together by these individuals and small groups who are the ambassadors of the common people.

**REFERENCES**


2. World Bank, Spotlight on India’s AIDS Control Efforts (c2001).


5. Gender Dimensions of HIV/AIDS challenges for South Asia- Extract from a region scan and South Asia Regional Consultation, August 2004.


7. Turning the Tide—CEDAW and the gender dimensions of the HIS/AIDS PENDEMIC – Printed by UNIFEM.

UGC SPONSORED
TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

Organised by:
CENTRE FOR STUDY ON WOMEN ADVANCEMENT (C.S.W.A.), TPMM.

Venue:
Thakur Panchanan Mahila Mahavidyalaya
Jointly with
Sub Divisional Legal Services Committee, Sadar Cooch Behar.

This Certificate is awarded to: Tarkamath Chakma

Scholar/Lecturer/SLG Lecturer/Reader of: Vishva Bharati University
for his/her presentation of paper on: Human Trafficking...and...H.I.V./AIDS...Role of Civil Society...participation in
the 2-day U.G.C. Sponsored National Seminar on "Social Attitude to Trafficking in & Violence against Women in India
with special reference to West Bengal and the District of Cooch Behar", organised on the college campus on 29th - 30th August
2009.

Gopa Majumder
Co-Ordinator, LOC
T.P.M.M., COB.

Sri Bibhuti Bhusan Biswash
Joint Co-Ordinator
T.P.M.M., COB.

Dr. Manjari Biswàsh
Principal
T.P.M.M., COB.
University of North Bengal

NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON
Population and Development Education

Certificate of Presentation

This is to Certify that
Taramath Dasgupta

Presented a paper titled "M.I.W. AID affected women in India: Role of Social Workers"

Participated in the National Seminar

Organized by the
Department of Adult, Continuing Education, Extension & Field Outreach

State Resource Centre for Adult Education, West Bengal

24-26, March 2009

Conference Hall, University of North Bengal

Nandini Kajuri
Director/SRC

Prof. M. Yasin
Director / DACEEFO
UGC Sponsored National Seminar
on
Dynamics of Development and Discontent

Date - 27th & 28th September, 2013
Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya, Cooch Behar, West Bengal

Certificate of Participation

This is to certify that Dr./Prof./Mr./Ms. TARANATH DHAMALA
has participated/presented paper entitled GENDER DISPARITIES AND ITS
IMPACT ON GIRL CHILD EDUCATION in the UGC sponsored
National Seminar on Dynamics of Development and Discontent, held at Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya, Cooch Behar, West Bengal on 27th & 28th September, 2013.

Dr. Amal Mandal
Secretary
Seminar Organising Committee

Dr. Chanchal Mandal
Jt. Secretary
Seminar Organising Committee

Dr. Sidhartha Sankar Laha
Jt. Secretary
Seminar Organising Committee

Dr. Debasish Chatterjee
President
Seminar Organising Committee