

Optimizing Screening and Support Services for Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons Victims in India



A research study of India anchored by The Asia Foundation to critically examine how screening and service delivery can be optimized for Gender Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons victims.

The study found crucial gaps in understanding of intersectionality of gender-based violence and trafficking in persons among first responders, challenges in screening of victims, and barriers in service delivery for victims.

It's important to remember that

While victims of GBV and TIP are predominantly females.

People of all genders could be victims of GBV and TIP.

Methodology



70 key informant interviews were conducted with

Police Officers Prosecutors, Judges, Border Officials, Government Officials, NGOs, Shelter Homes, and victims of Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons.

Research Sites



Gender-Based Violence can lead to Trafficking

Gender-based violence, including domestic violence is an important push factor for trafficking in persons. In trafficking cases, it's important to remember that there is a continuum of violence.



Barriers to improving screening and identification of Gender-Based Violence victims and Trafficking in Persons victims



Insufficient protocols for screening and identifying victims.

Law Enforcement Officers and Border officials require additional training to respond to instances of GBV and TIP.



Poor coordination among stakeholders and units dealing with GBV and TIP.

Institutional challenges and social stigma often result in lack of cooperation from victims during screening, and some turn hostile during trials.



Gaps and challenges in laws and legal procedures, and their implementation



Interviews with key informants revealed that



India requires a comprehensive law to prevent trafficking and prosecute traffickers



Courts must refer to different sections in the penal code to establish various aspects of the crime



Investigations and trials in trafficking cases are prolonged and time-consuming

What stops victims from reporting and seeking assistance



Costs associated with accessing services

Geographical unevenness of services



Insufficient awareness on the availability of services

Witnesses fear for their own safety



Lack of functioning Anti-Human Trafficking Units

Misconception that violence is a private matter



Lack of corporation and coordination among stakeholders

Negative perceptions of the Police and Judicial System



Insufficient response from law enforcement officials

Gaps in Service Delivery

- Uncertain and uneven funding for shelter homes and service centres from the government. NGO-run shelter homes and services do not receive timely budget allocations under the government's Ujjawala and Swadhar Greh schemes.
- Rehabilitation is incomplete and does not focus on economic rehabilitation of victims.
- Service delivery procedures are complex and that makes it difficult for victims to seek assistance.
- Services are concentrated in urban areas, restricting access for victims from rural areas.

Stakeholders need to respond to challenges to close gaps in service delivery, strengthen the law, and improve screening mechanisms for GBV and TIP victims.

▪ Strengthening legal and policy framework

Adapt comprehensive laws on TIP and GBV, amending existing laws and establish fast-tracking court cases for trials in TIP and GBV.

▪ Improving coordination among stakeholders

Encourage the government to work together with NGOs and other service centres.

▪ Formulating standardized protocols and guidelines

Develop guidelines on screening and identifying TIP and GBV victims for all relevant agencies.

▪ Ensuring reach and access to services in rural towns and villages

Increase service centres and make sure they are evenly spreaded across the country, especially in border areas.

▪ Developing an individual care and exit plan

Organize programs to rehabilitate victims and help them reintegrate within the community in a proper manner.

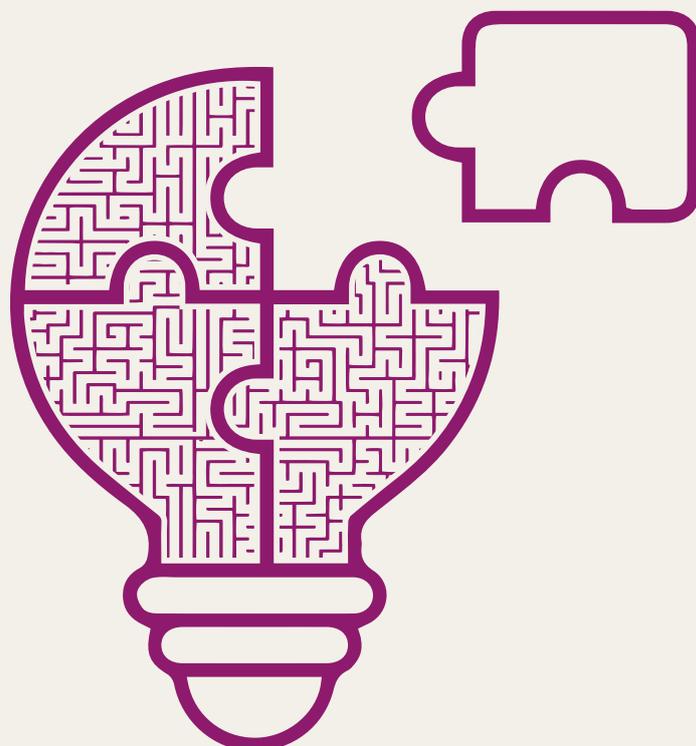
▪ Integration of services for GBV and TIP victims

Introduce common facilities like medical and legal assistance for victims.



Better coordination of services for GBV and TIP victims is necessary.

- Providing different services under one roof such as medical aid, legal support, mental health counselling, shelter, and rehabilitation support so it will improve the victim's access to services.
- Individual, trauma-informed support is crucial to effectively respond to victim's needs. Understanding the victim's journey holistically, especially their experience of GBV at different stages is crucial.
- Identifying risk factors in a victim is important to prevent trafficking of victims.
- Governments and NGOs should design strategies to prevent TIP by mapping vulnerable areas and hotspots and training first responders on implementing the preventive strategies.



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