

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SALIMA SARWAR, BANGLADESH)

THE STORY

"Bangladesh is seen as an area rich in women and girls for supplying the sex industries in India and Pakistan. In Bangladesh, poverty and social shifts are at the root of trafficking. Low income and limited scope of earning have made people vulnerable to trafficking." Salima Sarwar anti-slavery award acceptance speech-2001.

Salima Sarwar is the founder and director of Association for Community Development (ACD), a grassroots women's organization in Northern Bangladesh established to address the issue of sex trafficking which is endemic to that society. With more than 30 years of experience in development work, Salima has devoted her life to working with women both in slum and rural areas, chiefly training women in vocational skills, self-employment, and income generation. She began ACD in 1989 in order to help empower women and protect women's and children's rights. ACD is one of the first organizations in Bangladesh to focus on the issue of human trafficking, working directly with the victims of trafficking, the general public and local officials. In 1999, ACD founded a shelter home which helps trafficked women and children recover from their ordeal and stop them from being trafficked again. The proceeds from Spark's Cocktails for A Cause Event on Friday, April 21st will go to ACD, so that Salima Sarwar may continue her efforts to empower women in her community, thereby addressing the epidemic of the trafficking of women and children in Bangladesh.



FACTS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Trafficking is defined as 'the transporting of a person from one place to another through deception, kidnapping, or through the threat or use of violence'. This transportation of people happens within a country or between countries. It is a business in which human beings are treated as a commodity to be used as slaves or sex objects.
- A recent United States Government report estimates between **700,000 and two million women and children** are trafficked across borders each year. This figure does not include those who are trafficked within a country, nor men who are trafficked.
- Poverty lies at the root of this problem and in order for it to be ended, the conditions which make it flourish need to be addressed.
- In Bangladesh, every month an estimated **200 to 400 Bangladeshi women and children** are trafficked to Pakistan; an estimated 10-15,000 are trafficked to India annually.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To learn more about ACD and how you can become a part of the fight against human trafficking please visit our website at www.sparksf.org.

Also, please join Spark for our screening of the acclaimed documentary, **SEX SLAVES**, on **June 14th** at **6pm** at the World Affairs Council, 312 Sutter Street, San Francisco. **RSVP to programs@sparksf.org**.

