

# A REFUGE OF HOPE

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF SHELTER HOMES

SOUTH KARNATAKA – REPORT

Part of A FIVE-STATE ACTION RESEARCH STUDY



Research Team

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## **Acknowledgements**

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Last but not the least, we are deeply grateful to Vimochana for all the support received and on whose behalf we were commissioned to do the study.

It has been a great enriching, learning and rewarding experience for us. We hope that the findings of the study will help in advocating for support and necessary improvement in the shelter homes across the state, so that the survivors of violence who seek shelter are provided an environment of healing and transformation. In addition, it is our sincere hope that the survivors would be equipped adequately and feel empowered to step out of the shelter homes and lead their lives gainfully and with dignity in society.

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## Executive Summary

A Research Study on the experiences of women residing in Shelter Homes for Women in South Karnataka was conducted by a group of feminist activists/ social workers and development experts. The executive summary gives an overview of the results gathered and the recommendations being proposed to improve the conditions of these shelter homes and how women can be empowered through these residential facilities and programmes being offered for them.

### **Safeguarding Women and their Basic Rights**

While enshrined in the Indian Constitution that justice and gender equality is seen as a basic human right for all citizens, it is a far cry from reality for Indian women even today. Horrific crimes and violence against women continue and the deep rooted social evils of patriarchy and a skewed gender ideology have not helped in tackling this issue. It has systematically discriminated and oppressed women, particularly those belonging to the Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and other vulnerable groups of our society.

Statistics reveal that;

- The NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) data has shown a jump of 28% in major crimes in Bengaluru in particular. The state stands 2<sup>nd</sup> in Dowry related crimes
- Atrocities committed on Dalit women by the dominant caste in Karnataka are common, and they are committed based on gender, caste and poverty status
- The Devadasi system in particular is almost exclusively oppressive of the Dalit women and girl child.
- Karnataka has a high incidence of child marriage indicating that 39.3 per cent girls were married before the age of 18 years.<sup>1</sup>
- Sadly Karnataka registers the highest number of women suicide in India, registering 18 cases every 100000 women, compared to a national rate of 14.7. <sup>2</sup>In Bengaluru city alone, 1,133 women died in murders, suicides and accidents in 1997, 1,248 in 1998, and 618 till mid-July 1999
- Widows, women who are witch hunted, single women and mentally ill women face higher chances to be abandoned, while other women develop symptoms of mental illness because they are abandoned.<sup>3</sup>
- Violence such as moral policing and inter-religious intolerance resulting in VAW (Violence Against Women) is not factored in the crimes record. These crimes were concentrated in Mangalore and Bengaluru.
- Incidence of violence against women within the confines of the home is steadily and alarmingly increasing. Incest, marital rape, battering and other forms of violence both physical and mental are also on the increase

### **Schemes supporting victims of violence**

While the government provides different schemes to provide women with social support, there are semi-governmental and private institutions that access such schemes and also have their own support mechanisms to help women who are in need of protection and shelter.

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<sup>1</sup><http://wcd.nic.in/wgchilprotection.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>The Lancet Public Health report [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(18\)30138-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30138-5/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup><https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-45861899>

Some of the following are worth mentioning;

- “Gelati” – a special treatment unit for women functioning in different hospitals in Bangalore, all District and 145 taluk hospitals offer essential services such as Ccounselling, medical aid, police assistance and legal assistance all under one roof.
- “Swadhar Greh” – supported by the Central Government, to empower women who are in difficult circumstances by providing them food, shelter, clothing, training and education. It is implemented through Voluntary Organizations.
- “Santhwana Centres” - provide counselling, legal assistance, temporary shelter and financial relief to survivors of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence and dowry harassment. Selected NGO’s run Santhwana Centres funded by the Department.
- “Ujjwala” - The Ministry of women and Child Development has formulated Ujjwala – a new Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitating and Re-integration of victims of trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation. Institutions provide care, protection, shelter, food, clothing, medical facility and training for residents. They are transferred to the State home for long term rehabilitation.

### **Context**

It is a known fact that shelter homes are limited in number as compared to the number seeking a safe space. Sadly these homes do not conform to basic standards of safety/ hygiene/ adequate room space/ providing recreational and other facilities where women fleeing from traumatic experiences feel comfortable. This study was conducted in Karnataka - Bengaluru, Mysore, Mandya, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, in the Southern Karnataka region.

### **Methodology and coverage**

The study was done among government run homes, partially funded homes and private homes run by NGOs. They were chosen based on the services provided, its age, willingness to participate and number of residents. Research team also conducted research methodology workshops and questionnaires to ensure thoroughness in the study, sensitivity to survivors’ willingness to share their stories and confidentiality.

### **Key informants and survivors share their Story**

The study also ensured that the management and staff were involved in the process where possible and the survivors were women above the age group of 18. The approach was participatory and keeping the interest of the survivors as top priority. Primary data collection followed principles and guiding tools to conduct focussed group discussions.

### **Constraints**

Measures were taken to conduct one on one interview with survivors to allow privacy but this was not always possible, as the wardens/ staff found ways to be present or nearby where they could hear the survivor narrate her story. This often deterred the resident from sharing the whole story. Majority of residents in Mangalore or Udupi shelter homes for example who were undergoing psychiatric treatment could not participate.

### **Findings from the Study**

The study covered 86 women and girls across 10 shelter homes from 5 districts – Bengaluru, Mysore, Mandya, Dakshina Kannada & Udupi and the women were from ages 18 to 50. And majority of the

respondents were from the age group 18 to 20. Majority of the respondents were also illiterate, of them 52 % were unmarried and 5% were unwed mothers. Women seeking shelter homes have been victims of all forms of violence at home and society, from victims of gang rape, incest, trafficking, sexual harassment at work place, early marriage to dowry harassment. The study report includes a varied set of case studies, that of an abusive father, a torturing husband, and an unwed mother. It illustrates how each case has been handled differently by the care givers at the different shelter homes.

Three focus group discussions provided a unique opportunity for women to openly share their painful stories of being victims of violence. They were also vocal about the conditions and constraints of the shelter homes and the dynamics between the residents. While some shared how grateful they were for finding a safe space, others expressed the difficult aspects of living in a home with limitations of space, freedom and recreation or vocation. Some homes however provided vocational training programmes, allowed women to reside with their children, assisted with legal advice, and enabled them to apply for Aadhar cards and opening bank accounts.

Overall, the opinion of the respondents is that they feel safe and secure in the shelter homes. They feel they have been cared for and protected by the organisation and that they have a space to share their concerns and problems as the staff is willing to listen to their woes.

***The FGDs additionally provided a lot of insights about the functioning and the environment in the shelter homes. All these inputs have been included in the findings of the study.***

### **Administration and care providers**

Shelter homes are institutions mostly run by government/ NGOs and faith based organisations. The infra structure and organisational capacity varies in terms of accommodation space, professional staff to cater to different needs of residents and the residential programmes and facilities being offered. Location of these homes also plays an important role in terms of their safety and social acceptance, since some neighbourhoods provide a hostile environment for the residents. Duration of their stay varies from case to case; it can last up to 2 years till they are reintegrated into family and society. Many of the homes lack transportation facility so it becomes difficult especially in case of a medical emergency.

### **Recommendations for strengthening Shelter Homes**

#### **Budget Allocation**

- There is a definite need to invest more capital in government-run homes, to provide better infra structure, skills training and staff capacity building
- To explore CSR ( Corporate Social Responsibility) funding and channel it to NGOs prepared to strengthen their existing shelter homes and to find interested groups who can initiate new project homes with new approaches to supporting women seeking shelter

#### **Management of Shelter Homes, Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Selection and criteria of personnel running these homes need to be scrutinised for professional qualification and skills, commitment, and sensitivity to work with the complexity of issues facing women survivors
- Regular monitoring visits should be made to all shelter homes to ensure they adhere to transparency and accountability
- Groups working on VAW should be part of the monitoring team and voices of the survivors must be heard and taken into account

## **Specific recommendations – Vis a Vis Shelter Homes**

### **Infra structure and management**

- The need for room space, organised recreational programmes and space, vocational training programmes and capacity building of all staff

### **Professional Services**

- To provide professional counsellors and services that also includes legal aid/ medical support/ meditation and other healing programmes for women. To build the capacity of care providers to address various kinds of needs of victims of violence. And to find ways to support children who are dependent on their mothers
- To develop creative and new empowering training programmes for women that would enable them to acquire specific skills ( computer training/ literacy/ language/ vocational training) towards gainful employment
- To sensitise the public and create awareness on victims of violence who are justly in need of protection, safe space and dignity

### **A future that spells Hope**

The report from the study and its recommendations will be shared with Government of India and other related departments and NGOs who are committed to investing time and resources to improve the situations of the shelter homes. Besides, this study will be disseminated to the state government and WCD (Women and Child Development) responsible for the setting up and functioning of these homes in the state. It will also be shared with International and UN agencies, seeking their support and guidance in enabling the states and civil society to strengthen and improve the functioning of existing shelters. Based on the study, there is a need and huge potential for developing model shelter homes that envisions women living and growing to realising their full potential in a safe space. The Study aims to put the concrete recommendations into action.

One would like to mention, that the findings are of a very small sample and therefore has its own limitations. For a proper, intensive study, it would be necessary that a larger sample is taken. The research team should comprise of psycho-social experts other than feminist researchers, so that a more in-depth study can be undertaken. This will help to provide more evidence and clearer trends about women's conditions and the impact that violence has had on them. Based on which, more concrete recommendations with the required strategies can be developed for piloting some model feminist shelter homes, as well as improving the existing ones.

It is safe to conclude that we need more Shelter Homes as the graph of violence is on a steady increase. As survivors of violence often feel inhibited to come to a shelter home, it is important that some kind of awareness be generated about the services available in the shelters. Survivors seek shelter homes as a last resort but if adequate funding is sought, these homes can be developed to assure women survivors that there is a space in a home for women to feel safe and ready to fight their fears of being a victim of violence and chart a new life with confidence and hope . There should come a day when no longer is the Shelter Home seen as a centre for women in crisis, but a home where women are being nurtured to stand on their feet again and be advocates of change and transformation.

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## **I. Introduction**

### **1.1 Gender and Violence**

The Preamble of the Constitution of India enunciates the socio-economic objectives and the goals for achieving them, in which the Constitution was framed. It rests upon two specific objectives, viz., delivering justice and equality. It gave the state the right to make specific provisions for the welfare of women and children. In the current context of a rights-based approach, this affirmative action can be seen as one that enables and urges women to demand for protection of their human rights. Encouraged by this provision, the states have been able to introduce legislative and other policy measures to improve women's status as citizens, workers and members of their households. Labour laws have evolved to direct employers to provide amenities such as maternity leave (with pay), child care facilities, protection to women night workers, promotion of women's political participation through reservation of seats in panchayats and municipalities etc.

Rising incidence of crime and violence against women is a manifestation of a deep-rooted social malaise and an expression of skewed gender ideology. It has systematically discriminated and oppressed women, particularly those belonging to the SC, ST and other vulnerable groups of our society.

### **1.2 Crimes against Women**

Violence against women remains a key factor that undermines the ability of women to participate as full and equal citizens in society. Violation of women's rights which are human rights, by acts of rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment and other forms of violence including those perpetrated by tradition, culture and caste in the name of crimes in the name of family honour, trafficking and forced marriage continue both to circumscribe the lives of women and girls and to undermine their participation at every level of the society.

The situation on the status of crimes against women in Karnataka is no different from the reality in the rest of the country. The NCRB data has shown a jump of 28% in major crimes in Bengaluru in particular. The state stands 2<sup>nd</sup> in Dowry related crimes. The Dowry Prohibition Act has seen 1,698 cases being registered in the State and 727 in Bengaluru. Overall, in crimes against women, the State has seen 14,131 cases, according to the 2017 NCRB.



### **1.3 Dalit Women victims of caste based violence:**

As noted earlier **Dalit** women of the lower castes are victimised on three points, by gender, caste and vulnerable poverty status.

Atrocities committed on Dalit women by the dominant caste in Karnataka are common. In Kambalpathi village in Kolar district an old man's wife, daughter and two sons were burnt alive along with three others when members of a dominant caste set fire to three huts belonging to Dalit families. This was not the only recorded incidence of violence. Dalit women are raped, teased, beaten, paraded naked and treated shamefully.

### **1.4 Honour Killings:**

No Dalit woman came forward to narrate or give statements in the honour killing that took place at Ambalavadi village in Mandya in 2012.<sup>4</sup>Suvarna's death was made out to be a suicide, and witnesses changed their version after the visit of the SC Commission which held talks with the district administration and police officials. This was however a murder of a higher caste girl for being involved with a Dalit boy.

### **1.5 Devadasi system:**

For instance the heinous practice of dedicating young girls into the Devadasi system continues to be prevalent in the backward districts of North Karnataka, despite being banned by law in 1982. This is a tradition prevalent among the Dalit communities in pockets of north Karnataka, a region that has for decades faced severe drought and seen persisting poverty. Whatever may have been the nature of its existence in earlier periods, at present it has taken the form of prostitution through religious sanction, where young girls are dedicated to a goddess and thereafter inducted into flesh trade. While the enactment of the Devadasi Prohibition Act of 1982 has checked the dedications to a considerable extent, the practice is still prevalent, though not rampant in this geographic region.

Devadasi system in Karnataka- Concluding comments: Para 68

"The high incidence of gender-based violence including the customary practices such as dowry, Sati and the Devadasi system are oppressive to women and denying them of their basic rights to life and human dignity"

The Devadasi system in particular is almost exclusively oppressive of the Dalit women and girl child. There are legislations banning the practice and programmes to rehabilitate them. However the continued impetus to the system comes from social practice, and therefore the remedies must be necessarily more than legal. The government machinery is lax in the implementation mainly due to the implicit support of the political establishment to the

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<sup>4</sup>Read article <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hubballi/Honour-killing-claims-womans-life-in-Mandya/articleshow/11394364.cms>

system. There are no government-sponsored information, education and communication strategies applied on a wide scale to challenge the social and religious legitimacy given to the practice.

The extreme violence including rape, stripping in public and public parade faced by Dalit women during caste conflict caused by the continued existence of the caste system goes almost entirely un-redressed as evidenced by the poor record of the implementation of the SC/ST Prevention Act 1989. The conviction rate under this act is about 1%, including the violence faced by women. (Concluding comments are the critical remarks made by the UN CEDAW Committee on the alternative submission made by NGOs on the Convention stating the de facto situation on the status of Women in India and the different areas of discrimination faced by them.)

### **1.6 Early, Forced and Child-marriage:**

This tradition still exists in the state, particularly in rural areas that are backward and poverty-ridden. Marriage not only deprives the young girl child of a childhood, but subjects her to various forms of violence, which is detrimental to her physical and mental health. According to the Rapid Household Survey conducted across the country, Karnataka has a high incidence of child marriage indicating that 39.3 per cent girls were married before the age of 18 years.<sup>5</sup> This is as per the legal statute. According to UNICEF, 47% of girls are married by 18 years of age and 18% are married by 15 years of age. These marriages are often performed with the consent of the girls involved in the marriage.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.7 Unnatural Deaths:**

It was found that a large number of deaths were being classified in police records as 'accidents' under 'UDR' (Unnatural Death Register). The category of 'dowry deaths' in a technical sense only included those cases that had been booked by the police under the relevant sections of the law. The 'accident' cases that were closed for want of evidence, however, were largely due to 'stove bursts' or 'kitchen accidents'. Investigations revealed that a large number of murders and suicides, punishable under law, were being made to look like 'accidents' by the husband and/or members of his family. These cases were closed by the investigating police officers for want of hard evidence of a crime. Sadly Karnataka registers the highest number of women suicide in India, registering 18 cases every 100000 women, compared to a national rate of 14.7.<sup>7</sup> In Bengaluru city alone, 1,133 women died in murders, suicides and accidents in 1997, 1,248 in 1998, and 618 till mid-July 1999. (*P. Menon, 1999*)\*

*\*P. Menon's report published in Frontline was based on the findings of Vimochana from their unnatural deaths study.*

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<sup>5</sup><http://wcd.nic.in/wgchilprotection.pdf>

<sup>6</sup><https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/relationships/love-sex/Courts-still-confused-about-legal-age-of-marriage/articleshow/21333081.cms>

<sup>7</sup>**The Lancet Public Health report** [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(18\)30138-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30138-5/fulltext)

### 1.8 Single women and abandoned women:

This category of women is particularly vulnerable, and often falls prey to different forms of violence. In rural areas, a common form that can be termed violence is desertion, which defines the abandonment of woman by her husband or In-laws. It can happen for various reasons; including when the woman has not given birth to a male child, or after the death of the husband. This gives rise to large number of households headed by single women. Another cause is the practice of 'multiple marriage' which is illegal and is a major reason for desertion of women. It finds acceptance in both feudal households as also in the more recently upwardly mobile backward classes. Widows, comprising a major section of single women often are subjected to all forms of violence, physical, social, mental and sexual. In parts of north Karnataka, especially Bidar, a practice called 'Banamathi' is practiced which is similar to witch hunting of eastern India. Again this practice targets widows. Single women represents a big chunk which also includes women who are promising into marriage, betrayed and dumped, and women who choose to come out of abusive family situations, both paternal and matrimonial house, and women who are abandoned by brothers for property. Also mentally ill women face higher chances to be abandoned, while other women develop symptoms of mental illness because they are abandoned.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.9. Other forms of Violence

It is important to highlight that the crimes mentioned above largely are in north Karnataka. However, the incidence of unnatural deaths was a phenomena of the state capital, as per a study conducted by Vimochana and perhaps a few bordering districts. But violence such as moral policing and inter-religious intolerance resulting in VAW is not factored in the crimes record. These crimes were concentrated in Mangalore and Bengaluru. Though women in the cases below have not been targeted for violence per se but creating fear, but the impact of what they have been witness to certainly has impacted many such women, who fear for their security and have isolated themselves.

As reported by the media, in 2015 a Muslim man was stripped, tied to an electric pole and beaten for hanging out with a Hindu woman in Mangalore.<sup>9</sup> Another episode happened few days later in Dakshin 100 km from Mangalore, when two students belonging to different religions have been suspended from a college in Sullia, a town about 100 kilometers from Mangalore. The transgression of the girl and boy, *The Hindu* reports, is that for hanging out together.<sup>10</sup>

Again in Mangalore, in 2009 women were targeted, beaten and stripped in the pub attack by 25 men, in a violent case of moral policing which shocked the country.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup><https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-45861899>

<sup>9</sup><https://scroll.in/article/751469/stories-of-moral-policing-in-mangalore-that-you-didnt-hear-about>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Mangalore/friendship-proves-costly-for-two-college-students/article7588730.ece>

<sup>11</sup><https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/mangalore-pub-attackers-let-off-despite-assault-video-10-points-1823220>

### **1.10 Domestic violence - Violence within confines of homes:**

Incidence of violence against women within the confines of the home is steadily and alarmingly increasing. Incest, marital rape, battering and other forms of violence both physical and mental are also on the increase. The urban woman's perception of violence is quite different from that of the rural woman. This is primarily due to the fact that the urban woman is exposed to more information and awareness, in comparison to her rural counterpart. The urban woman also has access to services like counselling and redress mechanisms, which instil in her the confidence and courage to come forward and report an act of violence.

Crime registration shows that rape cases alone constitute 5 per cent of the crimes in Karnataka. The actual number of the cases is probably higher, as women are reluctant to register complaints reasons being; i) societal pressure and dissuasion by relatives and friends ii) threats from the perpetrators of violence iii) hostility of the police and iv) the legal rigmarole and delays involved in legal recourse are some of the reasons why women refrain from registering crimes against them.<sup>12</sup>

As domestic violence is on the increase as also other CAW, survivors of such crimes need shelter, when faced with circumstances of desertion. Women want to get out of a situation of violence and seek shelter. Therefore, the government and civil society organizations recognize this as a dire need for women. There are different kinds of shelter homes that were created, some are short stay and even serve as transit, while you have other homes, where women survivors of violence are able to stay for longer periods. Some of these are:

To provide shelter and counselling to women who are victims of domestic violence, Swadhar, Short Stay Homes and Santhwana Centres are notified as Shelter Homes in the state.

Ministry of Women and Child Development has established One Stop Crisis Centre (Sakhi) to support women affected by violence. There are seven OSCC in Karnataka in: Bagalkot, Chamarajnagar, Chitradurga, Dharwad, Mysore, Tumkur and Udupi.

These centers provide counselling, medical assistance, legal and Police assistance under one roof.

### **1.11 Schemes**

#### **'GELATI'- A SPECIAL TREATMENT UNIT FOR WOMEN**<sup>13</sup>

Gelati provides all services under one roof to women affected by violence, such as:

<sup>12</sup><http://eprints.nias.res.in/817/1/SP3-02.pdf>

<sup>13</sup>[http://dwcd.kar.nic.in:8080/women\\_welfare.jsp#ww\\_gelati](http://dwcd.kar.nic.in:8080/women_welfare.jsp#ww_gelati)

- Women are provided necessary help in difficult circumstances.
- Special Treatment Units are established at all District and 145 taluk Hospitals.
- In Bangalore urban districts these units are functioning in Bowring & Lady Curzon hospital, Vani Vilas hospital, Jayanagar general hospital & K.R. Puram hospital.
- Counseling, medical aid, police assistance and legal assistance are provided to women survivors of violence under one roof.
- These units function 24\*7 and also provide services of toll free Women's Helpline 181.
- In these Units medical officers, legal counsellors, Police officers, counsellors and Social case workers function to provide essential services.

### **Swadhar Greh**

In 2015-16 the central Government merged Swadhar centres and short stay homes as **Swadhar Greh**. The main objective of this scheme is to empower women who are in difficult circumstances by providing them food, shelter, clothing, training and education. It is implemented through Voluntary Organizations, which need to be registered and working for at least 3 years in the field of women's welfare and have good infrastructure, to be considered to run a Swadhar Greh. The government of India grant is sanctioned to run shelter Homes that provide a women's help-line, counselling, training centres and a medical centre. At present there are 48 Swadhar homes functioning in the State.

### **Santhwana Centres**

The aim of the Santhwana: To provide counselling and necessary timely help to women survivors of violence.

Objective: Counselling, legal assistance, temporary shelter and financial relief are provided to survivors of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence and dowry harassment. Selected NGOs run Santhwana Centres funded by the Department.

Santhwana Centres function 24x7 with a counsellor and 3 social workers to provide assistance to women in distress.

Rs.2000 to a maximum of Rs.10000 is provided to the survivors of violence, as financial relief through consent of a district committee.

Currently there are 196 Santhwana centres functioning at Taluk and District levels.

The assistance provided to the women survivors of violence ranges from immediate relief, to long term rehabilitation plans. There is a toll free helpline functioning, short stay home,

counselling services, legal assistance and also provision of accommodation in working women's hostels and skills training to become economically self-reliant. While the effort is laudable, there are limitations that impede efficient working of this scheme.

A review of the 19 *Santhwana* centres run through *MahilaSamakhya Karnataka (MSK)* (*Mathrani 2004*), reflected the fact that the scheme had failed to make real choices available to women in need. When women decide to opt out of a violent situation, it translates into various needs that women require such as referral services, legal help, medical help, livelihood/vocational help, temporary stay and child care to name a few. Due to inadequate funding, these Centres were unable to meet the demands and hence they were only partially effective in addressing the problem.

While the Karnataka government initiatives including the *Santhwana scheme*, the all women police stations and family counselling cells have attempted to address gender-based crimes including domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse and dowry harassment, efforts are severely constrained by several factors in addition to the fact that funds are short and real choices are seldom made available to women.<sup>14</sup>

### **Ujjwala:**

The Ministry of women and Child Development has formulated Ujjwala-new Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitating and Re-integration of victims of trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation.

### **Objectives of the Scheme**

To prevent trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation through social mobilisation and involvement of local communities, awareness generation programmes generate public discourse through workshop/seminars and such events and any innovative activity

- To facilitate rescue of victims from the place of their exploitation and place them in safe custody
- To provide rehabilitation services both immediate and long – term to the victims by providing basic amenities/such as shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment including counselling legal aid guidance and vocational training.
- To facilitate reintegration of the victims into the family and society at large.
- To facilitate repatriation of cross – border victims to their country of origin.

### **Target Group:**

Women and children who are vulnerable to trafficking to commercial sexual exploitation

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<sup>14</sup>KHDR pgs 188-189 ( Karnataka Human Development Report)

### **Reception centres**

- Women who are above the age of 18 years, who are in need of shelter and care are admitted in these institutions voluntarily or referred by NGOs or by individuals and by the court under immoral traffic (prevention) Act 1956.
- Institutions provide care, protection, shelter, food, clothing, medical facility and training for residents.
- Residents are transferred to the State home for long term rehabilitation. In the state there are 3 reception centres working in Bangalore (U), Tumkur, Karwar districts.
- Based on court order minors are released, if parents are willing to take care of them
- Short term rehabilitation centre (6 months).

### **State Homes**

- Women above the age of 18 years, who are in need of shelter and care are admitted into these institutions. This is either voluntarily or they are referred by NGOs or by individuals, as also under the directive of the court, including those, Committed under, the immoral traffic (prevention) Act 1956.
- Institutions provide care, protection, shelter, food, clothing, medical facility and Skills training to the residents.
- This is a long term rehabilitation centre
- If the parents are willing to take care of their wards, the residents will be released into parent's care as per the rules.
- The residents are eligible for marriage and if willing, then marriage will be conducted.  
For this Rs.20000/- will be released, in this Rs.5000/- will be given for marriage Expenditure and Rs.15000/- will be fixed deposit in the name of the woman.
- In the state there are 8 state homes in Bangalore (U), Shivmoga, Ballary, Davangere, Gulbarga, Hubli, Mysore and Udupi districts.

### **1.12 Lack of Housing leading to Homelessness**

Ever since human civilization evolved, human settlement became a primary concern along with food and clothing. Housing, in fact, laid the foundation for human settlement and civilization. Housing is a pre-requisite for human development as it provides shelter, security, amenities and privacy to human beings to lead a decent and dignified living.

Without good housing one cannot realise their full potential to lead a healthy life and it reflects the general welfare of the community. Recognising the importance of housing has been acknowledged and housing as a human right was recognized way back in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948. Article 25 of this declaration states “Everyone has the right to standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing...” Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 also recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living including food, clothing and all” right to housing as a part of human right. It asked the states to take appropriate steps to ensure realization of this right. India is a signatory to both the Declaration and Convention. Article 19(1) (e) of the Constitution of India states as: “All citizens shall have the right to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India.” This provision 1 is construed as a right to residence / home / shelter. In pursuance of this, India embarked on the path of making “housing for all” a reality. The National Housing and Habitat Policy, 1998 stated that the ultimate goal of the policy was to ensure “shelter to all”.

However, when women are perforce thrown out of their homes, or driven to a situation whereby, women leave their homes, are situations leading to a state of, ‘homelessness.’ Therefore, it is when women are pushed into this situation; the need for a safe place arises. Such homes are a necessity and an urgent need of the hour. The shelters that this study has focussed on, are the spaces where women in distress turn to, or are referred to, or are through the court directed to stay in, till such time that their situation is resolved or, they are in a state to take care of themselves independently, or they continue to stay there indefinitely.

## **II. Context and Purpose**

In recent times with increased violence, the need for safe spaces for women to seek shelter is important. It is common knowledge that the number of such safe spaces or shelter homes is very limited and not able to cater adequately in accommodating the numbers of women seeking shelter.

Besides, the one question that comes up often is, how well equipped are these homes in terms of human resource, the available facilities and the environment necessary to make women in traumatized situations feel comfortable. There have been several instances earlier and even recently, which has exposed the fact that, many of these shelter homes are far from safe for women and young girls. In fact the survivors of violence are sexually exploited and made to do all kinds of work in these homes. In some of the shelter homes, survivors were sent out to work as domestic workers and faced sexual exploitation.<sup>15</sup>

With increased violence of different forms that women are being subjected to, women want to get out of such situations. It has been often observed that women are deserted, thrown out of their homes. It is in such desperate situations that women either by themselves, or

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<sup>15</sup> A case in one of the shelters visited.



through the police or NGOs, find refuge in shelter homes. It is in this background that a five state study has been embarked upon. This report will dwell on the situation in Karnataka, namely covering the following districts:

Bengaluru, Mysore, Mandya, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, in the Southern Karnataka region.

The findings from the consolidated study will be shared with the GOI, Department of Women and Child Development for advocacy and policy change. It will also be disseminated to other stakeholders, who could contribute in improving the shelter homes. Besides, this study will also be shared with the state government and WCD responsible for the setting up and functioning of these homes in the state. It will also be shared with International and UN agencies for their support and guidance in enabling the states and civil society to strengthen and improve the functioning of existing shelters. Possibilities of setting up new ones that can be model shelter homes is one of the goals. The Study aims to make necessary effort that will help in getting the recommendations emerging from the study to be accepted, so that some action is initiated to improve the state of the shelter homes. One envisages that these shelter homes can be a safe haven for the survivors of violence, who would receive appropriate support and skills to be able to start their life again, with a positive approach.

## **2.1. Methodology:**

Initially, a scoping of shelter homes was done to understand the type of shelter homes existing in South Karnataka, in the districts that Vimochana had identified as its canvas for the study. The study attempted to cover three types of homes that were identified during the scoping – NGO run shelter homes (private) sans government funding and Government homes that are partly and fully funded. Further selection also took into account what are the kinds of services rendered by these shelter homes. Finally the shelter homes were selected on the following basis;

- of their age, how long they have been in the service of providing the survivors of violence shelter
- willingness of the management to allow us to conduct the study
- Number of residents in the home (P.S. as one of the homes had only 1 resident, so it was dropped)

Based on these parameters, the sample was selected. The table below shows the number of shelter homes, number of key informants, number of in-depth interviews

with the survivors of violence and number of focussed group discussions held with survivors across the five districts in southern Karnataka.

## 2.2 Coverage

Districts	No. of SHs	No. of Kills	No. of IDIs	No. of FGDs	No. of Participants in FGDS
Bengaluru	3	8	5	2	17
Mysore	2	5	6	2	18
Mandya	2	3	3	2	16
Dhakshin Kannada & Udupi	4	7	1	2	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>71</b>

The sample covered four types of shelters which are:

- NGO run private Shelter Homes
- Govt-Aided – Swadhar Greh run by NGOs
- Government Shelter Homes
- One stop crisis centre  
(names will be provided in the Annex)

## 2.3. Research training workshop

The Jagori research team conducted a two day research methodology workshop. Issues on selection of the shelter homes were discussed. Questionnaires which were still in the draft stage were explained. A demonstration of how the questionnaire should be administered was enacted. This was helpful in terms of understanding the need to create a comfortable atmosphere for the survivor to speak. At the same time have the willingness of the shelter staff and management to grant permission to speak to the survivors, as well as, they themselves feel confident to give interviews to the researchers.

The ethics team was looking closely into the questionnaire and was providing the Jagori team their comments, before finalisation of the questionnaire. This was important so that it is maintained that the study follows principles of ethics needed to conduct such sensitive studies. Maintaining confidentiality, not posing directly probing questions, respecting the interviewee's willingness to answer, how much to answer and not to answer questions.

## 2.4 Crime statistics in the study districts

Below is the number of cases reported & rate of crime committed against women in KARNATAKA during 2016 as per the State Crimes Record Bureau, Government of Karnataka.

Districts	Incidence	% contribution to Karnataka total	Female population as per 2011 census	Rate of total cognisable crimes
Bengaluru city	3408	23.9	46.0	74.1
Bengaluru district	509	3.6	4.8	105.7
Dakshina Kannada	159	1.1	8.0	19.8
Mandya	737	5.2	9.0	81.8
Mangalore City	297	2.1	2.5	117.3
Mysuru city	405	2.8	6.1	66.3
Mysore	374	2.6	8.8	42.6
Udupi	217	1.5	6.2	35.3
<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>14230</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>301.3</b>	<b>47.2</b>

## 2.5 Sample selection of Key informants and survivors of violence

Key informants were selected in such a way to see that members from the administration and care providers were covered. The choice of choosing the survivors was left to the KIIs specifying that the women should be over 18 years of age. However, there were few the sample covered who were below 18 years as they were unwed mothers and hence had been placed in these shelter homes.

The approach was participatory, using feminist research techniques, keeping the interest of the survivor of violence uppermost.

Secondary data comprising of some GOs, WCD evaluation reports and information collected from the GOK website was reviewed.

Primary data collection adopted the following: Administering tools developed for individual interviews as well as guiding tools for conducting FGDs.

Interviews were conducted with survivors of violence, key informants, namely the staff of the shelter homes and FGDs with survivors of violence.

## 2.6 Limitations

- The curiosity of the counsellors in some shelters and care takers in others, (Key Informants), while conducting individual in depth interviews with the respondents, it deterred them from speaking freely. Even though it was made clear to the Shelter staff, we would like to interview the residents on a one to one basis; it was not easy to get privacy. In some places the shelter home staff wanted to be present while the

IDIs were being conducted. In many cases, the staff would keep entering the room under the pretext of getting some stuff, or would be standing at a place where it was easy for them to eaves drop.

- The majority of the residents in Mangalore & Udupi Shelter Homes were undergoing psychiatric treatment and therefore, they were unable to give interviews. Even FGDs we were unable to conduct effectively, as again several of them were in a state of depression and were not participating in the discussions, as they seemed distracted most of the time.

### III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

#### A. SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

##### 3.1 Profile of the respondents

The study covered 86 women and girls across 10 shelter homes from 5 districts – Bengaluru, Mysore, Mandya, Dakshina Kannada & Udupi.

##### Age Group of the respondents

Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 18 to 20 years (31.40 %), the data shows that most of the women who faced violence in one form or the other, had left the marital or natal home in search of shelter were aged between 18 years to 30 years. As the number of older women coming to shelter home is comparatively less than the ones in their prime age as they are more vulnerable to all forms of exploitation and also have to face more challenges in life. 79.09 per cent of the women were between the ages of 18 and 35 years in the study sample.

Age- group	No. of respondents (%)
<18	5 (5.81)
18-20	27 (31.40)
21-25	19 (22.09)
26-30	13 (15.12)
31-35	9 (10.47)
36-40	5 (5.81)
41-45	6 (6.98)
46-50	2 (2.32)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86 (100)</b>

##### Education of the respondents

Education for girls not being a priority in the society, dropout rates among girls being high due to younger sibling care, attending to domestic tasks, child marriages and early

marriages are factors that hinder continuing education of girls. Respondents covered under FGD and IDIs shows that 31.40 per cent of them were illiterates, 24.42 per cent had studied up to SSLC, 22.09 per cent were able to study till PUC and a very minimal percentage of the respondents were able to complete graduation (2.33%).

Education	No. of Respondents (%)	Marital status	No. of respondents (%)
Illiterate	27 (31.40)	Never married/single	40 (46.51)
Up to 4 <sup>th</sup> std	3 (3.48)	Unwed mothers	5 (5.81)
5- 8 <sup>th</sup>	10 (11.63)	Married	23 (26.74)
9- 10	21 (24.42)	Separated	9 (10.47)
PUC	19 (22.09)	Deserted	3 (3.49)
Graduation incomplete	4 (4.65)	Divorced	3 (3.49)
Graduate	2 (2.33)	Widow	3 (3.49)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86 (100)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>86 (100)</b>

### Marital status of the respondents

The data shows that 52.32 per cent of the respondents were unmarried women and girls, of them 5.81 per cent were unwed mothers. About 26.74 per cent were married women with and without children were residing in the shelter homes due to domestic violence. Separated women were 10.47 per cent and an equal percentage of deserted, divorced and widows were residing in the shelter homes in the study districts.

### Religion and caste of the respondents

Majority of the women who were residing in the shelter homes were found to be Hindus then Muslims and Christians, though some of the shelter homes were run by Christian missionaries, they were catering to women and girls from all religions and castes. Women facing violence, who had taken shelter, were more from the SCs (33.72%) and OBCs (25.58%). Table below shows women from different religious and caste groups.

Probably it could be assumed that women coming from the less privileged sections of society, both in terms of caste and economic status, were the majority seeking shelter, based on the table below. Therefore, the assumption could also be that those of the upper caste and economically well off, did not easily approach shelter homes. Why? These factors have not been probed, however, could be the factor of social stigma coupled with fears about quality of the homes etc?

Religion/ caste	No. of respondents (%)
Brahmin	2 (2.33)
OBC	22 (25.58)
SC	29 (33.72)
ST	6 (6.98)
Christian	4 (4.65)
Muslim	6 (6.98)
Hindu/caste DK	17 (19.76)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86 (100)</b>

### 3.2 Forms of violence seen in the society and faced by the survivors

Violence on women and girls is a gross violation of human rights. Women have the fundamental right, to live with dignity in the society. Family as an agency of socialisation is also one of the most common places, where violence against women takes place. Everyone thinks that home is a safe place for girls and women, a place free from any form of violence. But time and again women are forced to suffer in silence as it is a disgrace and culturally inappropriate to reveal to others about the violence that they are undergoing. Though society does not accept any forms of violence, in reality there are many violent practices against women and girls that have social, cultural and religious sanction of the community.

Violence against women and girls has a far reaching impact on their physical and emotional health and the overall wellbeing of women. The traumatic experience women face, due to violence has huge impact on their functioning in all domains. Women who come to shelter homes for care and protection are survivors of various forms of violence.

The study throws light on the various forms of violence faced by women and girls in their natal and marital home before reaching the shelter homes, as reported by the respondents, and are as follows:

- Domestic violence – physical, economical, sexual, verbal, ignoring the person
- Child marriage
- Parents forcibly sending for work
- Elopement as parents were against the partner, the girl was involved with
- Marital discord between the couple, to do with infidelity
- Insecurity
- Lack of social support
- Community shaming
- Gang raped, kidnapping
- Sexual harassment at workplace
- Father and relatives abuse
- Alcoholism resulting in violence on the women
- Desertion, marriage through deceit
- Homeless migrants
- Single women

- Forced marriages, including being married off to old men
- Being orphan
- Drug abuse
- Trafficked for prostitution

### 3.3 Case Studies

The respondents who were residing in the shelter homes faced various kinds of violence that drove them to leave their homes and seek shelter where care and protection were given. Those respondents who were married were facing violence at the marital home for dowry, alcoholic husbands, torture by in-laws, extra-marital affairs of husbands, in some cases suspicion of women having extra-marital affairs etc. Those who were unmarried, were victims of trafficking, child marriage, deceived by boy friend, unaccepted love affairs, raped, parents forcing girls to take up jobs, force to marry men who were much older to them, abusive fathers and relatives etc. Below are some of the case studies that highlight the type of violence faced by women.

#### **Case Study 1 – Abusive father & relative**

*Sheela is a 24 year old and had studied up to X standard. She is a Christian and has been divorced. She lost her mother when she was in class VI and the family shifted residence from Bangalore to KGF. 'I was in class VII and my father raped me, 'she almost choked telling us this. Again when she was moved to her uncle's house for her security, Sheela says, 'I was abused my uncle too and so I had to discontinue my education and go and live with my grandmother.' She stayed with her grandmother for a year. In the meantime her father had remarried and he came and took her back home. Sheela said, 'He got me back only to abuse me repeatedly.' Sheela could not take it anymore, so she told her grandmother, who brought her back and got her married to a cousin. Sheela said, 'My husband beats me and asks me to eat my food near the toilet. He is having an extra-marital affair and so is violent with me,' sorrowfully she shares. Sheela has a little daughter who was then two and half years. She said, 'I could not take the beatings and the mental torture anymore, so I called the helpline number, I was directed by them to St. Joseph's convent.' She somehow managed to leave the house and went and stayed in the convent for 20 days. The convent called her husband and counselled him and she was again sent her back home. Back home, the situation worsened and she left home again to a shelter home. This is an NGO run home without government support. 'I am happy here as the counsellors and other staff understand my situation.' The effort is to respond to what the woman wants, keeping the interest of the woman, rather than forcing them to go back into an abusive home.*

### **Study 2 – Suspecting and torturing husband**

*Begum is 23 years old, illiterate and native of Bangladesh (illegal migrant), though she does not admit this and says she is from Kolkata. She lost her parents at a very young age and was brought up by her grandmother. After the death of her grandmother she was married to a person who brought her to Bangalore. Begum said, 'He was working as security guard for SBI, but he was very lazy and would often miss work.' She continued saying, 'because of his laziness, I took up domestic work in the flats around.' When Begum started going for work, her husband started suspecting her and torturing her every day. 'I have a daughter and I again become pregnant and my husband used to beat me even in this stage,' she cried. Unable to bear the physical violence and torture anymore, she decided to leave the house. She said, 'I took my little daughter and went to the railway station and thought I will go back to Kolkata. On the station I heard people mentioning Mysore and queuing up to buy the tickets, so I also followed them.' Mysore was a new city; she had no idea where to go. She said, 'I was looking around wondering where to go, when an auto driver approached and volunteered to take me to a place where I and my child will be safe. 'I did not know what to do, so I got into the auto and he brought me to this shelter home.' She said, 'I am thankful to the auto driver for bringing me here as where would I have gone with my little daughter and in my pregnant state?'*

*Once in the shelter home, she said she was made to feel comfortable and taken care off. In the meanwhile her husband gave a missing complaint stating that she had run away with someone. The police came and met her and discussed with her about the problems she had faced. She said if her husband was willing to take her back, she is ready to return and would not want to be a burden in the shelter home, though there is no compulsion for her to leave the place. To be able to start life a fresh, she is currently undergoing a beautician's course in the Shelter Home. Here in the shelter she delivered her second child and is now in a contented frame of mind.*

### **Case Study 3 – Unwed mother**

*Uma is 20 years old and belongs to the OBC (Lingayat) community. She has completed her SSLC. She has been with the Shelter Home for the last two years. She was 8 months pregnant when she was sent to the Shelter Home. She had irregular periods and hence was not aware of the pregnancy. When her family came to know about it, she was thrown out of the house and an anganwadi teacher informed the CDPO. A police complaint was lodged and through the court she was sent to the Shelter Home. She delivered a girl child who is about one and half years now. Her family wanted her to give the child for adoption and then take her back home. Her grandmother came and stayed with her in the Shelter home to take care of her delivery. Initially when the child was around four months old, Uma was willing to give the child for adoption, but as months passed by and when the child turned seven months old, the mother was no longer willing to give away her child in adoption. She decided that if she was returning, she would with her child now.*

*Shelter Home has been negotiating with the boy's family to take her but now the DNA test has shown negative. Therefore, she is not being accepted by the boy's family. Her family members do visit her, but do not want her to come back with the child. She is in a dilemma; Uma feels they would kill the child. Yet she feels that her home is a better place. She also feels that if the family is hostile, she can come back to Shelter Home. She now wants to learn computer skills to take up a job and put the child in a hostel.*



## **Focus Group Discussions (FGD)**

### **FGD-I**

It was a mixed group of young women students, working women and middle aged women staying in the shelter home. Radha was being forced into a marriage. So when she resented this, she was subjected to violence. To get out of such a situation she ran away from home. There was another woman who shared, 'My husband was an alcoholic and he beat me every day. I could no longer take this torture so I left the home.' Another resident shared that she was the second wife and was being tortured for dowry. Jayamma said, 'I am a widow and have a child. My brother-in-law and his family were torturing me for the property that I inherited on the death of my husband. So I decided to leave the house and that is how I found my way into this shelter.' Bhavana was in love with a person of another caste and the family disapproved this, so she was thrown out of the house. Bhavani's wedding was fixed, so she ran away from home as she was in love with someone else. In fact she has just turned 18. Another young woman, Dimple said, 'I was in the children's home and then on attaining adulthood, I was shifted here.' Most of the residents we spoke to mentioned that they had heard of the shelter home on the radio. One of them mentioned that she was guided here by a former resident. However, most of the cases referred here were through the police and NGOs. Most of the residents were not aware about such shelter homes earlier.

The residents shared, 'There is an increase in violence and that even children are not spared. We have no idea about laws against women and violence.' The residents shared that when admitted into the homes, most had no luggage. But whatever they had like mobiles or any jewellery, cash, was kept in safe-custody by the shelter staff. All of them informed that they had to fill an application during admission.

The residents mentioned 7 to 8 of them share a room with a bathroom. There is a warden who stays 24x7 with them. All are provided basic needs such as bed with bed sheets, blankets, pillows, plates and glasses, toiletries etc.

Residents shared that, they have a time table which they follow. Tasks are assigned to them. The residents help in the kitchen and in cleaning etc. There are fixed meal timings and also fixed timing for vocational training. Care is taken when residents fall sick. First it is attended to in the shelter itself, but if it requires hospitalization, the residents are shifted there for treatment. Periodic health check-ups are held and there is a doctor who visits to the shelter. In the shelter here, there were no mentally ill residents and those who showed signs of depression were treated by psychiatrists.

Recreation time is provided for the residents. Some watch TV others do their personal work. On demand residents are taken out if they wish to eat non-veg. The staff also take the residents for outings once in a while.

Visitors are allowed with permission. Residents are allowed to use the landline once a week to call family, with permission of the warden.

In the shelter, the staff help the residents to get identity cards like Aadhar and also helps in opening bank accounts.

Counsellors are there the whole day to attend to the residents. Those who have legal cases are accompanied by the counsellors to the court.

One of the residents, said ' Oh we have little fights, but such fights happen among sisters in the home, so not an issue as we make up in a couple of minutes.' 'We stay like a family here.'

## **FGD 2**

**Participants: 8**

**Age -group: 20-40 years**

**Place: Bengaluru**

The eight participants were quite vocal. The first thing all of them echoed was that they have nice open space, in the shelter home now. This was because they had recently shifted from another place, where space was a constraint.

Most of the residents here had faced domestic violence. They shared that they lived like a family. According to Nisha, 'We all live like a family, no difference of caste or religion, what is important is we are all women and have faced similar situation of violence. This is our common bonding.' 'We have got all that is needed to live comfortably here, all are needs are taken care of', was Rima's input.

Most of the cases here have been referred through an NGO. Once here, the process of admission is similar like in other shelter homes. All valuables including mobile phones kept in safe custody. An exception is made for those who are working, travelling long distances.

Residents shared that they are provided good food. There is a set time table for the residents to keep themselves occupied in the shelter home. They help in the cleaning, cooking and other upkeep of the home.

Children are allowed to stay with their parents and provided schooling in the neighbouring schools.

There is regular health check up and even a psychiatrist visits them, for those who need such support. In fact four of them are receiving treatment from NIMHANS. If anyone falls sick, they are taken to the doctors available nearby and if hospitalization needed, they are taken to the hospital.

Legal service is also provided. Neelima said she was fighting her case, 'I am happy with the closure of my case and how it was settled'. Interestingly in this shelter, a lot of therapy is used, such as dance, expressive art, and narratives etc, which experts from outside come and give time to the residents.

The residents appear happy and content. Sheena ofcourse on a serious note mentioned, 'We cannot be here forever, so we must try and acquire some skills so we can go out and be independent. I want to start a beauty parlour. There are many like us who need shelter, so only if we move out can others find place.'

### **FGD 3**

#### **Participants :8**

#### **Age : 18-50**

The residents were quite at ease talking about the kinds of violence women and children face and listed the following: Child labour, kidnapping and rape, sale and trafficking, deceit, marriage of minors and domestic violence.

Meera with a sad look said, 'when a girl marries and faces problems in the marital home, due to which she is forced to return to her natal home, she is shunned'. 'My parents and others think I am a burden and that my presence will create problems for my siblings in getting proper alliances.'

Another resident shared that even if it is marriage of choice, once in the in-laws home, she is targeted by the brother-in-law. Her in-laws ill treat her and the husband does not come to her rescue. She says, 'There is no age for violence on women.'

The kind of violence that residents faced ranged from sexual harassment, trafficking, emotional blackmail, threats, physical torture, burning with cigarette butts, displaying their images on face book, etc.

One of the residents stated, 'women need to become bold and reach out for assistance. Parents should be supportive and police must take cognizance of reports of violence.' Another resident laughed and said. 'Police is hardly helpful. In fact the help comes from NGOs. Laws are there but not implemented and the actual criminals go scot free.'

Not all were at ease speaking, but continued to be active listeners in the discussion.

The shelter provided all the basic needs. Food was both vegetarian and non-vegetarian and some of the residents helped the cook. Like in other shelters, time table was drawn and followed by the residents. The admission was again similar to the other homes. Counselling was initiated only after the survivor felt comfortable to share her story.

Health care provided including for those who were mentally disturbed.

Vocational training on baking and beautician course was being offered. Several of the residents interested in these are taking the training. There are few residents who evinced interest in pursuing their education, so they are being educated.

Here in this home, there is no age-restriction for children to stay with the mother, so there is also an adult girl staying here. 'We are happy to have our children with us', says one of the residents. 'They are all that we have.'

Aadhar cards and bank accounts have been opened for all residents.

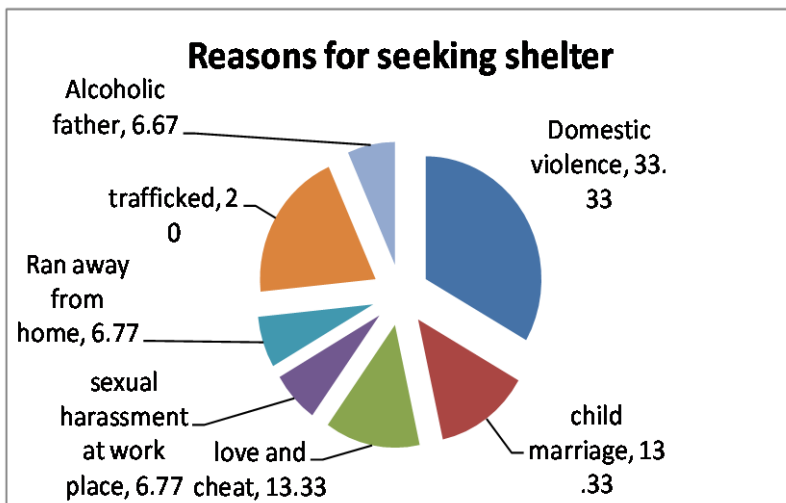
All festivals are celebrated in the shelter home. As we were concluding our discussion, excitedly Madhu adds, ' Akka , we live like a family and feel safe and secure here.'

***The FGDs additionally provided a lot of insights about the functioning and the environment in the shelter homes. All these inputs have been included in the findings of the study.***

### 3.4 Do Shelter Homes provide care and protection?

Women come from various challenging situations to shelter homes. The graph below shows the various reasons for which respondents get out of abusive and violent homes. The study points out that 33.33 per cent of them were victims of domestic violence, 20 per cent were trafficked and rescued, 13.33 per cent were survivors of child marriage, 13.33 per cent were love affairs and cheated by men, when they were teenagers, 6.67 per cent were living with alcoholic fathers, 6.67 per cent had faced sexual harassment at workplace and another 6.67 per cent ran away from home respectively.

None of the respondents approached the shelter homes directly. They were brought to shelter homes by police, through courts or rescued by NGOs.



All the respondents were of the opinion that they were warmly taken in by the shelter homes and were provided immediately with the basic necessities of food, clothes and shelter. They were asked to do the formalities of filling a form and / or signing it and it was read to them. Their

valuables like mobiles, cash and jewellery or any other things were taken and kept in a locker, which would be given back to them at the time of leaving. They were told about the rules and responsibilities of living in the shelter homes and were allotted places to stay. They have been allowed to get adjusted to the place and depending on their willingness to speak to the house mothers and /or to the counsellors, the process of counselling was started either the next day or after 2-3 days, depending on the willingness of the survivor of violence.

Initially, women were scared and had inhibitions in staying in the shelter homes, some of them were able to adjust to the environment in a short period of time, for some it took almost 2-3 months and for a few of them, it took more than 3-6 months .

All women were taken care of including their medical needs, however, special attention was provided to those women with children and who were pregnant with regard to their food and medical care. Children till the age of 6 years were allowed to stay with their mothers and then later girls were shifted to Balakiyaramandira and boys to balakaramandira for care and schooling.

Two of the shelter homes – one in Bengaluru and one in Mysuru dealt with trafficked victims and majority of them were teenagers. Hence, their focus is on providing them with education and vocational skills. Bridge courses were conducted, which helped them to join the mainstream educational institutions. Those who were not able to go in for formal education were given vocational training of their choice – such as bakery, beautician, tailoring, computer skills etc.

All the shelter homes draw up a time-table to be followed by the residents, regarding their daily activities, as well as the menu for the day. Women who are not going out for work or for studies, are allocated certain chores, such as, some assist the cook in the kitchen, others do other domestic chores. In some shelter homes, the residents have been formed into groups and tasks allocated, such as: cleaning the bathrooms and toilets, cleaning the office and premises of the shelter home, chopping vegetables, cooking etc and this is done on a rotation basis. There is specific recreation time, during this time the residents are allowed to watch TV.

Most of the homes prepare both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food, only 2-3 of them follow vegetarianism but those women who want to eat non-vegetarian food are allowed to go out and eat or get it from outside and eat in the shelter home.

Women are allowed to pray as per their faith, no restrictions or compulsion to follow the choice of the shelter homes' religious faith or belief. Majority being Hindus, festivals such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Dasara, Diwali, Ugadi etc are celebrated and special dishes prepared for the occasion.

Respondents openly shared that like in a family situation there are sibling fights, arguments with parents and relatives, similarly here in the shelter home too, there are minor misunderstandings/fights and arguments and this is forgotten over a period of time. Also the residents indulge in small thefts of things like; bindis, bangles, hair bands, soaps etc, which also leads to some conflicts among them, but this is all temporary.

The survivors who have been reintegrated into the families or have moved out of the shelter homes hardly visit the shelter homes and do not have any contact with them. Very rarely one or two of them have visited as they are in the vicinity of the shelter home and come and spend some time with the respondents and the staff.

Overall, the opinion of the respondents is that they feel safe and secure in the shelter homes. They feel they have been cared for and protected by the organisation and that they have a space to share their worries and problems as the staff are willing listen to their woes.

### **3.5 Limitations in the shelter homes**

Women residing in some of the homes felt the space crunch, if it could have been bit more spacious and aerated. In some rooms there are less fans and overcrowded. Number of residents are more, while the number of bathrooms and toilets are not enough. So this also leads to fights for using it as well as for the task of cleaning. Most of them felt that if they could be allowed to cook food of their choice, it would be good. In few shelter homes Sunday cooking is entrusted to the women and they can decide on the menu.

What was quite obvious was that the Government aided homes were crowded especially in Mandya and Mangaluru. Therefore, this led to space crunch as the buildings were not spacious enough to accommodate the residents.

In addition, shelter home lack providing details of minor girls and of mentally disturbed women once they leave the shelter. After they turn 18 and are allowed to leave the shelter, there is no way to get information about them, and contact them to follow up their situation.

### **3.6 ADMINISTRATION AND CARE PROVIDERS**

Shelter homes are institutions run by Government, NGOs and faith based institutions to provide safe spaces for women facing domestic violence and other forms of violence and who do not have a safe place to live. These shelter homes or short stay homes as they are known are meant to provide a homely atmosphere, care and protection to women, to help them overcome the trauma that they have undergone, due to the violence suffered.

The study covered three types of shelter homes – (1) those run by NGOs without the support of government funds, (2) those with the funds from government and (3) purely government run. The services of these homes varied from 30 years to last 3 years.

Interviews with 23 key informants from administration and care providers from 11 shelter homes were carried out. Their positions varied from founder directors, coordinators, house mothers, counsellors, and social workers. They all held a post graduate and/ or graduate degree in social work, psychology, economics and sociology. Their experiences in shelter homes ranged from stay period- more 30 years to just 4 months.

Overall responsibility of running these shelter homes lay with the founder directors and/ or administrators. Major work involved interacting with various agencies to raise funds for maintenance of these homes, which had a capacity for sheltering 30 to 40 women survivors of violence.

House mothers/ resident supervisors are the ones who receive the survivors directed by the police, court, Santwana centres, CWC and other NGOs. They reside in the shelter homes itself and their work is 24 x 7, since women can come seeking shelter at any time and they have to be present to receive the women who are brought into the shelter homes. There is a separate private space to receive women and do the admission process. This again varies from shelter home to shelter home. Where space is a crunch, the privacy becomes limited, even if there is some kind of separate space provided. It necessarily will not be in that sense private. For example in a Shelter Home in Mandya, there is as such no separate exclusive space.

In the shelter homes, the women are provided food, clothing, toiletries, bed and bed sheets. As precaution, all valuables are taken and kept in the lockers for safe keeping. All the items are handed over to the woman at the time when she leaves the shelter home. During admission, the woman seeking shelter is informed about the rules and responsibilities expected to be followed in the shelter home. The woman is then allocated a room with a bed which is shared by other residents. There were shelter homes visited where beds were not provided and the women slept on the floor. The shelter homes provide counselling, medical care, legal aid, education (some of them not all), vocational training etc. Again vocational training though all are expected to provide, paucity of space is an issue.

Survivors are given time to settle down in the shelter home, before the counsellors begin their counselling. It is felt that the women should get enough time so that they are comfortable to speak as many of them would be in a state of trauma. Therefore, it may vary from 2- 4 days or a week, before the woman begins to open up and speak. Counselling is carried out in a separate room without the interference of any other person in almost all the shelter homes. It was found that in only one shelter home, a third person is present along with the counsellor. The reason given for this

was, that there had been instances when women come out of the counselling room and blame the counsellor saying that their version has been changed/misquoted etc. Therefore, it was felt necessary to have a third person present during the counselling process, so that such accusations can be checked. It would serve as a check on both the counsellor as well as the survivor. Therefore, it is illustrative of the fact that the shelter homes function as per the need and comfort of the women, as well as to maintain the credibility and name of the organisation. Counsellors expressed that women do not disclose the reasons for coming to shelter home in the first session; it takes time for them to tell the truth. This varies from person to person and duration of disclosure.

### **3.7 Forms of violence faced by the survivors**

The shelter homes have witnessed the following type of violence faced by the survivors before reaching them.

- Domestic violence – abusive husbands, alcoholics, abusive in-laws, physical torture, sexual abuse, mental torture, financial deprivation
- In case of unmarried women and girls – trafficking, deceived in love and deserted, child marriage, parents pressure forcing them to work, being forced to marry older men, abusive fathers and relatives, torture by step fathers and step mothers, due to violence faced at home, forced to run away from home

There is a need to be cautious about the use of mobiles. Residents are requested to surrender their mobiles, partly because it could be misused. It could also breach their security. It is both in the interest of the survivors as well as the shelter homes that caution against keeping mobiles were taken.

Some of the Shelter Homes have security guards, while in others the main gates are locked. There is a movement register for those who go out to work and for those going out to study-an in and out register is maintained.

### **3.8 Location of shelter homes has an impact on the survivors**

Discussion with the key informants brought to notice that location of the shelter homes play a great role in the recovery of the survivors' mental status. In case of a couple shelter homes, which were started in an area where there were no houses in and around and as time passed, now apartments and residential houses surround the shelter home. So, when people in the neighbourhood got to know about, who the women and girls staying in these homes were, they started passing nasty and lewd comments on the residents, when they go out for work or studies. This has had a negative impact on the women.

The government shelter home in Udipi which is located on the highway became a threat to the staff. There was an incidence where a resident ran away from the shelter home and in order to avoid being caught, crossed the road and met with a fatal end, as it is a highway with heavy fast moving traffic all the time. Now the shelter home is kept locked and women guards posted to prevent any such incident from reoccurring.

### **3.9 Duration of stay**

Survivors are allowed to stay for a period of 6 months to 2 years. But there are cases when reintegration into the family has not taken place and they are allowed to continue their stay in the shelter home. Some of them have been staying for the last ten years and more. There are cases where children have been born in the shelter home and have been left behind by the survivor, so she can start a new life. The child continues to be reared in the shelter home.

### **3.10 Lack of transportation facility**

Most of the shelter homes have to depend on 108 services in case of medical emergencies. They have to depend on private vehicles and are charged high rates if needed during the night. In some of the shelter homes the staff member has to bear the cost of transportation. Only two shelter homes had a vehicle of their own with a driver.

### **Profile of different Shelter Homes**

#### ***Privately run but also hosts the Santwana scheme - Mysore***

*NGO started in 1991-92 by two friends whose concern was to rescue children and women who have been trafficked. Understanding the needs of girls and women a separate building was designed which is women and girl friendly. The building houses a library, computer centre, beauty parlour, bakery unit etc. Open space around the building allows women and girls spend time doing gardening or walking around. There is a security guard room near the gate which is maintained by the survivors themselves. Gates are not locked as the staff believe and are of the opinion that when the survivors realise that they have the freedom to do things, they do not go against the rules of the shelter home, they do not try to run away. It is like one's own home.*

*Organisation's approach is holistic in nature to combat sexual violence through prevention, rescue, and rehabilitation, creating awareness and providing training programmes. They get support from other organisations and individuals and are not dependent on government funds to run the organisation.*

*They mainly work towards survivors being reintegrated into their families if they are not the perpetrators of violence. They encourage survivors to undergo training of their choice and to be self reliant and to be part of the mainstream society. The other psycho-social interventions are yoga, karate, kungfu, art and drama therapy, acupuncture, traditional dance, sports, counselling to regain their confidence and to overcome the trauma that they have undergone. Thus, through these programmes and skills offered, they are being prepared to face the mainstream society as empowered individuals.*



### **Fully Private- Bengaluru**

NGO started its functions from 2010 onwards with a focus on providing counselling to women who are facing violence. They did not have prior experience of running a shelter home or any training on VAW other than knowledge on gender issues. Networking with other NGOs and understanding the need for a shelter home, is what led to this initiative. Here women are allowed to keep their children along with them. They do not take women directly, survivors have been routed through other NGOs and they are not willing to disclose their identity to the public. They feel that safety of the survivors will be at stake and the family members of the survivors' will be able to contact them only through the NGO who had directed women to the shelter.

Another experiment tried in this shelter is a transit home for one of the survivor, who has been with them for the last four years. She works as a cook and has grown up daughters who are going to college. Hence, within the premises a single room house with kitchen has been given to them to stay. The survivor has to take care of her needs from what she earns and pay a nominal rent for staying in the premises. It is expected that in the long run she would be in a position to move out of the shelter home premises and lead an independent life. Similarly, they do ask those women survivors' who are going out and working to pay a nominal amount for staying, which will be utilised for the benefits of those who cannot afford as well as to create a sense of responsibility.

There are volunteers who come to teach children karate, dance, artwork and sports. Like any home they too plan for a short vacation for everyone and last year they has a 4 day vacation to Ooty . The staff expressed that such outings are

### **Government Shelter Home – Udupi**

It is located on the national highway connecting Mumbai and Pune. It has a capacity to accommodate 100 persons. This shelter home is taken care by a 15 member team headed by a superintendent, an all women team including security guards. Women from various parts of the state are residing in it, though majority of the residents are from rural areas. The survivors of violence are brought to this home by the police, Santwana centres, and court, referred by NGOs. They have been provided with necessary clothing, bedding, toiletries and dormitory like accommodation. It has full-fledged kitchen with cooks. They have doctors including psychiatrist on regular visits and it was observed that majority of them are undergoing psychiatric treatment. Hence, the survivors were not in a position for individual discussion.

The officials concerned were of the opinion that the location being on the highway they have to always keep the gates and main door under lock. As earlier there was an incident where a resident who was mentally disturbed had ran out of the gate and met with a fatal accident as the highway as speeding traffic 24X7. The future plan of the department is to make this shelter home into a full-fledged centre for training, as of now they render few training such as, coir making , tailoring, tamarind cleaning (deseeding of tamarind) etc. The income received on the sale of the produce is shared among the members who were involved in the work and they have to contribute 20 percent of their earning to the government.

Once the shelter home is fully converted into a training institute, the residents who are mentally disturbed will be transferred to Shimoga and Hubli shelters which are equipped to handle such cases and the rest will be sent to other shelter homes in the state. They have a set menu for the residents, which are tasted by the probationary officer or superintendent before serving to the residents. There is a display of the items with calories in the office room that needs to be followed for the residents' dietary needs.

There is a balakiyara and balakaramandiras within the same campus, which facilitates the mothers to meet their children and vice-versa. This home has residents aged between 18 and 60 years, there is no hard and fast rule expecting them to leave the shelter, hence many who are being living for several years. Those who are willing to continue their education are allowed to do so and are given government job under reservation after the completion of their studies. Those who want to get married necessary arrangements have been made accordingly. Those who are placed as domestic workers, the home takes the responsibility to verify the credentials of the house where the person will be sent to work and then a order will be given from the head office. A case was shared with us where the survivor was placed as a domestic worker and she was sexually exploited by the employer and sent back to the home when found she was pregnant. It was observed that while sharing this case the officers blamed the survivor for being responsible for the situation that she got herself into. In other words, that she had consented to the relation that resulted in her becoming pregnant. It is evident that the team has lacked the sensitivity and feminist approach in dealing with such situations.

### **Government aided Shelter Home- Mysore**

*It was started in 2001 in Mysore for destitute women, rape survivors, and victims of domestic violence and rehabilitation of women forced into sex work.*

*It is built on a nice open space with lot of greenery around thereby providing a healthy ambience for free movement of the survivors. However, there is a security guard to ensure the safety of the residence on the one hand and restricting their movement to go outside the campus.*

*Women are allowed to stay as long as they feel the need to remain as we happen to meet a resident who has been staying for over 20 years.*

*The Santwana programme is also housed in the same premise, so women who come to the Santwana are directed to the shelter, if need be.*

*There are vocational training programmes such as tailoring and cooking. A canteen is been run by the residents. There is also a plan to start computer and baking courses.*

*Like other shelter homes there is a time table drawn for the residents for cleanliness and to support in the kitchen and any other errands that may be required in the office. They also have free time to watch TV and do their own personal chores.*

### **One-Stop Crisis Centre- Mangalore**

*This is a four bedded space for immediate and temporary shelter requirement. If the survivor requires medical attention, that is also provided as this facility is normally housed adjacent to a government hospital. However, the OSCC that we visited was newly constructed and located away from the hospital but adjoining the State women's home. It was well equipped with the needed amenities. There was a counsellor, but at that point we visited, there was no one in the OSCC.*

### **3.11 Observations:**

- One of the SH visited in Mysore has a free atmosphere. Gate is not locked and it is monitored by the trafficked survivors themselves. This certainly infuses confidence among the women and they feel trusted. Certainly appreciable that this shelter trusts the residents, unlike in most other shelter homes.
- In some of the shelter homes, the survivors are provided with skill training/ education etc as per their aptitude. For instance, in one of the homes, there was this young woman, who was eager to become a beautician so that she could become economically independent and lead a 'normal life' according to her. So the Shelter home had this vocational option and seeing her interest, she is given that opportunity. Must note this as worthwhile effort, as the shelter home encouraged and promoted the interest of its residents.

- One of the shelters in Mysore did not have any rules like any child over 7 years cannot stay with the mother. In fact, in this home, there are cases where the girl has reached adulthood (18yrs), yet she continues to be with her mother. The shelter home management provided a very valid reason for this. They said, we see our shelter as a home and the survivors are family. In a family, is anyone asked to go out against their will? That is the logic we apply with our survivors. It certainly makes sense. However, as there are already clearly specified rules about keeping children, under the law, therefore, maybe based on how effectively the shelter home can manage mother and children above 5, could be considered on a case by case basis, giving primacy to the child's interest.
- Another shelter in Mysore has ample space for free movement and has a healthy green environment within the campus. However, the staff expressed that it is necessary to keep the gates locked, even though there is a security watch. They have had instances of residents slipping out and perhaps hence want to maintain guard. In another shelter in Mangalore, there was an incidence of a resident trying to run out of the gates and was run over by a speeding vehicle as the home is on the highway. Therefore to prevent such instances, the gate is locked.
- Space in several places is a constraint, especially seen in Mangalore. Surprisingly these are in the Government supported Shelter homes, as already mentioned earlier. But in the privately run shelter homes, space is not a constraint, but occupancy is less.
- A point for study in the near future is why does Mangalore have such an alarming rate of survivors with mental illness under treatment? This situation was a hindrance as it was not feasible for the research team to, either, conduct any IDIs nor FGDs. Though FGDs were attempted, but was futile, as the women were hardly in a position to answer.
- In most of the Shelter Homes, large numbers of residents were survivors of domestic violence. In addition there were women who had been trafficked, rape survivors and unwed mothers.
- One of the privately run shelters was very particular that their organization address remain confidential. The reason offered was that it was in the interest of the safety of the survivors. There have been cases where the perpetrators of violence had come in search of the woman and threatened her, to return home. Therefore, anyone associated or related to the survivors is required to approach the NGOs through whom the survivors were sent for shelter and only through the NGO, arrangement to meet was made possible.
- The privately run shelter is also trying out a model of a transit home for a survivor with her four children. The survivor has been in the Shelter Home for the last four

years, so she has now been provided a separate house within the compound. She works as a cook for the shelter and takes care of her four children. This effort is with the hope that providing her this space, to manage on her own, will build in her the confidence to continue leading her life independently.

### **3.12 Recommendations:**

#### **General**

#### Budget

1. There is need for more allocation of budgets to the shelters that are run by the government. Adequate resource allocation for skill training and capacity building initiatives.
2. With a lot of resources that is coming now for CSR, perhaps, such funds need to be used in starting SH and the responsibility of running such homes can be given to NGOs, who are keen to do so, as well as those functioning effectively.

#### Managing Shelter homes and Monitoring and Evaluation

3. Selection and criteria of personnel in government and NGOs run Shelter Home must undergo thorough scrutiny, regarding their capability, sensitivity and commitment to this work, which requires dedication, experience as well as other skills, to manage violence survivors and women seeking refuge.
4. Regular monitoring visit should be made to the shelters, irrespective of whether, it being government supported or privately run, so that the process of transparency and accountability is adhered.
5. VAW's group should be included as part of monitoring team as their expertise in the sector can help improve the service. Voices of residents of the shelters should also be heard and taken into account.

#### **Specific vis-a-vis shelter homes**

#### Infrastructure and Management

6. The need for better spaces, more airy and with sufficient rooms, especially in

the case of SWADHAR GREH, which seemed rather cramped for the survivors. Hence, necessary adequate support should be provided, so that such spaces can be acquired.

7. It would be important if shelters were able to offer a recreational environment, inclusive of an open-air space in the surrounding, and a library s and other useful resources, to encourage residents to cultivate reading as their hobbies and to include this habit in their everyday schedule.
8. It was observed in the Swadhar Grehs, the number of bathrooms were not sufficient, therefore, the suggestion is, it should be in proportion to the number of residents
9. Management and staff both professional and administrative should be imparted regular capacity building

### **Professional services**

10. All the Shelter homes had counsellors, one observed the need to recruit more professional counsellors or enhance the skills of the existing counsellors.
11. It is important that a holistic approach is adopted, to help survivors recover from the trauma suffered. This includes legal and medical support and extends to meditation, stress release and inner wellness.
12. The need for periodic capacity building of the managerial and care providers in order to enhance their skills, to address the new challenges/ new forms of violence etc.
13. Survivors who were receiving treatment for their psychological condition require specialised care and support and environment. Therefore, special attention needs to be given to such survivors.
14. It would be advisable that women with mental and psychological disturbances are not lodged in a common shelter home. Due to their psychological conditions, this category of women are particularly vulnerable and more subject to abuse, neglect and violence in residential institutions<sup>16</sup>.
15. Counselling for the family of the survivors, both natal and marital, as the case may require. They should be counselled to help the survivor if she wishes to return. However, this should not be the prime thrust of counselling.

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<sup>16</sup>**2014 report by Human Rights Watch <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-45861899>**

16. Need to create awareness to sensitise public perception about the survivors, so that they are not seen as deviants.

17. Need to shift from stereotypical skill training and gear up to progressive programmes such as computer skills, English classes etc and include other trades to equip the survivors to get decent employment

18. Imparting literacy should be an integral component of skill training

#### **Other Suggestions:**

19. Children must be allowed to stay with the mothers and balakiyara programs like Nutri-food, education, health check-ups must be clustered together to give the objectives of both centres to reach full meaning. However, this will have to be considered based on the ability and willingness of the shelter home, as all shelters may not find this option viable.

#### **Ways Forward**

20. Need for appropriate awareness about the shelters and facilities offered, including the different schemes that the state/centre provide for survivors of violence.

21. The government and CSR initiatives should support in enabling the survivors to start their life afresh, so that they can be mainstreamed in society and not stigmatised.

22. Support women to become economically independent: (1) by securing jobs, (2) enabling entrepreneurial initiatives (3) provide training for confidence building and self-defence

23. The personnel managing shelters need to have an understanding of the intersectional nature of violence against women to effectively act. For instance, as highlighted in this report, the majority of women found who sought refuge belong to the Scheduled Caste community, the most vulnerable, who face discrimination in society. Therefore possibilities of facing continued discrimination if the shelter team is not sensitised enough. In addition, the personnel should be aware and sensitive to other factors of discrimination that force women to leave/be abandoned such as sexual orientation/gender/age. Hence it is important for the management and employers to undergo regular trainings on the latest rules and regulations, and to develop the right skills and the sensitivity needed to take care of these matters.

24. Shelter Homes should start collaborating with HR agencies and corporate to provide employment opportunities to survivors.
25. Separate space and specialised care for mentally disturbed women and for those who require geriatric care.

### **3.13 Conclusion:**

The study helped us access different kinds of shelters and dialogue with its management and its residents, who in fact were the key focus of the study vis-a-vis their wellbeing. It was heartening to find a privately run shelter home started by two men, which seemed to have adopted the feminist approach in caring for the trafficked survivors. The thrust of this shelter home was to ensure that the women are able to come out of their trauma and dehumanizing experience and get back to leading their lives with dignity and respect.

Most of the other shelter homes tended to be more clinical and provided the required services. However, even here, the women appeared quite comfortable, though one cannot generalize this, as there were some who were hesitant to speak out. But overall, the space seemed to provide the needed shelter to women in distress and there was certainly scope for improvement.

In yet another privately run shelter, it was observed that here the comfort zones of the survivors was very high. The survivors were comfortable sharing their stories and what was encouraging was a couple of them were actively participating in the running of the shelter home as they had been absorbed as paid employees. For instance, one of them who knew accounts was in fact working as their accountant. Another survivor was working as a cook, whose case study is written above. Several other survivors were going out to work from the shelter home and were happy staying there. Their children were also staying with them and attending schools in the vicinity. Therefore, the atmosphere in this shelter home was like a commune.

Certainly, the Shelter Homes run with government support and those solely, run by government would do well to improve their services. It would be helpful to introduce skill training, which is not stereotypical. This is necessary so that the survivors can find themselves decent employment. Perhaps, there is need for the Shelter Homes to collaborate with HR agencies, corporate etc, to secure decent and adequate employment opportunities for the survivors.

An approach which is **survivor/resident centric is key**, to enable women get back into leading their lives with dignity. It is critical that in the formulation of any policy, scheme, other provisions in the interest of the survivors of violence should be **RIGHTS BASED** as they are **RIGHTS HOLDERS** and every effort to ensure their **protection and rehabilitation is humane** and there is no **violation of their Rights**. The approach needs to be multi-dimensional, addressing all aspects social, economical, physical, emotional and mental that

will lead to the well being of women in distress, violence survivors, through a sensitive process that will enable them come out of their trauma and dehumanizing experience and get back into mainstream life.

One would like to mention, that the findings are of a very small sample and therefore has its own limitations. For a proper, intensive study, it would be necessary that a larger sample is taken. The research team should comprise of psycho-social experts other than feminist researchers, so that a more in-depth study can be undertaken. This will help to provide more evidence and clearer trends about women's conditions and the impact that violence has had on them. Based on which, more concrete recommendations with the required strategies can be developed for piloting some model feminist shelter homes, as well as improving the existing ones.

Finally, the need of the hour is to have more Shelter Homes as the graph of violence is on a steady increase. As survivors of violence often feel inhibited to come to a shelter, it is important that some kind of awareness should be generated about the services available in the shelters. This will help the survivors to get an idea about the quality of care, so on. It is only as a last resort or when she is thrown out of her home and has no place to go to or through the court that survivors reach Shelter Homes. Therefore, important to have adequate funding and budget allocation, so that skilled and specialized care givers can be recruited and the survivors find a HOME in a SHELTER. Policy makers and the state need to take serious cognizance of this need and do the needful for survivors of violence to lead a life with HOPE.

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### 3.14

#### Appendix 1

List of Shelter Homes in the districts

#### Bengaluru District

Sl. No.	Government Organisations
1.	Abhaya Ashram (O), Wilson Garden, Bangalore (A.K.A) Association of Social Health in India
2.	BharathiyaGrameenMahila Sangha, VibuthiNagar, Bangalore
3.	The State Home (O), Near NIMHANS, Hosur Road, Sadduguntepalya, Bangalore – 560 029

Sl. No.	Private Organisations
1.	MahilaDakhatSamiti, HBCS Layout, Bangalore

Sl. No.	Religious Organisations
1.	Abala Ashram (O), Shivaji Nagar, Bangalore
2.	St. Michael's Home
3.	Pastoral Sociology Institute, Asha Bhawan. Sr. Celia (Malur)

Sl. No.	Semi-Governmental Organisations
1.	Sumangali Seva Ashram (O), Hebbal, Bangalore

Sl. No.	Santwana Centres
1	Janodhaya Trust, NO. 2/1, 7 <sup>th</sup> Block, 80 Ft Road, Koramangala, Bangalore – 560095
2	Emmanuel Orphanage & Child Care Centre, NO. 144/9, Bhimrao Layout, Opp. CDPO Office, Anekal, Bangalore (U)
3	Sri ShankariBalaga, # 302, 6 <sup>th</sup> Main, Vyalikaval, Bangalore – 3
4	Emmanuel Orphanage & Child Care Centre, 15 <sup>th</sup> Cross, Yellakunte, Mangammanapalya, Bommanahalli, Bangalore

Sl. No	Swadhar Centres
1	Jnanasindhu Educational & Cultural Society, 22/6, 7 <sup>th</sup> Main, 4 <sup>th</sup> Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore.
2	Vidyaranya Educational & Development Society, Mandur, Virgonagar, Bangalore (East), Bangalore
3	Sarvodaya Service Society, Near Ever Green School, Vijayapura, Devanahalli

	Taluk, Bangalore (R)
4	Sri ShivakumarSwamiji'sEkatha Charitable Trust, No 66/67, Ranka Nagar, 5 <sup>th</sup> Main, KHB Road, Kavalbairasandra, R.T.Nagar, Bangalore – 32

### Mysore District

Sl. No	Santwana Centres
1	Shakthidhama Women Rehabilitation & Development Centre, 18-1-B, Mysore Ooty Road, Near JSS College, Mysore
2	Odanadi Seva Samsthe, NO. 15/2, DSRS Colony, Goutham Nagar, Hootagalli, Belavadi Post, Mysore – 18
3	All India Women's Conference, Door No. 19, EWS Housing Board Colony, Nanjangud
4	Mahatma Gandhi Trust, SantwanaSahayavani Kendra, Kalkunike Circle, Hunsur – 571105
5	Rajiv Gandhi Education & Welfare Trust, B.M. Road, Behind Telephone Dept, Piriapatna
6	Sri MatrusriVidyaShikshanaSamsthe, Shivashakthi Complex, Mysore Road, R. No. 20, Opp. SBM, K.R. Nagar, Mysore
7	Sri ChamundeshwariMahilaSamsthe, Hebbal, Mysore

Sl. No	Swadhar Centres
1	Odanadi Seva Samsthe, NO. 15/2, DSRS Colony, Goutham Nagar, Hootagalli, Belavadi Post, Mysore – 18

### Mandya District

Sl No	Government Organisation
1	Jnana Sindhu Educational & Cultural Society, HosahalliKarasvadi Road, Mandya
2	River Valley Organisation for Rural Development, Navajeevana, Srirangapatna – 571438 (rivoral@yahoo.com)
3	DHWANI Institute For Rural Development, 3 <sup>rd</sup> cross, Behind Sihineeru Kola, Holalu Circle, Mandya – 571401 (Dhwani94ccc@yahoo.com)
4	Sri Akshayaniketan Trust, Soonagahalli, Mandya

Sl. No	Swadhar Centres
1	Sri. Akshayaniketan Trust, Soonagahalli, Mandya

Sl. No	Santhwana Centres
1	ViksanaGrameenaAbhivrudhiSamsthe, # 2500, 6 <sup>th</sup> Cross, Marigowda Layout, Mandya
2	Vikasa Rural Development Organisation, MaruthiNilaya, Court Complex, Malavalli
3	GnanaVikasa Education Trust, Chinakuruli, Pandavapura
4	Sri AkshayaNikethana Trust, No. 306, 1 <sup>st</sup> Cross, Behind KSRTC Bus Stand, Maddur
5	River Valley GraminabhivrudhiSamsthe, No. 3211, Old Mysore Road, K.R.Pet
6	Anupama Association Trust, KaveriNilaya, Ganjam, Sri Rangapatna – 571436

7	NisargaGraminabhiyrdhiSamsthe, Maddur, Mandya
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**Mangalore – Dakshina Kannada District**

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Government Organisation</b>
1	Prajna Counselling Centre, Falnir Road, Kankanady, Mangalore

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Swadhar Centres</b>
1	Prajna Counselling Centre, Falnir Road, Kankanady, Mangalore

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Santhwana Centres</b>
1	Prajna Counselling Centre, Falnir Road, Kankanady, Mangalore