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OPTIMIZING  
SCREENING AND  
SUPPORT  
SERVICES FOR  
GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE AND  
TRAFFICKING IN  
PERSONS VICTIMS

**SRI LANKA**



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## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Globally, it is estimated that one in three women will experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner. It is also acknowledged that women are disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence (GBV) and trafficking in persons (TIP). In a context where resources for service provision is limited, ensuring accessibility to existing services for victims of all forms of violence is important. To better understand the dynamics at the core of these issues and of access to services specifically for TIP and GBV victims, the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) conducted a study with the objective of optimizing screening and service provision for victims of TIP and GBV.

The study was conducted as part of a research initiative anchored and commissioned by the Asia Foundation (TAF) from November 2019 to July 30, 2021 simultaneously in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, with the primary objective of identifying promising practices and challenges in integrating or separating services for human trafficking and GBV, giving due consideration to the specificities in access to services that exist in each country. It is expected that the findings be applicable and relevant across the South Asian region given the significant challenges and resource constraints that typify service provision in these areas. This synopsis summary of the full Report highlights the key findings and recommendations on how best to improve access to services for victims of GBV and TIP.

### 1.1 Methodology and Data Collection

The research adopted a qualitative approach to data collection, with in-depth and structured interviews conducted with identified stakeholders, including government and non-governmental service-providers (54); law enforcement officials (20) and victims who had received shelter care (4). Two focus group discussions were held – one with service providers and the other with Immigration Officers. In addition, 10 Key Person Interviews (KPIs) were held with identified stakeholders to ground the study in Sri Lanka's particular socio-economic context. The districts of Colombo, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Mulaitivu, Matara and Nuwara Eliya were selected to maintain an ethno-linguistic balance, to capture data from high migration districts and due to the presence of GBV shelters in some of these districts.

The imposition of a nation-wide curfew as a result of COVID-19 coincided with the data collection phase resulting in the postponement of field visits. Ultimately, a significant number of the interviews were conducted remotely; mostly over the phone with the exception of interviews of victims, which were conducted in-person once inter-district travel was permitted. All interviews were conducted with verbal and, where available, written consent; all data sources have been anonymized and confidentiality of all respondents assured. The data was analyzed using the NVivo software, which uses a common scheme of codes developed for all three countries.

## CHAPTER 2 - UNDERSTANDING OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This section analyzes the prevalence of TIP and GBV in Sri Lanka and its implications, especially in terms of ascertaining the gaps in data. This was followed by an examination of how GBV and TIP are understood by all the respondents. Since one's understanding of the different forms of violence shapes the screening and identification process, the analysis points to who is considered a victim and consequently, which groups of victims may not be correctly identified.

### Major Findings

#### 2.1 Trends and Patterns of TIP and GBV in Sri Lanka<sup>1</sup>

**1. Prevalence of TIP and GBV in Sri Lanka** - The prevalence of GBV and TIP in Sri Lanka is difficult to trace. The Police Grave Crimes Extract provides an overview of the prevalence as this captures the recorded number of police complaints lodged. However, disaggregation by gender, ethnicity and age are absent, making it difficult to gauge the particularities of GBV. The most recently published national survey data on violence against women indicates that 21.4 percent have experienced physical violence, 9.7 percent sexual violence and that almost a quarter (24.8 percent) of women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner<sup>2</sup>. In terms of who is at risk of such violence, ever-married women<sup>3</sup> living in urban locations and post-war districts of Sri Lanka, with lower educational attainments and belonging to the poorer segments of society tend to report the highest percentages of domestic violence.

**2. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic** - The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the prevalence of GBV. Media reports pointed to an increase in hospital admissions in relation to domestic violence<sup>4</sup> and a spike in the number of calls to domestic violence helplines has been noted<sup>5</sup> during the March-June 2020 curfew period. The detection of 30 Nepali and Indian trafficked women during the first national lockdown in March 2019 confirmed concerns about the potential for TIP in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>6</sup>. According to a rapid survey conducted among groups including those who self-identify as transgender women and female sex workers and men

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<sup>1</sup> For details refer to sections 2.2 and 2.3 in Chapter 2 of the full Report.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Census and Statistics. (2020). Women's Wellbeing Survey (2019). Findings from Sri Lanka's first Dedicated national survey on Violence Against Women and Girls.

<sup>3</sup> Defined as persons who have been married at least once in their life.

<sup>4</sup> Kumarasinghe K. (March 22, 2020). Curfew causes spike in domestic violence.

<sup>5</sup> UNFPA (December 8, 2020). A Violence Free Sri Lanka.

<sup>6</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2020). COVID-19 and its Implications on Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka.

<sup>7</sup> Care Consortium (2020). Community-led Rapid Survey. COVID-19 Impact on Key Populations, People Living with HIV and Global Fund Sub-Recipient Organizations in Sri Lanka.

**3. Data related issues** - While multiple sources of data are available for GBV, data on TIP is more difficult to access. The number of reported cases of TIP is relatively low compared to neighboring countries – a cursory review of the past five years indicates less than 30 cases annually. However, coupling procurement and trafficking together as well as the lack of disaggregated data by gender makes it impossible to form a clear idea of TIP prevalence.

## 2.2 Understanding of TIP and GBV<sup>8</sup>

**4. Conceptual clarity of GBV among the respondents** - Among the respondents, GBV and TIP are understood as distinct forms of violence, with vulnerabilities largely framed within the context of women. Many service providers' understanding of possible victimization stems from conformity to the patriarchal ideology around gender relations and the socially attributed roles of men and women. GBV is mostly viewed through the prism of domestic violence and hence, on women and their vulnerabilities to abuse within the household. The narrowing of scope to the domestic sphere is important to note, as in most cases violence is understood as physical violence perpetrated against women. In Sri Lanka, this may suggest that men as well as Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) individuals can find themselves cast outside of the service framework to access support. Already, marginalized groups like sex workers<sup>9</sup> remain outside the domain of assistance because they are not necessarily recognized as a group who are vulnerable to experiencing violence.

**5. Conceptual clarity of TIP among the respondents** - In contrast, understanding of TIP is quite weak among service providers, with a few marked exceptions. The exception was law enforcement officials, including Officers of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) and Department of Immigration and Emigration, as well as the Judges and State Counsels.

## 2.3 Challenges to Screening and Identification of TIP & GBV Victims<sup>10</sup>

**6. Lack of focus on internal trafficking** - Even among those who clearly understood TIP, little to no attention is paid to trafficking that occurs within Sri Lanka's borders, especially for forced labor and sexual exploitation. Hence, internal migrant workers such as those working in the Export Processing Zones and as domestic workers are not adequately identified as at-risk populations. The inability to differentiate between human smuggling and human trafficking is also common. These in turn, point to the way in which service provision can be impacted negatively as proper screening and identification of victims may not take place.

**7. Lack of understanding of modus operandi of trafficking** - Apart from understanding of the concepts, several other factors also negatively impact the identification process. The general lack of understanding of what TIP is; the incomplete or lack of information on how individuals can become trafficked and how this process manifests both within and outside Sri Lankan borders impacts at-risk populations.

<sup>8</sup> For details refer to sections 2.5 and 2.6 in Chapter 2 of the full Report.

<sup>9</sup> Throughout this summary, references are made to "sex workers" instead of individuals in the sex trade. The reasons underpinning this choice is explained in the report in detail and must not be construed as obscuring the potential presence of trafficked victims and the sexual exploitation such victims encounter in the sex trade.

<sup>10</sup> For details refer to section 2.10 in Chapter 2 of the full Report.

**8. Family and societal pressures** - Similarly, societal pressure and the fear of being labelled deter women and men from coming forward as potential victims. Family members and religious authorities can also impose pressure on victims to withdraw their complaints, which are generally made against an intimate partner, including the husband. The culture of suffering silently also permeates the migration process where shame of having been sexually exploited can have a devastating effect of marginalizing such victims in their own communities. Thus, social ostracism and the acceptance of such violence as a part of life keep potential victims from seeking justice.

**9. Institutional gaps and lack of faith in the justice system** - The existent gaps in the institutional structures can act as a strong deterrent. The lack of understanding and/or awareness of the complexities of GBV or trafficking and the inadequate number of female cadres in the police stations, officers' incompetency in communicating in the language most used in the region were flagged as major drawbacks. Furthermore, the lack of faith in the justice system can discourage victims from reporting. For sex workers and LGBTQ individuals, the risks of coming forward far outweigh the benefits, given the punitive lens adopted by law enforcement.

## Major Recommendations

### 10. For Government, law enforcement officials and service providers

- Focus on preventative measures/efforts: Community level awareness creation is paramount, especially in light of the socio-economic challenges at-risk populations experience as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is an urgency to include the few organizations that work with men and women engaged in the commercial sex trade, domestic workers' unions and associations, as well as the Associations that represent the LGBTQ community and a selection of NGOs that support workers of the Export Processing Zones.
- Strengthen understanding among officers at the Divisional Secretariat level: Existing training efforts targeting these officials must be strengthened and where possible, consultations held with the respective line-Ministries to explore how understanding of TIP and GBV can be included in the training modules for the officers. Cross-fertilization of knowledge on the two concepts would help understand how both constitute different forms of violence.
- Strengthen capacity of Police Officers at the local stations: As one of the first points of contact, it is important that police officers are sensitized and guided on how to use screening and identification tools in identifying TIP. This would have a direct impact on improving identification of internal trafficking.

## CHAPTER 3 - LEGAL FRAMEWORKS ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

This section deals with an analysis of the existing laws, gaps and challenges in the legal framework and gives a brief account of the government schemes and policies that are operational in the context of TIP and GBV. The chapter concludes by providing brief snapshots of some landmark judgments delivered by the higher courts on TIP and GBV.

### Major Recommendations

#### 3.1 Laws and Policies Governing TIP and GBV<sup>11</sup>

Sri Lanka has designed multiple National-level policies and Plans of Action that provide an overarching framework within which protection can be extended to victims of violence. The problem lies in enforcement and/or implementation.

**11. International commitments** - Sri Lanka is signatory to a number of international instruments which include the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography. In addition, Sri Lanka is also a signatory to several regional level instruments as well. More recently, on April 10, 2019, the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) ratified the ILO P029 - Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930. Overall, Sri Lanka has ratified eight key Conventions concerning forced labor, freedom of association and the protection of the right to organize, the right to collective bargaining, equal remuneration, abolishment of forced labor, discrimination in employment, minimum age for admission of employment and the Convention concerning the prohibitions and elimination of the worst forms of child labor.

**12.** In addition to becoming a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981, Sri Lanka is also a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (June 11, 1980), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ratified on June 11, 1980) and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Legislation in Sri Lanka also draws from some of these international commitments, especially in relation to TIP.

**13. Current national laws pertaining to GBV** - In terms of legal protections, the Penal Code as amended in 1995 identifies several offences that relate to GBV. Under Chapter XVI (offences affecting human body or offences affecting life), the general offences of assault, hurt, grievous hurt, sexual abuse, prostitution, murder and kidnap are included. The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) No. 34 (2005) has proven to be instrumental in enabling women to report cases of domestic violence, as this allows 'any person' who suffers or is likely to suffer domestic violence to seek a protection order from a Magistrate's Court. The Act defines physical violence as well as emotional abuse which is defined as a systemic pattern of cruel, inhumane, degrading or humiliating conduct of a serious nature directed towards an aggrieved person.



**14. Current national laws pertaining to TIP** - With regard to TIP, the Penal Code (Amendment) Act No. 16 of 2006 has brought the existing law in line with the Palermo Protocol<sup>12</sup>. Under Section 360C, the offence of “Trafficking” has been broadly defined and aligns the legal provisions more closely to how trafficking is defined in the Palermo Protocol, recognizing TIP in the context of both labor exploitation as well as sexual exploitation. In addition, the Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution Act No. 30 of 2005 was introduced to give effect to the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution of 2002. Additional offences related to TIP can also include sections in the Penal Code related to kidnapping - Sections 351, 356, 357 and 358; Section 358A on debt bondage, serfdom, forced or compulsory labor, slavery and recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; Section 360A, 360C, 360D and 360E that details offences related to procuring for prostitution, forced labor or sexual exploitation and procuring and soliciting of children respectively<sup>13</sup>. The Amendment to the Penal Code has also been complemented by the Assistance to and Protection of Victims of Crimes and Witnesses Act No. 4 of 2015.

**15.** In addition to these legal frameworks, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No. 21 of 1985, the Immigrants and Emigrants Act (No. 20 of 1948) and its subsequent amendments are also important.

### **3.2 Gaps and challenges in laws and legal procedures and their implementation<sup>14</sup>**

**16. Criminalization of women in prostitution** - Although a recent judgment stated that earning a living through prostitution is not a criminal offence<sup>15</sup>, many women are criminalized under the Brothels Ordinance (1889) and the archaic Vagrants Ordinance (1841).

**17. Restrictions on female mobility/travel overseas for work** - The importance of legally non-binding yet impactful government policies must be taken note of. For instance, the Family Background Report (FBR) introduced in 2013 and imposed by the GoSL to restrict the mobility of women with young children has been attributed with having a direct impact on reducing the number of female migrant workers seeking work overseas<sup>16</sup>.

**18. The policy framework** - The National Strategic Action Plan to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking (2021–2025) is currently in force. The Policy Framework and National Plan of Action (NPOA) to address Sexual and Gender-based Violence is one of the key policy documents. The National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) for Sri Lanka introduced in 2008 is considered a turning point for Sri Lanka’s labor migration management. The existence of these legislations however, does not ensure enforcement that is equal or effective.

**19. Justice delivery** - Sri Lanka’s low rate of convictions in relation to TIP has come into criticism on several occasions. However, this too must be understood in terms of Sri Lanka’s justice system, where prosecution rates are low for criminal offences. Prior to a potential case of TIP being referred to the Attorney General’s Department, however, other factors can also play a role.

<sup>12</sup> Guneratne C. (unpublished). Review of the Standard Operating Procedures (Commissioned by The Asia Foundation Sri Lanka, 2019). Accessed: October 17, 2020

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 1

<sup>14</sup> For details refer to section 3.5 in Chapter 3 of the full Report.

<sup>15</sup> Silva S.C. (February 19, 2020). Not an Offence to Earn a Living by Prostitution.

<sup>16</sup> Weeraratne B. (2016). Protecting the Welfare of Children and its Causal Effect on Limiting Mother’s Labour Migration. International Migration. Accessed: October 10, 2020



**20. Gaps in identification of presumed victims of TIP** - In relation to TIP, immigration officials are bound by the duties assigned through the Immigration and Emigration Act. This leads to tracking offenders of the Act rather than on offenders and/or potential victims of TIP. At the local level, police officers may lack a clear understanding of TIP and under-staffed and over-stretched police officers may also not have adequate time to pursue an investigation on trafficking even when there is some suspicion in this regard.

**21. Challenges of transnational investigations in TIP cases** - Sometimes the transnational nature of TIP can be challenging in the collection of evidence due to financial and human resource constraints placed on the CID. Complaints that are directed to the SLBFE may become framed as employment contract violations rather than as potential trafficking instances.

**22. Non-cooperation by victims** - Even when investigations are successful, the victim may not be willing to cooperate with the investigations. As the main witness to the crime, the victim's refusal to cooperate or withholding of crucial pieces of information can make filing indictments more challenging. The implications are far-reaching especially if, as the chief witness, the victims change their statements once an indictment has been filed. The lack of cooperation must also be understood in light of the delays and the resultant costs incurred in appearing in Courts, the inability to migrate overseas without the express permission of the AG's Department, and the social stigma of coming forward. The court proceedings can also appear daunting to a victim as interactions with legal counsel is prohibited unless a local NGO offers guidance on the courts' proceedings.

## Major Recommendations

### 23. For Government

- Training for Consular staff of Embassies: As labor attaches are withdrawn from the Embassies, training the relevant embassy officials can help efforts to support regular as well as irregular migrant workers, especially in instances where they may experience forced labor or sexual exploitation.

## CHAPTER 4 - SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK ON TIP AND GBV

Chapter 4 of the report focuses on the existing services available under various government-mandated policies and schemes in India for victims of TIP and GBV, and lists the various stakeholders involved in the service delivery system. In conclusion, this chapter addresses the crucial question on integrating or segregating services for victims of TIP and GBV.

### 4.1 Existing Service Delivery Framework<sup>17</sup>

**24. Service delivery framework for GBV** - The Government of Sri Lanka has taken considerable measures in the provision of services for victims of violence, especially GBV, most often through the Family Health Bureau and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Through several Action Plans and Standard Operating Procedures, multiple pathways for victims to access services is outlined. These include using hotlines and helplines and accessing drop-in centers managed by the government as well as CSOs. Referrals also take place at multiple locations, allowing victims to enter at any given time into the existing service framework and access services. However, this may preclude them from gaining access to some services.

## 4.2 Types of Available Services<sup>18</sup>

**25. Services for GBV victims** - The ability to access services also hinges on the capacity of the government institutions as well as the CSOs to respond effectively to the needs of the victims. As funding for GBV declines, many NGOs tend to offer advice and counselling to potential victims and make referrals to the public health and law enforcement structures. Among the services most commonly on offer are professional counselling services and economic support. The former requires that Counsellors work not only with the victims but also their family members, whereas the latter hinges on the organization already having such a program in place and then finding means to include the identified victim within the programs. This is considered critical as economic dependence on an intimate partner is commonly identified as the main reason that prevents victims of GBV from leaving an abusive relationship.

Not as common but available is access to legal aid as well as support for documentation. None of the CSOs specialize in facilitating this process but they usually direct the victims to the relevant authorities and support them by filling in the necessary application forms.

## 4.3 Reasons for gaps in service provisions<sup>19</sup>

**26. Shelter home services** - Markedly, a more cohesive service provision framework is visible wherever a recognized shelter is operating. While there is a shortage of accessible shelters for both TIP and GBV in Sri Lanka, only a few falls within a regulatory framework with oversight of the Women's Bureau. In response to the demand therefore, several unregulated shelters continue to function on an ad-hoc basis. The lack of adequate shelters is a major shortcoming but even where such shelters are available, strict protocols regarding times of admission, the need to visit a police station to indicate the victim is voluntarily agreeing to seek shelter and the security protocols that prevent children of victims from accessing education facilities can discourage victims from opting to use shelter services. Hence, receiving shelter is not a given.

**27. Services during shelter home stay** - However, once shelter services are accessed, case management becomes efficient as counselling, legal aid and economic support are all addressed on the basis of a need assessment carried out by the Counsellor. Hence, during her period of stay, a victim is provided with a wide spectrum of services that have been deemed as necessary, thus rendering positive outcomes for the victim. While the return and reintegration process is also managed with adequate attention provided, the process of re-settling into the community can prove to be daunting.

**28. Lack of services for TIP victims** - This degree of cohesiveness is absent for TIP victims as a majority of the service-providers do not offer any specific services to them exclusively. Under-reporting, coupled with the shortcomings of identifying victims correctly by law enforcement can further marginalize presumed as well as actual victims of TIP from accessing this support network. In this context, marginalized groups like female sex workers and individuals identifying themselves as LGBTQ can face insurmountable hurdles in accessing services.

<sup>18</sup> For details refer to section 4.3 and 4.4 in Chapter 4 of the full Report.

<sup>19</sup> For details refer to section 4.6 in Chapter 4 of the full Report.

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**29. No shelter homes for victims of TIP** - The closure of the dedicated TIP shelter has happened at an unfortunate point in time. The inability to house presumed victims at a dedicated shelter carries the indirect impact of overburdening the existing GBV shelters. The complicated process of accessing shelter for TIP victims makes accessibility even more challenging. Confusion regarding at which point and who should refer the presumed victims to shelter services further exacerbates these existing problems.

**30. Challenges to service delivery to TIP victims** - The lack of understanding of TIP, gaps in identification of TIP victims by the law enforcement sector and the lack of NGOs that focus attention primarily on supporting TIP victims combine to make access to services for such presumed victims much more challenging. There are no provisions for compensation, unless pursued through the Courts. Hence, unless the government or non-governmental service-providers are able to make representations on behalf of the presumed victim to access an existing government program that provides support, access to any form of medium to long-term support for TIP victims is not possible.

**31. Lack of funds** - When access to services is placed against the backdrop of the policy frameworks and Plans of Action developed at the national level, several shortcomings are visible. There exists a mismatch between the written documents and efforts that take place at the community level. The lack of funds to provide sustained assistance to victims, the viability of skills taught by shelters for victims to become economically independent and the changing priorities of the GoSL can determine the outcomes for victims.

**32. Gender barriers to accessing services** - Gender plays the critical role in accessing services, as victimhood is viewed through the narrow lens of women but can also exclude female sex workers. These ideas can easily leave out men as well as LGBTQ persons from receiving services. Public health services continue to be the most sensitive in terms of access to these groups but the lack of sensitization and awareness about how anyone can become a victim of GBV/TIP continues to be missing.

#### 4.4 Integration of Services as a Way Forward?<sup>20</sup>

**33. TIP and GBV services through the same service framework** - In Sri Lanka, services tend to be provided not systematically, as spelled out in the policy documents, but in an ad-hoc manner and where funds and resources allow for such services to be aligned. In this current context, the question of integrating services can be considered a moot point as services targeting TIP and GBV victims are provided through the same service points.

<sup>20</sup> For details refer to section 4.7 in Chapter 4 of the full Report.

**34. Pragmatic integration vis-à-vis separation** - Even though maintaining separate services is desirable and considered an ideal, integration is viewed by many as the pragmatic way forward, given the access to funding and human resources and the existent public services. The major concern is regarding shelter access. While many argue for the importance of securing safe shelter over maintaining separate shelter facilities, the disagreement for integration stems from concerns regarding the security threat TIP victims may experience, given the transnational nature of the crime. The argument for separation holds merit on the grounds that those providing services must be specially trained to deal with and provide the necessary services to TIP victims. A more non-traditional argument about extending support, which is universally understood as very important in the case of TIP victims, is to re-think what shelter constitutes. While acknowledging the importance of shelter, the idea is to ensure that “shelter” support is provided in a non-institutional setting as well.

**35. A hybrid model** - Hence, rather than advocating for a separation of services completely, the evidence points to the possibility of a hybrid model where existing services can continue to be utilized by both TIP and GBV victims. However, the question of shelter warrants a closer examination. The limited number of shelters available, the resources required and the protocols that may deny access to specific sub-groups of TIP victims on the basis of their gendered identity or the nature of their livelihood must be first examined in detail to identify how best to respond.

- Sensitize public health officials: Counsellors and Medical officers of Health operating within the Mithuru Piyasa centers can assist to screen and identify TIP as a form of violence. This is imperative as marginalized groups such as sex workers and LGBTQ individuals have relatively easier access to public health services.
- Strengthen the NAHTTF: The task force must play a more proactive role to help make referrals as well as keep presumed TIP victims within the service framework. It must consider if a victim can be anchored to a state entity or office which can assume primary responsibility for the victim. Similarly, the Task Force must consider how best to engage with at least some identified NGOs to bridge the gaps in services for TIP victims.
- Design a cohesive framework for access to services: As detailed in the SOPs, identified entities – government and NGO - must be included within this framework and the necessary personnel trained and sensitized to offer legal, medical, documentation and counselling services. The fact that many of these services are ultimately linked to public services is helpful since a system is already in operation to provide these services.

## Major Recommendations

### 36. For Government

- Incentivize existing service providers: Enhancing access to services through existing service providers must not lead to a reduction in resources at the disposal of NGOs to support GBV victims. Therefore, NGOs must be incentivized with training as well as financial resources to provide counselling and legal counsel to TIP victims.
- Conduct needs assessment on separate shelter: A needs assessment can focus on what form shelter services must take, including whether protection can be provided within a non-institutional setting, the geographical location of the shelter on the basis of need, the costs of setting up this separate system, and under whose authority this shelter must operate.