



The Asia Foundation
Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

Optimizing Screening and Support Services for Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons Victims India, Nepal and Sri Lanka

This multi-country research study conducted in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka was aimed at identifying promising practices, gaps, and challenges in integrating or separating services for Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) victims and optimizing screening and support service.

Methodology

The study is informed by key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and review of laws and secondary literature.



225 people

were interviewed across India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

The key informants included:

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



Research Sites

India

Delhi, Goa, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Manipur

Nepal

Kathmandu, Morang, Sunsari, and Banke

Sri Lanka

Colombo, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Matara, and Nuwara Eliya

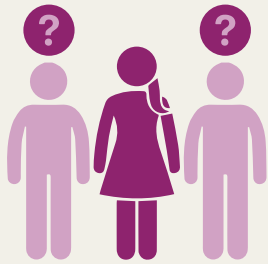
Gender-Based Violence can lead to Trafficking

GBV is one of the critical push-factors for trafficking. There is tendency to overlook or underplay the importance of identifying and addressing the push factors like GBV which have a direct relation to TIP, affecting the timely preventive action to stem TIP, delivery of appropriate protection support which could substantially reduce re-trafficking.



Common barriers and challenges

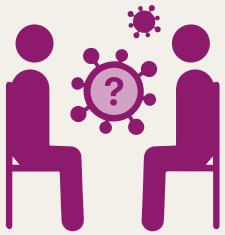
Barriers to accessing services



Differential access to services on the basis of gender (which therefore exclude males and people across the non-binary gender spectrum)



Uneven responses from law enforcement officials



Difficulties in accessing services due to the Covid-19 pandemic

Victims' reluctance to access services due to lack of knowledge on available services, fear of stigmatization or shame, not knowing ones' rights, feeling of isolation and lack of social support, fear of re-integration into the family / community.



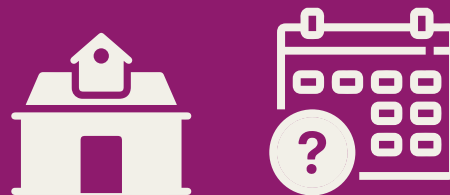
Challenges to service delivery



Lack of funds – Shelters that operate with government funding often face lack of or irregular disbursement of funds, which impacts service delivery. Uncertain and uneven funding for shelter homes and service centres severely impacts service delivery.



Limited number of shelters – Shelters are mostly concentrated in urban areas, making it difficult to provide services or to continue providing services to victims who have gone back home or are re-integrated in the community, which may be in smaller towns or rural areas. Inadequate availability of shelters for men and for people across the non-binary gender spectrum who may be victims of TIP or GBV.



Lack of composite rehabilitation mechanisms - Rehabilitation services are very limited, and are usually restricted to sending victims back to their families, which often leads to loss of access to services for their economic and other rehabilitation

Recommendations

India



Ensure reach and access to services in smaller towns and rural areas.



Develop an individual care and exit plan for victims.



Consider integration of service at a common location like the One Stop Crisis Centre model.



Integrate some services for GBV and TIP victims such as medical and legal aid services.

Nepal



Ensure effective screening and identification of victims in coordination with law enforcement agencies.



Establish shelter homes that cater to the needs of men and sexual minorities.



Avoid concentrating services in urban and border areas.



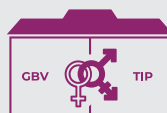
Develop effective referral mechanisms.



Increase the number of shelters across Nepal.



Allocate an annual budget to support shelters and service providers.



Set up shelters that cater to the needs of men as well as sexual minorities

Sri Lanka



Expand awareness at the community level to improve preventive efforts.



Cross-fertilization of knowledge about GBV and TIP through trainings.



Conduct needs assessment on shelter services.

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The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the author[s] and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of State.

