

# Migrant Domestic Workers: Nepal, Lebanon



A project evaluation for Anti-Slavery International

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November 2016

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# 1. About the project

This section provides background information about the project

## Background Information and Project's aim

The overall aim of the project, funded by the Open Society Foundation, is to ensure Nepalese domestic workers migrating to Lebanon are able to protect themselves from exploitation and abuse; assert their rights; and ensure the governments in both countries are responsive to their needs.

In response to evidence of widespread exploitation and abuse, and the deaths of numerous domestic workers, Nepal implemented a deployment ban on migration for domestic work from Nepal to Lebanon in January 2010 by not issuing labour permits anymore; in August 2012, Nepal reinstated a complete ban on women from working in Gulf and Middle Eastern countries, but limited it to women and girls under the age of 30. The ban has since been revised again, in April 2015, to apply to women under the age of 25. Migration to Lebanon nevertheless still occurs in significant numbers. Establishing effective methods for protecting migrant domestic workers from countries that currently have total or partial bans on their nationals travelling to the Lebanon for domestic work is critically important. Until the project started, the Nepalese domestic worker community in Lebanon was among the least organised community and its members amongst the most vulnerable groups of migrant workers.

In Lebanon, the labour migration policy for domestic workers is based upon the sponsorship (*kafala*) system that operates throughout the Middle East and the Gulf, and constitutes a structure under which domestic workers are effectively controlled by their employer/sponsor (*kafeel*), and which in many cases contributes to slavery-like conditions. The sponsorship system is one of the major factors contributing to the vulnerability of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon. The system restricts their freedom of movement, channels of communication, independence and freedom. The *kafala* system binds migrant workers to their local employer legally and generates financial dependency from which they cannot withdraw unilaterally. Domestic workers cannot leave the house or employ of the *kafeel* without his/her permission and thus without putting their immigration status in jeopardy as if they do so they become undocumented migrants and as such they risk deportation and imprisonment. Within such confines, the system leaves domestic workers highly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, without providing access to viable recourse or redress.

Anti-Slavery International with its local partners GEFONT in Nepal and KAFA in Lebanon have been implementing a four-year project which seeks to improve living and working conditions of Nepalese migrant domestic workers in Lebanon and overall to provide better protection and prevent exploitation and abuse of all migrant domestic workers planning to or already working in Lebanon, through advocacy for policy change in both the country of destination and origin.

The ultimate goal is to end the exploitation, abuse and rights violations of migrant domestic workers from developing countries working in the Middle East. This requires substantial systemic changes and attitudinal shifts at both statutory and civil society levels within the destination countries, and is a long-term objective.

The medium-term goal is to ensure migrant domestic workers, individually and collectively, have the capacity to protect themselves from exploitation and abuse and assert their rights; even in a background socio-political environment that is still overwhelmingly dismissive of their needs, status and well-being.

In order to achieve these goals the project aimed to:

1. Empower Nepali migrant domestic workers (MDWs) who may be seeking work in Lebanon to be aware of their rights and how to claim them, of the risks and vulnerabilities they may face; how and where to seek assistance; and to encourage them to make contact with partners (e.g. Kafa and Nari) on arrival. These MDWs were also to be sensitised to the importance of linking with a community of support.
2. Ensure that Nepali migrant domestic workers, both current and newly arrived, self-organise to create a new, empowered and partly autonomous community of migrant workers who build the confidence to claim their rights and raise awareness amongst their peers and Lebanese society more widely.
3. Ensure that duty bearers and civil society in Nepal and Lebanon are responsive to MDW needs, by strengthening the Lebanese legal framework and access to justice; improving access to services (including increased Nepali consular services); to encourage a review of the ban preventing Nepali domestic workers from working in Lebanon and increase understanding and initiate constructive dialogue towards eventual ratification of ILO Domestic Work Convention.
4. Share lesson learning from the project with relevant stakeholders from other source and destination countries; in particular what has been learned about the most effective pre-departure and post-destination intervention strategies and how these can be made mutually reinforcing through collaborative working. The project also aims to share these lessons with the wider human rights and development community.

## 2. About the evaluation

This evaluation took place in June and July 2016



The process included



**Review of existing materials:** project documents by Anti-Slavery International and additional resources on MDW related issues in Nepal, Lebanon.



**Fieldwork in two countries.** Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders in Nepal (Kathmandu and in Jhapa district) and Lebanon (Beirut).



**Documentation, analysis, generation of various products.** The evaluation recognise *complexity*. Hence the need to capture evidence and share analysis in innovative ways (e.g. through open data, online analysis tools, multimedia).

### Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- **Identify the impact of the project**, the positive negative, direct and indirect consequences.
- Allow Anti-Slavery International to **learn** about what has been achieved through the project and the challenges encountered in implementation and the gaps in project design.
- Allow Anti-Slavery International to **share lessons learnt** with internal and external stakeholders.
- Allow Anti-Slavery International to **account** to local stakeholders and funders for project achievements.
- Ascertain whether **funds were used effectively and efficiently to deliver results** (the evaluator will not conduct a full audit).
- Allow Anti-Slavery International to decide whether there is need for **a follow-on project** and if so how such a project could build on the success achieved and address any shortcomings in the current project.

### Gathering evidence

The evaluator was **accompanied by project staff** of partner organisations. She **engaged with various stakeholders** (project partners' representatives, civil society organisations working on MDWs, government representatives, MDWs and returnees, international and UN organisations, local Trade Unions, researchers, private sector actors). The evaluation diary and full interview records are available on the evaluation blog. Interactions were mainly based on **in-depth open qualitative interviews**, to explore what changes informants experienced and their views. Active listening generated discussion and learning **beyond anticipated results**: unexpected views, outcomes, challenges. These were **systematised**. Systematisation involves bringing together many diverse views and insights about change; organizing them: identifying drivers of change and key issues. It involves looking for structures and drivers beyond the pre-established log-frames or programme outline. This is to inform learning and/or future action. For example, rather than stopping at looking at project activities, the process revealed a broader migration chain underlying them. The evaluation process also **recognises complexity**, and the need to contextualize change. The approach was **participative and learning-oriented, rather than being "judgemental and expert driven"**. It encouraged critical reflection amongst key stakeholders, so that findings – co-generated – could be richer and owned.



**Active listening: in-depth qualitative interviews.** Interviews did not follow pre-set guidelines or checklists. Of course the evaluator had her own broad framework and expertise for looking at and probing empowerment and rights-based change. Broad topics worth discussing with stakeholders were identified ("*What can this actor tell us?*"). But an active



listening approach was taken. Initial open question about change (e.g. “*what change did this project provoke*” or “*what do you want to share about this project?*”) led to topics to explore and deepen. This created interesting space for discussion and learning, revealing unexpected perspectives, outcomes, challenges.



**Participant observation:** the team participated to some of the events run as part of the project itself. This included, participation in a sensitisation meeting for women in a village in Jhapa (Nepal); participation in a GEFONT zonal meeting focusing on MDWs issues (in Nepal); an outing with NARI members (in Lebanon).



**Dialogue with and involvement of partners:** they were active part of the team. They were involved on ongoing critical reflection on the findings. How to avoid that presence of staff could make interviewees reluctant to share? 1) An active listening approach and long interviews created the space to look into challenging topics; 2) When we felt that some sensitivities might exist, we allowed for private conversation. On the other side: 1) the presence of familiar faces often makes people more comfortable; 2) it helps to clarify misunderstandings and to cross check facts; 3) it also allow staff to bring forward issues that evaluators might not be aware of. We could involve partners because - throughout the evaluation - they demonstrated openness to criticism and genuine willingness to learn. Their presence contributed to create a safe space for discussion and enriched it.







**Focus on the process of change.** Beyond *results*, the evaluation looked at the *process* of change, seeking to systematise insights on dynamics and “soft components”. It did so through an extensive analysis process (captured in the “mother report”) and employing tools such as social network analysis / timeline generation software.




## Sharing evidence and analysis.

This report is only the tip of the iceberg, and it is intended to capture key ideas and findings. More resources are shared online to:

- **ensure transparency** of the evaluation process
- link conclusions and recommendations to **supporting evidence**
- allow **further analysis** and insight generation by Anti-Slavery and partners (based on their experience and standpoints, they might use the evidence to inform further analysis, lesson learning, further work)
- inform and **improve communication** of how change is happening through diverse media (e.g. videos);
- enable evaluation users to **test novel ways and tools for analysis** of change (e.g. network analysis).

It is hoped that the additional materials and tools for analysis – linked below - can be further used by project and other interested stakeholders.

 <p><b>Evaluation site</b>  <a href="https://mdweval.wordpress.com">https://mdweval.wordpress.com</a>            contains all the materials produced for this evaluation. It was updated as the evaluation was ongoing.</p>	<p>10/06 – Mira Basnet (field representative GEFONT)</p>  <p><b>Interview notes</b>  <a href="http://tinyurl.com/jek68uq">http://tinyurl.com/jek68uq</a>            Full notes of all the interviews / activities of the evaluation</p>	 <p><b>Videos</b>  <a href="https://mdweval.wordpress.com/videos/">https://mdweval.wordpress.com/videos/</a>            Over 100 mini-clips capture highlights from the interviews.</p>
 <p><b>Stakeholder Map</b>  <a href="http://tinyurl.com/gm57spk">http://tinyurl.com/gm57spk</a>            Interactive social network map showing: 1) information about each stakeholder; 2) its relations with others; 3) how relations developed throughout the project.</p>	 <p><b>Timeline</b>  <a href="http://tinyurl.com/zysuvfx">http://tinyurl.com/zysuvfx</a>            Key events – derived from project reports and context analysis – are put on a timeline.</p>	 <p><b>Additional resources</b>  <a href="https://mdweval.wordpress.com/context/">https://mdweval.wordpress.com/context/</a>            Background materials, reports, videos produced by Anti-Slavery International and other organisations</p>

 <p><b>Mother report</b>  <a href="http://mdweval.wordpress.com/analysis">mdweval.wordpress.com/analysis</a>  An extended report reporting on all the analysis done, enriched by comments by partners</p>	 <p><b>Final report</b>  <a href="http://mdweval.wordpress.com/analysis">mdweval.wordpress.com/analysis</a>  This document can also be accessed on line.</p>	 <p><b>Excerpts</b>  Stand alone insights (on the <a href="#">migration chain</a>, on <a href="#">programme strategies and learning</a>, on <a href="#">challenges and enablers</a>)</p>
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## Reading the report: accessing additional content

The resources above are linked from the report itself.



### Links to additional content.

Within the report you will find URL / active links to some of the resources above (e.g.: stakeholder analysis, excerpts)



### Video bites.

Rather than having “footnotes” this report has “talking heads”!

By clicking on underlined text you can access mini videos supporting the point made. As you access the video, you can also read further information, and short contextual summaries.



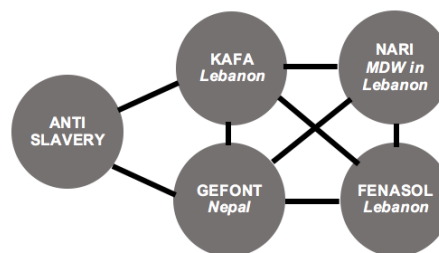
### Visuals

Visuals, icons are used throughout the report to highlight key ideas, and to make content scanning easier.

## 3. Project partners, key stakeholders

Anti-Slavery International collaborated;

- in Nepal: with the *General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)*. GEFONT had previous collaboration with Anti-Slavery International on bonded labour. Within Nepal they are a unique trade union: they pushed the boundaries of “what is ‘work’” to include categories that – as MDWs- are often not recognised.
- in Lebanon: with *KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation*. KAFA is a feminist, secular, Lebanese, non-profit, organisation seeking to create a society that is free of social, economic and legal patriarchal structures that discriminate against women”



These partnerships ensured that:

- **perspective MDWs** in could be reached in Nepal, through **GEFONT zonal offices**
- **current MDWs** could be reached in Lebanon through the setup of a MDW organisation, **NARI**. NARI was supported by KAFA, as well as by outreach staff from GEFONT.

**FENASOL** (a Lebanese Union) emerged - in the lifetime of the project - as another key, unanticipated partner, for the support of MDW in Lebanon. A Domestic Worker Union was established under it, and KAFA, GEFONT, NARI, all collaborated with it.

### MDW organisations

In the lifetime of the project, MDWs organisations emerged in Lebanon.

- **NARI** – A main component of the project was the creation of a new entity, an organisation for Nepali MDW, supported by both KAFA and GEFONT. It brought together Nepali MDWs for mutual support, outreach, advocacy.

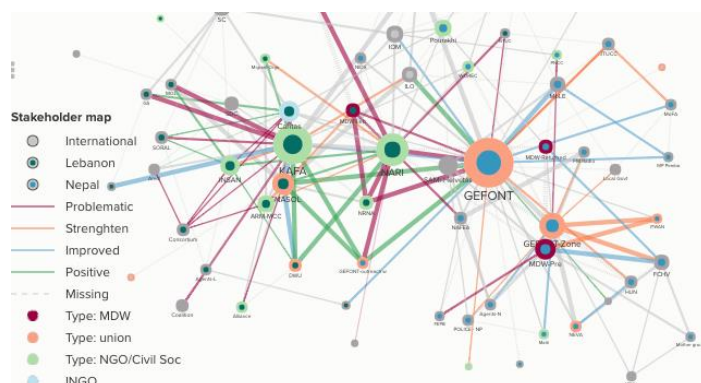
- **Domestic Workers Union** - established through other projects (supported by ILO and SDC) as the project was ongoing. The DWU is hosted within FENASOL, a Lebanese trade union. It involved Nepali MDWs – including NARI members - since its inception.
- Beside NARI and the DWU, other initiatives now exist to support MDWs. For example, activities for MDWs are run by migrants' centres; other national groups are getting together.

## How did the the project impact on its main partners?

The project strengthened its main partners and their capacity to support MDW, as well as their relationships. GEFONT- gained **resources to boost the work on MDW; sensitisation, expertise on the MDW issues (a new area of engagement); expanded its remit in supporting migrants**; developed a strong relationship with FENASOL in Lebanon. KAFA strengthened its focus on violence and abuses against MDW in Lebanon, through research and through direct exposure and support of cases. It accessed **resources to set up and /or strengthen services for MDW** (in particular hotline and shelter, but also legal assistance), and established capacities for **outreach and direct support work** – which was a new area for the organisation and out of its comfort zone.

## Stakeholder analysis: building and changing relationships

Beyond linkages amongst the main partners, the project acted on and transformed many more relationships. This aspect was extensively explored through social network analysis. An interactive stakeholder maps, capturing information for all stakeholders identified in the evaluation, was generated. It is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/gm57spk>. It contains a wealth of information that simply cannot be captured in a report, and that is best explored online. The analysis revealed that Anti-Slavery partners were able to **build and manage many relationships** and networks to steer change, in a complex context. The time and efforts that this takes is often underrated, and the social network map should help to appreciate it.



Access the full interactive map at: <http://tinyurl.com/gm57spk>

You will be able to:

- Get information about all stakeholders involved in the programme (as tracked by the evaluation)
- Explore relations amongst them (which ones were strengthened? Which remains problematic? Which are still missing?)



### Many new connections were created or improved as a direct result of this programme.

Many relationships simply did not exist before the programme. This includes relationships that are now very strong and matter for MDWs. GEFONT had never engaged with FENASOL in Lebanon. KAFA and FENASOL had no collaboration. Beyond these major relationship, many others were created or strengthened. Bringing together such different organisations is a strong achievement of the project, and resulted in tangible outcomes.



**Some relationships are “problematic”.** In some cases being problematic is part of the game (it should be no surprise, for example that the relationship between KAFA and General Security is often challenging, at a time when there is resistance to advocacy!). Elsewhere, addressing problematic relations might help to prevent conflict and/or to create new opportunities (e.g. the relations amongst NARI and NRNA – the Nepali Non-resident organisation)



**Some important links are still “missing”.** In some cases, connections anticipated by the programme had not yet materialized, or need to grow (for example, connecting more Nepali MDWs in Lebanon to NARI). Missing connections also suggest emerging possibilities to connect actors (e.g. potential for collaboration of GEFONT zonal offices with the the “SAMI” project – a broad project on safe migration).

<p>Nepal ↕ Lebanon</p>	<p><b>The programme supported connections along the migration corridor</b> The map shows dense and growing relationships amongst actors in Nepal and Lebanon. The programme had been true to its desire to create linkages within this corridor. This take is quite unique and worth emphasising.</p>
<p>NGOs ↕ Unions</p>	<p><b>The programme bridged different realms (e.g. NGOs/trade unions).</b> In both Nepal and Lebanon there is a strong cultural gap between these two worlds, and some competition. KAFA recalled that: “At the beginning Castro (<i>Head of FENASOL</i>) felt that NGOs were numbing people, by providing assistance rather than promoting rights”. GEFONT often pointed out that “trade union are right based, and they need to follow through on the rights they promote. NGOS are ‘issue based’ and have a projectized work”. As the colour coding on the map shows, despite these diverse views, and challenges on the way, <u>organisations ended up collaborating</u>, improving mutual understanding and created positive relations. This is a positive outcome of a project that created a common ground by strongly enforcing a rights based approach.</p>

## 4. Work in Nepal

### Objectives for the work in NEPAL

- Objective 1: **Empower** Nepali migrant domestic workers (MDWs) who may be seeking work in Lebanon to be **aware** of their rights and how to claim them, and of the risks and vulnerabilities they may face; and how and where to **seek assistance**; and to encourage them where possible to **make contact with partners** (e.g. Kafa and Nari) on arrival. These MDWs will also be sensitised to the importance of **linking up** with a community of support.
- Objective 3. Ensure that **duty bearers and civil society** in Nepal and Lebanon are responsive to MDW needs, by strengthening the Lebanese legal framework and access to justice; improving access to services (including increased Nepali consular services); to encourage a review of the ban preventing Nepali domestic workers from working in Lebanon and increase understanding and initiate constructive dialogue towards eventual ratification of ILO Domestic Work Convention.

### Advocacy in a changing context: when asks are within reach

The advocacy goals of the project (lifting the ban, signing Convention 189, ensuring diplomatic representation) have not been reached. But they now seem within reach, given the changed political situation in Nepal (e.g. a new constitution, the nomination of Bidhya Devi Bhandari - who had affiliations with GEFONT as president of Nepal...). **Government is now very progressive**, and concerned with MDWs rights. There is strong optimism by organisations. It was also recognised that – due to action of civil society – awareness of fair recruitment is now much more widespread amongst the general public.

Members of GEFONT are now in advisory roles within the government. They have unprecedented leverage for change. They can directly influence administrators and functionaries, rather than lobbying politicians.

What progress is expected?



**Removing the ban on migration** (Go...but safely!). The government wanted to “protect” women from risk of trafficking and exploitation with a ban on migration. It has not yet been removed – but the age limitation was reduced and further changes now discussed. Also, the Government is ready to agree an MOU with the Lebanese Government that will allow for sending domestic workers.



**Consular representation:** The experience of the Philippine MDWs in Lebanon (their embassy also includes a shelter, as reported by MCC) and the experience of GEFONT in other countries (as shared by GEFONT management and government functionaries) shows that **proper diplomatic representation makes a difference for MDWs**. When the project started, there was an honorary consulate of Nepal in Lebanon, now closed. In the lifetime of the project: GEFONT has **strengthened ties with the embassy in Cairo**, and negotiated with them, e.g. in some cases of repatriation. They **lobbied for diplomatic representation in Lebanon**. It was not a priority (re other migration states) but the government felt the pressure, and a new government budget contains provisions for a consular presence in Lebanon (including a female attaché).





**Signing ILO Convention 189.** Civil society is still demanding that Nepal sign ILO Convention 189. Not doing so weakens Nepal's position, asking others to respect a convention that it did not itself sign. It emerged that the main issues in ratifying the 189 convention are not linked to the convention per se, but rather the mistrust of international conventions generated by the ratification of Convention 169 (on indigenous people), which had unexpected consequences that polarized political debate.



**Zero Fees:** "Zero Fees" for migrants is the current policy (i.e. that employees should not pay expenses for recruitment or travelling). Agents are trying to counter that on the ground that unless Zero Fees apply to all countries, it would penalize Nepal, and that procedures are now complex and expensive. When rumours about a change in policy appeared, NGOs **campaignned and protested loudly**, GEFONT **lobbied quietly**. They preferred to rely on contacts within the government to verify information and lobby. This alienated other civil society actors.

Overall, NGOs in Nepal are very positive about proposed changes. They are confident that they will improve the situation. Many feel that the civil society goal should now be to help to raise awareness about the new provisions, rather than engage in advocacy.

### Key learning on advocacy in Nepal, and way forward

- **Enhance complementarities in advocacy.** The role of GEFONT in support of MDW is recognised by civil society, but room for collaboration on advocacy – as well as projects - is still limited by the perceived differences amongst NGOs and Trade Unions. Dialogue should continue to reveal and enhance opportunities for collaboration (e.g. to complement project such as SAMI - Safer Migration Project run by Swiss Cooperation in collaboration with the Government, to strengthen support networks, to more strongly link rights claims with projectized work.
- **The risk of over-optimism.** There are now many changes in the pipeline that civil society had advocated for a long time. The main risk is now over-optimism and trust that migration policies and practices will have the anticipated results. Civil society needs to remain vigilant and critically monitor if the changes they supported so far are actually having the desired impact.

## Reaching out, mobilising

GEFONT engaged directly with MDWs in in Jhapa – a region in eastern Nepal. The area was identified through research on migration patterns. Jhapa borders with India, and had with a high degree of outmigration (young MDW circumvent the ban to migration by travelling through India). The project:

- **set up a training of trainers (TOTs) and additional resources** for awareness raising,
- **trained and motivated community mobilisers** - for door to door work and organisation of events
- supported **sensitisation events in villages** and awareness raising sessions in general union meetings
- **identified returnee women domestic migrants as resources for awareness** (this only started at the end of the project, as it was challenging to identify and motivate them);

### Tools for outreach (TOT... and more)

Many organisations had focused on TOTs, and this is now discouraged. Several resources for training already exist and are little shared (also materials on Lebanon, for example, already existed – see: <http://www.mdwguide.com/>). The government has no system to manage pre-departure materials, and this result in a proliferation of materials.

Why this proliferation? Pre-departure awareness requires diverse components:



#### **Broad, empowering messages and advice**

e.g. on basic rights, potential risks, referrals on ports of call (agencies should also provide it, but civil society organisations and unions are best placed to complement it / monitor that it is provided, and to a good standard)



#### **Detailed, practical advice and know-how**

e.g. on contract provisions the task to be performed as MDW, language and life-skills (agencies are required to provide it, government and civil society might monitor relevance)

Because of the ban, young women willing to migrate to Lebanon have no access to the formal recruitment system – and, hence, to that detailed information on migration usually provided by the agents (they go abroad smuggled by illegal intermediaries). NGOs stepped in and tried to cover both aspects. So did the project's **Training of Trainers (TOT) for community mobilisers**.

The TOT materials produced by GEFONT/KAFA was considered of good quality. They contained general information about migration and specific information about MDW in Lebanon, and were linked to community mobilisation setup, as described in the next section. ILO reported using the package as a reference to develop its own materials.

But, overall, focusing on TOT materials covering practicalities – and of a specific country - turned out not to be the best option. Respondents pointed out that training:



**become less relevant and harder to circulate:**

It is hard to identify where migrants will go, and what will be relevant to them. And since Lebanon is not a priority country for migration, this issue was exacerbated.



**become too detailed, distracting from the main focus.**

Several informants highlighted that perspective MDWs often have no awareness of very basic rights and no idea of what domestic work involves. Basic messages - the role of a domestic worker, what she might be asked to do, what she should say NO to... - should take priority over focusing on a country

Besides this, other **practical to suggestion on how improve TOT** materials included:

- **invest in visuals.** some nice visuals were included, but there was **too much text**, which was too small;
- **rethink multimedia:** the CD included broke easily, it was hard to show videos in many locations:
- include **training props** (e.g. guidance for participatory games, illustration cards, explanation posters)
- make it **simpler and lighter** (too much material to memorize, also for the facilitators!)

Many NGOs are now aware that the role of civil society is sensitisation about rights, rather than training on duties. They should complement – rather than duplicate – curricula that had tended to focus on practicalities such as how to operate washing machines and ultimately focussed more on the needs of the employers, rather than the MDWs. If the ban remains, alternatives to the training in use should be devised. For example GEFONT now realise that provision of general information before departure and a more in-depth training at arrival could be a better combination– linking up with local civil society organisations.

### *Other Awareness raising tools and practices*

Beyond the TOT, the project also raised awareness of migration through:



**Leaflets and “hello cards”** - containing contact numbers for each major destination country. They were successful and republished, and would be worth sharing as “common creative licence”.



**Videos - for broadcasting on long haul buses** (in collaboration with the transport union). However drivers were often not able to convince passengers to watch them (way forward proposed included: further sensitisation on safe migration to drivers to make them more persuasive; shortening the videos; use entertaining styles , e.g. docu-drama)



**Radio messages:** radio was used, but professionals pointed out that recruitment agencies have much stronger impact as they tend to advertise in prime time. If organisations wish to propose alternatives to migration / highlight potential challenges, their communication strategies should account for this.



**Street theatre:** Few street theatre events were organised to raise awareness of MDW. It was considered very effective to share information and to sensitise people to the challenge that MDW have and the respect they deserve. The challenge, however, is how to ensure replicability across villages.



**Mobile phones** were not used. Their potential should be looked into, given the increasing adoption of this medium.

### **The FCHV (Female community Health Volunteer) model**

(Female Community Health Volunteers- - as well as Mothers Groups members); GEFONT, through its Zonal Office in Jhapa, mobilised local activists/groups to raise awareness on MDW issues and to support perspective ones. It mainly involved:

- **Unionised Female Community Health Workers (FCHV).** FCHV – exist in all villages. They mostly work on basic health issues, but are also often the point of contact for other developmental activities within villages [for a full outline on their role, see [http://nfhp.jsi.com/CHW/ch\\_workers.htm](http://nfhp.jsi.com/CHW/ch_workers.htm)]. GEFONT has a FCHV union, NEVA, and could mobilise members for outreach and sensitisation. FCHV were coordinated by union representatives, helping them to organise and report (The representative we met had been a MDW herself). They received information through the TOTs, and they shared it in face-to-face and village meetings.
- **Mothers' groups:** beside FCHVs, the project also involved existing **mothers' groups**, which are a common feature in many villages. (Note: other Civil Society representatives proposed that involving local cooperatives may also be a viable entry point)
- **Other trade union members.** For example, the transport union members, who were invited to broadcast videos on their buses. Members of other unions had also been involved in awareness session during periodic zonal meetings.

The project certainly had a positive impact in **raising awareness and motivation of the mobilisers**, as expressed by the FCHV we met. **Women were engaged** in meetings, although it is not clear how many women were reached (there are **challenges in monitoring outreach**, which will be discussed later). FCHV were also starting to **reach out to returnees MDWs** – inviting them to share their experiences. But this has been challenging, and only happened at the very end of the programme.

Looking at the FCHV models raised 3 main questions, as below:

- What are the strengths / potential of the model?
- Is mobilising MDW “business as usual” for trade unions?
- Can the model be up-scaled?

### What are the strengths / potential of the model?

The involvement of unionised FCHV lend itself to more than general awareness raising. FCHV do door to door work, they have in-depth knowledge of the community and they know what is going on. This suggests that a strength of the model also lies in the capacity “monitor communities” and provide support for MDW as need arises. The added value of involving FCHV is their capacity to talk and be vigilant over migration, in a context where migration and abuse are often hidden, and where Domestic Work is stigmatised. It is a model that is leaner on “awareness raising” and faster on “action and referrals”.

FCHV, rather than just providing information, are best placed to trigger action. Community monitoring can be a powerful asset to create safety nets in support of MDWs. Care should be taken that community monitoring does not can hamper privacy/personal choices of women (the tendency to interfere in women’s choices in the name of protection is well exemplified in the ban!) To this end it is important to:



**Inform choices:** FCHV should not interfere with the choices of perspective MDWs, but rather help them to make more consensual and informed ones (e.g. sharing alternatives, other MDWs experience, creating linkages);



**Sensitise the whole community, not only MDWs.** Awareness is now mainly directed to migrant workers, but it is important to sensitise the whole community on MDWs related issues. Part of this also involves helping to reduce stigma associated with Domestic Work, which still exists in Nepal;



**Monitor dynamics:** the capacity to monitor community dynamics might allow a reduction in potential abuse (e.g. warning signs of trafficking, shocks and stressors in communities / families)



**Trigger action on (potential) abuse:** some FCHV said that they can inform, but they cannot respond to abuse. Strengthening referrals, sharing options for action (with the support of GEFONT) is key.

### Is mobilising MDW “business as usual” for trade unions?

Mobilisation needed to reach out MDWs is different from the usual modalities of union work. It needs to reach people in individual households, and also overcome diffidence: people are not keen to reveal their migration plans, and they also are suspicious that trade organisations might discourage them. The union had to adapt to “door to door” work, and to test engagement of community groups to do so. Incidentally, GEFONT had recently set up a **Domestic Worker Union which encounters similar challenges in mobilising members**.

Local zone managers pointed out that **linking up domestic work within Nepal and abroad might create interesting synergies.**

### Where to “house” MDW rights?

MDW rights are now a cross cutting issue for GEFONT. It has sensitised several of its member Unions to deal with it. This was really important to ensure that the MDW issue was not sidelined and considered “a women’s affair”. However, MDW remained largely an issue of “awareness” rather than being absorbed as an area of engagement on workers’ rights proper. GEFONT still lack a “home”, a place to represent specific MDWs interests, where specific expertise can be consolidated, methods and techniques for reaching out MDWs can be sustained and from where to create lasting ties amongst MDWs. GEFONT has now a National Domestic Workers union, which has still little capacity, but has obvious overlaps with the issue of MDW, and opportunities for cross-fertilisation (e.g.: advocating for the dignity of domestic work as work; techniques needed to reach and mobilise DWs, awareness of basic rights, support to alternatives... etc.) GEFONT could consider if – whilst still ensuring that many unions mobilise to support MDWs – the National Domestic Worker Union might provide a necessary point of reference for MDW issues.

### Can the model be up-scaled?

This project emphasised depth of intervention rather than coverage. It worked in a small area, which was appropriate to test the approach. GEFONT is confident that the investment so far will be maintained. (A Union representative said that: “*The FCHVs linked to GEFONT will stick to the issue. Until and unless we ask them to change the focus, they will not do it*”). But does GEFONT have the will and capacity to broaden the scale of action? When considering issues of sustainability and upscaling it emerged that:

- **A strategy for scaling up the initiative has not been devised as part of the project**, so it is unclear if and how the approach could be replicated.
- **The coverage was too small to attract the interest of other actors** (e.g. government, media). This seemed to have reduced the potential for communication about the initiative, and, consequently, for support / partnerships.
- **Is institutionalisation possible?** GEFONT worked through its own unions when sensitising FCHVs. Would it be realistic to advocate for engagement in MDW as part of the standard FCHV duties? There is a risk of overload in doing so: several NGO informants considered the engagement with FCHV as a model with lot of potential. But some pointed out the risk of overloading the FCHVs: are the conduit for many initiatives (Government and NGOs often rely on them!) and can be overloaded.

In the absence of funding and specific projects, MDWs issues are likely to be tackled as part of general meetings, rather than supported with fully fledged training. This again poses the question if programme investment should have been in lighter products, more suitable for integration in general meeting / awareness raising / dissemination. A way forward could be, for GEFONT, to assess what can now be distilled from the experience, to ensure that mobilisation does not stop in a few Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Jhapa district. What can GEFONT realistically scale up? And what should be shared with other initiatives targeting MDWs/migrants instead?



**Foster specific focus on MDWs:** broader projects to sensitise people to migration issues exist all across Nepal (e.g. SAMI), but they do not always specifically focus on MDW issues. Based on the experience so far, GEFONT could generate specific action points / messages, in collaboration with such initiatives, to strengthen their specific support for MDWs.



**Simplify media, messages, options:** work towards simpler media / messages to share awareness, and to basic action points to stir action (e.g. “what to do when informed about abusive situations”). Ensure that they can be shared across GEFONT members – building on the experience of collaborating with the FCHV and transport union.

### Beyond “pre-departure training”.

The discussion so far indicates the needs to rethink roles and responsibilities for “pre-departure activities”, and the importance to recognise that “pre departure activities” include much more than standard “pre-departure training” (this is discussed further with reference to the migration chain). Reconsidering all this is particularly relevant now, as policies and practices for migration are likely to change. Both government representatives and civil society now feel that civil society organisations will have an important role in raising awareness about new norms. But... do they? And is it this their only role? The evaluation highlighted the importance for civil society to take the higher ground, and continue to promote broad rights awareness and empower, beyond sharing practicalities.





### Still a long way to go

<https://youtu.be/FMvgAt9CTVw>

Pemba Lama, former project manager of Gefont and now MP, highlights that a lot had changed, re: law and attitudes on MDW. But the challenge is now on the ground, in informing women so that they can avoid the many risks that still exist. This is why awareness programmes, focusing on rights, still matter.

The role of GEFONT should reorient (especially if legal options for departure are reinstated) towards:

- **monitor the quality of packages and provisions**, rather than duplicating them – ensuring that they also adequately tackle the rights of workers
- **complement them with broad awareness raising**, to emphasise the “rights” dimension, and the dignity of work, making use of its activists on the ground
- **lobby for the set-up of incentives to attract migrants to the legal net** (for example, provision of support, to make legal options more attractive)
- **continue monitoring for issues of trafficking / illegal migration**, and ensure **redress and access to justice**.

### *A side thought on preparedness; what could increase risk of trafficking?*

During the project, major earthquake happened in Nepal, followed by the fuel crisis. The earthquake did not hit the project area, but it had a massive impact on the capacity of GEFONT to run this project. As any other civil society initiative, the union focused all its resources in supporting the people affected.

It was observed that the quake impacted migration and trafficking: it initially reduced it. Both potential MDW and agents were affected, they had to focus on priorities at home. While there are no data, it was an evident phenomenon: the usual queues at the passport office disappeared. A few months after, however, rumours about increased risk of trafficking came to the attention of GEFONT. It is unclear if trafficking really increased: claims about increased risk were made by many organisations, but there is no robust evidence to support it. **Given the exposure of Nepal to disaster**, and the fact that it has now set up an emergency unit through learning from this earthquake, GEFONT could consider how to incorporate preventive measure to trafficking in the aftermath of disaster. For example, promoting awareness before instances of trafficking start to be reported. This is a timely opportunity to do so, because what exactly the response unit should do and when, has not been defined. It is important that a response unit does not stop at supporting the delivery of generic assistance rather than building on the strengths and specificities of GEFONT. For example, if GEFONT understands where the likely window is, when trafficking might increase, it might be ready to sensitise / mobilise its members / volunteers / staff / supporters to prevent it. They could have a set of messages ready that they could broadcast / share at the appropriate time, and be prepared and alerted to engage with key stakeholders to sensitise them.

### **Key learning on mobilisation in Nepal, and the way forward**

GEFONT tested channels to spread broad information about domestic migration, and options for mobilisation. But the focus chosen – **“pre-departure training” is not the best fit with GEFONT**. The strength of the organisation lies in its capacity to sensitise grassroots on access to rights, to mobilise them, and in ensuring redress / access to justice.

In a transforming context, unions should reconsider their positioning re MDW work, and **options for scaling it up** – which has been a gap in this programme. It could play on its strengths by:

- **Checking that agents and government respect the norms**, enable and support local activists and union members to do so, and to demand compliance.
- **Checking the quality of the training provided through agencies**. Having set TOTs GEFONT is also better placed to gauge quality of materials in use, ensuring, for example that training incorporates rights. (It was reported that that some pre-departure training discouraged migrants from joining trade unions abroad: “do not get involved in trade union, it is against the law”).
- **Seeking redress / bring people to justice**: support union members and other citizens to seek redress when the norms are not respected. This is very important in contexts where access to justice is limited.
- **check effectiveness**: gauge if the norms are really curtailing abuses, and propose alternatives. At a time where there is a lot of optimism about the new norms, it is key to remain vigilant and inquisitive about their impact. GEFONT, because of its rootedness and increased capacity to gauge migration trends – legal and illegal - in the areas where it works, is well positioned to do so
- **understanding information and awareness gaps in the systems, and raise awareness**: this might involve, for example, stressing the “rights” dimension of migration, or issues of dignity of work, which are at risk of being sidelined. Investment in **preparedness** would also be an asset.

All the above should be linked to a “**community monitoring**” model, where – building on its presence at the grassroots, GEFONT can put community members in a position to understand abuse and trigger action.

Specific options for awareness raising and mobilisation (applicable also as the ban remain) include:

- **development of “lighter and broader” capacity to engage with MDW migration.** This involves: focusing awareness on key rights of migrants and alternatives (rather than in depth pre-departure training, and country specific); develop a sustainable mix of outreach techniques (tapping into existing community mobilisers rather than setting ad-hoc events); distilling messages for easier broadcasting. Lighter awareness should be accompanied by efforts to broaden up coverage, in other districts.
- **Continue to produce good – and simple! - materials, and ensure that they are shared...** The Foreign Employment Promotion Board is using some of the materials GEFONT developed. IOL referred to their training. The “hello card” got reprinted and the information within it shared also by other organisations. GEFONT could consider making key, up to date information publicly available, and promoting a culture of reprinting and sharing.
- **... but rethink training / awareness raising packages.** The training package produced by GEFONT was considered of good quality, but is it really the most suitable one? Its narrow country focus, and its hybrid nature (too extensive to be a light awareness package, too light to be a full fledged-pre-departure training) demands reconsideration of its format. It is suggested that GEFONT revise its training packages and communication materials, to make them more suitable to union action. It should also invest in modalities that raised interest and participation, such as **theatre**.
- **“House” (M)DW work.** Linking up the national programme on domestic work with the international one, might help GEFONT to strengthen and innovate on its outreach capacities and support for (M)DW. Whilst doing this, coordination and involvement of trade unions, initiated by this programme, should be maintained.

When engaging with returnees:

- **Reconsider where/how returnees can best share their experience.** Be more wary of mass meeting (checking messages, sensitivities, content), and check the viability of smaller, more focused meeting (e.g. with perspective migrants rather than with the broader community). Guide returnees to share the aspects that could be more relevant for perspective migrants (e.g. organisation of the trip, logistics, practical “how to” in country) rather than generic information.
- **Be wary of the consequences on returnees.** Remember that inviting returnees to share experiences of exploitation might mean that they reconsider their experience abroad in a new light: they might now see as “abuse” behaviours that they had accepted. The psychosocial implications of this should be considered when working with returnees.

## 5. Work in Lebanon

- **Objective 2.** *Ensure that Nepali migrant domestic workers, both current and newly arrived, **self-organise** to create a new, empowered and partly autonomous community of migrant workers who build the confidence to claim their rights and raise awareness amongst their peers and Lebanese society more widely.*
- **Objective 3.** *Ensure that **duty bearers and civil society** in Nepal and Lebanon are responsive to MDW needs, by strengthening the Lebanese legal framework and access to justice; improving access to services (including increased Nepali consular services); to encourage a review of the ban preventing Nepali domestic workers from working in Lebanon and increase understanding and initiate constructive dialogue towards eventual ratification of ILO Domestic Work Convention.*

In Lebanon the project aimed at having a positive impact on the situation of MDW (in particular from Nepal) through 3 main areas of work:

- Advocacy work (including: consensus generation towards reforming the Kafala system; increased consular facilities, strategic litigation cases).
- Self-organisation on MDW from Nepal in support of their community.
- Provision of services (including support to survivors of violence, legal support).

### Advocacy work.

The main objective of advocacy was to promote changes in the *Kafala* system. **Kafala is not a law**. It bundles together law, practices in use, administrative processes, and social norms. It is **quite hard to disentangle**

what practices are rooted in law and which are arbitrary. It **affects MDWs, but it also put the burden of responsibility on the employers**, who are/feel responsible for the choices and behaviour of the MDWs. **Lack of information on (changing) procedures and requirements** further complicates the issue.

## Changing law, changing culture

In this context, advocacy work needs tackle different spheres, and within them, different angles:

### Law, policies

What should the “ask” be?

- Change the labour **code**? It now excludes domestic workers from its provisions, as they are not considered workers.
- Changes to **procedures**? (changing the *Standard Unified Contract* for MDWs, and other relevant administration procedures?)

Organisations have different positions. KAFA is uncompromising on the need to change the labour law (a view not shared by all organisations). All organisations, however are seeking incremental approaches to the policies in use.



### Cultural aspects

The status of MDW derives from multiple discriminations:

- Attitudes to **Women**: patriarchy still prevails in Lebanon, and violence against women is still widespread (this is the main focus of KAFA action)
- Attitudes to **Domestic Work**: it is not recognised as “work”.
- Attitudes to **Migration**. In the limited time at disposal we did not check what are the implication of “being a migrant”, per se. we noticed that the MDW issue tends to be disconnected from the issue of migration as a whole. Looking more closely at this connection might reveal further potential avenues / challenges for advocacy – at a time where there is a large influx of migrants and refugees.

The programme allowed KAFA to tackle both spheres, contributing to progress. In **assessing the progress made, vis-à-vis the situation at the inception of the programme**, it should be considered that:

- **More organisations now work on MDW**. A few years back, Caritas was the sole actor working on the issue, and did so mainly providing services. In recent years, several more national/regional organisations started to engage bringing in a rights / advocacy angle.
- **The political climate is less favourable to reform**. Up to 2012 the Minister of Labour was sensitive to workers’ rights and willing to change system. There was optimism. Following his resignations, space for change shrank.
- **There are other compelling priorities**: The Syrian crisis has a big impact on Lebanon, and the country is now hosting a high number of refugees. Several of the people we met asked “can MDW be a priority in these circumstances?”
- **MDW are now a visible issue**. Despite the large number of MDWs in country, the Lebanese community was in denial of the issue. As one representative of AMEL put it, “they have been hidden and abused for 40 years. But now MDW are visible”
- **Procedures are continuously shifting**. For example, the right for MDW to be accompanied by NGO representatives at their interrogation has been suddenly denied for the past two months. The norms regulating the permission for children to stay have been tightened, and children have been deported. As the FENASOL leader put it “*Due to the pressure of FENASOL and other organisations, some administrative decisions have been taken. But I can change things today, and someone can change them again tomorrow*”.

## Changing the culture

Many emphasised the positive changes in the perception of MDWs. They are **visible**. Issues affecting them are recognised and **debated**. There is also increased recognition – by the public, not yet by the law! – that **migrant workers are workers**.

There has not yet been research on the impact on advocacy, but all of the people interviewed feel that **KAFA had a major role in pushing for cultural change**. KAFA’s voice is amongst the strongest in civil society, messages are catchy, people listen to them. “It can run very strong campaigns” ... “It builds on a strong reputation for systematically reporting unacceptable forms of abuses” ... “KAFA campaigns make you think” NARI, with guidance of KAFA, also managed to engage in campaigns to change the attitudes of the general public, which attracted attention.

### Engaging the “other side”: agents, employers

KAFA have had challenges engaging “with the other side”: agents and employers. They tried to establish relations with the **head of the syndicate of the agents** at the beginning of the programme, but unsuccessfully, and the relationship is now very strained. We did not manage to meet him during the

fieldwork. Yet, other organisations are engaging positively with them. Caritas gets Head of Syndicate support when investigating cases. INSAN mapped individual agents and started to work with them on an individual basis; they prefer this options to engaging on top-down work, based on the respect of their code of conduct.

KAFA is also seeking to engage with the **employers**, around the message that “Kafala is a problem for both MDW and employers”. It recently conducted research to check if this perception is already shared by the employers, but did not get conclusive results on how employers feel. In some cases, employers were successfully brought on board (for example, calling on employers to refuse denouncing MDW for having relationships). But KAFA advocacy/campaigning work also seem to have alienated them: they feel that they are put in a bad light. Other organisations had engaged positively with employers. For example, Caritas runs group activities with employers, sharing information on rights and responsibilities of migrants, information on the contracts, ideas on how to improve the situation. AMEL uses its centres across Lebanon for one2one or group sessions to negotiate improvements / solutions for local cases. MCC is planning to amplify positive voices of employers. “There are some people who respect the DW and progress can be made with them.” KAFA might also try to share more captivating and positive messages. An attempt to do so happened in collaboration with NARI (campaign “my madam is good”) – but impact is not clear.

### Changing the law

As highlighted, little progress was made in changing Labour Law and the Kafala system (and connected administrative procedures). Civil society encounters resistance in doing so. KAFA, in particular, has an uncompromising stance that puts the organisation at the far end of the negotiation spectrum. Some options have been offered for input (e.g. on modifications on the standard contract), but they were not taken by civil society organisations. The lack of effective coordination / collaboration amongst organisation further limits engagement for change.

### Advocacy work by KAFA: key characteristics, achievements and way forward

The evaluation looked at the **advocacy of KAFA within the broader advocacy context**, checking how KAFA plays within it. The role and effectiveness of an organisation in changing policies and perceptions also need to be appreciated vis-à-vis the position and roles of other actors. KAFA is a **bold organisation**, and its **demands are radical**. This boldness is part of the identity of KAFA, and the organisation rightly seeks to preserve it. If KAFA was the only organisation working on MDWs it should probably try to be less confrontational / open up channels with various stakeholders: short term gains are more likely to be achieved by pinpointing specific issues to change rather than trying to change the whole law. But, beside KAFA there are organisations with a more “pragmatic” approach. In this setup KAFA’s strong positioning is useful to **set the compass**, reminding of the importance for structural changes. Defining a strategic stance on advocacy requires the capacity to monitor the position and claims of other actors. Unfortunately, **there is no space for coordinating advocacy**, or – at least – share information on position and activities of organisations. A consortium to this end was setup, but it “traumatically collapsed” – as put by an NGO informant and echoed by all other people consulted.

#### KAFA: characteristics of its advocacy



**A bold organisation:** KAFA is **bold**, as are its advocacy / campaigns. They are **memorable**. They are **strong**. But some observed that KAFA messages, whilst resonating with rights are like “screaming when you are in pain”. They are more **catered to denounce and alert, rather than offering alternatives for change**.

*KAFA should emphasise more its concrete propositions, beyond denouncing issues*



**Non-compromising, taking side, radical.** KAFA is radical, and **demands structural change** (for example: changing Labour law, beyond the domestic workers contracts). To avoid stalemates, a principled modality of campaigning and advocacy requires that the **overall landscape and action is continuously reassessed**: when should KAFA take a stance on structural change, and when should it **tactically ally** with organisations requesting for “minor” changes?

*How can KAFA better balance the need to achieve pragmatic gains whilst seeking structural change?*



**Evidence based advocacy:** The importance of strong evidence is well recognised in Lebanon, and many organisations had produced research on MDW. The quality of KAFA’s research and evidence has been recognised by all actors we met. And its campaigns are factual. But it was observed that “*Doing a research is something... building a relationship with decision maker and have the discussion about it is different*”.

*How can KAFA increase its capacity to make its research really travel within administration and influence key stakeholders, for impact (within the difficult political*



environment described above)?



**A grounded organisation:** Grounded advocacy involves **bringing along MDWs as active actors and to enable them to speak out**. It is key for empowerment. KAFA is committed to this approach: “*We were the first NGO that invited domestic workers in our meetings, as stakeholders with ministries*”. Advocacy initiatives featuring “vulnerable” people are always at risk of just “using” them. But this does not seem to be the case of KAFA. The **members of NARI had been empowered to speak out, and thrive in doing so**. They have been recognised as **authentic and genuine** in airing their experience. The main challenges in stepping up grounded advocacy is gauging to what extent MDWs can be supported to become more political. Whilst members of NARI can strongly share their experiences, **it is not clear to what extent “their personal is political”**. Clarifying who wishes to share testimonies and who is willing to take a political stance is needed to inform future action. Both are relevant, but they involve different engagement / support. It also requires **reassessing safe space**: MDW had been hesitant to speak out in front of authorities. In a meeting with the MOL, despite being prepared, NARI members “did not have the guts to raise their hand and make them accountable to their promises”. Reassessing safe spaces, and discussing the issue with activists is important.

*How can NARI engagement –as well as the engagement of other migrants groups – complement KAFA’s advocacy?*



**Ambitious.** KAFA is working for big changes, and so did women in NARI. They expect that the labour law will ultimately be changed. This ambition matches the potential of KAFA, that has already proven capable to put the issue of domestic violence on the agenda. But, when involving MDW, ambitious campaigns need be accompanied by monitoring which can highlight even small incremental change, to prevent frustration. MDWs feel the need to “see some change”, which is hard when the goal is a big policy change!

*Can KAFA increase its capacity to appreciate – and make visible – small incremental gains?*

### Key learning on advocacy in Lebanon, and way forward

- **Advocacy matters, in putting issues on the agenda.** All stakeholders we met emphasised how the perceptions of the MDW issue in Lebanon changed, in a few years, because of the work of concerned organisations. Amongst them KAFA was seen as having a strong role.
- **When you hit a wall, how to circumvent it?** Changes in the *Kafala* system have been hard to achieve. KAFA’s strategy has to be bold and principled, and this has served to orient the compass and stretch demands. It tried diverse options for awareness raising and advocacy. This section had highlighted some critical question in relation to KAFA distinctive approach to advocacy, which might help to spur further option for action.

## Organising and mobilising MDWs

A main project objective was to support MDW from Nepal to self-organise. A group – NARI – was formed to this end. As NARI developed, other initiatives to organise and mobilise MDWs were developed in Lebanon, including a Domestic Workers Union. Some NARI members / other Nepali MDWs engaged in the Union. Project partners – both KAFA and GEFONT – actively supported it, beyond project prescriptions – for example through the establishment of a MOU and collaboration between GEFONT and FENASOL. This was not without tensions (in particular: on the feminist agenda amongst KAFA and FENASOL; on the politicisation of their engagement, for NARI members). But commitment of all parties to overcome challenges is remarkable.



The evaluation looked extensively at NARI (and in particular at its identity and its development). It also documented the evolution of the DWU. Insights captured are fully presented in an excerpt, accessible at: [\[https://mdweval.wordpress.com/insights-on-nari/\]](https://mdweval.wordpress.com/insights-on-nari/).

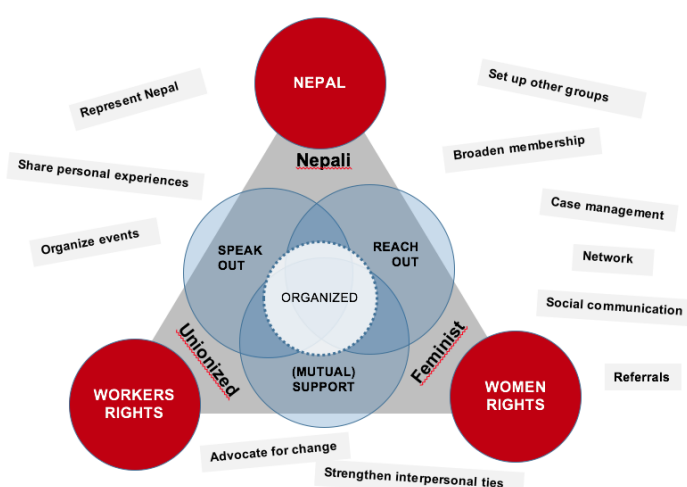
## NARI

NARI is a group of active Nepali MDW women. It was expected to grow, in the lifetime of the programme, to over 100 members, but it never reached this target (it reached 80, but a recent check put down the member count to 30 active ones: some were dormant, left or disengaged for example, when they [got boyfriends](#)) The main group is active in Beirut, but there are also regional committees in Tripoli - North of Lebanon - and Zalka - east of Beirut (the evaluation did not manage to meet their representatives)

## The identity of NARI

The setup of NARI was driven by the project brief and by the partners (high!) expectations. For GEFONT, the focus was mainly about **exploited WORKERS**: a mean to unionise MDWs, adapting a model already tested by GEFONT in other countries. In this respect, the collaboration with a local union, FENASOL, was the best strategy to ensure sustainability. For KAFA, the focus was on **abused WOMEN**. KAFA acknowledged the gender-labour dimensions, but it was not set up to tackle violations solely related to work (e.g. lack of payments). It responded to physical and psychological abuse of women. This difference initially created confusion amongst partners. But these different perspectives are also an asset, revealing diverse dimensions.

So, what is NARI, and what does it do? “NARI means **women** and it is a **feminist** organisation of MDWs, **supported by KAFA**”. This is how NARI members always describe themselves. But beyond this, what actually NARI is, what are its strengths and weakness, what are its ambitions... is quite hard to pin down. The organisation, according to its own plan, has 3 main objectives: 1) change and improve the situation of Nepalese and all migrant women in Lebanon; 2) help the Nepalese community, give advice and information on their rights; 3) outreach. Yet such objectives do not really seem to be owned, viable in the long term and sufficient to describe what NARI is and does.



This diagram illustrates the complexity of NARI. **What drivers?** NARI needs to link up three spheres: 1) Nepali identity; 2) workers rights and 3) women rights. These aspects can complement each other but they can also collide. Individual members might relate to one, but not to the others – which is what has happened in practice. **What activities?** The choice of activities requires prioritising / negotiating different spheres. For example, “organising events” might be about asserting Nepali identity (e.g. engaging in national celebrations) or workers identity (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> may parade with other nationalities) **What approaches?** The main strategies for action of NARI are “voice”; “support”; “outreach”. But each of them requires diverse skills and strategies. **What set-up?** Organisations can be formalised or loose/evolving. The project invested in formalising NARI from the start (agreeing on plans, devising procedures and structures). But does such formalisation allow the space needed to create / experiment with identity? Could a more fluid / evolving structure be better suited?

Defining what NARI is, what is its potential in Lebanon, requires further thinking. Until now it emerged that: 1) **harmonising different views on what NARI is was a hard task**. It has been hard for members and for partner organisations themselves. NARI can be framed as: a structured group, a group of MDWs with a voice; a feminist organisation; an organisation for mutual support; a way to get together and have fun; a national group.

2) **Aspirations of NARI members did not always coincide with the project objectives**, but they have not been made explicit. Members seem to have spent more time and energies trying to meet expectations – which are sometimes unclear to them - rather than evolve their own identity. “If they explained to us why we are establishing NARI it would be easier! They did not tell us: this is what we want you to do”. The end of the project is a timely opportunity to check what NARI is, and to refocus it.

In doing so, a point deserving special attention will be issue linked to national identity, because:

- **The relationship amongst NARI and NRNA (the non-resident association) have been challenging**, and – at times – openly conflictual (There are allegations of some NRNA members being MDW agents, and opposed to MDW rights). This distressed NARI members. It has been suggested that there could be spaces to generate more mutual solidarity amongst NRNA members and domestic workers, but this would require intervention from the higher echelons of NRNA.
- **Emphasising NATIONAL identities weakens the MDW movement**: fighting for the rights of one group of nationals eventually leads to the exploitation of another. And, in Lebanon, where pay is set by nationality now, not by skills, emphasising national networks could reinforce an attitude to think bilaterally. This does not seem to be a challenge now – also thanks to the existence of the Domestic Workers Union - but it should be kept in check.

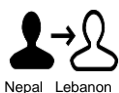
## Key learning, and ways forward on mobilisation in Lebanon (building identity)

**Would the project have worked if limited to the initial setup** (i.e. support of NARI only)? Probably not. The partnership amongst KAFA/GEFONT only would not have led to a sustainable group, able to fight for women's and labour rights. The objective was too far-fetched and ambitious, and the agendas of the organisations too different. In the end, the project was enriched by the unexpected engagement of other actors. The presence of FENASOL transformed the dynamics and created a sustainable house for unionised MDWs.

- **What next for NARI? Ownership of its identity.** NARI's development was mainly driven by the expectations of the program and of the partners supporting it. NARI should now reassess its mandate and the identity, across the multiple dimensions highlighted in this section. This should be done also taking into account changes in the context. For example, the existence of a domestic worker union, requires revision of the connections NARI wants to have with it, and the level of attention given to workers' rights within NARI. Similarly, the emergence of more national groups of MDW requires thinking on what connections NARI wants to have with them.
- **If the purpose is to unionise, then unions are more likely to get the work done.** The purpose of unionising women was definitely better supported by the linkages amongst trade unions. This is a tried and tested model of engagement of GEFONT which ultimately seem to be working also in Lebanon.
- **Mixed partnership (NGO, trade unions) have a big transformative potential.** Having KAFA in the equation ensured that other dimensions – beyond right to work - could be tackled better. Women's rights /empowerment are not yet strongly embedded even in the most progressive unions, and women's work might remain invisible. The presence of KAFA brought MDW powerfully onto the agendas of both GEFONT and FENASOL. Its relationship with the unions brought new perspectives / support allowing for deeper engagement and mobilisation of women within the Union. As GEFONT pointed out: "The connection with KAFA mattered, and they are very professional, but we needed a trade union. We did not have relationship there. Now we have a close one".
- **National or mixed groups?** In working on rights, it is important to strike a balance between a national identity and the need to ensure protection for all. The Nepali focus certainly helped to identify the specific challenges of this group, to forge international ties and to provide targeted support. The drawback is the risk of dividing the MDW community, and a diminished capacity to lobby for equal rights. The programme and situation have evolved and now there is an optimal setup: national groups – keen to exchange with others – which are linked to other mixed platforms (e.g. the DWU as well as other Alliances and informal groups). The learning is that a good programme for MDWs should aim at supporting and structuring multi-national platforms, whilst allowing women to have spaces to engage with fellow nationals. The way forward is to continue to work in parallel on both fronts, ensuring that the identity and focus of NARI vs Union is clear.

## NARI: organisational building

As an informant shared: "NARI might seem to be a small initiative, but it is a big deal. It happens in a country where people are not allowed to organise, and even trade unions are not working on these rights. The gender dimension is a further challenge". The **bottom line is that the empowerment of women in NARI has been remarkable**, and they are rightly proud of their achievements. They migrated from communities that dismiss women, and are now proud of their identity of feminist leaders. They face exclusion and fear in a society that exploits them, does not recognise their work as such, and considers them illegal. They are overworked, threatened... and yet keen to continue to get together and mobilise. Any suggestion on how to improve their work needs to be read with this in mind.



**Support through outreach workers** It became clear that a Nepali outreach worker was essential, to overcome language and cultural challenges. Observers also agreed that outreach workers are an expensive option, but needed (ILO). GEFONT has already provided outreach support to other community groups, in foreign countries, making use, wherever possible of returnee migrants. But Lebanon was different: there was not an existing active group of workers, and it was hard to mobilise isolated MDWs. Sita, the first outreach worker summarized it by saying "At the beginning I was blind". The personal dynamics amongst outreach workers and NARI members had ups and downs, but overall the presence of the outreach worker served to structure the organisation and to bring in new members. However, achievements have been hard to sustain, and capacity gaps remain to be addressed. (on: capacity for outreach, referrals, organisational management, motivation)



**Modalities for strategising and planning:** NARI members have been involved in planning, but the quality of their participation is unclear. More investment /expertise in participatory planning might have addressed this issue



**Modalities of action: risk of bureaucratisation.** Skill sharing on organisational procedures was an important part of the support. But ultimately, was this an asset or rather an impairment for action? Also the idea of relying on a physical office might be rethought. NARI had an independent office, and it is now hosted by FENASOL – but in an area where MDWs do not like to go. To what extent could office work be done remotely or online? Whilst posing challenges of access and connectivity, online work could be a better option to manage NARI, to reduce the time taken by office work on the free days.



**Communication, internal dynamics and conflict resolution:** There were challenges in intercultural communication, amongst KAFA and NARI, which the presence of the outreach worker helped to address. Weak participatory processes were aggravated by insufficient feedback loops to check if the information delivered was digested. There was also conflict amongst members (a code of conduct helped to address this).



**Assessment of individual capacities and interest.** A lot is demanded of NARI members, considering that they only have limited time free. To maximise the input they can provide, it will be key to identify individual capacities and interests, and offer opportunities for personal growth to people with diverse skillsets.



**Political sensitiveness:** The experience of NARI also reminds that being active MDWs might not equate with being unionised. Overlapping 'leadership in NARI' with 'activism in union' had created resistance – which might now be overcome because of the set up of the DWU

### Key learning on mobilisation in Lebanon, and ways forward

- **Support to group formation and activities is essential.** The presence of a GEFONT outreach worker was key in supporting NARI, to overcome language and cultural challenges, and to help moving things forward in a context where MDWs have very limited free time. The presence of facilitators to support group formation and mobilisation should be factored into future projects to support group formation and mobilisation.
- **Invest in participatory methods:** lack of expertise in participatory methodologies affected the ownership of planning, as well as communication and personal dynamics within NARI.
- **De-bureaucratise NARI.** NARI was set to function as a bureaucratised entity: with a formal plan, process and procedures, minutes of meetings. Office work frustrated members, and did not prove effective. Options for work need to be rethought. For example, can an up-to-date timeline on Facebook substitute for formal reporting? Can the use of mobile internet and online platforms help to substitute record keeping in office? Can formal meetings be minimised and happen in leisurely setups?
- **Mobilisation or organisation setup?** The support to NARI prioritised the set up of a formal organisation and with a focus on leadership building, but did not consider broader team dynamics and options for engagement by members. Recognising diversity of options for action and engagement might have created more buy in by members.

## Service provision

The project supported KAFA in strengthening services for MDWs. The services supported will be sustained beyond the project lifetime.



**Helpline.** Since 2010, KAFA has a **dedicated helpline to report cases of abuses** to MDWs. It is active 24/7. It is managed by an outreach worker, who can then take immediate action. Clients include MDWs, employers, police. KAFA has several helplines, and it might consider unifying them under one number, promoting it as the port of call for all abused women (screening screening procedures / protocols to refer callers should then be set). One number rather than many can be more easily advertised and shared (notwithstanding the need to also have specific advertisement for MDWs). Consolidation of the protocol used by the helpline should also be a priority. The outreach worker shared that learning how to best respond to hotline calls took her considerable time: her expertise should now be translated into **standard operating procedures**, that can be shared and handed over.



**Legal services:** the quality of legal services provided by KAFA is recognised. They mainly focus on cases of physical/sexual abuses, but – if need be, the lawyer also provides other advice and referrals. Lack of expert lawyers had been identified as a big challenge in Lebanon. This is why KAFA also ran **training for lawyers** to introduce MDWs issues. The training only recently happened, so it is still unclear if it will result in additional support for KAFA's work.





**Shelter:** KAFA recently established a shelter for trafficking survivors, which can cater for MDW cases of Sexually Exploitation / Forced Labour. It can host up to 18 survivors of violence. As with the legal services, KAFA focused assistance on survivors of physical and psychological violence. As we visited the premises we met women trafficked or abused from several countries (e.g. Bangladesh, Syria, Ethiopia). In the shelter, women participate actively in daily life, and to various activities (e.g. crafts, language sessions, awareness sessions, sport). They have access to treatment (psychologist and psychiatrist) and staff monitor their therapies. Caritas dismissed the initiative as redundant, in the light of the many placements they already offer. But other observers and NGOs, including representative of General Security, highlighted that there is a high need for shelters and this initiative is very useful. There is actually pressure on KAFA to use the shelter beyond cases of physical violence. KAFA initially tried, only to discover that different types of cases do not match together in a shelter. *“The people less abused would not go on well with the other people in the shelter. They were bored. The worse cases, instead, really needed the right pace and time to recover”*.

### Key learning on service provision in Lebanon, and ways forward

- **Focused services.** KAFA targets its services – in particular legal advice and shelter – to women who suffered physical and psychosocial abuses. There is a lot of pressure on the organisation – given the scarcity of such services - to broaden the target. But more generalist organisations exist providing integrated services, so it is suggested that KAFA continues to provide targeted services. The survivors of violence assisted by KAFA have very specific needs, hence the importance to develop specific protocols and capacities to respond to these. It is also important that KAFA continue to clarify the rationale for its targeting: several other institutions in Lebanon do not appreciate that abused MDW require specialised services.

## 6. Work across countries

A defining characteristic of the program was to link work on MDW across an origin and a destination country (Nepal and Lebanon). What does this involve? And what was achieved? Here are some highlights.



**Impact of the support to individual outgoing MDWs:** can work on a specific corridor **directly** impact individual outgoing MDWs? This could not be verified, and it is unclear if it happened. Migration to Lebanon is a fraction of MDW migration. In the district chosen it was not possible to single out women wishing to migrate specifically to Lebanon (because: a) prospective migrants might be secretive about their plans, or: b) they are often unsure of their destination. Conversely, in Lebanon, there are no NARI member who had received awareness training in Jhapa (nor NARI is aware of any).



**Support to returnees:** the program supported some MDWs on return / repatriation - directly with project funds, or collaborating with other organisations (e.g. providing case support to IOM)



**Increased collaboration of actors along the corridor:** The programme successfully connected stakeholders along the migration corridor. The stakeholder analysis shows how many relationships have been created and strengthened in the process – beyond the KAFA ⇔ GEFONT.



**Joint action for changes in inter-state agreements.** Project partners are involved in pushing for a MOU between Lebanon/Nepal and for improved representation, and they had made some progress on this front. The project allowed them to engage on bilateral relations that they had not tackled beforehand, because of the specific focus on MDWs. This joint work continues, but it is hampered by lack of funding.



**Monitoring of migration trends / trafficking.** Information on migration patterns along the Nepal-Lebanon corridor is still lacking (obtaining government data is also a challenge). The programme could do little in this regard. Limited capacity for outreach to Nepali MDWs had an impact on the capacity to document abuse along the corridor. However, there are some allegations of human trafficking involving Nepali MDWs, identified in collaboration amongst DWU/ FENASOL. The union is currently following up on this, albeit with little means. KAFA would consider almost all of MDWs in Lebanon in trafficking-like situations. They argue that the recruitment and sponsorships systems, in addition to practices of employers, put workers under trafficking-like situations.

Whilst the programme could not track individual cases, it allowed **an overview of dynamics and actions along a migration corridor to be gathered. This proved equally important**, in broadening perspectives on migration and the quest for better solutions and support. At the initial stage of the project, this was done through the inception research.

This evaluation now seeks to systematise the practices, options, challenges and opportunities that were encountered whilst visiting both Nepal and Lebanon.

## The migration chain

The evaluation could not track individual cases along the Nepal-Lebanon corridor. But it could join the dots and gain a broad perspective on the *global care chain*. To do so, it assembled learning from the experience of migrants, partners, other key stakeholders engaged in this project and in the concurrent *Work in freedom* one (a project by Anti-Slavery International – with its partners in Lebanon and Nepal – funded by ILO and working cross-country with other MDW communities, e.g. Bangladeshi).

The project did more than engaging on a few stipulated pre-departure activities (i.e. awareness raising on migration / pre-departure training) - and post-arrival ones (i.e. mobilisation of migrants). Programme managers and partners strategically acted on a broader “migration chain”, involving more stages and activities. This is because they could link up diverse projects but also because they were open to try options as need or potential emerged within the project.



The whole migration chain, however, remained implicit. The evaluation invested in making this chain explicit, as a resource for future work. It documented what project partners did within and outside the project. The chain also shows additional activities, performed by other stakeholders, worth being aware of to complement action on MDWs.

This section 1) provides a broad outline of the migration chain – on which to map out and put in context all the project activities (both activities intended by the project ■, and additional ones ■) and 2) identify areas to consider for future engagement ■

- What the programme set up to do, and did
- What key programme partners also did (additional project outcomes / other linked programmes)
- Areas where project partners might consider to engage (or scale up engagement).
- Areas that are better tackled by other actors



Detailed learning on the the chain, with examples and multimedia, is available online [\[https://mdweval.wordpress.com/the-migration-cycle-overview-analysis/\]](https://mdweval.wordpress.com/the-migration-cycle-overview-analysis/)

### Decision to migrate



*What informs the decision to migrate? Is migration really the better option for people? It has been recognised that there is now a strong pull for migration from Nepal. But there is increasing awareness that migration might not be the best option, for the people and also for the country. There are jobs within Nepal that would offer similar revenue to an experience abroad (e.g. work in tea plantations)*

- Identification of **risk factors** that might increase migration / risk of trafficking
- Awareness of **alternatives to migration**
- **Skills development (on alternatives)**
- **Dignity of work** (make alternatives worth considering and engaging with)

## Pre-departure



*How can MDW be best informed and supported as they prepare to leave their country? And can they migrate safely? This is the area where the programme had invested in supporting informed decision (awareness raising) and in creating support (e.g. through transport workers). Options for pre-departure work had been skewed by the ban, which had forced many migrants to leave the country illegally. Instead of a clear system, it is often a hard to track a chain of agents. There is now widespread optimism about removal of the ban, and reform of the system*

	<b>Awareness raising on rights and threats</b> to potential MDWs
	<b>Pre-departure training to MDW</b> (professional training on contractual issues, on skills needed to work as MDW, in specific contexts)
	<b>Monitoring pre-departure</b> (and linked actions: e.g. denouncing bogus agents...)
	<b>Creation of support net for MDWs at community level</b> (e.g. transport workers)

## Safe migration



*The rights of women should be ensured as they work in the destination country. This requires setting checks and support there, but also remaining vigilant in the country of origin.*

### In country of departure (Nepal)

	<b>Monitoring of migration trends</b> (data collection, community monitoring)
	<b>System reform</b>
	<b>Awareness raising for family/ community</b>
	<b>Linked mechanisms to trigger action</b> (active role of family in seeking for support)
	<b>Check intermediaries.</b> Be vigilant on the behaviour of agencies and other intermediaries
	<b>Bring abusers to justice.</b> Ensuring that agents and other intermediaries that abuse / traffic / exploit women are kept in check and are brought to justice.
	<b>Contain the destabilising effects of absentee women</b> in the family

### In country of arrival (Lebanon)

	<b>Monitoring of migration trends.</b> (with a focus on abuses)
	<b>Monitoring the migration system</b>
	<b>Monitoring intermediaries</b>
	<b>Awareness raising of general public</b>
	<b>Post arrival capacity building</b> (training, e.g. on language, life skills, etc.)
	<b>Setup of support nets</b> (e.g. linkages with active groups and organisations, unions. This should include <b>outreach</b> to isolated and at risk MDWs)
	<b>Ensure access to support and referral</b>
	<b>Provision of basic services</b> (e.g. legal, medical, psychological assistance)
	Creation of <b>networks for support by civil society</b>
	<b>Access to justice</b> (legal support for abused MDW)

### Across the corridors (Nepal to Lebanon)

Activities also need to happen across the corridor. The establishment of safety nets and referral systems, individual case management all require collaboration and information exchange across countries.

	<b>Monitoring of migration trends</b>
	<b>System reform</b>
	<b>Networks for support</b>

## Return, settlement



*What is the long term perspective? How to support MDW in their life-choices? Be it return or settlement, they will face challenges that need to be anticipated. Some migrants might choose to establish themselves in the new countries. Return can happen in several ways: completed cycle of migration (migrants achieved what they wished); incomplete cycle (migrants did not obtain what they expected, e.g. lack of payment; unsatisfactory work; adverse conditions abroad); interrupted cycles (expulsion, abuse, non renewal of permits, loss of job). We encountered all such cases in the evaluation, and options to counter the abuses that they might face surfaced.*

	Settlement: <b>working status</b>
	Settlement: <b>right to relations, children</b>
	<b>Return: emergency repatriation</b> (of abused MDWs, of deceased MDWs)
	<b>Return: return programmes.</b> Facilitation of programmes to support returnee women.
	Return: <b>fighting against stigma</b>
	Return: <b>Building support networks in country of origin</b>
	Return: <b>policy setup</b>
	Return: <b>empower women to control resources</b>
	Return: <b>value returnees</b>

### Key learning on the migration chain, and ways forward

- **Focus on a corridor... to then act broadly!** Looking at a specific corridor helped to appreciate the full migration cycle, and to systematise an array of practices that have been so far dispersed. Beyond supporting this programme it is hoped that this systematisation might help the project partners to better strategise future options for action, also along other corridors.
- **Pre-departure options for action are not limited to pre-departure training.** Pre-departure training – which was the main focus of this programme – is rather better left to agents. GEFONT and civil society should rather 1) engage in broad awareness raising of rights and threats – directly or by ensuring that this is part of the pre-departure curriculum 2) highlighting alternatives. GEFONT is well positioned for this because – through many of its unions - it claims dignity for jobs that are stigmatised, and could be promoted as an alternative.
- **Community monitoring.** Much emphasis has been given to awareness for MDW. But communities and families have an important role to play to ensure safe migration, which has not been tapped in, and which had emerged at all stages of the cycle. Community networks now exist to raise awareness, but it is key that they are also able to monitor risk of abuse and trigger action.
- **Return: the need to reintegrate MDWs, with dignity.** There is still little focus on return. Data are lacking, policies are missing. It is an area of big concern from the MDWs we met in Nepal. How to ensure that they are not stigmatised, and have control over the resources they generated, as they go back? And how to ensure that the dignity of their work is appreciated and valued?
- **Broaden the theory of change.** The programme did not have an explicit theory of change, but was built on the assumption that – within a migration corridor - pre-departure training could increase the options for MDWs to access support groups in country of destination, and to get support against abuses. The migration chain helps to reveal other complementary actions to support MDWs. Partners engaging had gone beyond the activities planned, and tackled many diverse components of the cycle. Looking at the overall chain, and at the options for engagement, might help to redefine and enhance a strategy for action.



# 7. Strategies for intervention

This section looks in at specific strategies for intervention: capacity building; mobilisation of activists and groups (with emphasis on participatory processes); outreach; coordination and risk management.











Detailed learning on strategies for intervention (including checklists for action) are shared on the blog [<https://mdweval.wordpress.com/strategies/>]

## Capacity building

A lot of investment in capacity building in the project, translated into “training”. Kafa/GEFONT trained MDWs, community mobilisers, but also lawyers’ administration, functionaries (e.g. police forces in Lebanon). The training offered was of good quality and appreciated by members. **Organisations also collaborated to share training options.** For example, in Lebanon INSAN launched a social media campaigns, and realised the importance of connecting domestic workers. They offered training on how to engage politically on Facebook, how to network with the country of origin. NARI members were invited and appreciated it.

The drawback is that active MDWs, functionaries responsible for MDWs support are often **overwhelmed by training** – organised by this project, and other initiatives. There is “training, training, training”, they lamented. Options highlighted to overcome this included





 Broaden options for capacity building	 Make training practical and connect it to action	 Make it fun!	 Enact, rather than tell.
 Stick to few messages:	 Use props, handouts.	 participatory methods	 Offer “online options”.

## Mobilisation and participation

The project invested in mobilising activists and creating groups. The **commitment to put MDWs and local activists in the driving seat is certainly strong.** For example in the general meetings of GEFONT the community volunteers were given a strong role, as presenters and facilitators, in front of senior representatives. They were proud of it. NARI members have always been encouraged to lead at events, and engage in action. However, both in Nepal and in Lebanon, supporting organisations **lack knowledge of participatory practices** that might have strengthened mobilisation.

Energies **were spent in getting a formal plan – linked to a monitoring system - rather than a very simple, clear, owned vision.** We saw that even NARI senior members had no ownership of it. They do not feel that they evolved their objectives. Despite many meetings spent in defining the plan, they could not even recall the main objectives. One NGO activist observed “*They are strengthened, empowered. But there is no sense of ownership of NARI: they have been organised. This power imbalance (‘you are organised by us’) does not allow the organisation to grow.*”

A more participatory approach might have entailed:

 Generation of a simple, shared vision	 Factoring in resources / Financial literacy	 participatory tools.	 Conflict resolution processes
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## Outreach

Mention of “outreach” is often made, within this programme (and more in general across other ones), to indicate different activities. There is not one type of outreach, but many. It is important to disentangle them to have more clarity about approaches in use and possibilities. Outreach might be targeted at multiple stakeholders (i.e. not only MDWs) and might involve:





Different purposes <i>What for?</i>	Different models <i>How?</i>	Different media <i>Through what?</i>
Getting members? → (link to mobilisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FCHV model: linking to existing membership / established community activists</li> <li>NARI model: start small, build leadership, expand.</li> <li>DWU: start small, snowball, identify leadership/roles, build capacity, strategise options</li> <li>AMEL (Lebanon): Piggyback to service provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialised, professional staff (e.g. Outreach worker, Social mobilisers)</li> <li><a href="#">MDW to MDW</a></li> <li>Phone</li> <li>Mass media / radio</li> <li>Social networks</li> </ul>
Identifying cases of abuses? → (referral/services)		
Getting supporters → Link to campaigning, awareness raising		

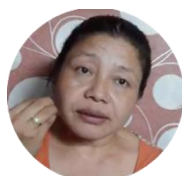
### Reaching out to MDWs in Nepal: building on an existing network

In **Nepal** outreach could be based on **existing networks of community mobilisers**, and this is a very effective and potentially scalable mode. Challenges however remain due to the **secretive attitude around migration issues**. Incidentally, **GEFONT started to develop specific expertise on mobilising DW in Nepal** (they have recently setup HUN, a trade union of home workers). Many of the [challenges and techniques to reach DW by HUN within Nepal](#) (e.g. having to go door to door, trying to meet them at market places...) resemble the ones now in use in Lebanon. [HUN recently started to collaborate with NEVA](#) (the Community Health Workers Union) to reach out to DW, but it has not been involved, until now, in this project. **This might have been a lost opportunity for sharing modalities of outreach, and to create linkages re: action domestic workers, within and outside Nepal.**

### Lebanon: challenges in reaching out to isolated MDWs.

In **Lebanon** the situation is even more complicated, as workers are now outside their community, and isolated. Organisations had offered training (NARI members received extensive training through the outreach worker), but the challenge is that there are not yet strong tried and tested models that are easy to replicate. More research and innovation on outreach is also needed.

 <u>MDWs are isolated and require a different mobilisation type.</u>	 Limited freedom of movement (MDWs are afraid to engage with others)	 Mobilisation might require <u>many visits and contacts.</u>	 Linking with employers matters but <u>only a minority are supportive</u>
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#### How I approached a domestic worker

<https://youtu.be/kaF92C4Y1X0>

Sita Lata, outreach worker from GEFONT in Lebanon, recalls the challenges she had connecting with a Nepali MDW, and how she was successful, after many attempts.

NARI actually had **intertwined two purposes for outreach, when reaching out to MDWs: increasing membership and seeking cases of abuse**. The assumption was that increasing membership might have eventually snowballed to reach out and bring into the safety nets also MDWs now isolated and at risk. Experience showed, however, that reaching **new members does not necessarily lead to reaching cases of abuse**. Outreach for MDWs seems to have actually reached a standstill. An ILO representative mentioned “*We keep on reaching out to the same group of people, for empowerment. Important to broaden the circles*”. Kafa reflected that they should have had a more “**anthropological approach**” in understanding linkages, connection and structure of the communities they work with, to better inform their strategies and options for

outreach (a lesson that will be tested in the program with Bangladesh community, which has an initial phase that is analysis oriented).

Other organisations are broadening their outreach towards MDWs at risk by **linking it to their service provision** across Lebanon. This modality of work, however, plays to the strengths of organisations like Caritas or Amel which have a broad presence on the ground and provide a broad set of integrated services to the population.

**Outreach for mobilisation** had crashed against lack of time and – sometimes – of interest, of people to engage within the groups. Why should a MDW engage in a group? It was already pointed out that NARI had emphasised an ethic of commitment and service, but this might not be attractive for all people. Some might not feel empowered enough, some would prefer more leisurely engagement. It is important to recognise that **different MDWs will be attracted by diverse groups/activities**, and cater for this by; 1) diversifying activities within one group and/or 2) by creating connections amongst different groups (e.g. training providers, national diasporas, activists, unions...)

Effective outreach for mobilisation requires MDWs support groups – and NARI in particular - to rethink their purpose and its desired membership, rather than going for a generalist one.

## Challenges in outreach

KAFA shared that they had encountered many challenges when engaging in outreach to mobilise MDWs. It was a new area of engagement, which they tackled as space for conventional advocacy work was shrinking. They felt it was out of their comfort zone, but they would disagree with people who say they did not have the expertise. They certainly acquired considerable expertise setting up NARI, and they are now trying new options with other communities (e.g. investing more in community mapping, linkages with the diaspora). It is key that KAFA capitalises on that, and further enriches its capacity to facilitate mobilisation – for example by acquiring techniques for participation and facilitation.

MDWs encountered very specific challenges in doing outreach, as captured in the table below. The bottom line is that realistically **MDWs can complement outreach work, but they cannot be the ones driving it.**

### Challenges encountered by MDW activists in their outreach.

- **Where to find MDWs?** The most worthwhile ones to reach are also the most secluded and isolated, and out of their net.
- **Reduced mobility.** Travelling is risky, and this is a challenge for visiting MDWs, but also for linking with other groups.
- **Limited time.** MDW have, at best, one free day a week, and they are then secluded at home
- **Is it the priority?** When contacts of MDWs were identified by the outreach worker, NARI members seemed sometimes to have other priorities, rather than following up on them
- **Know-how.** MDWs received training, but both KAFA and GEFONT did not have experience of outreach with MDWs. To what the extent was the know-how shared contextualised?
- **Overreliance on word of mouth:** one of the most widespread modality of outreach seems to have been “bringing in friends and acquaintances” but this technique limits the possibility to reach out more broadly than accessible circles.

## Coordination

Coordination work was not directly supported by the programme, but it is necessary for advocacy and effective support of MDW, and it is now lacking. The stakeholder analysis captured the very intricate networks that are in place, as well as synergies and tensions that are in place. It is hoped that they can be the basis of a strategic reassessment of options for coordination and synergies.

In **Nepal there are currently many projects that look at migration issues**, on a large scale and with the involvement of the government. GEFONT had some collaborations at the local level, for example with Maiti, an NGO working with trafficked girls. A project worth looking at is SAMI, which works on providing information and skills to prospective migrants. They have, for example, set information points at passport offices and it is going to be rolled out nationwide. Collaboration with such initiatives can be very fruitful, and play to the strength of GEFONT: because of its presence in villages GEFONT could continue to monitor trends in migration, and work to ensure access to justice to the workers that are cheated by the system. Such collaboration did not start yet, but a SAMI Representative was invited to the recent general meeting in Jhapa district.

In **Lebanon coordination is a thorny issue.** Previous attempts to generate a consortium, which dragged for some years, **frustrated participants.** By engaging in a SDC/DRC funded platform, NGOs had to agree

on common messages and demands, and this was simply impossible, given the differences amongst participants. Existing differences resulted in bigger fractures. The idea that “coordination does not mean agreement” does not seem to be owned by organisations. Another project, financed by the SDC through Amel, is just started and will try to work collaboratively on set issues. There are now monthly meetings of “who does what” but they **are not accompanied by platforms** that allow for better sharing. Coordination would also be useful to share progress in engaging with diverse stakeholders. For example, other organisations are exploring options for advocacy and awareness raising in schools (e.g. [Amel](#)).

Decision making at the national level is taken by a **Steering Committee**, which includes government bodies and international organisations. After some years of inactivity, it has now resumed its role, and it is discussing for example a revision of the standard unified contract, the use of banks for wage protection, employers blacklisting and online systems. The representative for Civil Society is Caritas – having engaged in MDWs since the committee was formed in 2007. Information sharing with other organisations does not seem to happen effectively, for example re: a recent attempt to ask for input on the Kafala system through the Steering Committee. Other organisations willing to input in (i.e. Insan) it finally got frustrated by lack of mutual feedback, and resorted to do their own advocacy on the issues.

In both countries, collaboration with tripartite agreements (also involving agents) has been limited so far; both GEFONT and KAFA have had limited engagement with them. This is an area requiring investment. Looking at the collaboration that some other organisations are testing (for example Insan in Lebanon) might generate options for engagement.

### *Better coordination for better referrals:*

Some organisations advocated for KAFA to broaden its action, and provide shelter / legal assistance beyond physical / psychological abuse. If this focus is too restrictive and should be broadened can only be assessed with a clearer picture of who does what, which is now missing.

In Lebanon different organisations have different capacities and niches. FENASOL is a port of call for work-related issues, but they do not have lawyers: they engage in direct negotiations. Insan covers diverse cases, and has a strong focus on children of migrants. Amel also has a broad scope, and has capacity to operate beyond Beirut. During the evaluation we noticed that “who does what, and with what capacity” is not always known by organisations. This limits the potential to 1) acknowledge and address gaps across the system and 2) to improve referrals between organisations.

Several organisations noticed that it is still hard for NARI to refer cases to the right organisation, but given the lack of a comprehensive referral system, and the different requirements of the organisations, this is not surprising. Some cases are borderline. For example, a case in which a MDW ran away and/or got pregnant is not something that KAFA could follow, if not linked to a physical abuse. but the consequences could be psychologically devastating for the woman and it is not surprising that NARI might still try to refer it.

### **Managing the risk encountered by women: protection issues.**

Protection is a thorny issue when it comes to MDWs. The ban in Nepal actually stems from believing that women are more in need of protection than other categories of migrants, at the expense of curtailing their rights. The stance of the partners of this programme is to avoid protection becoming a means to subjugate and limit the rights of women. This is not the only case where there is a thin line between the need to “ensure protection” (i.e. assess risk, recognise vulnerabilities of women and take action to reduce them) and “overprotecting” (i.e. treat people as passive, and restrict their right to make choices). This makes managing the risk faced by women a challenging issue.

Here are some instances where the line might need to be reassessed:

- **Protecting returnees: How to avoid sensitisation that creates stigma?** Awareness requires that women are made aware of the risk they face when they leave the country as domestic workers. However, publicly sharing that “MDWs are treated as dogs” might reinforce the stereotypes affecting the perception of returnees. How to reach a good balance of “warning about the risk” without creating an environment that makes returnees defensive and less likely to share the risks and challenges they might have faced?
- **Overprotecting groups.** NARI faces many risks and the supporting organisations have tackled them. For example: their independent office – exposed to raids – was moved to FENASOL’s premises. GEFONT’s outreach officer and KAFA provided step by step support and monitoring of their activities. But some observers, and KAFA itself, commented that NARI might have been overprotected. KAFA strongly felt the responsibility of having to respond to an affiliate organisation, and making it work well. This over-support meant that NARI had to grow as per expectations, rather than having space to experiment, to make mistakes and learn from them. *“They lack freedom to plan the activity by themselves, to take some risk. Even within the space they have, they are very controlled by the organisations supporting them”.*



- **Protecting activist MDWs. It is risky for MDWs to work on cases** in Lebanon. The employers can then file cases against them, and this puts them at risk of being deported (which has happened). NARI members as well as members of the Union received threats, and live in fear that the General Security could do something against them. A senior member of NARI shared: *“I came here for work, not for fighting... I should not put myself at risk”*. The support of local and international organisations does not make them invulnerable. One international staff expressed her worry: *“We promise to the MDW that we will always support them, and that nothing can happen to them... but can we really be confident in promising this?”* Another organisation pointed out: *“It is important to involve migrant workers themselves in advocacy. Some are really vocal. We inform them about the risk. We do not stop them, we inform them. But we cannot promise them ‘we will save you’”*. A former member of NARI revealed that she left the organisation when she felt under threat, but chose not to share with KAFA or with the group the reason why she left. She did not want to make other people afraid. It is key that KAFA, FENASOL as well as other organisations working on MDW continue to be vigilant re: the activists they are supporting, and strengthen their network of support to them.
- **Does protection only apply to women?** As it is important to fight the idea that “women *need* to be protected” and the idea that “*only women* need to be protected” should be challenged also. Abuse – including sexual and physical – also affects male migrants. Some of the measures being finalised in Nepal (e.g. the rapid response line) seem to now target women exclusively. Those who demand that abuses predominantly affecting women are tackled, should also demand that men are not discriminated in accessing them, especially when they are subjected to highly stigmatised and taboo sexual abuses.



#### **Insecurity, commitment**

<https://youtu.be/cJa6rxrNRRU>

Suzana, part of NARI management, shares the fears she has, but also reinstates her commitment to support other MDWs

#### **Key learning on cross-cutting strategies**

- **Training overload!** Many lamented to be overwhelmed by training. It will be key to promote ways to “learn by doing” (ensuring that people can achieve learning outputs *whilst* doing something tangible) rather than conventional classroom training.
- **Participatory tools might create more ownership?** The planning process of NARI was frustrating for all those involved, and generated little ownership. Could more participatory techniques have generated a stronger common and actionable vision?
- **Outreach work needs to be rethought and be more strategic.** In Nepal the outreach strategy could be built on existing linkages with community mobilisers. In Lebanon there are more challenges: MDWs are isolated and scattered, and outside their own community. In this context outreach is really challenging, and this difficulty was probably underestimated when setting the program. Many programmes in Lebanon actually assume that “MDWs will do outreach”, but this is simply not feasible. If the goal is to reach out to vulnerable and isolated migrants at risk, MDW activists can support action, but realistically not drive it. The way to go will probably involve trying and testing *combinations* of methods (e.g. linking mass campaigns with one to one follow up work by MDWs). Investment in research and ethnographic analysis of the MDWs/diaspora will also be key to understand which mechanisms can work best with what communities.
- **Coordination does not mean agreement, but collaboration.** In Lebanon in particular, coordination is very limited, and resisted by organisations. A previous effort to create a consortium for joint advocacy created divisions rather than collaboration. As a result, diffidence in coordination mechanisms still remains. This reduces the space for establishing, for example, necessary referral systems. The purpose should not be to get to a common statement, but rather to enable organisations to take informed decisions to guide and complement their advocacy initiatives and service provision.
- **Who does what? (and the links needed to strengthening referrals).** There is a need to map out activities and services. This is essential to streamline the referral system and to work on complementarities of assistance / advocacy. It was often emphasised that NARI had challenges in doing referrals, but a lack of clarity of “who does what” and “what services are available”, across the system, certainly does not help. Even General Security representatives expressed that referral and access to services might be challenging!
- **Risk management should be reassessed in the light of “protection” vs “overprotection.** MDWs who are mobilised through the project do this at personal risk: in Nepal they challenge stereotypes and perceptions. In Lebanon they take on very significant personal risk as their status makes them vulnerable. It is key that the organisations continue to assess risk and put in place measures to contain it. At the same time, they need to allow space for women to take action and experiment, without “overprotecting” them.

# 8. Learning



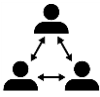

Learning was a specific objective of the programme. The programme generated a lot of learning indeed, but **structured eliciting and sharing of learning was limited until now**. There was little sharing of information beyond reporting, which was centralised through Anti-Slavery International. Much monitoring was linked to expectations and therefore not suitable to capture other dimensions of the project, which ended up being the real added value.

This evaluation – which took place beyond project requirements – is possibly the only formal process through which learning was harvested and consolidated. This is why it did not stop with highlights, but also deepened documentation aspects. It also emphasised the “systematisation” of the programme: i.e. revealing processes, linkages, challenges, opportunities beyond the results achieved. It looked at “how the programme worked” (and tried to outline this), not only at “what it did”. It is hoped that this can help programme stakeholders to derive their own recommendations and learning.



Detailed learning on monitoring and learning (including checklists for action) are shared on the <https://mdweval.wordpress.com/learning/> ]

Saying that learning was not often made explicit does not mean that the project has not learned! As shown below, it did, but not through set processes helping harvesting and sharing.

 <p>Piloted, innovative activities (but did not share them much)</p>	 <p>Provided learning to other programmes and activities</p>	 <p>Supported exchanges (but learning remained implicit)</p>	 <p>Had a critical approach (but no set evaluative activities)</p>
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## Gathering of evidence: monitoring, research.

The programme invested in evidence from the start, by **supporting research** along the corridor. In Lebanon investment in research then continued: Research and evidence based advocacy is one of the strengths of Kafa, also recognised by other organisations (“Kafa’s *research is strong and we rely on them for research*”).

Monitoring could also have contributed to the generation of evidence, but its use was limited. It was mainly limited to **tracking results / feed into reporting**. The following looks at alternatives to reporting and at further uses of monitoring, beyond reporting.

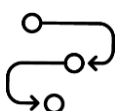
### Options for innovating on reporting

There were **challenges in getting data**, and in sharing them amongst partners. Reporting as it is now is not suited to the people on the ground. Collecting information from Nepal was particularly challenging. At field level there was a **reporting format**, in writing, but it was never used (and for good reasons: The coordinator lost her arm in an accident, volunteers often cannot read and write). It became evident that this reporting was the elephant giving birth to a mouse: reports took time and did not provide useful information (for example, consider the time spent for sharing report on paper in locations that are far away). In this context, phone reporting (regular update calls logged in at office) or SMS reporting (for example using SMS questionnaires that might be made available even on very simple phones) might be a less frustrating option, and ultimately more fruitful and useful.

As smarter information is captured on the ground, the monitoring of the overall project should also evolve, to track progress and learning beyond results. That data that reached Anti-Slavery International, for example, could have been packaged / conveyed in more useful formats.



**quantitative data** is now scattered in different documents, which does not allow for immediate analysis. Using **dashboards** (linked to an excel data sheet, tracking **progress** of key indicators in time) would allow for immediate analysis of trends and achievements.



The **process of change** is also hard to track. Most information was conveyed through tracking tables on key indicators. But important insights were not captured. The following table





suggests some alternative tools that could be used for ongoing reporting. Some of them have been piloted as part of this evaluation, in the blog.

The following options could be used beyond (or instead of) traditional reporting and monitoring

 <p>Ongoing reporting, project diaries</p>	 <p>Repository of documents</p>	 <p>Social network analysis</p>	 <p>Use of social media</p>
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## What is monitoring for?

There is much more to monitoring than reporting.

 <p><b>Inform response, advocacy, policy</b> In Lebanon there is a lot of investment in research and in checking facts overall, to inform advocacy. In Nepal there is very little data / awareness about migration, as was also <a href="#">pointed out by local administration</a>. Lack of evidence has consequences for the quality of advocacy and policy making. <a href="#">making claims with little supportive evidence is overall a problematic trend within Nepal</a>.</p>	 <p><b>Getting a sense of achievement</b> When engaging in campaigns and actions seeking to provoke major changes, it is important to appreciate changes along the way. Whilst KAFA is well aware of the challenges in achieving changes in the system, and has the patience and stamina to continue working for it, NARI and MDWs found it harder; We experienced an overall sense of frustration “we want to change the law, but nothing is happening</p>	 <p><b>Support learning</b> As mentioned, there was little investment in capturing the process of change. It is then hard to share.</p>	 <p><b>Strengthen a culture of accountability</b> Both in Lebanon and Nepal there is little emphasis on a culture of transparency and accountability. A culture of transparency on budgets and resources is not promoted; mechanisms to monitor policies and migration are not available; Demand for accountability measures on policies is weak.</p>
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### Key learning on learning

- **The project learnt a lot, but did not capture it.** As noticed by evaluation informants. not many projects link origin-destination countries. This project has therefore a lot to offer. This evaluation – which was initially not part of the proposal – became the main opportunity to capture learning. It is hoped that the systematised learning - in particular along the “migration cycle” – can now feed the process of sharing learning and practices.
- **Critical reflection needs to be supported by formal opportunities to learn.** Spaces and methods for after-action review / evaluative activities are missing amongst the organisations – within NARI, but also in the supporting organisation. They have a culture of action and a strong capacity to continuously reassess options, but no formal techniques / system for after-action review / evaluative activity. Creation of such spaces is needed.
- **Share learning.** There is little sharing of practices amongst actors working on MDW, both in Lebanon and in Nepal. The challenges in coordination, highlighted in the previous section, further compound the situation. There are now some emerging opportunities in Lebanon to promote the sharing of experiences (e.g. through SDC financed coordination), to which KAFA could contribute.
- **Move from “monitoring for reporting” to monitoring for informed response, accountability, etc.** Monitoring was mainly oriented to track progress. Systems for data capture were overall quite poor. Capacity to gather and process information should not be considered “a project requirement”, but rather an asset for the participating organisation – and particularly in Nepal, where there is a chronic lack of data. **This section illustrated how innovating options for data collection and reporting might support stronger accountability, inform response and advocacy and also empowerment of these engaged in supporting MDWs.**

## 9. Will change last?

This program was instrumental in putting MDWs on both GEFONT and KAFA's agendas. It bootstrapped involvement with support to research, mobilisation, and advocacy. Both **partners are strongly committed to MDW issues**. *"Migration is now in the agenda of GEFONT. Now we talk about the issues in the meeting. We cannot continue with the same emphasis as we did in the project but the issue remains in the agenda, even if the level of engagement will be less. If we do not get support, we will keep on trying. But it will not give up."* (a Gefont zone leader)



The evaluation also highlighted challenges and enablers of change, in Nepal, Lebanon and across the corridor. It lists these experienced so far, which are likely to remain an issue in further action on MDWs. <https://mdweval.wordpress.com/challenges-and-enablers/>

In Nepal, work on mobilisation and sensitisation was halted by the earthquake, so engagement and mobilisation at the local level only really took off towards the end of the programme. GEFONT however stressed that their way of working is not "projectised": when they start engaging on an issue and mobilising people, this becomes part of their commitment to their constituencies, and is not dropped off. The focus on MDW is now strong in Jhapa (community mobilisers are supported, several branches of the trade union committed, other stakeholders informed and engaged). The commitment on national advocacy is equally strong, and high profile. The question remains if and how the work at the local level could be scaled up to other areas.

In Lebanon, **KAFA has set up structures (e.g. the helpline, the shelter)**. They are recognised as important part of the response system in Lebanon, and the only dedicated ones to physical and psychosocial abuse. They will require considerable funds, but the organisation is **confident that they can fundraise to support them in the long term**. KAFA had also started to engage with other communities, with lighter touch models for their mobilisation, learning from the experience with NARI, supported through other programmes, by different donors.

Other actors became involved, **FENASOL** in particular, which is now linked to GEFONT through an MOU. This follows a model of building relationships in support of migrants that GEFONT had successfully tried in many other countries - but had not yet tested in a context where MDWs were prevalent. The involvement of FENASOL is probably the element that will ensure sustainability to the programme, re: capacity of MDWs to demand their workers' rights. It will also broaden this beyond Nepali nationals.

Such objective could not have been sustained only through the **mobilisation of NARI**. The **theory of change beyond the project was overly optimistic** in believing that a newly formed group of MDWs could – in the short project timeframe - gain momentum and work in many different areas (outreach, to increase membership and to reveal abuses; referral and case support; advocacy, etc.). NARI is not what was planned as per the project. It has weaker capacity for outreach, case referral and management than was anticipated. It is, nevertheless, a group that empowered and motivated MDWs leaders, and equipped them to assist them in supporting cases. It is also a point of reference for organisations working on MDWs. Looking at options for the future of NARI should also consider resourcing: so far NARI has been supported and funded. MDWs – as current practice in Lebanon – have been provided with incentives for transport, and for the organisation of activities. KAFA is still keen to provide some support to NARI, but transparently factoring resources should be part of planning the way forward.

### *Key learning on sustainability*

- **The project was effective in strengthening organisational capacity:** The project invested in KAFA and GEFONT at a time when they become interested in MDWs issues, but needed the capital to initiate substantial action. It can be seen as a seed programme from which further action was spurred. Both KAFA and GEFONT now have MDWs strongly in their agendas, and the commitment and capacity to continue working on it.
- **Adaptation is key: focus on goal matters more than focus on outcomes:** if the project limited itself to the initial theory of change, important components would not have been sustainable. The turning point in the project was the engagement with other actors (FENASOL) which could offer more sustainable options for engagement on workers' rights. The capacity of partners to opportunistically seize opportunities and to build operational relationships, as well as the leeway that the project management allowed them, were instrumental in ensuring sustainable change.



- **The setup of MDW driven initiatives was the weak link:** will NARI last? What will it be? NARI is not what was envisaged to be – over optimistically! - at the start of the project (a very strong, organised group of MDWs capable to mobilise on MDWs rights). Even if different from what anticipated, nevertheless NARI has a strong identity, and commitment from its members. A realistic reassessment of the role of NARI, focusing on the aspirations of its members need to take place, to inform future action. The support to NARI - and more broadly to MDWs activism - needs now to be reconsidered in a changed landscape. Beside the DWU - more migrant organisations / alliances now exist, supported by organisations with a strong right based approach to engagement with MDWs.

## 10. Recommendations

A lot has been achieved by the programme, and the organisations involved remain committed to work on MDWs beyond the project, as assessed in the previous section. A lot has been learnt, as highlighted throughout the evaluation. The following are overarching recommendations that might help shape the action of Anti-Slavery International and its partners, beyond the project.

### *Rethink - on the migration cycle – where further action would be more relevant*

Experience, as systematised in the migration cycle showed that the activities run by this project were useful, but sometimes a bit off-the-mark. For example, pre-departure activities and right awareness should now take priority over “pre-departure training” [i.e. the skill training which should be delivered by the agents]. The project partners experimented with many activities and this resulted in a rich menu of options for further action. It is recommended that – using the migration cycle as a reference – project partners reassess where their stronger niche could be, in context.

### *Enable NARI to strategically think about their future (but do not pre-empt it!)*

NARI might not have grown according to expectations but it is now an established group, with committed members. But now that the project ended... will NARI last? And what will it be? The evaluation cannot give definitive answers. Doing so would replicate the issue that generated confusion about the identity of the group: NARI became what the project wanted it to be, but it was not really evolved/owned by the members. The evaluation highlighted different facets of NARI, which can inform discussion and choices. What identity and purpose NARI should have and what membership it should attract should now be decided by members. It is important to support NARI to do so by designing a process that is **participatory** (i.e. employing participative methods) and **informed** (i.e. clearly sharing what resources – e.g. money, support time from Kafa and other organisations - is realistically available). This should be **done in context**. For example: Now that the Union exists, what is the role of NARI vis-à-vis it? Given the existence of alliances of different nations (e.g. within MCC), how should NARI link to it? And it should be **realistic**: the challenge for NARI was to match big expectations... a reality check on what can be done is now key for sustainability.

### *Move from awareness raising to “monitoring for action”*

There was lot of awareness raising and capacity building but in Nepal, as in Lebanon, trained community mobilisers felt frustrated by not knowing how to stop abuses in practice. For example, active MDW in Lebanon shared that “We know about rights, but it is hard to handle day to day harassment”. Rather than sticking to conventional awareness raising models, GEFONT, NARI, FENASOL could invest in “monitoring for action”. This involves having knowledge about potential abuse, capacity to identify it, and practical options for response (e.g. triggering signals indicating likelihood of abuse; MDW options for “self-defence”, etc.) Ensuring this has been a key objective of the project (e.g. one of the key expectations for NARI was to improve capacity for case management) but it has not been fully reached. Somehow the connection “information -> action” has been weak. Redefining modalities for training and awareness raising, for example linking them to practical simulation of action, might help to strengthen the link about knowledge and action, and to create safe spaces where actions can be tried out. Further investment in referral systems might also improve capacities of local actors to start action.

### *Consider how to upscale the models tested*

The project tested models and practices for mobilisation, for example through FCHV in Nepal. It is however not clear if and how they will be scaled up. Will GEFONT continue to raise awareness through them? Will other zonal offices engage in this?

### *Invest in participation*

Project partners had limited skills to support truly participative processes, and this has hampered growth and ownership of project activities. This limitation has been observed by many civil society representatives that had engaged with NARI. When support was provided through participatory methods (e.g. use of theatre both in Nepal and in Lebanon for sensation / planning) it was memorable and useful. Strengthening capacity to facilitate participatory process will be a key investment for project partners, and in particular for KAFA, as it is now engaging with diverse MDWs communities in Lebanon.

### *Where are the MDWs? Address outreach more strategically*

Most organisations working on MDWs find it hard to reach at-risk MDWs, in particular in Lebanon, where MDWs are isolated outside their communities. Until now **outreach has not been tackled strategically**, on the assumption that linkages amongst MDWs would snowball, but this was not the case. Organisations find it hard to broaden the existing circles of MDWs involved in groups and activities.

**There is probably not a silver bullet to ensure outreach**, but rather a combination of techniques, ranging from awareness with communities in the country of origin (e.g. motivating families to encourage MDWs to link up to safety nets); mass information campaigns in country of destination; linkages and connections through the diaspora; organisations of public gathering on national celebrations; use of messaging and social media, engagement with diverse stakeholders (e.g. in schools, etc.); attract them with provision of services (e.g. trainings)... All this is happening already, but haphazardly. Programmes engaging with MDWs need to **deepen their analysis** on the circumstances of MDWs and their diaspora, and **strategically devise outreach strategies, complementing activities that are now disconnected, in coordination.**

### *Continue to embrace a management style that ensures adaptation*

The richness of this programme was generated by it being adaptive. The most interesting outcomes are linked to unforeseen development and possibilities. The capacity to run adaptive programmes is an important asset for an organisation that work in complex and evolving settings, and it cannot be taken for granted. It requires enlightened donors and managers, as well as capacity of partners to be flexible, capable, and strategic in responding to changing contexts.

Further strengthening adaptability would require stronger monitoring, beyond results only (i.e. of context, of process). Having an explicit and evolving theory of change - as well as tools and mechanisms for keeping it in check and revising it - would contribute to a stronger strategic focus.

### *Share the learning*

This programme has a lot to offer in terms of learning. There are several regional projects looking at migration and corridors, but this one has a unique outlook, as it also dealt with issues at the grassroots. What can be grasped - looking at one destination country – what is not seen when looking at outward migration from Nepal only? And, conversely, what can be highlighted about Lebanon, when taking migration from Nepal into consideration? This evaluation was an opportunity to capture and highlight the many lessons that this project offered but the evaluation also noticed that they have, until now, been little shared, even amongst the partners collaborating along the corridors. Improving modalities of learning in the lifetime of a programme is a necessary investment for Anti-Slavery International and the organisation should also now invest in selecting lessons worth sharing.