Livelihoods of Post Trafficked Women in Nepal
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Nepal faces a large problem of trafficking of women and this research centres upon the post trafficking experiences of women and how their lives develop. Data was gathered from and with the women themselves and illustrated how post trafficked women may be stigmatised and discriminated against, including through lack of access to citizenship and ensuing rights. By bringing sexuality and citizenship into dialogue with debates on livelihoods this project is helping to generate a way of understanding the relationship between sexuality, gender and development. The research goes beyond the immediate ‘rescue’ of returnee trafficked women and combines a focus on livelihoods with the need to address the issues related to their right to citizenship.

The Advisory Group on the project play a key role in disseminating the research to relevant audiences. The project has disseminated its findings at conferences, meetings with relevant ministers and through the Nepalese press. Researchers from Newcastle University are working with policy makers locally and internationally to ensure that project findings feed into current citizenship debates and anti-trafficking strategies in Nepal and the wider South Asia region. This research is being undertaken with project partners Shakti Samuha (right), an anti-trafficking non-governmental organisation run by returnee trafficked women.

The research team have been successful in contributing to policy development by providing advisory information to the government of Nepal on the National Action Plan to combat trafficking and the Chair of the Nepali Fundamental Rights Committee. The research team have also provided conceptual input to a new large Department for International Development (DfID) anti-trafficking regional project, influencing the programme’s focus on returnee trafficked women’s rights to livelihoods. In August 2013 Shakti Samuha received Asia’s prestigious Magsaysay award. Established in 1957, the Ramon Magsaysay award is Asia’s highest honour and is widely regarded as the region’s equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize. Recipients are hailed as “Asia’s heroes of change” and are awarded to “honour the spirit of greatness and selfless leadership”.

The Board said of the decision to award Shakti Samuha: ‘In electing Shakti Samuha to receive the 2013 Ramon Magsaysay Award, the board of trustees recognizes its founders and members for transforming their lives in service to other human trafficking survivors, for their passionate dedication towards rooting out a pernicious social evil in Nepal, and the radiant example they have shown the world in reclaiming the human dignity that is the birthright of all abused women and children everywhere.’