

Women Into Work: Moving On

Internal Evaluation Report

**Slough Asian Women's Information Network
(SAWIN)**

A Stonham Project

July 2007

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background and Introduction to WIW: Moving On	9
1.2 Start up Issues and Problems	11
CHAPTER 2 - THE EVALUATION	
2.1 The Evaluation Structure	14
2.2 Overall Aim of the Internal Evaluation	15
2.3 Objectives of the Internal Evaluation	14
2.4 Type of Evaluation	15
2.5 Evaluation Questions	15
2.6 Empowering Evaluation Strategies	16
2.7 Methodology	17
2.8 Fieldwork Conducted	17
CHAPTER 3 - THE PROJECT	
3.1 Project Information/Details	18
3.2 Rationale	18
3.3 Objectives	19
3.4 Partners	20
3.5 Management/Project Structure (from the original tender document)	21
3.6 Target Group	21
CHAPTER 4 - TARGET GROUP RESULTS	
4.1 Beneficiary Profile	22
4.2 Activity Plan Results	26

CHAPTER 5 - DECONSTRUCTING THE PROJECT PROCESSES

5.1	Group Activities and Courses	27
5.2	Individual Interventions	27
5.3	EQUAL/SOVA Activities	28
5.4	Participation in the Project	29
5.5	Recruitment	29
5.6	Engagement	30
5.7	Equal Principles	33
5.8	Empowerment	33
5.9	Innovation	37
5.10	Brief Discussion of Other Principles	38

CHAPTER 6 - IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

6.1	Hard Outcomes	40
6.2	Analysis of Soft Outcome Questionnaires	40
6.3	Analysis of ILPs, Progress Reports and Perceptions of Progress	44

CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

7.1	Summary of Results	46
7.2	Key Strengths	46
7.3	Issues to Note	47
7.4	Items to Consider for Future Projects	47

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1	Activity Plan Results	49
Appendix 2	Staff Interview Schedule	55
Appendix 3	Beneficiary Interview Schedule	56

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In 2001, SOVA and partners came together to secure funding from the European Social Fund EQUAL programme for the Development Partnership (DP) called Women Into Work. In EQUAL Round 1 the partnership was commissioned to work towards combating discrimination and inequality experienced by women facing disadvantage, particularly as a result of their contact with the Criminal Justice System. The ultimate goal of the programme, lasting until November 2005, was to ensure that these women could work towards gaining access to and sustaining appropriate employment, training or education. An extensive peer research project was undertaken so as to identify the support needs of disadvantaged women and, based on the findings, five Pilot Projects were commissioned to provide such support.

Members of the this Development Partnership, along with a number of new partners, used the research and piloting work carried out during EQUAL Round 1 to identify further innovative approaches for development and testing under EQUAL Round 2. It was proposed that these approaches would continue to increase the employability and empowerment of women disadvantaged in the labour market in line with the work started by the Women into Work programme during Round 1. Money was accordingly secured from Equal to carry this work forward into Round 2.

The new Development Partnership was called Women into Work: Moving On and fell under the remit of Theme A of the EQUAL funding stream - 'Barriers to Employment'. Its key objective has been to pilot innovative and holistic support packages to enable disadvantaged women to move from disempowerment to empowerment in the labour market.

EQUAL programmes are organised and funded in three separate phases:

- Action 1 - the set-up phase
- Action 2 - the delivery phase, during which joint or complementary initiatives or activities are developed in the UK and in Europe
- Action 3 - mainstreaming policies and disseminating successful initiatives.

All three phases are expected to incorporate the five Equal principles of

- Innovation
- Empowerment
- Equal Opportunities
- Transnational Co-operation
- Dissemination and Mainstreaming

This Evaluation

This report is an evaluation of the Slough Asian Women's Information Network (SAWIN), which is one of seven pilot projects commissioned to run during Action 2. Action 2 was originally due to run from 1 July 2005 to December 2006, but in practice has run from 1 March 2006 to 31 May 2007, with a further extension for the project until 31 July. The project has been operational for a little over 12 months.

The aim of SAWIN is to offer flexible and holistic services to Asian women living in Slough who are currently experiencing or fleeing domestic violence, with a view to enabling women to overcome problems and to achieve greater independence through education training or employment.

This evaluation will assess the project processes, performance against key outcome targets and the extent to which the five leading Equal principles have been incorporated into the project work.

Summary of Evaluation Findings

These evaluation results suggest that SAWIN is a valuable project that offers a sympathetic and responsive service to Asian women who have experienced domestic violence. It set out to work in a holistic way and appears to have maintained this practice, through a flexible and varied provision of interventions, which have been able to respond to crisis needs and more long-term developmental goals.

SAWIN has built upon an existing outreach service and telephone help line attached to the established Asian women's refuge in Slough. It therefore benefited from a range of pre-existing relationships and partnerships with local agencies. Also, the project manager and two project workers had previously been employed either directly by the refuge or to run services connected with it. This meant that the project suffered less than it might otherwise have done from the reduced timescales for Action 2 initiatives.

The project has been able to demonstrate an empowering ethos and approach to work. It has been innovative in providing services for Asian women with an ultimate focus upon education, training or employment (ETE), whilst recognising the multiplicity of problems that individuals may need to address before ETE outcomes can be achieved. That said, the project reached the outcome targets that had been set for it, despite a reduced operational period.

The project participated in transnational work by hosting a visit by transnational partners in February 2007. Beneficiaries were also enabled to attend meetings of the Equal/SOVA Equal Opportunities and Diversity Advisory Group and a celebratory event in Sheffield in May 2007

Key Strengths of the Project

- separate project premises, which provides a safe space for women
- a skilled and committed staff group, with appropriate Asian languages
- a drop in facility so that women can easily access a range of advice
- a telephone help-line which has been extended 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

- links with key organisations and agencies so that women can obtain specialist advice relating to legal, immigration or other matters
- provision of practical help with benefits and finance
- provision of information and contacts relating to courses and training opportunities
- structured courses to assist women in improving English language skills
- additional courses on IT, beauty and self-development as well as other one off activities
- a commitment to empowerment of women through developing skills and providing support
- a welcoming and positive project ethos
- consultation with women over the nature and content of courses
- opportunity for a small number of women to become volunteers within the project

Difficulties or Barriers

Relatively few barriers were discussed in the course of the evaluation, although within tight timescales the project was unable to secure satisfactory crèche facilities to assist women with childcare needs to attend courses.

The project also noted the potential benefits of extending the telephone help line provision to evening and weekends.

Items to Consider for Future Projects

- that Asian women appreciate services that are culturally specific and where staff are able to speak appropriate Asian languages
- that provision of English language classes enabled women to achieve greater independence
- that key elements of effective delivery involve advocacy and brokerage in relation to mainstream agencies
- that another key feature of effective service is the ability to respond to the needs that women see as most important and that ensuring safety is paramount
- that a third key feature is practical assistance, particularly with financial matters

- that flexible drop in facilities in a dedicated premises is significant in enabling women to access services
- that a free phone help line within office hours is useful but there would be benefits in extending availability
- that this type of provision may be relevant for a wider constituency of Asian women, who may be disadvantaged, not because of domestic violence, but language, culture and social or economic circumstances

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Introduction to Women into Work: Moving On

In 2001, SOVA and partners¹ came together to secure funding from the European Social Fund EQUAL programme for the Development Partnership (DP) called Women Into Work. In EQUAL Round 1 the partnership was commissioned to work towards combating discrimination and inequality experienced by women facing disadvantage, particularly as a result of their contact with the Criminal Justice System. The ultimate goal of the programme, lasting until November 2005, was to ensure that these women could work towards gaining access to and sustaining appropriate employment, training or education. In order to achieve this goal an extensive peer research project was undertaken² so as to identify the support needs of disadvantaged women and, based on the findings, five Pilot Projects were commissioned³ to provide such support.

Members of the this Development Partnership, along with a number of new partners⁴, used the research and piloting work carried out during EQUAL Round 1 to identify further innovative approaches for development and testing under EQUAL Round 2. It was proposed that these approaches would continue to increase the employability and empowerment of women disadvantaged in the labour market in line with the work started by the Women into Work programme during Round 1.

¹ Addaction, CAST (Creative and Supportive Trust), Department for Education and Skills (Offender Learning and Skills Unit), Home Office (Women's Policy Team), Job Centre Plus, London Probation Area, NACRO, National Probation Directorate, Prince's Trust, Prison Service, Sheffield Hallam University, Stonham Housing Association

² O'Keeffe, C. (2003) Moving Mountains: Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Employment, Training and Education from the Voices of Women (Ex)Offenders. SHU Press.

³ 'The Network Club' - Creative and Supportive Trust
Creative Business Pilot - London College of Communications and HMP East Sutton Park
'Going Straight to Work' - NACRO
'Norfolk Women into Employment and Training' - Women's Employment Training and Enterprise Unit; Peer Mentoring Support and Resettlement Pilot' - SOVA

⁴ Business In Prisons, CAST, Incredit Ltd, NACRO, NOMS, Positively Women, Prison Service, Red Kite Learning, Sheffield Hallam University, Southside Partnership, SOVA, Stonham Housing, Tribal Education (Cambridge Training and Development Ltd), West Yorkshire Family Mediation Service.

Thus in June 2004, SOVA, on behalf of the Women Into Work (WiW) Development Partnership, bid for and subsequently secured additional monies from EQUAL Round 2 in order to build on the successes of the partnership work already achieved and to expand activities with new partners. The new Development Partnership was called Women into Work: Moving On and fell under the remit of Theme A of the EQUAL funding stream - 'Barriers to Employment'.

The key objective of Women into Work: Moving On was to pilot innovative and holistic support packages to enable disadvantaged women to move from disempowerment to empowerment in the labour market. The target group included women:

- in contact with the CJS/on resettlement from prison
- involved in the sex industry
- experiencing homelessness
- with health issues
- subject to domestic violence or abuse
- from ethnic minority groups.

EQUAL programmes are organised and funded in three separate phases:

- Action1 - the set-up phase
- Action 2 - the delivery phase, during which joint or complementary initiatives or activities are developed in the UK and in Europe
- Action 3 - mainstreaming policies and disseminating successful initiatives.

Additionally, EQUAL programmes have five leading principles which are incorporated throughout Actions 1, 2 and 3. These are:

- Innovation
- Empowerment
- Equal Opportunities
- Transnational Co-operation
- Dissemination and Mainstreaming

Action One of the programme has been evaluated elsewhere. During Action Two, proposals for innovative Pilot Projects were sought through the tendering and commissioning process in order to provide new delivery models which could promote access to the labour market for groups of women who are traditionally excluded or discriminated against. As a result of the due tendering and commissioning process, seven Pilot Projects were set up under Women Into Work: Moving On.

This report provides an evaluation of one of these Pilot Projects - The Slough Asian Women's Information Network (SAWIN).

1.2 Start up Issues and Problems

It is important to note that during the first phase of the evaluation of Action 2 there have been some major changes to the Moving On Programme. These changes have obviously had implications for progress with the programme. The background for these changes is described below.

During Action 1 of Women into Work: Moving On the partnership sought clarification from ECOTEC (the GB Equal Support Unit) that the large proportion of match funding in kind committed by one partner was eligible. This was agreed in principle, and the Development Partnership Agreement (DPA) was approved, but SOVA, the lead DP organisation, still felt uncertain about the extent to which some of the proposed match activity fit with the DPA objectives and within the work plan. At the start of Action 2, in conjunction with the main match funding partner, SOVA reviewed and restructured the planned match activity, eliminating that which was not suitable. This was a lengthy exercise and resulted in a reduction in the overall budget of the DPA, with attempts to source other match funding being unsuccessful. A Significant Change was submitted to the DWP via ECOTEC and a revised DPA was approved. Some of the key impacts have included the disbandment of the Beneficiary Support Forum in its original framework along with a reduction in the overall size and scope of the programme. For example, not all partners were providing their own match funding and so some could not be allocated Equal ESF funding as originally intended. These changes

inevitably had a negative impact on some members and delayed the start-up of the remaining pilot projects service delivery.

Action 2 of Women Into Work: Moving On was due to run between July 2005 and December 2006, thus allowing a period of approximately 18 months for pilot projects to operate. Initial proposals were put forward for consideration by the Development Partnership in the summer of 2005, the original tender document for the Slough Asian Women's Information Network (SAWIN) being signed on 6 May 2005.

Following the re-negotiating of match-funding detailed above, a Clarification Document, outlining new levels of funding, beneficiary targets and project activity, was issued in March 2006. At this point Stonham started the set up phase of the project, despite on-going uncertainty about the ultimate scope and remit of the project. The end date for Action 2 was also extended until 31 May 2007.

The project appears to have experienced fewer start up problems relative to other pilot projects, partly because some elements of its service in terms of the telephone helpline and a limited outreach service attached to the Asian women's refuge in Slough, Kinara, were already in existence. The project manager and two of the project workers were already in post and so the staff team for SAWIN as a more separate and distinct provision came together quite quickly from July 2006, building on existing working relationships and agency contacts from Kinara. An administrator and a third project worker completed the staff complement.

Whilst the project was establishing itself, further negotiations were still taking place between SOVA and Stonham, resulting in the production of a Service Specific Contract in September 2006. It is the target figures from this Service Specific Contract that have been used in this evaluation in order to assess performance, although elsewhere reference has been made as appropriate to both the original tender of May 2005 and the Clarification Document of March 2006.

In April 2007, a decision was taken to extend the project lifetime by a further two months, until 31 July 2007. The project has therefore been in operation for slightly over 12 months.

CHAPTER 2 - THE EVALUATION

2.1 The Evaluation Structure

Two evaluations in relation to Women into Work: Moving On were commissioned, the External Evaluation and the Internal Evaluation. The External Evaluation (conducted by the Centre for Public Policy at Northumbria University) was designed to examine the *overall effectiveness* of the WIW:MO Development Partnership (DP) and whether the partnership achieved its *strategic objectives*. The Internal Evaluation (as detailed in this report) was designed to examine the *specific achievements* of Pilot Projects and whether they have achieved their *performance objectives*. So, in summary, the External Evaluation was concerned with the '*overarching strategic goals*' of the WIW:MO Development Partnership whereas the Internal Evaluation was concerned with the '*nuts and bolts*' of Pilot Project activity.

2.2 Overall Aim of the Internal Evaluation

- To provide a rigorous and 'user friendly' assessment of the extent to which Women into Work: Moving On projects have met their objectives (incorporating the Equal principles of innovation and empowerment)⁵

2.3 Objectives of the Internal Evaluation

- To provide information on the progress made towards objectives as outlined in Service Specific Contract Schedules
- To identify what worked well and what did not work so well (in terms of both what was done (outputs) and how it was done (processes))
- To provide information on the extent to which Pilot Projects have met the needs of the target group
- To recommend improvements to working practices with disadvantaged women and outline models of good practice thus assisting with mainstreaming and dissemination.

⁵ The other EQUAL principles of equal opportunities, transnational co-operation and dissemination and mainstreaming are explored in the External Evaluation being conducted by Northumbria University

In addition to the above a key objective of the evaluation was to respond to the specific questions around holistic working which were outlined in the evaluation specification.

2.4 Type of Evaluation

The evaluation incorporated both formative⁶ and summative⁷ elements. The formative element employed mainly qualitative methods and involved a process evaluation which allowed for an understanding of the critical factors and mechanisms that shaped the delivery and outcomes of the Women Into Work: Moving On Pilot Projects. The process evaluation was valuable in helping to understand what worked, for whom and why.

The summative element employed mainly quantitative methods in order to assess the outcomes of projects. This part of the evaluation is concerned with the projects overall effectiveness.

The evaluation was conducted in consultation and co-operation with the Women into Work: Moving On DP. In particular, the WIW:MO DP were responsible for monitoring beneficiary information.

2.5 Evaluation Questions

The formative element of the evaluation focussed upon the following questions:

- What have been the main successes of Pilot Projects?
- What have been the main problems encountered by Pilot Projects?
What steps have been taken to address such problems?
- What are the organisational processes which have supported/hindered achievement of Pilot Project objectives?
- To what extent have worked in partnership with already established services? To what extent/how is partnership working kept high on the agenda – what level/type of dialogue is achieved?

⁶ A type of process evaluation for the purpose of new programmes or services that focuses on collecting data on programme operations

⁷ A type of outcome evaluation that assesses the results or outcomes of a program. This type of evaluation is concerned with a program's overall effectiveness

- To what extent were beneficiaries able to contribute to the design of the work programmes and products? To what extent has a sense of ownership of projects been achieved among beneficiaries?
- In what ways have Pilot Projects benefited the target group?
- In what ways has women's quality of life improved as a result of involvement in Pilot Projects?

In addition the following questions were addressed, specifically around holistic working practices:

- How did projects define/understand the term 'holistic approach'?
- To what extent was a holistic approach to the needs of disadvantaged women adopted by Pilot Projects?
- What factors need to be in place to facilitate a truly holistic approach (i.e. appropriate referral systems, shared agendas, building effective partnership building, peer approaches)
- To what extent does a holistic approach increase employability?

The summative element of the evaluation focussed upon the following questions:

- What are the primary activities which the projects have been engaged in?
- Have the projects met their targets of beneficiaries engaged? Did the Pilot Projects attract a range of beneficiaries?
- How many women have entered Education /Training/Employment as a result of their involvement in the Pilot Project?
- What level of 'drop out' have the Pilot Projects encountered?

2.6 Empowering Evaluation Strategies

In line with the ethos of all EQUAL work Evaluation staff conducted an evaluation which was as empowering for participants as possible and aimed at improving practice and fostering self determination of participants. In adopting this approach to evaluating strategies, it was possible to empower individual beneficiaries to self identify and assess the quality of their own experience of the project. In line with the ethos of the EQUAL programme, this evaluation recognises the value of 'soft outcomes' (i.e. increases in beneficiaries self

confidence, self esteem, motivation etc) as well as 'hard outcomes' (i.e. achieving qualifications and getting into work).

2.7 Methodology

As previously mentioned, the evaluation included both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. These included the following:-

- Analysis of project documentation including:
 - Terms of Reference
 - Recruitment/publicity material
 - Documents/diagrams relating to project structure
 - Any other documents which reflect work conducted

The following information sources were also used:

- Pilot Project progress reports
- Analysis of beneficiary records, including individual learning plans
- Observation of Pilot Project activities
- Analysis of data collected from Registration, Destination and Soft Outcomes forms

2.8 Fieldwork Conducted

In depth semi structured interviews with key stakeholders were conducted, as detailed below:

Project Role	No. of Interviews	Timepoint
Project Manager	2	December 2006, June 2007
Project Workers	2	December 2006
Project Workers	3 (inc 2 re-interviews)	April 2007
Beneficiaries	7	December 2006
Beneficiaries	5	April 2007

In addition, the researcher attended the concluding part of a self-development session, the last in a series of meetings, to hear feedback from the 7 women who had participated.

It should be noted in relation to beneficiary interviews that all of these were conducted with a staff member present to act as interpreter, and that working through an interpreter has inevitably influenced the depth and complexity of information gained in these interviews.

CHAPTER 3 - THE PROJECT

3.1 Project Information/Details

Project Title: Slough Asian Women's Information Network
Timescales: 1 March 2006 to 31 May 2007 (subsequently extended to 31 July 2007)
Location: Slough

Funds allocated to Project: £239,919.00

The following sections are intended to inform the reader of the original intentions of the Pilot Projects. The information is sourced from the tender documents which were submitted at the commissioning stage and also the Service Specific Contract Schedules drawn up by SOVA and agreed by Partner Providers.

3.2 Rationale

The tender document referred to research on domestic violence demonstrating that

- One in four women and one in six men will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime
- There is no significant difference between ethnic groups
- Half the Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Arab women who experience domestic violence waited five years before seeking help

In addition the tender document quotes census figures from 2001 showing that 29% of Slough's 119,000 population is Asian. Stonham already run an Asian women's refuge in Slough which has found that

- Women experiencing or fleeing domestic violence have a range of support needs in addition to their need for safety for themselves and their children. This includes housing, child care, benefits, legal advice, employment, training and translators
- Support services need to be holistic, flexible and needs-led, in order to respond to changes over time

- There is evidence of demand for a free phone information line, drop in and support groups to supplement the domestic violence services provided in Slough
- Group sessions build confidence, develop skills and provide peer support and information

The tender document further referred to the graphic demonstration of barriers faced by women on leaving a custodial sentence in the *Moving Mountains* report (O'Keeffe 2003) and drew a parallel with the disempowerment of Asian women experiencing or fleeing domestic violence. Particular mention was made of difficulties associated with having little or no use of English, and the context of strong cultural mores around family honour.

Together this provides the rationale for the flexible and holistic services that SAWIN aimed to provide to help each woman overcome her problems and achieve independence through education, training or employment.

3.3 Objectives

- to assess the needs of women accessing the domestic abuse service
- to provide on-going support to meet their social and welfare needs
- to develop a new resource centre to deliver a range of services to Asian women in Slough to provide beneficiaries with a range of opportunities to aid their personal development and to measure their progress
- to recruit, train and support a group of Asian women from the local community to support the service and its users
- to support beneficiaries in progressing into a variety of positive progression opportunities including voluntary work and training opportunities
- to support women into suitable, more independent accommodation if required
- to embody Equal principles in all areas of provision:
 - partnership working
 - innovation
 - equal opportunities
 - trans-national co-operation

- empowerment
- mainstreaming

3.4 Partners

Whilst the original tender documents outlined a proposed partnership with Red Kite Learning aimed at developing an innovative IT resource for women relating to their ETE needs, this did not appear in the renegotiated project activities in the final Service Specific Schedules.

The original tender document cited a range of local partner agencies as follows:

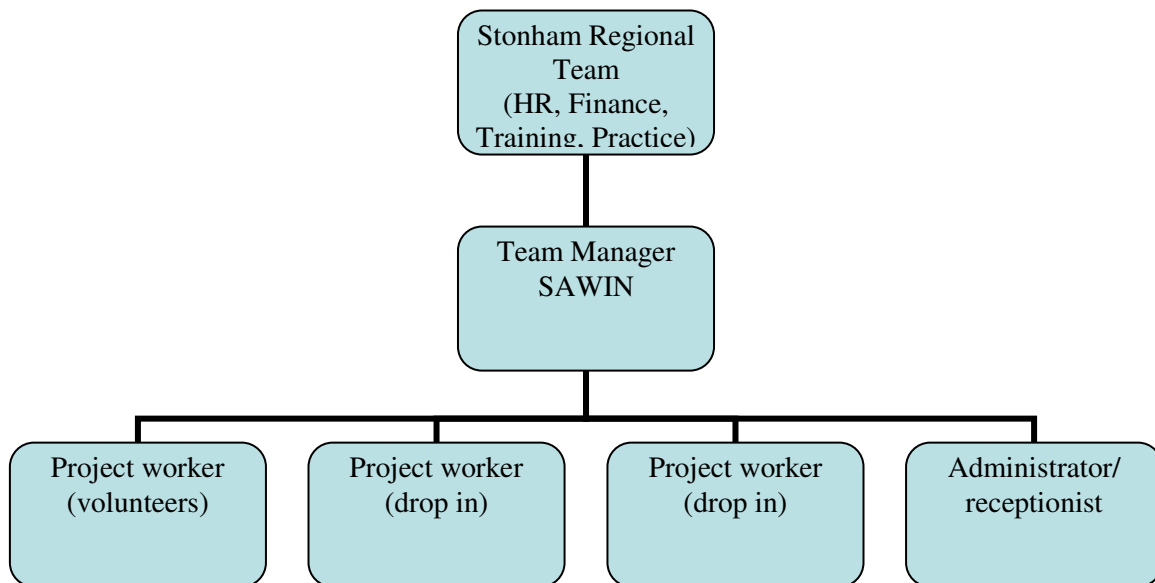
- Sure Start
- NSPCC
- Family Centres
- Slough Racial Equality Council
- Pakistani Welfare Association
- Slough Council for Voluntary Services
- Imkaan (immigration service)
- Slough Young People's Centre
- Thames Valley Police
- Slough Borough Council
- Berkshire Social Services
- Adult Education Centres and colleges

Letters of support were put forward at the tender stage from several local firms of solicitors. It is also significant that the project has premises adjacent to the Samaritans Service, who have passed on referrals and used project expertise when needed.

In addition the project has links with national bodies such as

- The Women's Aid Federation
- the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
- The Home Office (Forced Marriage Unit)
- the National Asylum Support Service (NASS)

3.5 Management/Project Structure (from the original tender document)



3.6 Target Group

Asian women living in Slough who are currently experiencing or who are fleeing domestic violence.

This includes

- women with alcohol/drug dependencies, mental health problems, criminal records or HIV/AIDS
- women who have difficulty in reading or speaking English (some do not read or write in their first language)
- women forced into marriage
- women who are refugees
- wives of prisoners
- women who have never worked in this country or overseas
- women who have worked in the sex industry
- women whose immigration status depends upon their continuing to live with their husbands (women with sponsored visas)

CHAPTER 4 - TARGET GROUP RESULTS

4.1 Beneficiary Profile

At the time of writing, information supplied by SOVA centrally relates to only 140 beneficiaries. Additional data is therefore anticipated, as project interviews did suggest that the full target number of beneficiary registrations had been achieved.

4.1.1 Number of beneficiaries participating over the lifetime of the project

	Target Set	No. achieved
Unemployed or not active in the labour market	158	140
Employed	0	0
Other* (incl ex-offenders)	0	0
Total	158	140

4.1.2 Qualifications

Beneficiaries gaining qualifications	Target Set	Actual Number
Below NVQ 1	0	0
NVQ 1 or equivalent	0	0
NVQ 2 or equivalent	0	0
NVQ3 or equivalent	0	0
NVQ4 or equivalent	0	0
NVQ5 or equivalent	0	0
Other	30	31

4.1.3 ETE Outcomes

What will happen to beneficiaries following their involvement in the project activities?

	Target Set	Actual Number
Full-time employment	0	7
Part-Time employment	9	9
Self-employment	0	0
Voluntary work	10	1
Further education, training	0	2
Government programmes e.g. New Deal	0	2
Unemployment	107	12
Other**	14	0
Not known	18	0
Total	158	33
** Please state		

4.1.4 Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Beneficiaries
White-British	1
White-Irish	0
White-Other	0
Mixed-White and Black Caribbean	0
Mixed-White and Black African	0
Mixed-White and Asian	0
Mixed-Other	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	23
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	103
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	1
Asian or Asian British - Other	4

Black or Black British – Caribbean	0
Black or Black British – African	0
Black or Black British – Other	0
Chinese	0
Other**	7
Not Known	0
Totals	139

4.1.5 Disability

Disability	Beneficiaries (more than one category may apply)
Physical Disability	5
Mental Disability	5
Learning Difficulty	0
Receiving professional support for emotional well-being	4

4.1.6 Age

Age	Beneficiaries
Under 16	1
16-18	1
19-25	23
26-49	104
50-65	9
65+	1
Totals	139

4.1.7 Background

Background	Beneficiaries
Homeless	34
Refugee	1
Asylum Seeker	3
Drug/alcohol misuser	1
Domestic abuse	83
Lone parent	25
Person with caring responsibility	2
Currently seeking employment	14
Aged over 50	3
Other	23

4.2 Activity Plan Results

The table attached at Appendix 1 provides a 'snapshot' of the extent to which original objectives of the project, as outlined in the Service Specific Contract Schedules have been achieved. The project was required to ground their objectives in the principles of EQUAL. These themes were required to inform and guide all aspects of programme delivery. The theme applicable to each objective is detailed in the second column of the table.

In the next chapter there also follows more detailed information on successes and also barriers to achievement which arose from in depth interviews with project staff. This data proved vital in understanding process issues and outlines the critical factors and mechanisms that shaped the delivery and outcomes of the Women into Work: Moving On Pilot Projects. The qualitative data collected and presented also provides evidence on the extent to which the themes were incorporated.

CHAPTER 5 - DECONSTRUCTING THE PROJECT PROCESSES

This section draws upon a thematic framework analysis of interview data in order to explore further the process of project delivery, successes encountered, barriers and how these have been/have not been overcome. This analysis provides:

- a comprehensive mapping of issues uppermost in the minds of stakeholders as the project progressed
- evidence of good practice in the work of the programme and identification of where improvements could be made to encourage reflection on and re-conceptualisation of current thinking and practice

The issues identified are not grounded in arbitrary external judgments but are firmly grounded in the data collected during the course of the evaluation.

5.1 Group Activities and Courses

Group activities at the point of second evaluation visit in April 2007:

- Self development course - March/April 2007
- English courses - first course, September - December 2006
- IT courses - first course, September - December 2006
- Beauty course
- information afternoon about business enterprise - 17/1/07 and 12/9/06
- attendance at conference on forced marriage
- Women Into Business - 25/11/06
- Women's role in Islam - 17/1/07 (26 attendees)
- transnational visit to SAWIN - 16/2/07
- Stall and info at International Women's Day celebration - March 2007

5.2 Individual Interventions

SAWIN operates as a drop in service and a great deal of intervention is given informally, including advice about housing, benefits, immigration and legal matters. There are strong links with relevant agencies for more specialist advice and a legal surgery is held regularly at the SAWIN premises. Interviews with beneficiaries showed that they value being able to come to staff for assistance:

"I bring my letters to show here and read." (Beneficiary)

Similarly a staff member commented that,

"If we have a class downstairs I can guarantee you once the class finishes, even if they don't have an appointment they will nip upstairs and show us quickly, 'I've got this letter. What do I do with this?', so that's the kind of support you are giving" (Project Worker).

More structured interventions appear to be still very advice orientated. Allowing the women to determine their futures and make informed choices through access to legal and other information is clearly a significant part of the empowerment work of the project. Examination of a small number of case files (six) and Individual Learning Plans (nineteen) indicated that much of the focus of work was around immigration and benefits, with a considerable input also in terms of housing and legal advice in relation to domestic violence, some of which is given in the context of a crisis situation. Some direct input relates to education and employment, but in general women are given time to build their confidence and skills, primarily language skills, and to move forward on ETE goals when ready:

"But it's always like, only if you want to, we always say that, it's just pushing forward but at their own pace" (Project Worker).

5.3 EQUAL/SOVA Activities

Whilst the flexible and holistic nature of the Equal intervention contributed towards the empowerment of the women involved, so too did the engagement with elements of the SOVA Equal programme, such as the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Advisory Group (EODAG) and the celebration day held in Sheffield on 10 May 2007, which nine SAWIN beneficiaries attended.

Transnational partners came to the project for an afternoon during a transnational visit in February 2007. In addition project staff participated in

two seminars of the Symposium on Women, Human Rights and Prostitution and a transnational visit to Slovakia in May 2007.

5.4 Participation in the Project

Evaluation visits to the projects and project information have suggested that SAWIN has tapped into a real need within the South Asian communities and that there is a great deal of enthusiasm for the services and activities offered. Many referrals are by word of mouth which indicates that women are positive about the project and are encouraging their peers to become involved also.

5.5 Recruitment

The project aimed to involve 158 women in its lifetime, and has achieved that target. As indicated previously, the project was not starting entirely from scratch and benefited in the early stages from Kinara's established links with potential referring organisations as well as a pool of women who were residents or ex-residents of the refuge.

A breakdown of sources of referral was not available as this data is not collected. However, project staff in their interviews all referred to women coming to the refuge having heard about it from other beneficiaries. Beneficiary interviews also referred to finding out about the project from friends, from a contact at school and through a relative. Other sources of referral from beneficiary and staff interviews included immigration solicitors, social services and the police. It is apparent that there are diverse routes by which women reach the centre and it appears to be seen as a valuable and credible service by other organisations, as evidenced by the letters of support from other agencies in the tender document.

The beneficiary registration data suggests that the beneficiary is diverse in terms of work or educational status at the time of joining the service. 14 women were in part time and 7 women in full time employment. 75% of the beneficiaries were of Pakistani origin, with a substantial minority who were Indian and only one who was Bangladeshi. The age range is also varied, but with the majority between 26 and 49 years.

5.6 Engagement

A number of factors have contributed to successful engagement of beneficiaries. One positive highlighted by one staff member in particular is the clarity and purpose underpinning project work and the reference back to increasing employability and opportunities. This staff member was able to reflect back upon the outreach work of the refuge before SAWIN was established as a separate entity and commented that,

"SAWIN has progressed. I feel it's more focused, we have a focus on our beneficiaries and their goals..... we feel now we can look at each person's needs and understand their educational needs" (Project Worker).

Similarly a colleague remarked,

"I think it has given us new dimensions to work with the clients it's never been the sort of education side and employment side, now it's just given us a totally new approach to lots of things" (Project Worker).

This new focus appears to have energised the project and has engaged the interest of the beneficiaries, who can see the project as enabling them to move forward in their lives. Structured groupwork and courses has been an important factor in this. Previously groupwork was much more informal and was described by one project worker as *'dealing with their problems or feelings or the emotions they are going through'*.

The Equal funding and objectives have enabled the project to establish a more substantial range of courses for women, the most significant of which are the English courses and IT, for which there is a real appetite:

"They have so much zest for wanting to know the computer even if they have very little English language and it's such a good thing to know that they have got this zest of wanting to learn this" (Project Worker).

The women have been able to progress from one course to another, having gained language skills and confidence, giving a sense of achievement and movement.

The accessibility of the centre is important also and the fact that it has dedicated premises that are open, as is the phone line, most weekdays 9.00 am to late afternoon. Staff members are able to deal with a variety of issues and mediate with official agencies and others on behalf of beneficiaries:

"The best thing is I feel relaxed here if I had to describe it to another woman, I would say that, if you have a problem, here it can be solved"
(Beneficiary).

This flexibility enables the staff to deal with the issues that are most pressing for the woman at the time within a safe atmosphere:

"A lot of women have not got anybody..... so the only people they trust are people here who can guide them and advise them and look after whatever is happening..... if they haven't got the language. I'm thinking this work cannot be done anywhere else. They can't go anywhere local and say 'please can you sort out my gas bill' " (Beneficiary).

Language, as can be seen from the above, is significant in reaching out to women, and the roles of staff in translation and advocacy are important features of the project. The ability to communicate in different Asian languages may also be particularly valued by women who have become socially isolated and perhaps experienced a loss of confidence through domestic violence, in enabling them to break through barriers. One beneficiary explained that she appreciated SAWIN because

"It's an Asian centre. They are very helpful and they speak other languages" (Beneficiary).

Another described experiencing a difficult time adjusting to the UK having arrived here only two months previously but was reassured when she was introduced to SAWIN:

"When I first came here I was tense, I did not know how to ask for help, but I am now relaxed here" (Beneficiary).

As a service specifically for Asian women, SAWIN is able to offer developmental opportunities that are culturally appropriate and comfortable for the women. This may not be the case in more mainstream provision where classes may be mixed in terms of ethnicity or gender, providing a powerful disincentive to participate.

A further aspect of engagement, linked to the Equal principle of empowerment, is the content covered by the courses. The English course, for instance, concentrates on very practical skills to enable women, for instance, to register with a doctor, plan a journey using a bus timetable or making an appointment on the telephone. These are directly applicable to everyday life and are thus a real motivating factor for women who can see progress as they are able to do more independently. Other courses, such as the self-development and beauty classes, can provide learning to be of immediate practical use, and the self-development course, particularly, had been built around goals set by the women participants, ensuring the group activities were meaningful to them.

Very little was uncovered in the course of the evaluation in relation to barriers to engagement with SAWIN, other than a lack of crèche facilities. On the contrary, the courses are well subscribed and there are waiting lists for some interventions. There were, inevitably, a number of issues raised in staff interviews about the barriers that beneficiaries experience in accessing courses or employment and which the project is seeking to address.

5.7 Equal Principles

A specific requirement of the Equal projects is the incorporation of the Equal principles into project design and implementation, these principles being:

- partnership working
- innovation
- equal opportunities
- trans-national co-operation
- empowerment
- mainstreaming

The two principles most significant for these evaluations are empowerment and innovation.

5.8 Empowerment

In looking at how the project has empowered its beneficiaries, it is useful first to highlight the aims around empowerment as expressed in the tender document of May 2005.

Additional aspirations were outlined in the original tender in terms of service user involvement in project planning, quality reviews and development. However, the subsequent revisions to the project proposal have meant that these expectations have been significantly scaled back. Reference here is therefore only made to the vision for individual empowerment.

Promoting Individual Empowerment

This will be achieved through

- * provision of information (free phone information line and drop in) which enable women to deal with practical problems, access relevant services and obtain funding
- * link working and support planning which provides intensive support during a crisis or period of change. This supports women to identify their goals and plan their achievement
- * confidence-building activities (groups and training) which provide social contact, peer support and skills
- * validating personal experience through engagement as a volunteer or as a member of a steering group

As indicated in the tender document, the provision of information, both directly by project staff and through links with specialist agencies, has been significant in empowering beneficiaries and enabling them to make choices about their lives. Information about educational, training, volunteering and other opportunities are available in the project and will remain for the use of whatever outreach service is established after SAWIN formally closes. However, the range of advice extends far beyond education, training and employment, and seeks to respond to the many practical and emotional issues faced by project beneficiaries:

"We provide a holistic approach. If women are suffering domestic violence, that's not the only thing - we look into everything as a package"
(Project Manager).

One staff member in particular highlighted work on finances as being important for some women and the discussed instances where women have control off their own finances for the first time having left a partnership:

I think the biggest thing is financially..... we've seen women come out of marriages and the benefits are going in their name and for the first time they have stepped out of the house to go shopping..... so financially they can take control of their lives, they know where to go for the help that they need, and that's not necessarily always coming to us, because we've obviously advised them of other agencies where help can be obtained"
(Project Worker).

Assistance with claiming full entitlement to benefits is therefore important as is signposting to other sources of welfare advice, thereby encouraging independence rather than dependence on the SAWIN service.

The provision of courses has been a powerful source of empowerment, in terms of both content and process. Although there has not been a formal service users group, the courses on offer have been influenced by consultation with beneficiaries and feedback. As previously noted, access to English classes has been particularly appreciated and women have benefited also from the self-development, beauty and IT classes.

A meeting with women involved in the self-development group on an evaluation visit indicated that they enjoyed the social aspect of the group. Group objectives as defined by the group leader were

"To build confidence, improve attitudes to life and to be happy!"
(Group Tutor).

However, she also added that another important focus for the group was about '*coping with negotiating the East/West context*'. This seems significant in terms of promoting social development and confidence in dealing with the 'outside world'. Women were given tasks to engage with from week to week, thereby practising and embedding new skills. For the tutor the effect was

"Like magic for themthey are coming to class and learning"
(Group Tutor).

Recognition of achievements by way of ending ceremonies and certificates on completion of courses has reinforced the progress women have made. As some of these women have had very little education in their early lives and may have limited literacy skills in their first language, marking achievements is particularly important. As the project manager explained,

"Most of these women have not been appreciated for anything we have been able to show a broader picture, so they can see themselves go further" (Project Manager).

Volunteering opportunities have provided a development route for some women, both in external organisations, such as Oxfam, and in SAWIN itself. Four volunteers have been trained within the project to assist with the telephone help line and basic office tasks, such as filing and photocopying. This enables them to gain confidence and familiarity with an office environment.

Interaction between the beneficiaries and staff members is a critical part of empowerment, and beneficiaries interviewed unanimously described the staff as helpful and approachable. Throughout the interviews there was a sense that the women feel safe within the project and with the staff and that there is a high degree of trust:

"I feel this is my house these are my children."

"They are very nice and very helpful."

"Any help I have needed, I have come here and received - e.g. benefits, accompanying to appointments."

(Beneficiaries)

The project manager also discussed the salience of staff members acting as role models:

Sometimes you don't feel like dressing up but your dressing up might enlighten somebody, so I make sure I am a role model for them and that they always feel warm and comfortable. If I give a tired and lazy look to them then that's probably not good" (Project Manager).

As indicated earlier, the original intentions for a service user group were revised before the project came into operation. Nevertheless, the project has tried to be responsive to beneficiaries individually and collectively as far as possible within resources:

"The expectation level has been quite large. We try to be beneficiary-led, but cannot always put it into practice because of funding"
(Project Manager).

On the theme of collective voices, however, some beneficiaries did participate in meetings of the Equal/ SOVA Equal Opportunities and Diversity Advisory Group (EODAG) and nine women from the project took part in the EODAG Showcase in Sheffield on 10m May 2007.

5.9 Innovation

Whilst the Clarification Documents and Service Specific Schedules make no specific reference to innovation, the original tender documents illustrates that the project will be innovatory in three ways:

- by providing a dedicated information and support service for Asian women delivered by Asian women: the only one of its kind in Slough
- by providing flexible support services designed to address women's needs in different circumstances at a practical and emotional level
- by engaging in inter-agency working which involves service users in designing and delivering the service.

In the process of renegotiating the original project proposals and agreeing the reduced activity outlined in the two later documents, the activity envisaged in point 3 above has been reduced, although as discussed in the previous section service users contribute feedback and ideas for future activities.

The project has been innovative in terms of its holistic and inclusive approach, adopting flexible ways of working and being prepared to respond to a wide range of barriers experienced by this beneficiary group. This is evidenced in ILPs and was discussed in staff interviews, holistic being interpreted as willingness and ability to address the physical, emotional and educational needs of women.

The project is innovative also in being a service for Asian women designed and delivered by Asian women and with an educational focus. It provides practical tools that can enable women to gain confidence, to achieve greater degrees of independence and to explore opportunities in more mainstream provision. The fact that it has a project base and offers drop in facilities is useful, as that represents a safe environment for women to practice new language and social skills.

5.10 Brief Discussion of Other Principles

Whilst partners were not contacted as part of this evaluation, details of partnership working were explored in staff interviews. The number of letters of support appended to the original tender document for the project also testifies to the range of relevant contacts and working relationships that already existed even before the project began. Because of the different issues addressed within the work of the project, partner agencies are diverse and include agencies working on domestic violence (police, local authority, solicitors), agencies relating to childcare (Sure Start, family centres, social services), and agencies relating to immigration matters in addition to providers of welfare advice and education.

Staff were positive about partnership working, and the only concern that was raised was in relation to the local further education college where relationships had not developed as much as had been hoped. Staff were clear that an important part of their ethos was to signpost women to services and to enable them to access other agencies:

"Anything we can't deal with we try to signpost it as well, so it's not a case of, if we can't deal with it, look somewhere else, but we actually make the link for them" (Project Worker)

Mainstreaming has not a major focus in this evaluation as it is largely an Action 3 activity. However, it should be noted that SAWIN has been active in relevant multi-agency forums and has been involved also in work at a national level, for instance, a conference on forced marriage.

Transnational work has been a marginal element, although, as previously stated, the project has hosted a visit from transnational colleagues and the project manager participated in a transnational visit to Slovakia as part of the work of the Women Now! Transnational Partnership.

The final Equal principle is Equal Opportunities and this was evidenced by the project in terms of its activities aimed at overcoming barriers and opening doors for women. This principle also relates to the internal employment practices of Stonham and their adherence to their corporate Equal Opportunities procedures. No concerns were raised in this regard in the course of this evaluation.

CHAPTER 6 - IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

6.1 Hard Outcomes

Data supplied by SOVA indicates that the project has been successful in meeting ETE targets. No target was set in relation to full time employment, but seven women were recorded as entering full time work. Nine beneficiaries found part time employment, as anticipated and two entered government programmes.

Some data, however, is missing and this may explain why only one woman is recorded as having entered voluntary work, which is contrary to the figures stated in evaluation interviews. This may be rectified as the final closing cases are added to the data set.

The project had no targets relating to formal qualifications, but was expected to have 30 women completing courses, which was achieved, and has been described in earlier sections.

6.2 Analysis of Soft Outcome Questionnaires

A specific 'soft outcomes tool' has been developed by Stonham in the form of two questionnaires completed by the women and by project staff at key stages in their involvement in the project and this section highlights the main findings from analysis of these questionnaires.

The first questionnaire relates to the following areas:

- communication
- confidence
- motivation
- team work
- autonomy

Whilst the second questionnaire focuses upon:

- problem-solving
- work-related values
- self-esteem

- coping with pressure
- positive attitude

Beneficiaries complete these questionnaires at the beginning and end of their involvement with the project and at intermediary points, depending on the length of their intervention. Each of the ten areas listed above is scored from 1-5, according to beneficiary responses to the questions. Comparison of the initial questionnaire scores with subsequent scores gives an indication of 'distance travelled'. A similar process is followed for the practitioner questionnaires.

Beneficiary Questionnaires 1 and 2

Item	Average 1st score n = 115	Average 2nd score n = 52	Distance travelled
Communication	2.6	2.9	0.3
Confidence	2.5	2.8	0.3
Motivation	2.7	3.0	0.3
Team Work	2.6	2.9	0.3
Autonomy	2.5	2.8	0.3

Item	Average 1st score n = 102	Average 2nd score n = 48	Distance travelled
Problem solving	2.3	2.7	0.4
Work-related values	2.5	2.8	0.3
Self esteem	2.4	2.7	0.3
Coping with pressure	2.3	2.7	0.4
Positive attitude	2.3	2.6	0.3

Practitioner Questionnaires 1 and 2

Item	Average 1st score n = 115	Average 2nd score n = 52	Distance travelled
Communication	2.6	2.8	0.2
Confidence	2.5	2.8	0.3
Motivation	2.6	2.9	0.3
Team Work	2.5	2.8	0.3
Autonomy	2.5	2.8	0.3

Item	Average 1st score n = 115	Average 2nd score n = 52	Distance travelled
Problem solving	2.3	2.7	0.4
Work-related values	2.5	2.7	0.2
Self esteem	2.4	2.6	0.2
Coping with pressure	2.2	2.5	0.3
Positive attitude	2.2	2.5	0.3

Both sets of questionnaires indicate a steady progress across all areas and the similarity between beneficiary and practitioner scores is striking. There are no items here where aggregated scores indicate exceptional improvement, but this may be due to the evening out effects of averaging. Individual scores are available for each beneficiary. Whilst they have not been examined for the purpose of this analysis because of the large number of cases involved, such individual analyses should be useful at project level for determining progress in individual cases.

Although the scores here are encouraging - not least because there is no area which does not indicate progress for the beneficiary group as a whole - they should be treated with some caution as the total numbers completing second questionnaires represents slightly under a third of the women who have been through the project.

As the project draws to a close a more substantial analysis of data from beneficiaries completing their interventions should be available and it is important that this data is revisited in retrospect in order to glean what further messages it may indicate. In particular, at that point it would be anticipated

that a higher number of third questionnaires would be available, thus giving a clearer picture of more long term progress enabled by the project.

6.3 Analysis of ILPs, Progress Reports and Perceptions of Progress

A sample of 20 ILPs was examined and these contained a varied set of goals, reflecting the differing needs of beneficiaries. As noted earlier, a significant proportion of work was devoted to accessing sources of legal and other advice. Sorting out benefits and debts also featured in many cases as did housing-related issues. It was clear, however, that for many of these women concerns about their immediate circumstances were paramount and, until their lives were stabilised or these issues resolved, education, training and employment was not a priority. Accordingly, the goals of work in some plans were around seeking naturalisation or raising sufficient money to start legal proceedings for a divorce.

Unsurprisingly, improving English was an aspiration in a number of ILPs and other self development goals included learning IT skills. Advice relating to courses featured in several plans and business start up advice in a smaller number.

A mechanism does exist for recording a review of the effectiveness of ILPs but these records were not available alongside the ILPs and progress sheets themselves.

Comments from beneficiaries, however, do give an indication of the progress they perceive:

"I have more confidence speaking to someone now. I can't explain everything, but I have improved."

"I learn lots of things. They are helpful and nice and I want to continue to learn."

"If I need any other help, I can tell them, but for now just my English I need just the speaking and writing and then, when I am more educated, I can do other things."

"I build up confidence. I feel good. I can speak to other people."
(Beneficiaries)

Project staff also spoke of the ways that they could see women benefiting from the service:

"Somebody signposted her here. She came and she did not know what we were about. She was so shy to talk to us..... we thought she could do with classes, so we encouraged her to come and she started the classes and now it's really nice to see her sit up and speak."

"One of our ladies did a self-development course. When she came she was a domestic violence sufferer. She came and she was very shy, very tense..... so she's been here about 7-8 weeks and now you can see - just by me observing it and seeing it - now she is more aware of her dress and she makes an effort to dress up and come to the class, she is talking to other ladies" (Project workers).

"Enabling them to do things and helping them with confidence-building, and slowly but surely that's happening. At the end of the day we are all women, we understand where they are coming from, the most important thing is the language" (Project Manager).

This last comment illustrates neatly one of the key features of the service that has led to its effectiveness, and that is its empathic nature. The warmth and compassion of staff was evident during evaluation visits, as was the safe and welcoming atmosphere of the project as a whole. Such characteristics are important, even though their contribution to more tangible outcomes may be difficult to separate out.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary of Results

These evaluation results suggest that SAWIN is a valuable project that offers a sympathetic and responsive service to Asian women who have experienced domestic violence. It set out to work in a holistic way and appears to have maintained this practice, through a flexible and varied provision of interventions, which have been able to respond to crisis needs and more long-term developmental goals.

SAWIN has built upon an existing outreach service and telephone help line attached to the established Asian women's refuge in Slough. It therefore benefited from a range of pre-existing relationships and partnerships with local agencies. Also, the project manager and two project workers had previously been employed either directly by the refuge or to run services connected with it. This meant that the project suffered less than it might otherwise have done from the reduced timescales for Action 2 initiatives.

7.2 Key Strengths

- separate project premises, which provides a safe space for women
- a skilled and committed staff group, with appropriate Asian languages
- a drop in facility so that women can easily access a range of advice
- a telephone help-line which has been extended 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday
- links with key organisations and agencies so that women can obtain specialist advice relating to legal, immigration or other matters
- provision of practical help with benefits and finance
- provision of information and contacts relating to courses and training opportunities
- structured courses to assist women in improving English language skills
- additional courses on IT, beauty and self-development as well as other one off activities
- a commitment to empowerment of women through developing skills and providing support
- a welcoming and positive project ethos

- consultation with women over the nature and content of courses
- opportunity for a small number of women to become volunteers within the project

The project has been able to demonstrate an empowering ethos and approach to work. It has been innovative in providing services for Asian women with an ultimate focus upon education, training or employment (ETE), whilst recognising the multiplicity of problems that individuals may need to address before ETE outcomes can be achieved. That said, the project reached the outcome targets that had been set for it, despite a reduced operational period.

The project participated in transnational work by hosting a visit by transnational partners in February 2007. Beneficiaries were also enabled to attend meetings of the Equal/SOVA Equal Opportunities and Diversity Advisory Group and a celebratory event in Sheffield in May 2007

7.3 Issues to Note

Relatively few barriers were discussed in the course of the evaluation, although within tight timescales the project was unable to secure satisfactory crèche facilities to assist women with childcare needs to attend courses.

The project also noted the potential benefits of extending the telephone help line provision to evening and weekends.

7.4 Items to Consider for Future Projects

- that Asian women appreciate services that are culturally specific and where staff are able to speak appropriate Asian languages
- that provision of English language classes enabled women to achieve greater independence
- that key elements of effective delivery involve advocacy and brokerage in relation to mainstream agencies
- that another key feature of effective service is the ability to respond to the needs that women see as most important and that ensuring safety is paramount

- that a third key feature is practical assistance, particularly with financial matters
- that flexible drop in facilities in a dedicated premises is significant in enabling women to access services
- that a free phone help line within office hours is useful but there would be benefits in extending availability
- that this type of provision may be relevant for a wider constituency of Asian women, who may be disadvantaged, not because of domestic violence, but language, culture and social or economic circumstances

APPENDIX 1 - ACTIVITY PLAN RESULTS

NB The shaded areas in this table are administrative requirements which do not relate to the Equal themes and these are only commented upon where information has been apparent in the course of interviews or case file reviews.

Activities	EQUAL Theme	Evidence of Achievements/Barriers to Achievements
Prepare and Implementation Plan for the project and submit this to the SOVA Women into Work Programme Manager or Programme Director		
Recruit staff for the SAWIN project as identified in the project budget, ensuring they have the necessary skills and experience to undertake their job descriptions to a high standard. The staff and volunteers recruited must speak a range of Asian languages in order to meet the communication needs of beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ Equal Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ staff members have been employed from previous refuge/outreach service, providing a body of pre-existing expertise and contacts ○ new staff members recruited and in post July 2006 ○ The staff group has appropriate language skills
Stonham will establish a new resource centre to deliver a range of services to Asian women in Slough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SAWIN centre established ○ Information and resources are available on the premises
The SAWIN resource centre will operate a drop-in facility with staff on hand to deal with Asian women's issues Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ drop in available ○ women use and value the flexibility of drop in ○ the staff complement is sufficient to ensure continuity on opening hours
The project will operate a free-phone telephone information line 35 hours a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the phone line was already in operation before SAWIN but with more restricted hours

<p>week from Monday-Friday, for each week of the contract once newly recruited staff and volunteers are in place. All telephone calls must be recorded on a record sheet providing brief information about each call, the information given by staff/volunteers, the action taken, and the outcome if known. A reference number must be allocated and the date and time of the calls and the length of time they last must be recorded</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the phone line is now open during office hours Monday- Friday staffed by project workers who are supported by volunteers ○ it was felt important to be available during school hours as this was considered to be the most likely time that women will be free to ring ○ a need to extend the hours to evenings and weekends has been identified
<p>Stonham will establish support and discussion groups within the resource centre involving beneficiaries in deciding on other group sessions and activities taking place in the resource centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ English language (ESOL), self-development, beauty and IT courses have been run successfully ○ Women have participated in the groups ○ Beneficiaries have been consulted about the groups to be run
<p>Recruit beneficiaries to the programme, ensuring eligibility to participate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation ➤ partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the project indicates that target recruitment numbers have been met, although data supplied by SOVA to confirm this is not fully up to date ○ an increasing number of referrals are self referrals ○ the project is well known to local agencies and interviews indicated a broad range of referral sources ○ no breakdown of referring agencies was accessed
<p>Undertake an initial assessment of need and negotiate an individual plan with each beneficiary attending the resource centre, setting SMART objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) were on case files, with agreed objectives and details of planned activities ○ ILPs were assessed as containing

(specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound), recording all information on the prescribed enrolment form and Individual Learning Plan		straightforward and realistic objectives, and in most cases there was a clear link between assessment information recorded and ILP goals
Where structured training will take place (whether provided by Stonham or an outside organisation), design and agree an individual training agreement for each beneficiary, identifying the learning outcomes to be achieved and how the trainer / supervisor will assess the understanding and progress of beneficiaries against session learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this level of recorded detail was not investigated in this evaluation
Devise plans for each structured training session, identifying the learning outcomes to be achieved and how the trainer will assess the understanding and progress of beneficiaries against session learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this level of recorded detail was not investigated in this evaluation ○ it was apparent, however, from discussion with staff and the tutor for the self-development group that there were objectives for each course
Assess and formally record the progress of individual beneficiaries, seeking and recording the opinion of the beneficiary about their own perception of their progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ progress reports were on case files ○ from the limited case file review, beneficiary views seemed to be included implicitly rather than explicitly
Stonham will develop and test a recruitment, induction and training pack for volunteers within the new service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation ➤ partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ no formal pack has been developed check ○ training and support has been provided for volunteers by a designated staff member
SAWIN will advertise for, recruit, train and supervise a pool of Asian women volunteers. Volunteers will be recruited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation ➤ Equal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volunteers have come from the beneficiary group check ○ Training and support has been provided for

<p>from the local community, be able to speak at least 1 Asian language, and will have completed training provided by the project to satisfactory standards</p>	<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>volunteers by a designated staff member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 volunteers were active at the time of the second evaluation visit in April 2007
<p>Support, coach and assess beneficiaries on a one to one basis and in small groups about relevant practical issues to promote their independence skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation ➤ Equal Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Courses have covered practical and life skills ○ English classes have been a major factor in women achieving more independence ○ Individual work has encouraged women to undertake tasks themselves e.g. making phone calls, filling in forms
<p>Provide information and guidance on education, training and employment matters, sign posting and escorting to appropriate specialist provision as necessary within the community e.g. for ESOL tuition and support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ Equal Opportunities ➤ Partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resource files with relevant information are available in the project ○ Project staff and beneficiaries can access further information electronically ○ Project staff are available to accompany women to appointments, as appropriate ○ Links exist with relevant agencies and ETE providers ○ The project has a relationship with East Berkshire College but it was felt that this could be developed further
<p>Refer beneficiaries to appropriate progression opportunities in the community to achieve greater independence and improve their vocational opportunities including, full and part time employment, voluntary work, further and higher education and training, government programmes etc. All meetings between staff and beneficiaries in the community must be evidenced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ Equal Opportunities ➤ partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ evidence exists in case files and on ILPs of onward referral

<p>Assist and support beneficiaries in attending the Development Partnership, sub group meetings and transnational activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ Equal Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beneficiaries have attended meetings of the Equal/SOVA Equal Opportunities and Diversity Advisory Group (EODAG) ○ 9 beneficiaries participated in the EODAG Showcase event in May 2007 ○ Project staff attended seminars of the Symposium on Women, Human Rights and Prostitution ○ The project hosted a visit from Transnational partners in February 2007 ○ The project manager was involved in a transnational visit to Slovakia in May 2007
<p>Attain feedback from beneficiaries on a regular basis: immediately after assessment and ILP development, whilst attending the project and as the beneficiaries leaves the project (where possible)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ empowerment ➤ innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ evidenced through Soft Outcomes forms
<p>Comply with requests for information and attend interviews with the DP evaluator, Northumbria Centre for Public Policy and the internal evaluator, Sheffield Hallam University, as reasonable</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SAWIN has accommodated request for visits in relation to these evaluations
<p>Ensure beneficiaries sign and date an attendance sheet each time they meet with a staff member or undertake training, showing the time they have attended, why they attended. A staff signature must also be included</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evidenced on case files
<p>Report all complaints and compliments to the Women into Work moving on</p>		

Programme director, as detailed in this contract		
Complete and submit monthly Claim Forms, detailing all outputs, outcomes, expenditure and activity during the month, both for match funding and ESF funding. These must be submitted to SOVA Women into Work office as described in the Partner Provider Support Manual. Beneficiaries should be monitored for up to six months after they have left the programme in order to justify further positive outcomes		
Undertake the annual Self Assessment Process with the support of SOVA Women into Work: Moving On staff, preparing a Self Assessment Report and then a Development Plan		
Produce a Closure Report at the end of the project in line with ESF and SOVA requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not available at the time of writing

APPENDIX 2 - STAFF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview format for project managers/staff

April 2007

NB This represents the basic range of question used but these were varied according to project and worker role.

- 1 Please describe how the work of the project has developed over its lifetime?
- 2 What have been the challenges in working with this group of women and to what extent have these been addressed?
- 3 From an organisational perspective, what has helped or hindered the work of the project?
- 4 Describe the range of activities covered by the project.
- 5 Describe some of the ways that you work with the women and how this might differ from other services they receive.
- 6 The project set out to provide a holistic service for women, what does a holistic approach mean to you? To what extent has it been achieved for the women?
- 7 Can you comment on the sources of referrals and any issues with referrals.
- 8 What have been the main positives in relationships with other agencies or providers? And any negatives?
- 9 Can you comment specifically on relationships with other mental health providers?
- 10 How effective do you feel the work has been in enabling women to move on and out of the project?
- 11 Do you feel the project has been successful about meeting the objectives or outcomes identified in plans for individual women?
- 12 One of the Equal themes relates to empowerment, in what ways has the project worked to empower individual women?
- 13 What next now that the project is coming to a close?
- 14 Do you have a sense of any longer term impact on service provision – what important lessons or messages have been/ can be passed on to other services?

APPENDIX 3 - BENEFICIARY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview format

Beneficiaries

April 2007

Name How long on project?

1. What types of activities have you been involved with through the project?
2. What is the best thing about being involved?
3. Is there anything that is not helpful or does not work in the project?
Anything that could be improved?
4. How much say do you feel you have had in planning your activities?
5. Have you been able to have a say about how the service develops and what activities it offers?
6. What would you like to get out of the project? What do you need in order for that to happen?
7. Do you think you have changed in any way through your involvement in the project?
8. What impact, if any, has the project had upon other areas of your life?
9. How would you describe the project to other women who might benefit from using it?
10. What do you think should happen now that the project is about to finish?