

**Young People's Health  
and Development  
A Reproductive and  
Sexual Health Centred  
Approach**

**A collaborative programme between  
RFSU, Sweden and MAMTA, India**

**Gordon Tamm  
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**Department for Democracy  
and Social Development**



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**Sida Evaluation 07/04**

**Department for Democracy  
and Social Development**

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## List of Abbreviations

INR	Indian rupees
MSEK	Million Swedish kronor
NGO	Non-government organization
PI	Phased Intervention (component of the project)
R&D	Research & Development
RFSU	Swedish Association for Sexuality Education
SEK	Swedish kronor
SFA	State focal agency (lead/coordinating NGO in the state level YRSHR network)
ToT	Training (or Trainer) of trainers
TSEK	Thousand Swedish kronor
YRSHR	Young people's reproductive and sexual health & rights

# Executive Summary

*Reviewing the progress of the RFSU-MAMTA collaborative programme on 'Young People's Health and Development – A Reproductive and Sexual Health Centred Approach' this Mid-term Evaluation found:*

## 1. Overall Assessment

MAMTA has with the support from RFSU and through an active strategy of linking with other peer environments and programmes, in India and abroad, built up a very strong base on which to facilitate a diversified promotion of YRSHR issues at the national level, fully in line with the objectives laid down.

The results are particularly striking in the areas of Research and Documentation and Advocacy, and to some extent also Informatics. However, the research carried out or promoted by MAMTA (although impressive in terms of sheer output) suffer from a somewhat mechanical application of methods that do not correspond to mature research requirements.

Progress is more uneven in the area of Networking that still suffers from problems of ineffective management, planning, and follow up/monitoring.

Phased Interventions have, in spite of the long standing of two of them (Bawal and Bangalore) still to generate evidence-based lessons learned, as also to gain a clear role and function in the overall programme – particularly in relation to the SRIJAN.

## 2. Research and Documentation

The established database constitutes a unique information resource that is also well-managed.

The action oriented research remains problematic. To a very large extent the reports of experiences gained from the PIs are non-specific and anecdotal, and the analysis is still to generate practical conclusions of relevance for field-level implementers elsewhere.

Primary research programme covers a large number of very relevant studies, and can potentially enhance the standing of MAMTA as a qualified voice on YRSHR issues, nationally as well as internationally. But they would profit from a greater involvement of or support from mature research environments to ensure their quality. There is also a need to make intelligible summaries along with possible practical implications.

The development of Quality Indicators remains a challenge. However, as the programme is nearing its end it makes little sense to continue the search for quality indicators. Instead, the focus should be on defining exit scenarios as far as the current external support is concerned, including criteria for ensuring that the programme is moving towards these.

## 3. Informatics

The physical as well as virtual (on the net) library has been established as an important professional resource for MAMTA as well as relevant outsiders. A special problem is the state level where the ambition was to capacitate the SFAs to have their own resource centres and to aid and support them in these activities in a cascading manner. This has not come about. Similarly, parts of the web-portal require more continuous updating.

The ongoing participation of MAMTA in a Q&A column in a major daily Hindi paper is a major achievement. Similar avenues could be explored by the SFA s in their respective states.

MAMTA has enhanced the existing materials as planned and among other things written handbooks as well as a manual for Youth Friendly Services, translated some RFSU documents on sexual and reproductive rights for young people. These productions form a basis for sustained training efforts.

A core team has been established at MAMTA to conduct Master trainer sessions. In order to ensure that the entire cascading training programme based on this core team incorporates the necessary strength and sustainability after the programme ends there is a need to continuously ensure, with specific assistance and involvement of the RFSU, that the core team is strengthened in terms of capacity and creative skills.

#### **4. Networking**

Considerable efforts have been done in strengthening the SRIJAN network. However, there are still critical challenges to be faced: the differences in working modalities, organisational strength, and management among members and how to deal with them. In addition it seems that the “technical capacity assessment” has lost in momentum and ambition so that it appears doubtful whether it will be completed for all SRIJAN members.

In view of the lingering problems faced by the SRIJAN, both in its state/regional setups and as a whole, we strongly feel that expanding the coverage of the network to more states and/or to more organisations is currently not to be attempted.

There is a need to review and revise the whole network strategy. At present it appears that the SRIJAN is in somewhat of a limbo: having the formal network instruments in place and being infused with a greater common understanding of YRSHR issues among, but lacking a momentum and identity of its own as well as capacity of effectively influencing policy where it counts – the State level. To move towards a breakthrough and sustained momentum in these areas may require a change of both the strategy of networking as well as of MAMTA's role within it.

Peer Education and Youth Friendly Services are in many cases still only a tentative or formative parts of the SRIJAN network, with little to facilitate them being mainstreamed into the state or local level YRSHR process. One of the basic tools with which this was to be done was the Phased Interventions where the more closely guided development of Youth Friendly Services as well as Peer Education were to generate practical experiences if not models to be used throughout the SRIJAN. This has so far not been systematically pursued.

#### **5. Advocacy**

At the national level advocacy appears to have been very effectively pursued and there is a marked tendency for MAMTA to be routinely invited to all relevant policy deliberations and fora where young people's lifestyles and reproductive health are deliberated.

At the level of SRIJAN and its members at state and local levels the situation appears different. The main advocacy approach tends to be issue/campaign or event based, with the more systematic interaction between SRIJAN and policy decision-makers largely lacking.

#### **6. Phased Interventions**

From the viewpoint of direct local interventions the PIs implementation has progressed according to plan. It has involved focal trainings, institutional support, and facilitating the acceptance of and support to the projects from the local public institutions and decision-makers.

The salient question surrounding the PIs is how they feed into the overall programme. As local interventions they are reportedly creating considerable impact, but it is not clear how and on what issues the experience gained percolates into the larger strategies of the programme, particularly Advocacy and Networking.

*Based on these findings and discussion presented in the report we make the following recommendations:*

## **7. Recommendations**

### **7.1. Overall**

There is an urgent need to discuss and introduce an ‘Exit Strategy’ that should permeate all strategies/ components during the last leg of the agreement period. This means that the plans as they stand for the remaining period should be reviewed and wherever necessary be revised in order to ensure that there are:

- (a) clearly defined end-of-programme scenarios for each strategy, including how to strengthen key actors and institutional arrangements that will carry the processes created forward
- (b) clear evidence-based lessons learned for all strategies, particularly as regards the experience gained in reaching (or not reaching) intended results or impact
- (c) intensified sharing of experiences and dissemination of findings, not the least to the network partners.

### **7.2. Research and Documentation**

The monitoring and analysis of the Phased Interventions need to be geared to practical conclusions and lessons learned as soon as possible, increasing their relevance beyond that of localised pilot projects.

The programme should make available to its stakeholders easily digested summaries of the research carried out or sponsored.

Even if earlier attempts at developing Quality Indicators were abortive there is a need to revisit the entire (and very numerous) range of indicators – process, input, output, result, etc – that have been developed in order to simplify the MIS as well as M&E. At present the very wide range of output indicators on which progress is reported makes it virtually impossible to gain an insight into either the relative effectiveness or impact of the different strategies, or for that matter the programme as a whole.

### **7.3. Informatics**

State informatics/resource centres as envisaged in the Forward Plan need to be initiated in order to strengthen a decentralised system of information and advocacy of relevance for the network members.

The web portal of the programme needs more effective and continuous updating/maintenance.

The core team of trainers at MAMTA needs to be consolidated to ensure that it has the necessary technical/pedagogical and self-sustaining capacity beyond the lifetime of the RFSU support.

### **7.4. Networking**

MAMTA should initiate a strategic review of the role, purpose and experience of the SRIJAN so far with the purpose of including organisational and managerial criteria for membership and capacity building and not only technical ones.

A focal evaluation of the peer educator process within the Phased Interventions as well as with selected members of the network should be done in order to inform the programme and its stakeholders about ways to make this more effective and sustainable.

The experience of youth friendly services need to be culled from the Phased Interventions and made available to the network members.

### **7.5. Advocacy**

The planned state centres need to be tried out in some state contexts on a priority basis in order to strengthen and systematise the advocacy efforts at state and local levels.

The advocacy workshops that have been carried out for the national level advocacy efforts should be replicated at the state level.

### **7.6. Phased Interventions**

The phased interventions need urgently to be summed up in terms of practical and replicable experiences, even if tentative.

In order to move the phased interventions closer to the network members and operational concerns, MAMTA must ensure that the last phase of the PIs are clearly focussed on getting operational result and experiences.

The programme management, including the network, should consider ways of effectively disseminating and/or exposing the concrete results and experiences gained in the PIs to network members.

# 1. Introduction

This Mid-term Evaluation of the MAMTA/RFSU collaborative programme on Young People's Health and Development 2003–2008 was carried out by a team consisting of:

- Gordon Tamm, Teamleader
- Rukmini Rao
- Viveca Urwitz (Informatics only)
- Hoang T Hiep (participant observer, Min of Health, Govt of Vietnam)
- Nguyen D Khe (participant observer, Min of Health, Govt of Vietnam)

The Terms of Reference for the Evaluation are found in Annex 1.

To some extent this is a follow up of the evaluation carried out of the previous phase<sup>1</sup> of the programme, particularly as two of the members of this team (G Tamm and R Rao) also participated in that evaluation. However, it is a hallmark of MAMTA to be on the move, and the programme has not only been reformulated in its current phase but also very energetically implemented. So even if the previous evaluation was used as a 'baseline' there were many new aspects that took the team by surprise, mostly pleasantly so.

Two things should be noted with respect to this report.

*First:* we have not included any assessment of the Global Partnership component of the programme. The reason is very simply that we did not get enough insight in or exposure to the activities carried out. Reports on meetings are not the stuff on which a serious assessment about the utility or effectiveness can be made.

*Second:* we have refrained from assessing the collaboration between RFSU and MAMTA. Again the reason is simply that we could not, during the very brief and hectic visit to the programme in India, gain any meaningful insight into how the collaboration had been played out. Having said this we do, however, want to stress that the clear signs of capacity building on YRSHR issues that could be seen – at the level of MAMTA but more dramatically at the level of the programme network members – was clearly a reflection of a an effective collaboration<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> G Tamm et al: Evolving Strategies for Better Health and Development of Adolescent/Young People. A Twinning Institutional Collaboration Project in India by MAMTA and RFSU (Sida Evaluation 02/40)

<sup>2</sup> At a more anecdotal level the grumblings about inadequate cultural sensitivity that was frequently met with during the earlier evaluation in 2002 was now a thing of the past, in itself a sign that the collaboration had matured – at the individual as well as organisational level

## 2. The Programme on Young People's Health and Development – An Outline

MAMTA is an NGO that has worked with child health in urban slums and among rural poor since 1990. Over the years it came to focus more on development and in that process came to identify the youth as a resource with a tremendous zeal to learn and willingness to change. While working with adolescents MAMTA identified their needs for knowledge and services on SRHR and started to develop this line of work. In 1999–2000 Sida facilitated exchange visits between MAMTA and RFSU in order to explore the possibilities of a programme-oriented twinning in the field YRSHR, resulting in a collaborative programme called 'Evolving Strategies for Better Health and Development of Adolescent/Young People 2000–2003'. This was in essence an exploratory phase with a total Sida support of MSEK 10.4.

In late 2002 an external evaluation of this exploratory first phase was carried out<sup>3</sup> In general it found that the YRSHR activities as had been carried out by MAMTA with the technical support of RFSU had gained a very positive momentum and had been very efficiently implemented. It made a series of recommendations aimed at exploiting the achievements made, particularly as regards effectiveness and quality.

Based on a draft new programme document submitted by MAMTA and RFSU in 2003 an independent appraisal was carried out. A revised Project Document incorporating most of the points raised both in the Evaluation and the Appraisal was subsequently submitted and approved by Sida: 'Young People's Health and Development – A Reproductive and Sexual Health Centred Action Approach'. The Project Document covers the period July 2003–June 2008 and entails a Sida commitment of MSEK 30.5 routed through RFSU. Of this MSEK 20.4 were allocated for organisational support and programme implementation facilitated by/through MAMTA, and MSEK 10.1 for technical and other support by/through RFSU.

The new phase of the programme, as described in The Forward Plan Document for 2003–2008, has *the enabling environment* as its focus. The result is a focus on Advocacy and broad Networking. The Research & Development, Informatics and the Phased Interventions should all be methods to build and support the Advocacy and the Network. A special focus of the network is participation and empowerment of young people.

The overall objective ('goal') of the programme is to:

*“Create an enabling environment for improved reproductive and sexual health of young people (10–24) especially of poorer sections by promoting gender equity and their right”*

The programme is very comprehensive and comprises six broad strategies or components, each with their specific objectives and output indicators<sup>4</sup>:

1. Research & Documentation
2. Informatics
3. Networking

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<sup>3</sup> G. Tamm et al (Sida Evaluation 02/40)

<sup>4</sup> See Annex 2 for the strategy-wise specific indicators

4. Advocacy
5. Phased Interventions
6. Global Partnership in Development<sup>5</sup>

## 3. Findings

### 3.1. Research and Documentation

Specific objectives:

- To enhance the database on YRSHR issues for various stakeholders
- To disseminate the database through the print and the e-media
- Promote action oriented learning by documenting and disseminating lessons emerging from phased intervention to feed into advocacy and programme development.
- To facilitate primary research on identified gap areas on YRSHR issues at central and state levels.
- To develop quality assurance indicators

Reviewing the performance of the R&D against these objectives we have found that:

- a) The database has been established and is periodically being updated and fine-tuned. Inaugurated as a web-based data bank in 2004, accessible through the portal [www.yrshr.org](http://www.yrshr.org) managed by MAMTA, it is primarily a tool to assist researchers and analysts rather than being of direct operational relevance.

*Comment:* It constitutes a unique information resource that is also well-managed. With (some) data disaggregated to the district level it is a powerful tool for profiling and analysing basic demographic, social and behavioural data on YRSHR-related issues, culled from the latest Census supplemented by other data.

At the time of this assessment there were 112 users registered. Most of them are academic/research institutions, and there is an ongoing effort to establish web-links to relevant other data sources to facilitate comparative analysis for users.

While the web-based databank has an obvious value, particularly in relation to policy oriented advocacy, the web-portal itself illustrates the classical problem of updating. Much of the information intended to reflect ongoing or forthcoming activities (e.g. on ‘events’, ‘training’, the ‘SRIJAN’, etc) is dated, often only conveying information up to 2005 or early 2006. With the increasing access to internet, particularly among urban youth as well as to activist NGOs at the sub national and local levels (inc. SRIJAN members) the maintenance of the web portal is less impressive than the design itself.

- b) The action oriented research to emerge from the Phased Interventions is primarily done through both quantitative and qualitative monitoring reports, with Mama’s PI unit in the driving seat.

*Comment:* Although the PIs will be discussed separately below, it is obvious to us that the research and analysis part of this action research is less than satisfactory. To a very large extent the reports of experi-

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<sup>5</sup> For lack of any direct exposure to the Global Partnership we have refrained from making any assessment of this strategy

ences gained from the PIs remain as non-specific and anecdotal as was found in the 2002 Evaluation<sup>6</sup>, and the analysis is still to generate practical conclusions of relevance for field-level implementers elsewhere. The main problem remains that the PIs have still largely the nature of pilot/local interventions and local capacity building rather than action research. The monitoring reports and analyses from the PIs made available to the team clearly illustrate this – they are conspicuously silent on ‘lessons learned’ of value for use and replication elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

c) Primary research has been carried out by MAMTA in three ways:

- (i) collaborative or joint research, involving qualified outside research institutes working together with MAMTA staff on specific YRSHR-related studies. This is called ‘multi-centric’ research in the Forward Plan, and has resulted in a number of research ventures,
- (ii) studies commissioned by various outside agencies, e.g. GOI, WHO, UNICEF (again with separate budgets outside the Sida supported RFSU-MAMTA networking project), and
- (iii) studies carried out by MAMTA (directly or through a qualified member of the SRIJAN) related to ongoing field activities or to issues relevant to the overall YRSHR programme.

*Comment:* In overall terms the research programme covers a large number of very relevant studies and at a cursory review reveals that they have been pursued at a considerable tempo. It is also obvious that they potentially enhance the standing of MAMTA as a qualified voice on YRSHR issues, nationally as well as internationally.

At the same time it should be mentioned that the value of the research sponsored or carried out by MAMTA – through this programme as well as through other funding sources – could be more effectively pursued on two counts. First, the methodological fit between the issues taken up and the way of collecting, compiling and analysing the data appears very mechanical (even if often elaborate) and would profit from a greater involvement of or support from mature research environments. Second, as the basic purpose of the research carried out is to explore issues of relevance for policy makers, opinion makers as well as activists there is a need to make intelligible summaries along with possible practical implications. Even if this is obviously a question of resources (time and competent staff) the risk of not doing so is that the link between analysis and action (except policy advocacy) is weakened. After all, the whole strategy of MAMTA must be to inspire and work through relevant others rather than to establish itself as the repository of YSRHR knowledge.

d) To develop Quality Indicators, i.e. in the context of this programme indicators that reflect the relation between content, contextual relevance, and effectiveness of promoting YRSHR through the various strategies/components, has been a challenge since the launch of the programme.

*Comment:* Although various attempts have been made, incl. an abortive attempt to access an expert through Sida, this still remains a challenge. Given the fact that the programme deals with intangibles such as awareness and behavioural change that are very difficult to assess, this lacunae is getting increasingly serious. In fact, without any discernable progress on this issue it is difficult to see what experience can be drawn from the activities undertaken over the years, and still less on how the programme – at the level of MAMTA/RFSU as well as at the level of the SRIJAN network – can generate an internal strategic management of its ongoing implementation.

However, as the programme is nearing its end it makes little sense to continue the search for quality indicators. Instead, the focus should be on defining exit scenarios as far as the current external support

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<sup>6</sup> See also Olov Berggren and Jonas Tillberg: Report on the Second Period. 2006-11-15

<sup>7</sup> The KAP-study of the PIs is a case in point (‘Situation Analysis: An Intervention Approach’, no date, but probably early 2005): focussing on impact and results it does not link the analysis of outcomes with an analysis of actions taken, and makes for very difficult reading for anyone trying to discern the operational implications.

is concerned, including criteria for ensuring that the programme is moving towards these. Such scenarios and criteria can then be used as a base for ‘backward planning’ to define what needs to be done between now and the end of the current programme.

### 3.2. Informatics

In accordance with the Forward Plan the purpose of ‘Informatics’ is to:

*“..... enable the young people and those working with them to access an accurate and scientific database on YRSHR related issues. It shall extensively focus on dissemination of information, innovative research conducted under phased intervention and Research & Documentation (R & D), support the SRIJAN Network and act as a training house to build skills and capacities on a demand basis”.*

The specific objectives of this strategy are:

- To strengthen the ‘informatics’ through collected and collated resources based on identification of strengths and gaps assessment on YRSHR issues at Central and State level
- To establish the functioning of ‘Informatics’ as a ‘clearing house’
- To enhance existing training materials and build concise documents on young people’s rights
- To devise and conduct specific training programs on and around YRSHR issues at central and state levels
- To develop innovative means to enable the young people living in poverty to access information/orientations on YRSHR.

The weakest and least concrete activities pursued against the above objectives are those concerning the clearinghouse function. The concept has not been fully operationalised and tangible.

So far the activities undertaken in this strategy have concentrated on:

- (i) Maintaining a library at MAMTA on YRSHR issues,
- (ii) maintaining a journal by and for youth on YRSHR issues (Arushi, launched in the earlier phase),
- (iii) maintaining and expanding an interactive web-portal, inc. a database on indexed articles and books, clippings/notes on YRSHR news, interactive counselling etc.,
- (iv) capacity building through a core training team as well as training manuals/documents.

Below follows an assessment of the major parts of the Informatics strategy.

*a) Library.* A lot of efforts have been laid down on structuring the physical library and enhancing the validity and reliability of the materials. This has turned the physical as well as virtual (on the net) library to a much more professional resource that could be developed and used by many others. There is a big internal need in MAMTA to have access to the types of materials that are gathered in the library and the MAMTA staff is using it frequently. Other agencies in Delhi also come and use it. It is also accessed quite a lot a lot on the web by different actors – everything from International agencies to government officials and departments to interested individuals and researchers.

The costs and efforts of developing a physical and virtual library is substantial and therefore the relevance of such activities are closely related to how needs in the network as well as other potential paid subscribers needs are mapped and followed up so that the resources in the library are put to use.

A special problem is the ambition on the state level. The ambition was to capacitate the SFAs to have their own resource centres and to aid and support them in these activities in a cascading manner. This has not come about. However if the training potential among the SFAs is realised some type of support around information and materials has to be arranged. As of now the MAMTA resource centre have tried to compensate the difficulties in mobilising SFAs for information centre activities by producing resource packs on CDs and distribute them.

At present the ambition has to be discussed for several reasons, among others:

- Each such state centre would need dedicated and especially trained staff (or perhaps supervised by a trained person) who works at least 50% of full time over a longer period
- Some SFAs already have libraries with another focus and might not be willing to divert this focus
- There is a need for physical facilities.

*b) The Web-Page.* The web page caters to most of the objectives but particularly the clearinghouse function for the network and other actors and professionals working with YRSHR. It is clearly also a tool to reach the decision making and influential parts of the Indian society for advocacy purposes which is the present overall focus for the project. Government officials, politicians, the media and the international support organisations like the UN or the big funds will use Indian sources of information if they are available. A third target group or user of the web-page is the youth of India, at least the part of the youth that can access the internet.

A problem of the present page is that the first page caters to all these needs at the same time. It makes the page a bit cluttered.

Network members of the SRIJAN-network have their own newsletters and special access part of the page. The existence of such a space is of course at the heart of building an active and updated network in such a vast and differentiated country as India. It is a tool for learning capacity building and exchange of good practices. It can be used for the purpose of distributing materials that can be printed in various places and thus speeding up distribution. It can be used to access translation into local languages by all actors and so on.

The advocacy role of a web page is increasing. Easily accessible information to use for major stake holders and the Media. Reviews of research, data on different YRSHR issues best practices and activities in India to be presented and distributed in a manner suitable to these target groups is surely an important tool for the overall advocacy purpose.

One aim of the project is to capacitate young people. This can mean two things:

- To empower special youth groups for advocacy purposes
- To provide knowledge and skills to individual young people on handling issues around sexuality in general and their own sexual health specifically.

The web page is intended to serve both functions. There is of course an inbuilt advocacy aim in having a Q and A part for young people on the page on top of the straight information and counselling aim. We want to stress that there is a very clear connection between access to the internet and access to wealth. A site on sexuality can grow endlessly. There is no end to the need of all social groups to ask questions on sexuality under the easy anonymous conditions of the Internet.

*c) Capacitating young people:* web Arushi, materials and other possibilities. The task of designing a magazine for and by young people has been fulfilled. The name of the publication is Arushi. It is also available on the web page. How this publication can be used by the SFAs and how well it reaches

different target groups is hard to assess. According to the LFA matrix such activities should be developed in the coming phase of the project. The lessons learned should be used in technical support for the SFAs to do similar activities on state level and disseminate in co-operation with their network.

In doing so we would like to stress the experiences of the Straight Talk magazine in Uganda. MAMTA is well aware of this project as well as many other similar followers in other places in Africa. We would like to stress that the original Ugandan project was extremely good in sustained distribution and outreach to the village level and to the poor. This experience could be used by the SFAs

As the web becomes more accessible throughout the country this source of information, like the magazine, the Q and A and materials for advocacy and empowerment activities might merit a page of its own. Anyway this will need further development. This is for the future but already synergies between the outreach and the web could be made in the next phase if the materials and magazines produced at state level could be supplied on the web.

The ongoing participation of MAMTA in a Q&A column in a major daily Hindi paper is a major achievement. Similar avenues could be explored by the SFA s in their respective states. It is a very cost effective way of capacitating the reading part of the Indian population. Radio and TV channels could also be used to the same purpose reaching an even bigger part of the population.<sup>8</sup>

*d) Training and training materials.* MAMTA has enhanced the existing materials as planned and among other things written handbooks as well as a manual for Youth Friendly Services, translated some RFSU documents on sexual and reproductive rights for young people. These productions form a basis for sustained training efforts.

At present the focus of the training is to train master trainers from all SFAs and networks so that they can replicate trainings in their own states. The documents and manuals will support this effort. Around 70 people were picked for trainings and 30 from these were chosen to become Master trainers. A core team from MAMTA conducts the Master trainer sessions. In order to ensure that the entire cascading training programme based on this core team incorporates the necessary strength and sustainability after the programme ends there is a need to continuously ensure, with specific assistance and involvement of the RFSU, that the core team is strengthened in terms of capacity and creative skills.

### 3.3. Networking

The overall objective of this strategy is to arrive at a:

*“Strengthened network of at least 150 NGOs in 10 states along with enabled youth fora to monitor services and integrate YRSHR in State institutions and policies”*

To achieve this the specific objectives of the Networking strategy are to:

- To consolidate the existing SRIJAN network to strengthen and reinforce understandings on YRSHR issues
- To expand the SRIJAN network for greater outreach of YRSHR issues and concerns
- To evolve and set the momentum towards the creation of a distinct strategy for greater involvement of young people on/for YRSHR issues through the network mechanism.

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<sup>8</sup> This has been done successfully by the above mentioned Straight Talk to reach minority populations youth and border populations in combat zones in Uganda. Also the straight Talk in Malawi operates mostly through radio because of a largely illiterate population. There are also a number of radio stations in SE Asia trying this method for minority languages. The key to success is knowledgeable and non judgemental NGO staff, participating peer educators and media staff who can run the operations together.

Before discussing the performance and dynamics of this strategy it should be stressed that this is without doubt the most difficult one of all the strategies of the programme. The reasons for this were discussed in the 2002 Evaluation and can briefly be summed up as follows.

First, virtually no one of the members of the SRIJAN has, unlike MAMTA and RFSU, YRSHR as a main focus or mission. In fact, for many of them YRSHR issues constitute a minor and only partly complementary aspect to their main activities. This makes for a very uneven commitment and contribution to, as well as involvement in, the carrying mission of SRIJAN. This in turn puts very heavy demands on the MAMTA/RFSU, not only to promote a consistency of message and understanding but also to balance this consistency against the necessity for member organisations to adapt these to local priorities and contextual factors.

Second, the network members are by definition extremely varied in terms of working modalities, capacity, organisation, and managerial styles. Some are small, individually driven grass root organisations with very few professionals involved. Others are in their own field or regional context leading agencies with ample resources and professional capacity and with firmly established management and governance structures. This in turn requires a very mature sense of what networking 'of unequals' implies, at the supportive MAMTA/RFSU level as well as at the state coordinating and locally dispersed NGO level.

Third, there is a similar high variation of resource endowments among the members of SRIJAN, with some having substantial and sustained access to resources (for whom the small grants available through the SRIJAN are inconsequential and indeed often an administrative liability) and others barely scraping through on very small budgets (for whom the SRIJAN grant often makes a very substantial difference).

The 'devolution' of the SRIJAN into regional/state mini-networks coordinated by a rotating State Facilitating Agent (SFA) – a well established and reputable member organisation – does not in itself counter these difficulties. In fact, as experience as well as the present situation shows, it can exacerbate them and make them more visible and acute<sup>9</sup>.

As noted above in Section 1 (Introduction) the assessment will not attempt to discuss any specific state network or NGO visited – the inevitable lottery underlying any selective visit programme would make this both unfair and risk getting the assessment lost in detailed local issues. Instead we have tried to identify the common factors of the SRIJAN momentum, based on our very brief visits to the concerned NGOs and their field activities<sup>10</sup> as well as on discussions with MAMTA and review of reports.

Reviewing the Networking strategy against its specific objectives we found that:

*a) Consolidation of the SRIJAN.* There is no doubt that since the launching of the current phase in 2003 considerable efforts have been put into strengthening the SRIJAN network. This has been done mainly in three ways.

First, the Forward Plan was formulated through extensive consultations between MAMTA and the SRIJAN members, from dissemination and discussion of the 2002 Evaluation, the initial formulation of the plan for 2003–2008, and a final review and revision of this in view of the comments made by the 2003 Appraisal. This has in itself contributed to the programme (if not its technical contents) being much more widely entrenched throughout the SRIJAN than during the previous phase.

Second, MAMTA has, through its own core team as well as jointly with RFSU, carried out several training programmes on sexuality, youth and gender aimed both at specific youth groups and at the

<sup>9</sup> This has been well borne out in the various RFSU/MAMTA reports as well as by the experience of the Evaluation Team during field visits

<sup>10</sup> In many cases the visit lasted only an hour and involved 'office' discussions only, while with others we had more extensive field and staff interactions of up to a day.

staff of member organisations. In addition a number of information and training material has been widely disseminated throughout the network. Compared to the situation observed by 2002 Evaluation this team was struck by the notable difference at the SRIJAN as well as at the field activity level – in terms of common understanding as well as ability to articulate and discuss sexuality and YRSHR issues in general<sup>11</sup>. In the sense of increased capacity of the SRIJAN membership to promote YRSHR in a consistent way the efforts have clearly generated an impact.

Third, together with the State Facilitating Agencies MAMTA launched a “technical capacity assessment” in 2005 of the partner organisations. The purpose of this was to identify YRSHR areas where the knowledge of the members needed to be boosted. At the time of this evaluation 69 member organisations had been reviewed in this way, providing an input to the training programme run through the Informatics strategy.

Although this has in itself been an important contribution to the efforts of strengthening the YRSHR capacity of the SRIJAN it is also clear that it has left one of the major problems of the SRIJAN untouched: the differences in working modalities, organisational strength, and management – and therefore also how to deal with them. In addition it seems that the “technical capacity assessment” has lost in momentum and ambition so that it appears doubtful whether it will be completed for all SRIJAN members<sup>12</sup>.

Taken together these efforts have, in our view, considerably ‘strengthened and reinforced’ the understanding of SRIJAN members on YRSHR issues. As such they have indeed consolidated the network as a ‘critical mass’ of awareness.

However, as pointed out above the consistent (or shared) understanding of the YRSHR issues is only one, and in many respect the least problematic area, requiring consolidation. More important and more decisive for the extent to which the SRIJAN can be turned into a dynamic force is the extent to which the network, with the active but careful facilitation of MAMTA, can gain a momentum in its own management and coordination. Without this the very rationale for having a network at all – i.e. where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts – is lost, with the SRIJAN becoming a rather administratively cumbersome conglomeration of what is in effect a scattered information dissemination and mini-grant distribution. This will no doubt require a much greater attention to networking mechanics in order to make it more interactive: meetings, arenas, exchange visits, opening up the Phased Interventions to direct exposure the network partners, etc.

*b) Expansion of SRIJAN.* In its original version the expansion objective meant the expansion of the SRIJAN network (and by implication the YRSHR programme funded by Sida) to at least one more state and to more member organisations. This has, however, gradually shifted to expand the supportive base of the programme with MAMTA providing training to members on how to develop proposals for funding<sup>13</sup> as well as facilitating linkages between SRIJAN members and other relevant institutions and organisations outside the programme fold. In fact, at the time of this assessment the original expansion plan had in effect turned into a contraction, with SRIJAN reportedly having 136 partners<sup>14</sup> with the following distribution:

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<sup>11</sup> This was of course so for the two members who participated in both the evaluations. For the Vietnamese members it was the openness and awareness with which YRSHR issues were discussed (in what they otherwise recognised as a much more socially conservative society than Vietnam) that was striking.

<sup>12</sup> Another problem, although not necessarily a decisive one, is that it has been carried out as a guided self-assessment rather than a joint one. During the field visits we found several inconsistencies between the reality on the ground and the information submitted to MAMTA.

<sup>13</sup> The Network strategy budget includes a small ‘Innovation fund’ to which SRIJAN members can apply.

<sup>14</sup> The no of partners tend to vary from source to source. This number was provided to the evaluation team at the initial sitting with MAMTA. In the list of partners maintained by MAMTA they are 133, the same as that found in the organisational profile of MAMTA made for the WHO in early 2006

1. Bihar.  
Districts under SRIJAN: 19 (total districts in state: 37)  
Partners NGOs: 29  
Coordination: 5 zonal + MAMTA
2. Rajasthan  
Districts under SRIJAN: 12 (32)  
Partner NGOs: 24  
Coordination: 1 SFA
3. Uttar Pradesh  
Districts under SRIJAN: 17 (70)  
Partner NGOs: 18  
Coordination: 4 zonal + MAMTA
4. West Bengal  
Districts under SRIJAN: 14 (18)  
Partner NGOs: 17  
Coordination: 1 SFA
5. Gujarat  
Districts under SRIJAN: 10 (25)  
Partner NGOs: 20  
Coordination: 1 SFA
6. Maharashtra  
Districts under SRIJAN: 13 (35)  
Partner NGOs: 13  
Coordination: 1 SFA
7. Andhra Pradesh  
Districts under SRIJAN: 9 (23)  
Partner NGOs: 13  
Coordination: 1 SFA

In view of the lingering problems faced by the SRIJAN, both in its state/regional setups and as a whole, we strongly feel that expanding the coverage of the network to more states and/or to more organisations is currently not to be attempted. The consolidation agenda for the existing network remains the most important and still unsolved challenge. In fact, during our field visits we were frequently faced with uncertainties about what the function and purpose of SRIJAN actually was – a distribution system for YRSHR information? a conveyor belt for (inadequate) funds? a coordination instrument for orchestrated advocacy events? a selective training programme?

At the same time it should be stressed that there have been some notable steps forward in making the SRIJAN, in its local setting rather than on scale, a more interactive process. This is particularly so in those states where, for reasons of inadequate performance or ‘over-extension’, the SFA structure broke down or proved dysfunctional (e.g. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh). To rejuvenate the function if not the organisation of the network process zonal coordinators were nominated, replacing the state-wide coordination model<sup>15</sup>. It is our distinct impression that this not only made exchange and interaction between the local NGOs much more dynamic, it also downplayed the (implicit) notion of hierarchy between strong/big and small/weak organisations that state-wide coordination processes risk entrenching. While this is obviously a way forward from a network perspective – creating a larger number of smaller and more interactive constituents – it also demands more of MAMTA as the guiding and facilitating unit as regards planning, monitoring, training and policy promoter. This is also illustrated by

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<sup>15</sup> A similar process was reportedly being actively considered also for Rajasthan.

the very effective local support- and policy-promoting role played by MAMTA in Rajasthan in face of an over-extended SFA, a role that is based on the fact that this is the only state in which MAMTA has a full-time professional representative.

Having said that we wish to flag for the possible necessity to review and revise the whole network strategy. At present it appears that the SRIJAN is in somewhat of a limbo: having the formal network instruments in place and being infused with a greater common understanding of YRSHR issues among, but lacking a momentum and identity of its own as well as capacity of effectively influencing policy where it counts – the State level. To move towards a breakthrough and sustained momentum in these areas may require a change of both the strategy of networking as well as of MAMTA's role within it.

*c) Greater involvement of young people.* Basically we see three approaches<sup>16</sup> by which this has been attempted with the SRIJAN as the carrying vehicle.

First a pyramid-like process of forming 'State Youth Fora' in the seven network states, based on representatives from SRIJAN district and which in turn have participated in regional youth conventions (Kolkatta and Jaipur). These conventions then nominated representatives to the Youth Parliament in 2005.

The second is through the Peer Educator process in which selected youth with a flair for interacting and influencing their peers are trained and supported to promote YRSHR issues in their own environment. Launched in the first phase it has now been expanded both in coverage and scope.

Of the two the Peer Educator process is undoubtedly the one that is likely to be more effective in terms of reach as well as impact on the ground. We were unable to get information on how many Peer Educators that had so far been trained or were active. However, the number (at least in nominal terms) is likely to be considerable as this is a standard feature throughout the SRIJAN. Throughout our field visits we met with, and had some opportunities to get glimpses of, the work of, Peer Educators in virtually all places and organisations.

Three aspects were striking:

- Peer Educators, whatever their quality, were ubiquitous, testifying to a real effort having been made both in identifying them and in retaining them in some fashion or other
- The manner in which they 'worked' differed greatly, and many also expressed their wish to be given more (or some) training
- The turnover appeared to be high, not the least because of little or no remuneration or formal recognition. This was particularly in case of smaller NGOs with few if any resources and very local reach.

The Peer Educators have been identified, and indeed come to be relied upon, as the core vehicle by which the programme promotes a youth dialogue (rather than being a one-sided information system). Given this it is in our view of critical importance that the Peer Educator process is being subjected to a focal participatory evaluation. The current lack of systematic information as to their actual inputs, their self-perceptions, and the factors that promote (or otherwise) their sustained contribution need to be corrected on a priority basis in order to enable actions to be taken during the remainder of the current phase.

The third element of putting the youth themselves on the centre-stage of the programme is that of the Youth Friendly Services. In the long run it is intended that they will provide the institutional backbone of mobilisation and awareness building of the youth, also providing the meeting ground between public programmes and actors and the youth.

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<sup>16</sup> In addition there is also the Arushi magazine discussed above under the Informatics strategy

They are, in many cases, still only a tentative or formative part of the SRIJAN network, with little to facilitate them being mainstreamed into the state or local level YRSHR process. One of the basic tools with which this was to be done was the Phased Interventions where the more closely guided development of Youth Friendly Services as well as Peer Education were to generate practical experiences if not models to be used throughout the SRIJAN. This has so far not been systematically pursued.

### **3.4. Advocacy**

The overall objective of the Advocacy strategy is to influence the policies bearing on the situation in which young people find themselves, so that they adequately reflect and support reproductive and sexual health and rights.

The specific objectives are:

- (For MAMTA) To be technically capacitated on advocacy skills through advocacy experts at both central and state levels
- To develop convergence and establish synergy in advocacy efforts between the central and state levels
- To sensitise identified constituencies on YRSHR issues at central and state levels
- Development of working forums to advocate for policies/strategies for YRSHR issues at both levels
- Develop advocacy capacity in young people and provide them distinct visibility in the advocacy effort.

In many ways Advocacy is both the end and the means of the entire programme – reflecting the overall aim of the programme to create an ‘enabling environment’ for young people – with virtually all other strategies forming part of or converging on advocacy. This is also an area in which RFSU has considerable expertise and practical experience, even if the modalities of advocacy are in many ways culture specific.

Assessing the performance against the specific objectives we find the following.

In a strictly operational sense this strategy has performed according to set targets and plans, and in some areas even exceeded them. Particularly in the case of MAMTA (and the national level) advocacy has been extremely efficiently played out, so much so that MAMTA (and/or its Director) appears as something like a brand name for YRSHR issues at the national media and policy level. Not that the resistance and hesitation in many policy circuits to incorporate or even discuss sexuality and reproductive health and rights has disappeared. But there is now a marked tendency for MAMTA to be automatically invited to policy deliberations on young people’s lifestyles and reproductive health.

At the level of SRIJAN and its members at state and local levels the situation appears different. The main advocacy approach tends to be issue/campaign or event based, with the more systematic interaction between SRIJAN and policy decision-makers largely lacking.

The Forward Plan includes the establishment of SRIJAN resource centres, in some or all the states. Although we recognise the difficulties of doing so we also believe that efforts need to be made to try this out during the remainder of the agreement period. In particular, we believe that they can have their strongest potential in providing closer professional and technical support to the very difficult process of Advocacy, moving it from its present event-driven nature to a more systematic interaction between the SRIJAN network on one hand and state policy makers and local decision makers on the other.

### 3.5. Phased Interventions

The phased interventions (PI) were introduced in the first exploratory phase as pilot projects, to develop and test methods and approaches of establishing a viable local process of YRSHR promotion and youth involvement. Key elements were ‘peer educators’ and ‘youth friendly services’. The methodology adopted was one of action research, i.e. combining concrete interventions with systematic analysis of process, outcome and impact, in order to make for replication elsewhere. In addition the PIs represent a window of practical ground exposure for MAMTA as they are managed and coordinated directly from Delhi (in one case, Varanasi, jointly with the State Facilitating Agent).

The location of the PIs have been chosen to provide cultural, social and socio-economic variation, with one being implemented in an urban slum area in Bangalore in the south, one in the urban/peri-urban context in the Hindu cultural ‘capital’ Varanasi in the north, and one in rapidly changing rural environment in the hinterland of Delhi (Bawal).

The specific objectives of this strategy are:

- To sensitize community and various stakeholders (parents, PRIs, religious leaders) to promote participation on YRSHR
- To build capacities of young people for enhanced participation
- To maximize out reach on identified issues of YRSHR
- To create and sustain youth friendly environment through existing resources (services) and network
- To build capacities and develop skills of outreach staff for continuous refinement
- To have successful implementation and develop model for future replicability and up-scaling (Intervention Research).

Apart from a short visit by two members to Varanasi the field visits of the Evaluation Team did not include any direct exposure to the PIs. Our assessment is therefore based on the reports provided by MAMTA as well as on discussions with SRIJAN members as to the role and contribution of the PIs to the efforts of the network.

From the viewpoint of direct local interventions the PIs implementation has progressed according to plan. It has involved focal trainings, institutional support, and facilitating the acceptance of and support to the projects from the local public institutions and decision-makers. A special situation cum baseline analysis was carried out in 2004 focussing on the attitudes and behaviour in relation to YRSHR issues. This in turn was used to guide and fine-tune ongoing interventions.

The salient question surrounding the PIs is how they feed into the overall programme. As local interventions they are reportedly creating considerable impact, but it is not clear how and on what issues the experience gained percolates into the larger strategies of the programme, particularly Advocacy and Networking. This is an issue that was raised also by the 2002 Evaluation, and we have not been able to see any breakthrough on this.

It is our considered opinion that the question of use value or replication potential of the PIs for the YRSHR programme as a whole must be given a much firmer attention than has so far been the case. This is so for several reasons.

First, the two key elements of the PIs – ‘peer educators’ and ‘youth friendly services’ – are also those on which members of the SRIJAN need most support: in understanding what they stand for, in practical terms of how to launch them, in establishing adequate support functions.

Second, the reports that have come out from the PIs, including the Situation Analysis, have their target audience clearly on the research community rather than the community of action oriented NGOs or even public actors. It is very high time that the reports and analysis generated from the PIs are ‘translated’ in practical terms and disseminated throughout the SRIJAN and elsewhere.

Third, as highly localised projects the local impact and possibly also the sustainability (through the efforts to involve public actors) may be high. It may also be that the end-of-project reports will contain a large number of both practical/replicable recommendations and lessons learned. But for the rest of the ongoing programme it is the experience gained now, in process terms that is of relevance, not a final ‘autopsy’ report when the programme folds up.

It is true that during this phase several exchange and exposure visits to the PIs have been arranged for SRIJAN members. But this is just one part of the effort that has to be intensified. In fact, the yardstick of the PIs must be the extent to which MAMTA can generate operational lessons learned as well as how this knowledge is made available to others and in particular to the network members.

## 4. Overall Assessment of Momentum and Results

As noted above the assessment is based on the performance as reported by MAMTA and RFSU for the period up to December 2005, coupled with interactions with members of the MAMTA management and staff as well as with member organisations of the SRIJAN network in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

It should be stressed that our visits to the SRIJAN members and their field operations were very brief. It is therefore not possible to make any valid assessments of the work carried out by specific member organisations. Instead the assessment focuses on the network dynamics as such, both in terms of the content and in terms of relations between its constituents.

Although the various components of the programme are interlinked and more or less mutually supportive, it is probably fair to say that the implementation is by design or otherwise played out at two levels.

First, at the national (or central) level with MAMTA taking a very clear and direct role and with the SRIJAN being more of a target audience. This is primarily the case of the:

- Research and Documentation
- Informatics
- Global Development.<sup>17</sup>

All of these are directly managed by MAMTA, with little active or systematic inputs from the SRIJAN member organisations.

Second, at the state or field level where the SRIJAN network and its constituents are the primary actors with MAMTA playing the facilitating and/or supportive role. This is basically the:

- Networking

component that spans the bulk of the effort to promote public awareness, particularly among rural youth and community level leaders.

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<sup>17</sup> As noted above this particular component is not dealt with in this report

Linking these two levels in terms of dissemination, sharing of experience and consistency of message and approach are the:

- Phased interventions, and
- Advocacy

with the one being intended to generate practical and effective approaches through action research, and the other to promote both the consistency in content as well as skills and instruments for influencing decision- and opinion-makers at all levels. Both of the components can be said to link analysis with practice, general approaches with contextual factors.

Although RFSU have been involved to some degree in all of these activities, its emphasis has been on Networking/Capacity Building through promoting sexuality awareness by way of training and education (direct and Training of Trainers).

In what follows we will therefore discuss the operational aspects of the programme along these groups of components. In doing so we deviate from the Programme Document (Forward Plan) as well as from the various presentations and reports made available to us. We also deviate from the emphasis in the 2002 evaluation as well as of the 2003 appraisal in that we do not posit the SRIJAN network as the core carrying feature and yardstick of the programme. Indeed, much of what has evolved since the earlier exploratory phase 2000–2003 only makes sense if one looks upon the MAMTA/RFSU effort not as one integrated programme but as (at least) two – requiring different capacities and different skills even if they feed on each other.

### **National/central level**

The three components that have their primary logic as centrally coordinated and pursued have the common characteristics in that they demand a high level of analytical/specialist competence to become effective. This means that they are not easily diffused or decentralised and rely on a common management that is able to ensure quality of outputs as well as access to information. In other words, they together constitute the analytical platform required to provide evidence-based consistency and guidance to capacity and awareness building – in relation to the SRIJAN network and, perhaps more importantly, to the society at large.

It should immediately be stated that this ‘level’ of the overall programme is by far the most dynamic and quite likely the most effective one. In parts it reflects the advantage of a centralised management and professional staff versus a diffused network of highly diverse partners with varying degrees of professional competence and commitment (see below). But it also reflects a very remarkable degree of efficiency in implementation with a very high level of performance and output.

### **State/local level**

This is of course dominated by the Networking. In fact, the SRIJAN was conceived as the channel through which conceptual and ‘technical’ know-how could be disseminated to a large number of local actors, at the same feeding practical experiences and concerns into the conceptual and technical capacity building. As we have frequently noted this two-way process is only materialising in limited ways. While this is partly an inherent difficulty in any networking operation, we do believe that the effectiveness of the network as such can and need to be addressed need in its own right and not only as a question of increased technical capacity building. At the same time, and as a closely linked effort, there is a need to intensify the vertical interaction between the state/local/SRIJAN level and the national level largely managed by MAMTA.

## 4.2. Results Against Objectives

Given the fact that this is primarily a process-oriented programme quantifiable data is hard to come by. This does not mean that it is impossible and as noted below there are some areas where the programme can do more on this. Selected data on various issues/outcomes is given in Appendix 5.

Below is summarised the main conclusions based on the findings in section 3, over five of the six programme components and their specific objectives.

### 4.2.1. Research and documentation

*Objective:* to establish a diversified data base at state as well as district levels.

*Results:*

- (a) a versatile database on YRSHR issues have been established, accessible on the web-portal for registered users (currently 116). In addition hard copies are distributed on specific issues through the SRIJAN network. The quality and scope of the database makes it unique (but requires skills to use that is likely to be available only to academically strong organisations, which leaves out the average SRIJAN member unless actively coached)
- (b) dissemination of lessons from action research/phased interventions still weak, and a clear operational approach to this is still lacking particularly as regards the SRIJAN network (partly due to lingering inbuilt problems in the action research itself, see 4.2.1 above)
- (c) gap-filling primary research ongoing with high quality studies emerging in identified priority areas (see 4.2.2 above), based not the least on international collaborative ventures
- (d) development of quality indicators still in its formative stage. This is a key area which puts the whole programme on a much vaguer and more exploratory basis than it should have been by now.

### 4.2.2. Informatics

*Objective:* to strengthen the information and training base at central and state levels.

*Results:*

- (a) the information resource centre at MAMTA/New Delhi in general well established and administered
- (b) State level resource centres still in their infancy, which limits the practical value of the MAMTA centre in terms of strengthening the network members
- (c) Training materials to facilitate direct dialogues with youth have been developed and/or fine-tuned (sexuality and gender, rights, pregnancy). As with most other information material the reach and use value throughout the SRIJAN network and beyond is limited by the fact that they are (with few exceptions) in either Hindi or English only
- (d) Clearing house at MAMTA operating both in terms of training and interface facility and in terms of hosting the 'virtual' interactive clearinghouse on the web as well sponsoring as a standing column with Q&As in a national paper. results in top enhance the database on YRSHR issues.

### 4.2.3. Networking

*Objective:* to strengthen the (SRIJAN) network of at least 150 NGOs in 7 states along with youth for a to monitor services and integrate YRSHR in state institutions and policies.

*Results:*

- (a) in terms of numbers of NGOs/CBOs as well as states the target is reached
- (b) quality and management process of networking still a serious problem, with very uneven involvement due both to differences in size of SRIJAN members, to differences in real or perceived value

added from membership (inc. SFAs), to personality factors common to most NGOs, and to a tendency towards ritualised planning (cf section 4.3. above).

#### **4.2.4. Advocacy**

*Objective:* to influence policy environment for young people reflecting and supporting reproductive and sexual health and rights.

*Results:*

- (a) at national level results impressive, both as regards political decision-makers, govt agencies and specialised bodies such as NACS
- (b) At state level uneven, largely depending upon nature of political regimes/leadership and regional socio-cultural traditions as well as SFA capacity and commitment
- (c) At local level critically dependent on quality of SRIJAN member organisations and the occasional support provided by SFAs (and MAMTA directly in specific events)
- (d) The journal Arushi brought out by MAMTA (5.000 copies) deemed to be of uncertain relevance/reach/use
- (e) MAMTA (and some of the SRIJAN members) very good at ‘hi-jacking’ or getting involved in relevant national events (e.g. Youth Day).

#### **4.2.5. Phased interventions**

*Objective:* through action research and localised interventions generate models and experiences to be shared throughout the SRIJAN network.

*Results:*

- (a) three ongoing interventions (Varanasi, Bawal, Bangalore) with different profiles and working modalities
- (b) evidence-based results as yet not possible to determine, partly due to deficiencies in original design, and in lack of measurable indicators and consequent follow-up
- (c) sharing of experience of (or involvement in) the interventions as yet very limited on the part of the SRIJAN members
- (d) a great risk that the interventions may end up in the typical pilot trap of non-replicable specially nurtured cases unless (b) and (c) above attended to on a priority basis (cf section 4.4. above).

#### **4.2.6. Results – an overview**

Leaving aside the issue of real and prospective impact (see below section 5.3) the results of the programme so far indicate that:

- (a) MAMTA has with the support from RFSU and through an active strategy of linking with other peer environments and programmes, in India and abroad, built up a very strong base on which to facilitate a diversified promotion of YRSHR issues at the national level, fully in line with the objectives laid down
- (b) The results are particularly striking in the areas of Research and Documentation and Advocacy, and to some extent also Informatics. However, the research carried out or promoted by MAMTA (although impressive in terms of sheer output) suffer from a somewhat mechanical application of methods that do not always correspond to mature research requirements or even the questions addressed<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> This has been a concern raised by the Karolinska Institute

- (c) Progress is more uneven in the area of Networking, that still suffer from problems of ineffective management, planning, and follow-up/monitoring
- (d) Phased Interventions have, in spite of the long standing of two of them (Bawal and Bangalore) still to generate evidence-based lessons learned, as also to gain a clear role and function in the overall programme – particularly in relation to the SRIJAN.

## 5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions presented in sections 3 and 4 above we make the following recommendations.

### 5.1. Overall

There is an urgent need to *discuss and introduce an 'Exit Strategy' that should permeate all strategies/components during the last leg of the agreement period.* This means that the plans as they stand for the remaining period should be reviewed and wherever necessary be revised in order to ensure that there are:

- clearly defined end-of-programme scenarios for each strategy, including how to strengthen key actors and institutional arrangements that will carry the processes created forward
- clear evidence-based lessons learned for all strategies, particularly as regards the experience gained in reaching (or not reaching) intended results or impact
- intensified sharing of experiences and dissemination of findings, not the least to the network partners.

### 5.2. Research and Documentation

The monitoring and analysis of the Phased Interventions need to be geared to practical conclusions and lessons learned as soon as possible, increasing their relevance beyond that of localised pilot projects.

The programme should make available to its stakeholders easily digested summaries of the research carried out or sponsored.

Even if earlier attempts at developing Quality Indicators were abortive there is a need to revisit the entire (and very numerous) range of indicators – process, input, output, result, etc – that have been developed in order to simplify the MIS as well as M&E. At present the very wide range of output indicators on which progress is reported makes it virtually impossible to gain an insight into either the relative effectiveness or impact of the different strategies, or for that matter the programme as a whole.

### 5.3. Informatics

State informatics/resource centres as envisaged in the Forward Plan need to be initiated in order to strengthen a decentralised system of information and advocacy of relevance for the network members.

The web portal of the programme needs more effective and continuous updating/maintenance.

The core team of trainers at MAMTA needs to be consolidated to ensure that it has the necessary technical/pedagogical and self-sustaining capacity beyond the lifetime of the RFSU support.

## **5.4. Networking**

MAMTA should initiate a strategic review of the role, purpose and experience of the SRIJAN so far with the purpose of including organisational and managerial criteria for membership and capacity building and not only technical ones.

A focal evaluation of the peer educator process within the Phased Interventions as well as with selected members of the network should be done in order to inform the programme and its stakeholders about ways to make this more effective and sustainable.

The experience of youth friendly services need to be culled from the Phased Interventions and made available to the network members.

## **5.5. Advocacy**

The planned state centres need to be tried out in some state contexts on a priority basis in order to strengthen and systematise the advocacy efforts at state and local levels.

The advocacy workshops that have been carried out for the national level advocacy efforts should be replicated at the state level.

## **5.6. Phased Interventions**

The phased interventions need urgently to be summed up in terms of practical and replicable experiences, even if tentative.

In order to move the phased interventions closer to the network members and operational concerns, MAMTA must ensure that the last phase of the PIs are clearly focussed on getting operational result and experiences.

The programme management, including the network, should consider ways of effectively disseminating and/or exposing the concrete results and experiences gained in the PIs to network members.

# Annex 1 Terms of Reference

## 1. Evaluation Purpose

In accordance to the Sida/DESO Decision 0674/03, a mid-term evaluation is planned to be carried out to assess the overall quality, functioning and success to date and to formulate specific recommendations for the rest of the agreement term.

The main stakeholders of this review are the two partner agencies, RFSU and MAMTA, with its network partners, and the Development Co-operation Section (DCS) of the Embassy of Sweden in New Delhi and Sida's Health Division in Stockholm.

## 2. Intervention Background

Sida has been supporting the RFSU-MAMTA collaboration on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights since 1999. The first evaluation of the partnership was undertaken in end 2002 followed by a new agreement which was signed between Sida and RFSU and a MoU between RFSU-MAMTA covering the period July 2003–June 2008.

The main focus of the project is on young people – male/female, married/unmarried, and in/out of school – in the age group of 10–24 years and from poor and disadvantaged sections of the society. The overall goal is to create an enabling environment for improved health and development of young people through an integrated approach to reproductive and sexual health and rights especially of poorer section by promoting gender equality and rights.

Initiated with a twinning arrangement between MAMTA and RFSU and focus on capacity building, the partnership now encompasses a network of NGOs named Sexual and Reproductive Rights Initiative for Joint Action, Srijan that has spread across several states in the country. The program resting on six broad strategies of advocacy, research & documentation, informatics, networking, phased interventions and global partnership in development, has six broad objectives viz.

- Create relevant database on key YRSHR issues for programmers/ implementers/researchers and young people;
- Strengthen resource and training base at national and state to capacitate young people and related stakeholders;
- Strengthen network of 159 NGOs in 10 states along with enable youth for monitoring services and integrating YRSHR in state institutions and policies;
- Influence policy environment for young people reflecting and supporting reproductive and sexual health and rights;
- Implement newer approaches and document lessons to develop model for future replicability and up-scaling;
- Develop effective fora for global partnerships for ensuring reproductive and sexual health and rights of young people.

### **3. Evaluation Questions**

The external review will cover all important aspects and components of the project as outlined in the project document and later amendments, taking into account developments since the signing of the agreement.

The evaluation team shall particularly address the following issues:

- To follow up the recommendations made from the first evaluation 2002, whether implemented or not.
- The continued relevance of the project in relation to the goals and policies of Swedish development cooperation: Policy on Global Development (2003), the Swedish International SRHR Policy (2005), Sida's Gender Policy (2005), & Poverty policy, and with regard to Convention on the Rights of the Child, CEDAW and other relevant conventions, and also to the needs and priorities of the partner country and target groups.
- To estimate to which extent poor girls and boys are reached by the project interventions.
- To describe the qualitative aspects of the pilot interventions in particular and the project implementation in general.
- The effectiveness of the approach/strategy being used to achieve the project outputs.
- The intended and unintended effects of the activities, including effects on the intended vulnerable groups.
- Gender concerns at various levels of project implementation and gender sensitivity of the project staff.
- The efficiency of project management and the cost-effectiveness of the resources/inputs used.
- The outputs in relation to the efforts put in for capacity building, including internal control routines, and institutional development and the development of networking and coordination.
- The institutional collaboration and partnership between RFSU and MAMTA: clarity in roles and responsibilities, scope for improvement etc.
- Early signs of potential impact, including at policy level, and sustainability of results, including the sustainability of the partnership between the twinning organizations.

### **4. Recommendations and Lessons**

On the basis of this assessment, the evaluation team should identify problems, constraints and lessons learned, if any, and propose recommendations for follow-up action. A number of generic recommendations should also be made that have bearing beyond the project.

### **5. Stakeholder Involvement and Methodology**

The evaluation team will carefully review all relevant documentation, including the original project document, the project progress reports and the review minutes.

The team will visit the project offices/sites in India and conduct interviews with relevant staff in the DCS/Sida, RFSU and MAMTA staff and the networking partner NGOs, as well as other stakeholders in the activities undertaken.

The team leader is responsible for the conduct of the evaluation team, for ensuring that the ToR is fully understood by all the team members, and for ensuring that the evaluation report is completed in accordance with this ToR.

## **6. Work Plan and Schedule**

The evaluation will be carried out during three weeks in end April/early May 2006. It is proposed that the review be carried out as follows:

- Documentation review and preliminary consultations with the DCS/Sida and RFSU/MAMTA, including the development of a work plan;
- Visit to the project site, including collection of relevant written material as well as interviews with the staff of RFSU/MAMTA, partner NGOs and other stakeholders;
- Analysis of the information collected and preparation of a first draft of the report; and
- Debriefing, information validation, and preparation of the final version of the report.

Logistical arrangements for the project visit will be decided upon once a detailed work plan has been developed.

## **7. Reporting**

The evaluation team will produce a mid-term evaluation report of not more than 20–25 pages, apart from relevant annexes, containing the following sections:

- i) Cover page with date of version and name of consultants;
- ii) List of contents;
- iii) Executive summary – with particular emphasis on main findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations;
- iv) Introduction – presentation of the evaluation’s purpose, questions and main findings;
- v) The evaluated intervention – description of the evaluated intervention and its purpose, logic, history, organization and stakeholders;
- vi) Findings – factual evidence, data and observations that are relevant to the specific questions asked by the evaluation;
- vii) Evaluative conclusions – assessment of the intervention and its results against given evaluation criteria, standards of performance and policy issues;
- viii) Lessons learned;
- ix) Recommendations;
- x) Annexes – terms of reference, methodology of data gathering and analysis, list of people interviewed, references, etc.

The findings and recommendations should also be verbally presented to RFSU/MAMTA and the DCS/Sida. A draft version of the evaluation report will be shared with the organisations for comments at least two days before the presentation/s. The final evaluation report will be submitted to the DCS/Sida in 4 bound hard copies and one electronic copy (in MS Word or compatible software).

## **8. Evaluation Team**

The evaluation team will be of two–three members (Swedish and Indian) designated by DCS/Sida.

The team should possess demonstrable skills in evaluating capacity development of organization as well as substantive experience from dealing with SRHR, in particular regarding young people, including HIV/AIDS and gender issues, and management/networking procedures. Excellent (English) oral and writing skills are essential. Work experience in India/South-Asia is of advantage and good knowledge and ability to apply Sida’s goals and Sida’s SRHR, LGBT, Gender and HIV/AIDS Policies in carrying out the evaluation is needed. In addition, Sweden’s Policy for Global Development-Shared Responsibility should serve as a point of departure for the evaluation.

The team leader is responsible for the conduct of the evaluation team, for ensuring that the ToR is fully understood by all the team members, and for ensuring that the evaluation report is completed in accordance with this ToR. Annex 2: Performance/output indicators

## Annex 2 Performance/output Indicators

### Research & Documentation

Objectives	Indicator(s)
<b>Objective 1: To enhance the database on YSRHR issues for various stakeholders</b>	X no of enhancements of the portal
	X no. of reviews
	X no. of gaps identified in data base
	X no. of data reports/ CDs collected and collated
	X no. of raw data collected
<b>Objective 2: To disseminate the database through e-media and print</b>	No. people/ govt. depts. (policy makers and implementers), research Institutions, network partners accessing database on different themes
	Data base informed "X" number of policies and interventions
<b>Objective 3: Promote action oriented learning by documenting and disseminating lessons emerging from interventions to feed into advocacy and</b>	Intervention research
	Data analysis of survey data of intervention research
<b>Objective 4: To facilitate primary research on identified gap areas on YSRHR issues at central</b>	X no. of modifications in process documentation to make it more efficient
	X no. of gaps identified against each YSRHR indicators against key issues
<b>Objective 5: To develop Quality Assurance Indicators</b>	X no. of research studies undertaken
	Guidelines for maintaining quality.

<b>INFORMATICS</b> Specific Objectives and Process Indicators	
<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Process Indicators</b>
<b>Specific Objective 1</b>	
<b>To strengthen the resource center at central and state level</b>	1. Acquisitions based on identified gap areas on YSRHR at central and state levels
	2. Supporting SFAs in streamlining the process of establishing/strengthening resource centre
<b>Specific Objective 2:</b>	
<b>To establish functioning of resource center as 'Clearing House'.</b>	1. No. of Sessions/hits on the website
	2. No. of Queries on the website and newspaper column
	3. Individuals/organisations to whom publications/training materials are disseminated
	4. No. of listserv sent and no. of members
	5. Individuals/organisations using MAMTA resource center
<b>Specific Objective 3:</b>	
<b>To enhance existing training material and publish relevant documents on and for young people.</b>	1. Existing training material revised/translated
	2. New resources developed for young people and other stakeholders
	3. Supporting development of documents for young people and other stakeholders
<b>Specific Objective 4:</b>	
<b>To capacitate individuals and organizations through trainings at central and state level</b>	1. Number of trainings conducted in a year
	2. Number of organizations represented during trainings
	3. Number of issues/areas covered under trainings in a year
	4. Number of members added to core team of trainers at central and state level
	5. Number of trainings held for organizations/individuals outside SIDA project
<b>Specific Objective 5:</b>	
<b>To develop innovative means for reaching out to young people in poverty context.</b>	1. Number of innovative means identified to reach out to young people in the poverty context
	2. Number of strategies used for dissemination for reaching out to the young people

## NETWORKING

### Networking Process Indicators

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
1 Strengthen network of at least 150 NGOs in 10 States along with enabled youth fora to monitor services and integrate YRSHR in State institutions and policies	10 SFAs take on functional responsibilities based on their strengths and build each others capacities
	Sharing of roles and responsibilities of Working Group undertaken by different network partners
	Number of initiatives (such as cross-visits, sharing experiences) taken by each SFA to strengthen the network and its outcome
	Number of NGOs mobilise alternate resources (such as financial, institutional linkages) for programme interventions on YRSHR issues
	X number of local institutions, youth fora, NGOs and state governments integrated YRSHR (into their programmes and policies or strategies) and effectively increased outreach
1.1 Consolidate the existing SRIJAN network to strengthen the functioning and reinforce understandings on YRSHR issues	Compliance to Charter and MoU developed in concurrence with all Network partners
	Number of SFAs providing timely progress report against indicators and agreed financial procedures
	X number of workshops undertaken to develop common understanding and objectives of YRSHR initiatives of the network
1.2 Expand the SRIJAN Network for greater outreach of YRSHR issues through increased institutional linkages	Number of partners in Network States increase geographical/population coverage (districts, slums/towns/villages having X population)
	Number of SFAs and their network partners develop formal and informal linkages with X number of institutions (Government, Non-government and Private)
1.3 To evolve and set the momentum towards the creation of distinct strategy for greater involvement of young people for YRSHR issues through the network mechanism.	Number of young people/peer educators from SRIJAN Network participating in the capacity building exercise
	Number of Joint Campaigns undertaken by State Networks in SRIJAN and role played by peer educators in the event
	Number of YRSHR youth forum activities at State and Regional level with various stakeholders
	Number of reports and articles in media on YRSHR initiatives undertaken by young people in SRIJAN states.

PHASED INTERVENTION		
Specific Objectives and Process Indicators		
Objectives	Indicators	
1	To sensitize and mobilize community & key stakeholders on the issue of YSRHR with a view to promoting their participation	No. of meetings/ workshops organized and people attended (age, sex, location and theme).  Evidence of support by parents, PRI and community leaders, for young peoples issues.
2	To capacitate Young People to seek information and utilize YSRHR related services.	No of sensitisation workshops, exchange programmes and meetings with YP held and X no. Of YP participated  No of YP trained as peer educators  No. of trained Peer Educators organised X no. of meetings having participation of Y no of YP as participants.  X no of YIC functional and being accessed by Y number of YP  X number of young people accessing counselling services at YIC  X no of YIC being managed by YP themselves.
3	To create Youth Friendly Services for young people and their enhanced utilization	X no. of medical service providers (doctors and Paramedics) oriented on YSRHR issues  X no. of teachers sensitised on YSRHR issues in Y number of schools
4	To build Capacities of outreach staff	No of training programmes against identified needs/YSRHR issues  Demonstrated Improvement in performance
5	To maximize outreach on identified issues of YSRHR	No. of YSRHR issues reaching X no. of villages/slum covering Y population

## ADVOCACY

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES & PROCESS INDICATORS

S.No.	Specific Objectives	PROCESS INDICATORS
1	To be technically capacitated on Advocacy skills by advocacy experts	1. No. of Workshops and Exposures, participants, theme 2. No. of Follow-up Workshops, to assess improvement in capacities against identified themes
2	To Develop convergence and establish synergy in advocacy efforts between the central and state levels.	1. Commonly agreed advocacy strategy in place 2. No. of initiatives taken against agreed strategies for identified themes
3	To sensitize identified constituencies on YSRHR issues at central and state levels	1. No. of sensitization Workshops/Meetings and follow-ups undertaken, constituent participants, theme 2. No. of Contributions of MAMTA and SFAs for articles and interviews on YSRHR issues appearing in media 3. Monitoring Attitudinal changes on YSRHR issues.
4	Development of working forums to advocate for policies/strategies for YSRHR issues at both levels	1. No. of working fora, its composition, no. of meetings and % of attendance 2. Issues and initiatives taken up for action. 3. Outcomes of action (contributions made by them to achieve the objective) documented
5	Develop advocacy capacity in YP and provide them distinct visibility in the advocacy effort.	1. No. of capacity building exercises organized for YP/peer educators. Participants and theme, and follow-up 2. No. of Campaigns undertaken, and No. of YP/Peer Educator as organizers, promoters and participants 3. No. of Capacitated Peer Educator and youth groups/clubs and their involvement in negotiations with schools systems, policy makers and service providers 4. No. of Media articles promoting YSRHR causes and reporting advocacy initiatives by YP

**Global Partnerships: Process and Outcome Indicators**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
1. Undertake Capacity Building in the areas of YRSHR	<i>Gap areas and themes for capacity building identified</i>
	<i>X no. of areas in which capacities have been developed</i>
	<i>No. of exchange programmes, trainings facilitated by MAMTA and RFSU</i>
	<i>Areas in which acquired capacities have been used, such as increased no. of global partnerships, capacitating other institutions/partners on similar themes and areas of performance improvement (how it helped oneself in one's strategy) –Outcome indicator</i>
2. Collaborate and Network With Organizations/ Institutions Nationally and Internationally to Strengthen the Ongoing Efforts	<i>X no. of partnerships facilitated by MAMTA and RFSU</i>
3. Strengthen Project Implementation and Training	<i>Project management meetings organized at planned frequencies</i>

## Annex 3 States Visited

### **The full team**

- Andhra Pradesh – 3 SRIJAN member organisations

### **G. Tamm & N.D.Khe**

- Maharashtra – 4 SRIJAN members
- Rajasthan – 6 SRIJAN members

### **R.Rao & H.T.Hiep**

- Bihar – 4 SRIJAN members
- Uttar Pradesh – 1 Phased Interventions (Varanasi) and 5 SRIJAN members

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