



Crossing Borders: Improving Protection for Asian Migrant Workers in Qatar

Evaluation of the Solidarity Center's Anti- Trafficking Project

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In October 2010, the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) in the U. S. Department of State awarded the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS), commonly known as the Solidarity Center, a two-year grant of \$750,000 to create a sustainable framework for preventing Nepalese, Filipino, and Sri Lankan migrant workers from becoming victims of labor trafficking in Qatar and improving the awareness and response to human trafficking in Qatar. This is a second grant the Solidarity Center received from J/TIP for its anti-trafficking initiatives in Qatar. The first grant in the amount of \$485,000 over 12 months period focused on the MENA region and did not include activities in any source countries.

Under a separate contract, Westat and its sub-contractor, the Institute for the Study of International Migration (ISIM) at Georgetown University, have been tasked with conducting a process evaluation of this project as part of a larger evaluation effort including the assessment of several other anti-trafficking projects in different parts of the world. This report is based on a comprehensive review of the project's written materials; a survey of academic and government reports, as well as other documents on trafficking in persons in Qatar and the source countries; a series of in-person interviews and conference calls with the staff in the Solidarity Center headquarters in Washington, DC; Skype interviews with the project's staff in Doha, Qatar; an e-mail correspondence with a representative of the National Human Rights Committee, a quasi-governmental agency, partnering with the Solidarity Center in Doha. The original design also called for a site visit to one of the source countries. This plan was abandoned because the low level of formal partnerships and activities did not warrant the expense of embarking on a site visit.

1.1 Program Overview

The Solidarity Center is the international development and technical assistance institute of the AFL-CIO. The Solidarity Center has conducted anti-trafficking programs in Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kenya, and the Dominican Republic. These programs have been funded by USAID, the U. S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) and its Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), as well as UNIFEM, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and Geneva Global's programs to combat trafficking for labor exploitation.

The list of programs suggests that the Solidarity Center has had a considerable experience in designing and implementing anti-trafficking programs in many parts of the world. Additionally, content analysis of the organization's website, including the description of its activities and review of

its publications reminds us of the long history of the Center’s involvement in assisting “workers around the world who are struggling to build democratic and independent trade unions.” Similarly to other organizations, the Solidarity Center re-framed its engagement in promoting workers’ rights as anti-trafficking efforts shortly after the *Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* and the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)* of 2000. According to the Center’s website one of the first anti-trafficking projects they have implemented—***Empowering Workers and their Children to Fight Human Trafficking in Indonesia***--dates back to the early 2000s.

The goals of the Solidarity Center’s activities in Qatar are ambitious. In its grant application to J/TIP, the Solidarity Center states that they will:

(...) combat the practices that make workers vulnerable to trafficking through advocacy for improved prevention and protection initiatives in Qatar and in the countries of origin where migrant workers in Qatar come from. The project will help build the capacity of Qatari organizations to provide protection and services to victims of involuntary servitude, trafficking and forced labor in Qatar. It will also help members of the Nepalese, Sri Lankan, and Filipino communities in Qatar develop their capacity to identify trafficking and involuntary servitude/forced labor and refer victims to the proper channels in Qatar, and support their efforts to work cooperatively with semi-governmental Qatari agencies to identify primary points in the migration process where workers fall victim to coercion or deception. Finally, the project will help Nepalese, Sri Lankan and Filipino migrant communities in Qatar to strengthen partnerships with allied organizations in their home countries, to develop specific interventions to combat the labor trafficking resulting from labor exploitation and to identify allies as well as targets for advocacy (including government) to propose changes in law and practice (Project Narrative 2010).

Detailed description of the program, including short-term and long-term goals and objectives, implementation plans, and activities will be discussed in Chapter 2: Program Design.

1.2 Context

Qatar is a sovereign Arab state occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the much larger Arabian Peninsula. The Al Thani family has ruled Qatar as an absolute monarchy since the mid-19th century. The most important positions in the country are held by the Al Thani family or their close confidantes.



Qatar has the world's highest per capita GDP and proven reserves of oil and natural gas. Qatar tops the Forbes' list of the world's richest countries. With a small citizen population of fewer than 300,000 people, foreign-born workers comprise 94.2 percent of the country's labor force. According to the Gulf News, unskilled or semi-skilled workers constitute 75 percent of the foreign-born labor force in Qatar.

1.1.1. *The Kafala System*

Similarly to other Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, sponsorship laws exist in Qatar. These laws are often described as akin to modern-day slavery. The sponsorship system (*kafeel* or *kafala*) exists throughout the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, except for Bahrain, which began to dismantle the *kafala* system in 2009, and means that a worker may not enter the country without having a *kafeel* or leave the country without getting the *kafeel's* permission. In the course of another research project, the author met a Filipino car driver working for one of the luxury hotels in Doha. When the first year of his two-year contract with the hotel was up, he wanted to quit and go home to Manila to his wife and 10-year-old son, but the hotel management refused to let him go. This particular man was quite satisfied with the salary the hotel paid him, but very disillusioned with the rest of his contract. The original contract stipulated that he would be provided with housing close to the Filipino Catholic Church in order to be supported by his ethno-religious community; that he would have access to the Internet in order to talk via Skype with his wife and young son. The reality turned out to be quite different. He was given company housing in a very small room with barely working air-conditioning some 20 kilometers from the Filipino Church and no access to any means of transportation. In order to cope with the difficult situation, he took every available overtime shift and drove hotel guests in a luxurious limousine or worked inside the palatial hotel.

According to various TIP and human rights reports, governmental sponsors have exercised their right to prevent employees from leaving the country, effectively holding them against their will for no good reason. In theory, workers can quit their contracts, but forfeit some of their earnings and must pay for their own airfare to return to their country of origin, and few have proven willing or are financial able to do so. Some individuals after resigning have not been issued exit permits, denying them their basic right to leave the country (Bajrachayra and Sijapati 2012). More commonly

reported, employers can legally confiscate the passports of their employees. Some employers may refuse to return these documents if an employee tries to quit. Conversely, some employers may arbitrarily fire an employee, or accuse an employee of a crime. In the latter case, the employer is released from any responsibility for providing passage for the former employee to his or her home country. Foreign laborers in the GCC (with the exception of the UAE beginning in 2011) do not have the right to switch employers and remain in the Gulf after ending a position with their employer, whether they quit or are fired. As a result, some employees may stay in bad job situations for the promise of higher wages than in their home country, and others may run away and attempt to remain in the country as illegal workers (MERIP 1999). These restrictions do not apply to special sponsorship of a Qatar Financial Center-sponsored worker, where it is encouraged and regulated that sponsorship should be uninhibited and assistance should be given to allow for such transfers of sponsorship.

1.1.1. International Migration and Trafficking

Qatar is a destination for both male and female workers from South Asia and Southeast Asia who migrate willingly, but are often exploited or trafficked into involuntary servitude as domestic workers and laborers, and, to a lesser extent, commercial sexual exploitation. The most common offense is forcing workers to accept worse contract terms than those under which they were recruited. During a visit to the Georgetown campus in Doha a couple of years ago, the author interviewed two Filipino hotel maids cleaning her room—a man and a woman—both of whom were trained as IT workers and were promised jobs in the IT industry. However, upon arrival they were told that they needed to start “at the bottom” by cleaning hotel rooms to “prove themselves” to be promoted to work with computers. At the time of our discussion, they had been “proving themselves” for about nine months and the IT job was nowhere in sight.

Other offenses, recounted by, among others, the TIP reports include bonded labor, withholding of pay, and restrictions on movement, arbitrary detention, and various forms of abuse. The TIP reports also mention men and women who are lured into Qatar by promises of high wages and are often forced into underpaid labor. Reportedly, Qatari laws against forced labor are rarely enforced, and labor laws often result in the detention of victims in deportation centers, pending the completion of legal proceedings (TIP Report 2010 and 2011).

Many workers are not paid in a timely fashion. While visiting Doha to present my research findings on children trafficked to the United States, I was told of a tea-server who went without pay for nine months. He finally got the courage to share his problem with one of the Georgetown faculty who quickly intervened with the Qatar Foundation in charge of hiring local labor for all academic programs in the Education City. This particular case got remedied albeit very late, but none of the universities with presence in Doha are allowed to hire directly for non-faculty positions and therefore have limited ability to monitor labor abuses.

The vulnerability of domestic workers to exploitation and abuse is well documented in the region, particularly in countries (including Qatar) that do not recognize or protect domestic workers under national labor laws. In Egypt, for example, neither Egyptian nor foreign domestic workers are protected by labor laws. Furthermore, foreign domestic workers are usually unable to secure a work visa, which have stringent and laborious requirements. All domestic workers report numerous abuses, but foreign-born women are at particular risk for sexual abuse and racial discrimination. Foreign-born women often turn to their embassies for support, lacking access to Egyptian institutions to protect them (Jureidini 2009). In Lebanon, foreign domestic workers often do obtain an official visa and necessary paperwork through their employers, though this process can indebt the worker to her family and lead to an exploitative working environment (Abu-Habib 1998). Nor does this visa provide domestic workers with protection under labor law; it merely regularizes the worker's temporary residence within the country. Issues of protection are exacerbated in the Gulf, where nearly all domestic workers are foreign-born and dependent on their employers for both a job and for their legal status in the country (Strobol 2009).

Lacking a protective legal framework in which to work, domestic workers in the MENA region are commonly exploited or abused. Human Rights Watch has recently published reports condemning the inadequate protection of domestic workers in Jordan, Lebanon, and Kuwait against abuse and exploitation by their employers (HRW 2010, 2011, 2012a). The UAE has recently considered a new law that would improve conditions for domestic workers somewhat, but the exact language of the law has not yet been made public (HRW 2012b). Horrific stories of extreme abuse against domestic workers also appear in the press, documenting instances of food deprivation; physical restraint; physical, verbal, and sexual abuse; and torture by some employers against their domestic workers (Al-Jazeera 2010, 2011, 2012). These types of abuses can be leveled at both migrants who voluntarily came to the Gulf for jobs as domestic workers and those who were trafficked to the Gulf by deception. Those who were trafficked are often more vulnerable to abuse, and more likely to have experienced abuse en route to the Gulf.

Apart from domestic work, other forms of trafficking also exist in the Gulf, including unpaid labor and forced prostitution. Rather uniquely to the region, children are sometimes hired, smuggled, or trafficked to work as jockeys in camel races.

Up until 2005, when Qatar set to substitute robots for human jockeys in camel races, many young boys from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan were trafficked to Qatar and other oil-rich Gulf countries.

They are either sold to "custodians" by desperate, poverty-stricken parents, or kidnapped by employment agents and smuggled into the country. Some of them have been trained for camel racing from as young as two-years-old, and the "custodian" pockets the fee the boys make for each race, the report says. Camel racing can be extremely dangerous: the children are strapped to the camels during the event, and some have been crushed to death in falls.

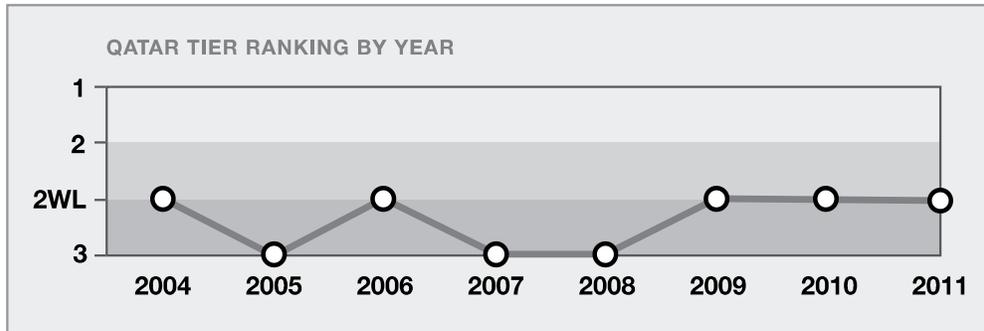
They are also often under-nourished, as custodians attempt to keep their weight down (Hussein 2001).

Both the U. S. Department of State and human rights groups raised the alarm over the exploitation of male children by traffickers who paid impoverished parents a paltry sum or simply resorted to kidnapping their victims. According to these reports, employers often starved the boys to keep them light and maximize their racing potential. Mounting camels three times their height, the boys--some as young as six years of age--faced the risk of being thrown off or trampled (see Ridgeway 2002).

Despite the fact that Qatar banned the use of children as camel jockeys in 2005, the technological triumph did not end the story of the child jockeys. Here is an excerpt from an article by Jim Lewis (2005):

(...) the robot camel jockeys are having a mixed effect, as such programs often do. They were meant to help free the children, but freedom is not simple. The State Department was pushing the Qatari government to set up a repatriation program with compounds and rehabilitation centers, but the Qataris simply started shipping the children back to the Sudan, which these days must qualify as one of the world's worst places to be. (...) In effect they have simply been sent from one circle of hell to another. As Ali al Mohanadi, a camel owner and a colonel in the Qatari Amiri air force, says to me, "If you get them out of this job, are you going to improve their life? No. They will go to their death. They will go to the Sudan and live there, as they did before, with no education, no food, nothing. How bad will their life be there? Nobody cares about it." Feleke Assefa, from the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, explains that the children were sent back to the Sudan without so much as a medical checkup, let alone basic lessons in how to read and write. Still, it's a step in the right direction. "These children were slaves," he says. "You can't argue that slavery is better than freedom." And he's right, of course: You can't. But you can argue that progress unaccompanied by a keen ear for context is just a game of Whack-a-Mole. You pound out one problem and another appears right next to it.

The range of abuses and lack of demonstrated evidence of significant efforts to punish traffickers or identify victims has landed Qatar in Tier 3 or more recently in Tier 2WL.



1.1.1. Labor laws

According to the 2010 Human Rights Report, Qatari labor law and regulations provide for worker organizations for citizens older than 18 years old in private enterprises that have more than 100 citizen workers. In practice the law makes union formation difficult. The country's labor code allows for only one trade union: the General Union of Workers of Qatar (composed of various general committees for the workers in a trade or industry, which are in turn made up of worker committees at individual firms) and forbid affiliation with groups outside the country. Most importantly, noncitizens are not eligible to form worker committees, and foreign-born workers can only be members of joint labor-management committees.

The law grants Qatari workers the right to strike, but restrictive conditions make the likelihood of a legal strike extremely remote. Qatari civil servants and domestic workers cannot strike, and strikes are not allowed at public utilities or at health or security service facilities. The labor law requires that a strike be approved by three-fourths of the company's workers committee. Such committees are composed of an equal number of representatives from management and labor, making it practically impossible for labor to gain a strike authorization. Foreign-born workers have no right to strike.

Despite the existence of these and similar legal restrictions across the GCC, there have been several large labor strikes in the Gulf in recent years, including in Qatar. In 2007, thousands of foreign-born workers marched on the iconic Burj Dubai, and 1,500 foreign-born workers in the UAE carried out a violent strike in 2008 in which they overturned buses and damaged their company's offices (Executive Magazine 2008). Workers have also carried out illegal strikes in Qatar, such as in 2001 when foreign factory workers went on strike over claims they had not been paid in over 14 months (Al-Bawaba News, 2001). In 2010, Nepalese workers were deported from Qatar for going on strike in protest of their working conditions (Nepal News 2010).

The Government of Qatar worked with foreign embassies at times to resolve specific labor disputes through mediation, although the Government of Qatar did not always allow the embassies to access foreign nationals when disputes arose. (IIP 2011). In the past, the government responded to labor

unrest by dispatching large numbers of police to the work sites or labor camps involved, and the strikes generally ended peacefully after these shows of force. In most cases, the government summarily deported strike organizers (TIP Report 2010).

The Human Rights Report (2010) quoted above indicated that on September 23, 2010, police arrested and deported approximately 90 foreign-born laborers working for the al-Badar construction company after striking against the company, in violation of their contracts. Al-Badar refused to increase the workers' salaries by 10 percent as required by their contract and instead cut the workers' pay by 35 percent, from 1,000 to 650 riyals per month (approximately \$275 and \$180, respectively). All of the workers were jailed for several days and then deported; those who had worked less than two years for the company had to pay for their return tickets home.

The labor law grants workers in private enterprises that have more than 100 citizen workers the right to bargain collectively and to sign joint agreements between employer and worker regarding a work-related issue. However, the vast majority of private sector employees are noncitizens. Therefore, they are not allowed to participate in union activities. The government circumscribed the right through control over the rules and procedures of the bargaining and agreement processes. Collective bargaining is not freely practiced, and there were no workers under collective bargaining contracts in 2010 when the data was collected for the report under discussion.

Private employers and workers set wages without government involvement. Local courts handle disputes between workers and employers. Foreign workers avoid drawing attention to problems with their employers for fear of retaliation and deportation.

1.2.4 Civil society

Given the legal restrictions in place that make it difficult for foreign-born workers to form labor unions, civil society offers one possible sphere in which foreign nationals might build networks of identity and support. Indeed, informal communities have formed in Gulf societies along ethnic lines among the contract laborers, though these informal networks fall short of formal nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or community-based organizations (CBOs). Even these very informal gatherings can prompt backlash from native Qataris: foreign nationals frequently experience racism and xenophobic responses when gathering in public spaces, including at supermarkets (Jureidini 2003).

Despite the 2006 law that relaxes some restrictions on the formation of NGOs, to date few independent NGOs or CBOs have been able to register or operate in Qatar, including those that would represent foreign nationals (State Department Human Rights Report 2010). The few NGOs that exist are permitted to engage in a few government-sanctioned projects, but severe legal penalties await those who attempt to mobilize such organizations for political purposes (Survey of Arab NGO Laws 2010). Furthermore, many of Qatar's "Non-Governmental Organizations" are, in reality, quasi-governmental organizations that require extensive government oversight. In short, the

current legal and structural environments in Qatar are not encouraging for the formation of NGOs or CBOs to represent foreign nationals.

***In summary:* These conditions make it very difficult, if not impossible, to implement a program that aims, among other things, to empower foreign-born workers to organize themselves and identify and provide assistance to victims of trafficking in persons.**

In the following chapters of this report, we describe the project design, project implementation, and make recommendations, including suggestions for technical assistance.



Photo by Constantin Boym

In its grant application, the Solidarity Center identified the following project goals:

- Improve TIP prevention, protection and prosecution efforts of governments in Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Qatar (**long-term goal**)
- Inform the four governments' approaches of addressing TIP prevention, protection and prosecution efforts in a way that directly responds to the needs and priorities of migrant communities (**short-term goal**).

Additionally, the Solidarity Center identified two interconnected project objectives:

- Build the capacity of Nepalese, Filipino and Sri Lankan migrant worker advocates and their Qatari allies to provide protection and services to victims of involuntary servitude, trafficking and forced labor; and
- Support partners' efforts to create recommendations for the Nepalese, Sri Lankan, and Filipino governments to improve anti-trafficking legislation; implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of existing laws; and prevention and prosecutorial responses to trafficking for labor exploitation and forced labor.

To meet these objectives, the Solidarity Center proposed to:

- Conduct worker rights trainings to prevent abuse;
- Improve victim identification and assistance;
- Conduct study tour in Doha for representatives of migrant worker rights organizations based in source countries;
- Conduct a mapping session to identify problem facing foreign-born workers in Qatar; and
- Engage in advocacy efforts in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Nepal.

Table 1: Logic frame as devised by the Solidarity Center

<p>Long-Term Project Goal: To improve TIP prevention, protection and prosecution efforts of government in countries of origin and in Qatar.</p> <p>Short-Term Project Goal: To inform the four government’s approaches to addressing TIP prevention, protection, and prosecution efforts in a way that directly responds to the needs and priorities of migrant communities.</p>		
<p>Objective 1: Build the capacity of Nepalese, Filipino and Sri Lankan migrant worker advocates and their Qatari allies to provide protection and services to victims of involuntary servitude, trafficking and forced labor in Qatar</p>	<p>Output 1a: Community leaders trained to provide education to migrant workers from Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Philippines in Qatar on basic labor rights under Qatari laws</p>	<p>Outcome 1: Migrant workers will have an increased awareness and understanding of their rights under Qatari law</p>
	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 training sessions on labor rights and labor trafficking • 360 community activists trained to provide educational training on labor rights to other migrant workers • At least 2700 migrant workers total trained in their native languages on labor rights and TIP 	
	<p>Output 1b: Production and distribution of materials to raise awareness of labor rights and educate about TIP</p>	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker rights booklets and flyers translated into 5 languages: Sinhala, Nepalese, Tagalog, English, and Arabic • 10,000 workers rights booklets and flyers printed and distributed through the ToT graduates and other workshop participants • At least 10,000 copies of the brochure printed by NHRC and distributed through their contacts, embassies, workshops and conferences

	<p>Output 2: Trained “crisis unit” volunteers have the capacity to address migrant labor abuse cases and are able to recognize TIP</p>	<p>Outcome 2: Organizations representing the 3 targeted migrant communities in Qatar will demonstrate increased capacity to refer cases to appropriate government agencies for services for victims of involuntary servitude/forced labor and TIP.</p>
	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 functioning crisis group per community group is established • Crisis units assist at least 45 migrant workers • Crisis units identify & refer to the appropriate Qatari entity at least 8 TIP/forced labor cases per quarter after the training occurs • The crisis unit volunteers have at least 2 meetings with the Qatari ministries to establish a referral system for TIP victims 	<p>Outcome Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 trafficking/forced labor cases identified and referred per quarter (total=40) following completion of the training course (<i>Note:</i> Measured from data collected through direct observation and 1 interview (total=15) with each crisis unit every quarter over 5 quarter) • Percent increase from baseline in the demand for services received from community group case handlers (<i>Note:</i> Measured from data collected in monthly meetings with NHRC & QFCHI)
	<p>Output 3: Formalized agreements between source and destination countries</p>	<p>Outcome 3: Greater cooperation between migrant worker advocates in Qatar and countries of origin in their efforts to prevent TIP</p>
	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHRC signs 3 MOUs with allied organizations, 1 per country of origin • Community groups in Qatar sign at least 2 cooperation agreements with allied organizations in countries of origin 	<p>Outcome Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant worker advocates carry out 1 joint advocacy campaign in all 4 countries • Migrant worker activists in Qatar and in countries of origin communicate with each other about their work independent of Solidarity Center facilitation
<p>Objective 2: Support partners’ efforts to generate and submit recommendations for the governments of</p>	<p>Output 1: Mapping of the migration process by migrant worker advocate organizations from Qatar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines</p>	<p>Outcome 1: Qatari institutions and community groups have an increased understanding of the root causes of TIP in both Qatar and the countries of origin as well as increased ability to identify TIP</p>

<p>Nepal, the Philippines and Sri Lanka to improve anti-trafficking legislation, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of existing laws, and government preventative and prosecutorial responses to trafficking for labor exploitation and forced labor</p>	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,½ day meeting for 20 participants held • 1 written summary of the mapping exercise produced and distributed to all participants and to the SC 	<p>Outcome Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants produce a written list of specific vulnerabilities workers have to TIP, including vulnerabilities in Qatar as well as in the countries of origin • 50% more NHRC staff and community group members correctly identify TIP (<i>Note:</i> Measured on the basis of pre-/post- evaluation questionnaires conducted at baseline and endline, which consists of a half-day evaluation session upon conclusion of the project)
	<p>Output 2a: Recommendations developed by Qatar based representatives and partners in the three countries of origin for governments and other relevant bodies</p>	<p>Outcome 2: Sending country government authorities in Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Nepal are willing to receive delegations of migrant advocates and to seriously discuss the recommendations developed under this project</p>
	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 written document outlining recommendations formulated jointly by the NHRC, community groups, and partners in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines 	
	<p>Output 2b: Advocacy campaign conducted by migrant worker advocates in Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines based on the recommendations</p>	<p>Outcome Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each government meets with the migrant worker advocates from the countries of origin at least two times • Each government takes steps toward implementing at least 1 recommendation as reported by partners in countries of origin • Partner organizations advocate for campaigns following meetings with migrant worker advocates as reported by SC field staff and partners in countries of origin
	<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant workers advocates work together to develop 1 written advocacy plan per country (3 total) and share it with Qatari counterparts and with SC staff • Partner organizations in each country hold 1, 1 day conference for 20 stakeholders including government, recruitment agencies, NGOs, migrant workers associations, trade unions, and other concerned organizations • Partner organizations hold 1 press conference per country to publicize their advocacy campaigns • Partner organizations hold 1 meeting per country, inviting 20 representatives from the media, Bar Association, and the Legal Aid Commission, to reach out and solicit their support for their advocacy campaign 	

	Output 1: Materials developed and produced to highlight model interventions, lessons learned, and best practices to inform NGOs, trade unions, migrant worker organizations, and government entities in both countries of origin and destination	Outcome 1: NGOs, trade unions, migrant worker organizations and government entities in countries of origin and destination will have an increased awareness and understanding of effective approaches to combating TIP and protecting the rights of migrant workers.
	Performance Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 3 different publications highlighting model interventions, lessons learned, and best practices will be produced • At least 500 copies of each publication will be printed and distributed to NGOs, unions, and government agencies for their use in combating TIP 	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10% of the organizations and agencies that receive these publications use them to improve their staff capacity to combat TIP and protect the rights of migrant workers

2.1 Fidelity/Adaptations to the Model

While some of the senior staff involved in crafting the original project are no longer involved, the current staff members in the headquarters have indicated that the project itself has not veered substantially from the model proposed and submitted to J/TIP. The main and only staff person based in Doha has been with the project since its inception.

The table below presents the indicators as defined by the Solidarity Center and corresponding discussion of targets, their completion or likelihood of completion before the end of this project on December 31, 2012. The assessment was made on the basis of written reports submitted by the SC to J/TIP and interviews with project staff in Doha and in Washington, DC. Drawing conclusions has been somewhat difficult since written reports often contradict information elicited in the course of interviews.

Indicator	Detailed Information
# of Training of Trainers sessions	<i>Definition:</i> Training is defined as an educational session on worker rights.
Target: 18	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Not very feasible given the fact that there are fewer than six months left in the project. The project staff and their partners would have to conduct more than 2 training sessions a month. To date, only one training of trainers has been conducted
Progress to date (PTD): 1	<i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. However, it does rely on the willingness of volunteer community activists to participate in the project. Given the fact that the rights and opportunities for community organizing among foreign-born workers are very limited this target is challenging.

<p># of community activists trained (TOTs)</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Community activists are defined as volunteers representing the Nepalese, Sri Lankan, and Filipino communities. In reality, most of the activists affiliated with the project are highly skilled educated migrant workers, not the low-wage lesser-skilled workers that the project was targeting.</p>
<p>Target: 360</p>	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Likelihood of completion is extremely low.</p> <p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. It seems that the project designers overestimated their ability to recruit the target number of activists/trainers to be trained. Interviews with project staff indicate that a total number of 23 activists participated in a variety of meetings (not always training programs), but the core group that participates in most activities hovers around 12-13 persons. No representatives of the Sri Lankan community are willing to participate. Again, given the restrictions on community organizing and formation of civil society organizations this is not a surprising outcome. It seems that the project designers have underestimated the challenges that working in Qatar on such sensitive issues as workers' rights pose for both INGOs and migrant workers, particularly low-wage and lesser skilled workers.</p>
<p>PTD: 23</p>	
<p># migrant workers trained by community activists</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Migrant workers are defined here as low-wage lesser skilled foreign-born workers employed in a variety of sectors.</p>
<p>Target: 2,700</p>	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Attaining this target in the remaining six months of the project is impossible.</p>
<p>PTD: Unknown.</p>	<p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The project relies on the good will of community activists to recruit and train migrant workers. However, there is no mechanism in place to monitor whether these trainings—formal or informal—take place and how many workers participate. In the grant application to J/TIP, the SC indicated that under a previous grant they trained 800 migrant workers. The questions remains why it is more challenging under the current grant to recruit workers for training. Were there different ethnic groups targeted in the previous grant? Who were the trainers? Why were they more efficient? Was the same recruitment strategy used this time?</p>
<p># of languages to translate worker rights booklets</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Booklets including a description of worker rights in Qatar translate into languages spoken by the target groups: Nepalese, Tagalog, Sinhala, English, and Arabic.</p>
<p>Target: 5</p>	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Completed.</p>
<p>PTD: 5</p>	<p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The NHRC was instrumental in achieving this target as they provided resources for the development of these booklets. It is a bit unclear whether work on these booklets had started under the previous grant the SC had or whether all the tasks necessary to attain this target were performed under the present grant.</p>
<p># of booklets printed</p>	<p><i>Definition:</i> Booklets including a description of worker rights in Qatar translate into languages spoken by the target groups: Nepalese, Tagalog, Sinhala, English, and Arabic</p>
<p>Target: 10,000</p>	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Completed.</p>
	<p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The NHRC</p>

PTD: 10,000	was instrumental in achieving this target as they provided resources for the printing of these booklets.
# of booklets distributed	<i>Definition:</i> Booklets including a description of worker rights in Qatar translated into languages spoken by the target groups: Nepalese, Tagalog, Sinhala, English, and Arabic. Booklets need to reach the workers that need the information about their rights the most.
Target: 10,000	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> The likelihood of attaining this target is good provided a large campaign to disseminate them among the workers that most need them is launched.
PTD: Unknown	<i>Comments:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The project gives these booklets out to the community activists, but does not keep track of how many were given out to which activists/trainers and has no mechanism in place to verify and track how and how many of the booklets were actually distributed to the migrant workers. Are the booklets left in strategic places where workers congregate? Can they be left at worksites? What strategies are in place to ensure that illiterate migrant workers learn the content of the booklets?
# of crisis groups	<i>Definition:</i> A group of volunteers representing the three ethnic communities and assisting them in failing complaints on behalf of wronged and/or abused workers.
Target: 3	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> The likelihood of attaining this target is very low. The project not only relies on volunteers to carry out these tasks, but, more importantly, given the local context such groups might not be legal. The questions that need to be answered: Is there a mechanism/system to respond to the abuse of foreign-born workers? Who is responsible for assisting such workers? Do informal community groups have the clout to advocate on behalf of wronged workers?
PTD: 1	<i>Comments:</i> There is a discrepancy between the written reports and interviews with staff on the ground. Different written reports also provide somewhat conflicting information and often conflate the attendance at monthly meetings with the crisis group membership/existence. Interviews with staff in Doha indicate that indicate that this target has not been attained yet. One written report indicates that one crisis group has been formed, while another report states that “the core members of the ‘crisis groups’ were identified” and goes further to enumerate the number of volunteers from different countries: 15 from Nepal, 15 from the Philippines, 8 from Sri Lanka, 10 from Bangladesh, 13 from Indonesia, and 12 from Pakistan. Information collected from interviews contradicts this statement and suggest that, for example, no Sri Lankan volunteers are collaborating with the project. They are apparently too fearful. Many questions still remain: Can the Solidarity Center form a crisis group composed of its own staff? Can the NHRC act as a crisis intervention group? It seems that without collaboration with the government the ability of the crisis group to intervene is very limited. Reliance on volunteers seems overly optimistic and will not produce the planned results.
# of migrant workers assisted by crisis groups	<i>Definition:</i> Foreign-born low-wage and lesser skilled workers who have been exploited and/or wronged by their employers/recruiters.
Target: 45	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> The likelihood of completing this target is relatively low. There are different reasons for the low likelihood of completion: Unclear if the crisis group exists (per interviews with the program staff in Doha it doesn’t; the written report suggests that one crisis group has been formed); except for the NHRC, what other officials and offices does the SC work with that have the power to intervene on behalf of wronged workers?

PTD: 0	<p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does rely on government, police, or judicial action. Without the help of the Qatari authorities workers will not be able to get back wages or be protected from abusive employers.</p>
# of TIP referrals	<p><i>Definition:</i> Persons that meet the definition of trafficked persons per the Palermo Protocol and the US TVPRA.</p>
Target: 8 per quarter	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> The likelihood of completing this target is very low. There are only six more months in this project and the SC would have to refer/assist 22 persons per the remaining quarters. They were not able to assist any in the previous six quarters.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comments:</i> This indicator does rely on government, police, or judicial action. This target cannot be accomplished without collaboration of appropriate governmental and law enforcement offices. It is noteworthy that nowhere in the project reports the SC indicates how they define and operationalize the definition of trafficking. Reading the reports and talking to staff one often wonders whether the project staff can articulate the link between protecting workers' rights and prevention of trafficking in persons.</p>
# of meetings between crisis units and Qatari ministries	<p><i>Definition:</i> Crisis group representatives meet with representatives of appropriate Qatari ministries.</p>
Target: 2	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Likelihood of completing this target is low since no crisis groups exist.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comments:</i> The attainment of this target hinges on the formation of crisis groups. Since representatives of the Filipino and Nepalese communities have already developed some contacts with the NHRC, it seems that the NHRC could facilitate further meetings between crisis groups (if the project manages to create such groups) and appropriate ministries. In June and July of 2011 an attempt to form a network of stakeholders, including the NHRC, QFCHT, and the Ministries of Interior and Labor had been launched and a work plan for the NHRC Labor Rights Unit was officially approved. However, written reports and interviews with staff in Doha indicate that restrictions placed on governmental institutions in terms of communication and collaboration with non-Qatari organizations, including the SC and community groups, pose major challenges.</p> <p>Note: During the study tour in December 2011 representatives of the migrant workers communities did meet with representatives of the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Interior. This was the first step in the right direction.</p>
# of MOUs between NHRC and allied organizations	<p><i>Definition:</i> An official MOU between NHRC and groups representing foreign-born workers from the Nepalese, Sri Lankan, and Filipino communities.</p>
Target: 3	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> This indicator does rely on government, police, or judicial action. The NHRC is a quasi-governmental organization. The likelihood of attaining this target is good.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comments:</i> The NHRC has been hosting representatives of the different foreign-born workers' communities and by all accounts seems to be willing to work with them. An MOU between the SC and NHRC had been signed in November 2011; however, there are no MOUs between the NHRC and migrant worker groups.</p>

#of mapping exercise summaries	<p><i>Definition:</i> Mapping of the migration process by migrant worker advocate organizations from Qatar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.</p>
Target: 1	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> The likelihood of completing this target is good. The SC facilitated a meeting between the NHRC and worker advocate organizations during which the participants began the mapping exercise by narrating the migration trajectories of the various workers from source countries to Qatar as well as the vulnerabilities these workers experience both in countries of origin and in Qatar.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comment:</i> To date, the SC has not written-up the mapping exercise and produced a document that can be translated into appropriate languages and distributed to all participants and the SC staff.</p>
# of entities/individuals to receive mapping summary	<p><i>Definition:</i> Staff of the SC, appropriate Qatari governmental offices, and members of the worker advocate organizations.</p>
Target: All	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The likelihood of completion is good provided the mapping exercise gets written up and translated into appropriate languages.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comment:</i> In the remaining six months of the project the SC should be able to write-up, translate and disseminate the mapping exercise. Much of the discussions on which such a document should be based have already happened. What remains to be done is the analysis of the collected data, writing up, and translating the findings.</p>
# of recommendation documents	<p><i>Definition:</i> Project partners were to create recommendations for the governments of Nepal, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka to improve anti-trafficking legislation, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of existing laws.</p>
Target: 1	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The likelihood of completion is good.</p>
PTD: 0	<p><i>Comments:</i> With six months left in the project, this target should be relatively easy to accomplish, especially since some recommendations have come out from the study tour and the meetings in source countries.</p>
# of advocacy plans	<p><i>Definition:</i> Migrant worker advocates work together to develop one written advocacy plan per country (three in total) and share with Qatari counterparts and SC staff.</p>
	<p><i>Likelihood of completion:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action. The likelihood of completion is relatively low given the poor track record of the project's</p>

Target: 3	written products.
PTD: 0	<i>Comments:</i> With the exception of the worker rights booklets, the project does not have a good track record of producing written materials.
# of conferences in source countries	<i>Definition:</i> Partner organizations in each country will hold one one-day conference for 20 stakeholders representing governments, recruitment agencies, NGOs, migrant worker organizations, and trade unions.
Target: 3	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Completed.
PTD: 3	<i>Comments:</i> Debriefing meetings were held in each of the source countries following the study tour to Doha held in December 2011. Additionally, in July 2011, the SC and the Migrant Forum Asia (MFA) organized a two-day consultation in Colombo, Sri Lanka bringing together 25 civil society organizations. These meetings seemed to have been somewhat different from the originally planned conferences that were to bring together representatives of national and local governments, recruitment agencies, civil society groups, and trade unions. Project reports provide no discussion regarding the change of plans/foci. The meeting held during the study tour in December 2011 also received extensive press coverage.
# of publications on best practices and lessons learned	<i>Definition:</i> A publication highlighting best practices and lessons learnt.
Target: 3	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> This indicator does <u>not</u> rely on government, police, or judicial action.
PTD: 0	<i>Comments:</i> Since there are still five months left in the project, the SC should be able to complete this target. The question is whether there are any best practices to highlight in such a publication. Staff interviewed in the course of this evaluation was not able to provide a list of best practices and promising strategies.
# of above publications printed and distributed	<i>Definition:</i> A publication highlighting best practices and lessons learnt.
Target: 500	<i>Likelihood of completion:</i> Completion of this target depends on producing this publication. If the publication is produced within the next month or two, the likelihood of attaining this target is good.
PTD: 0	<i>Comments:</i> The question remains whether it is necessary to produce 500 copies of this document. It is unclear from the written reports how the project staff determined the need for so many copies.

2.2 Implementation Challenges

As indicated above, the very restrictive environment in Qatar, an absolute monarchy provides for a difficult context within which to launch an anti-trafficking project aimed at protecting migrant workers' rights and preventing worker exploitation. Restrictive labor laws, limited ability of migrant workers to organize, and non-existing civil society create further challenges.

The design of this project calls for activities both in Qatar as a destination country for migrant workers from Asia, and in source countries of Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines supplying migrant labor force for various industries in Qatar as well as for domestic work. The project design relies heavily on the cooperation and collaboration among and between the Solidarity Center, the Qatari government (in particular, the Ministries of Interior and Labor), the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), and the Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking (QFCHT) (both quasi-governmental organizations), migrant worker groups in Qatar as well as civil society groups and worker advocacy groups in each of the source countries. While the NHRC and the QFCHT are relatively free to communicate and work with international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and migrant worker groups, representatives of the pertinent ministries have less freedom in this regard. It is difficult to say whether this lack of freedom to work with migrant workers stems from directives from the Sheik, is self-imposed or has to do with issues of class and discrimination.

On the other hand, migrant workers, particularly low-wage and lesser-skilled workers are fearful to come to the forefront and voice their grievances. Interviews with the project staff indicate that Sri Lankans are particularly reluctant to collaborate with the project. As a result, the project works mainly with a limited number (about a dozen or so individuals) of high-skilled migrant workers in the hope that they will be able to directly interface with their more vulnerable fellow compatriots and provide assistance or referrals to appropriate agencies. Given the fact that some of the migrant workers come from caste and class societies it might be unrealistic to expect the representatives of the higher caste and class to be culturally and socially prepared to undertake such activities.

The project staff in Doha finds the high turnover and long-absences from work of key partners in the NHRC and the QFCHT quite challenging as well. These absences are partially related to the fact that the staff at both the NHRC and the QFCHT is composed of young females of child-bearing age who take time off from work to go on prolonged maternity leaves. Long periods of vacation related to religious holidays and summer heat further contribute to prolonged interruptions of work. It takes a long time to build rapport and establish good working relationships with partner organizations. The project staff finds it frustrating when partners with whom they built good relationships and made concrete plans leave just before the plans are to be implemented and the relationship-building needs to start all over again.

The project staff member in Doha finds the staff turnover in the Solidarity Center's headquarters also quite challenging. Reportedly, there have been half dozen project managers in the headquarters

the field staff in Qatar had to work with in the course of this project, which does not bode well for seamless collaboration. The field staff does not understand well the responsibilities of the different headquarter staff involved in the project. It seems that the two sides of the organization operate somewhat independently. For example, the field staff sends various communiqués and reports to headquarters, but is often told that the reports to J/TIP will be written by someone in headquarters “who understands better what the funder needs and wants to hear.” The field staff rarely sees the final quarterly reports that are submitted to J/TIP.

The project relays heavily on migrant volunteers who are asked to participate in community meetings, to carry out training sessions, and to serve as crisis counselors. Recruitment of these volunteers has proven to be very, very difficult. As indicated above, low-wage lesser skilled migrant workers are the most reluctant to participate in any of these activities. The project experienced the most difficulty in engaging Sri Lankan workers. They also have little spare and unstructured time to travel to meetings and volunteer to work with their fellow compatriots and the project staff. The Filipino Community Association (FILCOA) reportedly works with about 100 community groups (of unknown size), but the leadership is facing major challenges in identifying 15 bilingual individuals to form ‘crisis groups.’ High-skilled migrants seem to be the only group of migrant workers that might have the freedom to engage in volunteer efforts. Most migrant workers work long hours and can attend meetings only very late at night or on Fridays.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

3

In the last section of this report we focus on several different findings and make recommendations addressed both at the Solidarity Center and the J/TIP staff. We focus both on definitional and conceptual issues (e.g. labor exploitation v. trafficking for labor; protection of workers' rights v. prevention of trafficking for labor; protection of workers' rights v. protection of victims of labor trafficking) as well as the main activities undertaken under this particular grant (e.g. training of trainers and training of migrant workers; referral of trafficked victims to appropriate services) to assess the project's progress and make recommendations.

3.1 Migrant Workers in Qatar: Trafficked Victims, Forced Laborers or Exploited Workers

It is interesting that nowhere in the written documents the Solidarity Center produced to date, including the original grant application, the authors provide the definition of trafficking in persons. The term 'trafficking' is used frequently, but the term 'trafficked victims' or 'survivors of labor trafficking' is absent in the writings. Close reading of the documents indicates that the project focuses on a much broader category of migrant workers and the case examples brought up in interviews conducted in the course of this evaluation suggest that the majority of the migrant workers the project works with came to Qatar voluntarily and there was no abduction, coercion or forced recruitment present. However, many of the migrant workers are disappointed with the conditions of their employment, including lower compensation rates than those promised when they were recruited, frequent delays in payments for work already performed, and poor working conditions, especially on construction sites (dust, heat, lack of protective gear, etc.).

The question remains whether these violations amount to trafficking and/or forced labor. The official definition of trafficking as stated in Article 3, paragraph (a) of the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children* (2000) defines 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 of the receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

The ILO Convention No. 29 (1930) defines forced or compulsory labor as:

(...) all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily (Art.2.1).

A subsequent ILO Convention No. 105, adopted in 1957, specifies that forced labor can never be used for the purpose of economic development or as a means of political education, discrimination, labor discipline or punishment for having participated in strikes. From this definition it is clear that forced labor is not just equivalent to low wages or poor working conditions. It represents a restriction in human freedom, a violation of human rights, and the exact opposite of “decent work” or “human development” as defined by the ILO and UNDP, respectively. Forced labor also encompasses situations such as slavery, practices similar to slavery, debt bondage, or serfdom as defined in various international instruments.

Many of the migrant workers whose stories were relayed to the evaluator would not meet the muster of these definitions unless we posit that the *kafala* or sponsorship system restricts the freedoms of migrant workers so severely that all migrant workers in Qatar should be considered to be trafficked.

Setting the issue of the *kafala* system aside for a moment, are we then dealing with a project that conceptualizes activities aimed at enhancing migrant workers’ rights as prevention of trafficking or the first P of the Prevention-Protection-Prosecution-Partnership paradigm? Trafficking discourse posits that indeed such a conceptualization is quite prevalent in the anti-trafficking arena. While this hypothesis makes a logical sense, it is a lot more difficult to prove empirically. The Solidarity Center seems to imply the connection between the focus on workers’ rights and trafficking prevention, but it is neither explicitly articulating this nexus nor is it collecting any data to empirically prove a correlation or cause-and-effect between these two phenomena.

In fact when the project staff was asked to explain why they have recast much of their work on migrant workers’ rights within the trafficking framework, they could not adequately answer this question. They were also not able to provide a satisfactory answer to the question whether using the trafficking framework was beneficial and whether it was positively impacting their attempts to enhance workers’ rights in Qatar and elsewhere in the Gulf or whether their use of the trafficking framework was purely opportunistic.

Ironically, in one of the reports to J/TIP the project stressed that the inability to correctly identify cases of forced labor and trafficking hampers efforts to prevent these violations and therefore, the Solidarity Center proposed to help migrant community associations, through capacity training and planning sessions, establish dedicated internal capacity called volunteer “crisis units” to handle migrant labor abuse cases, and to learn how to recognize TIP and involuntary servitude when they come across such cases.

Recommendation: It is important that all J/TIP grantees define the populations, types and phases of trafficking, types of activities, and dimension/s of the 4Ps they are working with and on for the funder to be able to hold them accountable and for the grantees to measure progress on all sorts of indicators. Definitions are not a purely academic exercise; they can affect both policy and program designs and implementation.

3.2 Creative Project Design: Focus on Source and Destination Countries

For a variety of reasons, many anti-trafficking projects focus either on destination or source countries. A deliberate focus on both destination and source countries is still relatively rare. The Solidarity Center proposed to work with three source countries—Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Philippines—and Qatar as a destination country for migrant workers from South and Southeast Asia. This design seemed to be very promising. The project aimed at informing Asian migrant workers about their rights before they departed for Qatar and while they were working in Doha. It is important that this information is provided before migrants launch their migration projects in order to be able to make informed decisions regarding labor migration.

The design did not reach its full potential. First, the focus on Qatar as a destination country posed many challenges to the project. As indicated at the outset of this report, the conditions in Qatar, including restrictive labor laws, the *kafala* system, limited ability to organize migrant workers, despotic monarchy as a political system, and other factors do not provide the kind of freedoms to operate that are needed both by INGOs and migrants to advance workers' rights and protect human rights. Since the grant under assessment is the second project the Solidarity Center implemented in Qatar with J/TIP funding, these challenges should have been known to the grantee and should have been addressed both in the grant application, the project design, and implementation. There is no evidence that the Solidarity Center attempted to modify its design and/or adjust the proposed activities to respond to the challenges.

When asked why they chose Qatar, the project staff indicated that J/TIP in its grants announcement listed Qatar as one of the countries that they would like the applicants to focus on.

The Solidarity Center has had a good track record of working on workers' rights issues in the source countries of Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Philippines. These established relationships boded well for the design of this project. Unfortunately, except for participation in the study tours (funded by this project), there are no formal relationships—MOUs, sub-contracts or sub-grants--between the Solidarity Center and the partner organizations in the three source countries to further cement the working relationships and have leverage over partner organizations.

Recommendation: With five months remaining in the project it seems too late to be altering its design drastically, but the Solidarity Center should think how to maximize the time left in the project to strengthen the relationship of actors and stakeholders in both source and destination countries. With a planned study tour to source countries, the Solidarity Center could be instrumental in brokering and/or enhancing more formal relationships between the Qatari organizations working on

issues of trafficking for labor and source country-based organizations preparing labor migrants for departure to Qatar.

3.3 Needs Assessment and Feasibility Studies as a Precursor to Funded Action

As already indicated, the Solidarity Center has been working on migrant workers' rights for many years and in many countries and participated in many formal processes aimed at enhancing workers' rights (e.g. the Abu Dhabi Dialogue). This particular project is a second project funded by J/TIP that the Solidarity Center implemented in Qatar. Yet, there is no evidence that the Solidarity Center staff has engaged in a more formal needs assessment before designing this project. It seems that some of the challenges the project staff writes about in their progress reports could have been anticipated and the design could have better reflected the local context, particularly the challenges faced by INGOs and other civil society groups in Qatar.

The project design calls for different study tours bringing partners from source countries to Doha and Qatari officials as well as migrant worker leaders to source countries. These study tours did not happen until quite late in the project—one study tour was organized at the very end of the first year, the remaining study tours are scheduled for the last few months of the project. They could have been organized much earlier and could have served as rapid assessments to further inform fine-tuning of the project design.

Recommendation: J/TIP should consider funding needs assessments and feasibility studies before the office issues a grant announcement to launch anti-trafficking projects in uncharted territories or regions of the world where engagement with human rights issues is difficult. Ideally, J/TIP would contract or provide grants to conduct needs assessments and feasibility studies to researchers and organizations that would not apply for grants and/or contracts to launch anti-trafficking projects in order to avoid a conflict of interest. In case of scarce resources, applicants for anti-trafficking projects should be required to document that they have done a thorough needs assessment and that the project design is based on these findings. Reviewers of grant applications should be instructed to assess the proposed project in the context of the needs assessment performed either by outside researchers or by the applicant/s.

3.4 Data and Documentation

While human trafficking continues to capture the imaginations and interests of many publics, there is very little data (both quantitative and qualitative) on this phenomenon. Many policy and programmatic decisions happen in an empirical vacuum. Therefore it is extremely important that each funded project collects data and information as well as documents its activities. This project has not developed any mechanisms to measure its activities either against targets or any other baseline

data. For example, a big part of the project is training of trainers and training of migrant workers. The project could not furnish any attendance lists or minutes from meetings they hold with migrant community leaders in order for the evaluation team to gauge the scale of the migrant networks with which they work. The only number that the staff was able to provide is the number of booklets on workers' rights published by the NHRC.

When queried how the project monitors and measures the training of migrant workers, we were told that trainers (high skilled migrant workers) take the booklets and distribute them among low-wage lesser skilled migrant workers (more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation). There is no mechanisms to: 1) monitor how many booklets are really distributed and how (e.g. left in places where workers gather to be picked up by interested migrants; actually distributed to worker at worksites or at training sessions); 2) gather data on the number of workers who had been trained; 3) evaluate the impact the training had on, for example, the number of abuse and exploitation cases reported either to the project staff or to appropriate Qatari authorities.

The booklet and a PowerPoint presentation (both developed by the NHRC, a partner organization in Qatar) serve as a basis for the training, but there is no curriculum that would include both the information that is shared with migrant workers and discussion of the pedagogy and leadership development activities that should be part of the documentation of the project and could shed light on the nature and quality of the training.

Data collection methodology should have also been in place as the project continues to put together 'crisis groups' to work with exploited and abused workers. There is no evidence of any measurement instrument to distinguish between a disgruntled worker and an exploited and abused worker, and exploited worker and a trafficked victim. The project staff has not developed any intake instruments to record basic demographic information; type of abuse and exploitation; name of the employer; the worker's assessment of what would be the best outcome for him/her; type of referral; need to follow-up, etc. Collecting this type of information would allow the project to answer many questions--Are workers of particular age or ethnicity abused more frequently than others? Which employers--are more exploitative or abusive? What type of a referral resulted in what kind of an outcome? etc.--in order to fine tune their services to migrant workers; select employers to work with in order to improve conditions for migrant workers; identify Qatari organizations that need to be involved in protecting workers' rights and minimizing risks for labor trafficking.

Recommendation: The evaluation team strongly suggests that the project captures as much data and information retrospectively as they can in order to better document its activities. One of the major criticisms of anti-trafficking projects and those who fund them is that public dollars are spent on projects that cannot properly document their activities and do not collect appropriate data. We suggest that J/TIP considers monitoring projects closely and requiring data collection (both quantitative and qualitative). The data along with appropriate products should be produced at incremental intervals and not at the end of the project when it is too late to provide technical

assistance to steer the project staff toward appropriate data collection techniques and data management systems.

3.5 Collaboration with Quasi-Governmental Organizations

The single most important outcome of the project under evaluation is its collaboration with two quasi-governmental organizations, the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) and the Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking (QFCHT), and a resulting paradigm shift in attitudes on the part of these organizations towards migrant workers. A migrant community leader reportedly told the project staff: “This is incredible and unbelievable. Three years ago they were not considering us as human beings. Now they are inviting us on their premises, calling us partners and goodwill ambassadors to the migrant workers. What a change. And it is all due to the Solidarity Center.”

At the same time, the very close relationship between the Solidarity Center staff and these two quasi-governmental organizations need to be examined in terms of the project’s ability to work equally closely with migrant workers, not just the diaspora leadership. The NHRC, for example, provides office space for the project staff and the offices are located within governmental ministries. The very location of the office might be intimidating for migrant workers.

Recommendation: We have not heard much about from where the ‘crisis groups’ (when they get off the ground) will be operating from, but it seems that this issue needs to be carefully considered in order to ensure the safety and comfort of migrant workers who will be coming to have their grievances against their employers heard. Also, is this location easily accessible for migrant workers? Perhaps the project should consider mobile crisis groups that would travel to the workers. In Doha where public transportation is non-existing, climate and lack of sidewalks is not conducive to navigating long distances on foot, and movement of migrant workers restricted these issues need to be worked out in the design of the project.

This project has only one paid staff person in Qatar and relies very heavily on the involvement of volunteers in Doha and partner organizations in source countries who are expected to collaborate with the project without any remuneration. The assumption that migrant workers, particularly low-wage lesser skilled workers, will be able to be involved in any substantial numbers in the project and will engage with the project in a meaningful way seems overly optimistic. Indeed, interviews with the Solidarity Center’s staff in Doha and in headquarters suggest that recruitment of migrant worker volunteers is a major obstacle.

3.6 Reliance on Volunteers

This project has only one paid staff person in Qatar and relies very heavily on the involvement of volunteers in Doha and partner organizations in source countries who are expected to collaborate

with the project without any remuneration. The assumption that migrant workers, particularly low-wage lesser skilled workers, will be able to be involved in any substantial numbers in the project and will engage with the project in a meaningful way seems overly optimistic. Indeed, interviews with the Solidarity Center's staff in Doha and in headquarters suggest that recruitment of migrant worker volunteers is a major obstacle.

3.7 Lessons Learned and Best Practices

As indicated in the grant application and the logic frame, a manual of best practices and lessons learned was to be one of the products of this project. It has not been produced yet; therefore, it is difficult to evaluate this component of the project. However, close reading of the project's progress reports and interviews with staff indicate that not much thought has gone yet into the development of this product.

Recommendation: The project staff should be not only held accountable for producing this document but should also be encouraged to be open about the pitfalls and limitations brought on by the difficult context in which the project was to be implemented. It would be important to future projects in the Gulf Region to know what could have been done differently and whether goals and objectives were realistic.

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