

**Baseline Survey Report under Project on**

**Promotion of Rights Enabling Women Survivors of Violence**  
**To Attain Social Inclusion**

**In District Jehlum, Punjab Province of Pakistan**

**July 2011**

**Civil Society Human & Institutional Development Program (CHIP)**  
*Islamabad*

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Civil Society Human & Institutional Development Program (CHIP) is a leading not-for-profit organization that works for improvement and strengthening of functional capacities of individuals, organizations and institutions in the areas of social welfare, education, gender

CHIP, with support from Foundation for the Future, has launched a project “Promotion of Rights through Enabling Women Survivors of Violence (WSV) to Attain Social Inclusion” in 20 villages of Tehsil Sohawa in District Jehlum.

The Project aims at helping women who have suffered violence to get over their trauma and to assist them in regaining their social rights through inclusion in mainstream society and social events. The project design will assist civil society organizations and district government to work together to help women survivors of violence realize their aspirations and to help them participate in the decision making process on issues which affect their lives, through social mobilization using rights based approach.

As the first step towards drawing a meaningful project plan, CHIP commissioned a survey to collect baseline information at the start of the project. This is intended to act as the “benchmark” from which improvements brought about by the implementation of the Project will be measured. The present report constitutes the first part of the survey and covers material collected from the actual women who had suffered violence.

The second part of the survey covered data collected by interviewing the persons in the environment of women survivors of violence (WSV) including the family members, neighbors, members of community in general like teachers, social workers, religious leaders, shopkeepers, teachers, etc. It aimed at assessing the knowledge (about the situation and rights of WSV), attitude towards such unfortunate women and the practices that assist or impede social inclusion of WSV of the persons that constitute the immediate environs of WSV. A separate report of that survey has also been published.

The present baseline study revealed that there is a prevalence of domestic violence and women are faced with cultural limitations regarding their inclusion in the social activities. Violence experienced by women may be domestic or external. Domestic violence includes physical, social and mental forms while external violence includes social exclusion, job discrimination, restriction on movements, etc. The prime cause of violence is a general lack of awareness among the communities on the repercussions of the issue. Families and populace in general need to be sensitized about the rights and needs of women survivors of violence. We found that women and girls of the villages covered by the baseline survey lacked confidence to talk about the issue to any one. At the same time WSV had no or very limited access to legal information, advice and support to protect themselves from violence, or to deal with its aftermath.

This baseline study will enable to focus the above mentioned issues and to proceed with the interventions accordingly.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Baseline Survey**

In order to work directly with women survivors of violence, it was important to identify women survivors so that direct work with them, their families and neighborhood could be initiated.

It was also essential to have a baseline profile that could identify their current engagement in social activities, factors that hinder the participation in social activities, as well as understand the current

dynamics and effects of violence, so that the activities could be designed keeping in mind the needs of the survivors.

- The purpose of the baseline profiling with survivors was to:
- Identify the causes and types of violence experienced by the women;
- To investigate the dynamics of violence against women;
- Explore current participation of women in social activities and the factors that hinder their participation in social activities.
- Identify the current practices of dealing with violence in order to recognize capacity building and programming needs.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Project**

The “Project to Promote Rights Through Enabling Women Survivors of Violence To Attain Social Inclusion” has the following objectives to which the current baseline survey will provide a benchmark for measuring improvement in the situation:

- Men and women community organizations have regular programs on women rights and concept of a happy family.
- Capacities of local institutions (like police, legal support bodies, medico legal officers and media) are enhanced in various aspects, including in particular, their competence in national and local laws to discourage violence against women.
- Establishment of a referral system between communities and local institutions responsible for ensuring justice system to ensure human rights.

It is expected that as a result of the project activities:

- Women/girls survivors of violence will start participating in social activities.
- Communities will adopt positive attitude towards women and work towards reduction of violence against women.
- The local institutions responsible for facilitating legal justice system will have improved capacity to provide justice and manage violence cases objectively with gender sensitivity.
- Communities will have information and access to available institutions (which are responsible to ensure legal justice) to get in-time legal support to victims when it is needed.

### **1.4 Defining Key Concepts**

#### ***1.4.1 Women Survivors of Violence (WSV)***

A woman who had experienced any form of physical or emotional violence. Since violence may not necessarily be a single, once-off incident but a continued ongoing practice, the survey covered women who had been subjected to violence in the past as well as those who were still experiencing it during the time period of this survey.

#### ***1.4.2 Nature of Violence Covered by the Survey***

All forms of physical and emotional violence were explored including slapping, beating, shoving, hitting with objects, controlling women’s mobility (or decision making), verbal abuse, etc. While violence of sexual nature within the household is a common occurrence, due to the sensitivity of the issue involved and considering the fact that this was the first interaction on the subject for most of the women covered by the survey, it was deemed appropriate not to explore this form of violence for the present survey.

Violence may not be only a single, once off, incident. In several cases, it may be a continued ongoing practice. Again, the survey was not restricted to spousal violence. We also interviewed women who had suffered violence at the hands of their in-laws or their own family.

### **1.4.3 Social Activities**

Based on experience of working in the 20 villages of the district and possible opportunities available for women of the district, a set of activities were identified as 'social activities'. These included attending marriages, going to vocational centers, schools, colleges, university, bringing water, attending funerals, visiting neighborhood for chatting, visiting patients, participating in meeting of women organizations, shopping, sightseeing/picnics, attending mela/festivals, going to shrines, attending religious ceremony, milads, etc.

### **1.5 Data Collection Process**

The Baseline survey was conducted over an extended period of time, covering 20 villages in Tehsil Sohawa of District Jehlum. The collected data has been analyzed in this Report. We believe the data yields a variety of useful information which is vital for designing programs and activities for the empowerment of WSV through social inclusion. It corresponds well with the objectives of the study and will be helpful in designing meaningful programs and achieving significant results of future interventions. The data and analysis contained in this report can hopefully be used as a reference for conducting other studies in this or similar areas which are focused on Inclusive Development or issues of violence against women.

Since the issue of violence against women is considered a taboo and generally not discussed openly, particularly in the rural areas of Pakistan, it was necessary for our teams to ensure that initial data collection is done in a manner that is respectful, non-judgmental and maintains confidentiality of those providing information.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 The Steps Involved**

The following methodology/ processes were used to complete this assignment:

- Step 1: Determining the perimeters
- Step 2: Development of questionnaire
- Step 3: Hiring of Interview Teams
- Step 4: Training of Interview Team members
- Step 5: Mock Interviews and assessment there-of
- Step 6: Conduct of real interviews and completion of questionnaires
- Step 7: Data entry
- Step 8: Analysis of data
- Step 9: Preparation of report

### **2.2 Determining the perimeters**

The first step was to design the research structure, determine the physical areas to be covered and estimating the size of population for the survey.

#### **2.2.1 Research Design**

The research design had the following features:

- The data was collected by means of well-structured, in-depth interviews with women who had suffered, or were still experiencing, violence, based on a comprehensive questionnaire.
- The study covered 20 villages of Tehsil Sohawa in District Jehlum.
- A total of 181 women survivor of violence were interviewed.

The Questionnaire included both qualitative and quantitative questions. The interviewers had been properly trained and sensitized to the importance and delicate aspects of the survey.

#### **2.2.2 Sampling**

For the purpose of sampling, women survivors were identified through a series of 40 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 20 men and 20 women that entailed questions about happiness of families and further through mapping exercises. These FGDs identified families that were unhappy. The reasons for unhappiness in the families were further probed to identify households where women may have/or still potentially be experiencing some form of violence. Since CHIP has been working in the area for the last 5 years and has 20 functional Women's Organizations, the members of the Men and Women Organizations also were also of immense help to the process of identification.

After conducting the above mentioned process 211 households were identified where interviews with women survivors of violence could be conducted. To create a conducive environment and ensure privacy during the interview, the research team with support of the WO coordinated the time and venue for the interview in consultation with the women identified as survivors. Some of them were interviewed at the office or home of the WO, while the rest were interviewed in their own homes. To further ensure privacy at the time of the interview, a condensed version of the original interview guide that had questions and suggestions for programming was administered to a second woman at the survivor's house. The purpose of this effort was to divert the women survivors from the enormity of the issue so that they speak their heart out in a candid manner without any hesitation.

Out of the 211 survivors, 16 did not give consent to be made part of the study. Out of the remaining 195 women, 14 women denied having experienced violence when they were interviewed, and were therefore excluded from the study. It was important to have the women's informed consent to be part of the study so that at the time of interview there is no possibility of opposition by the survivor. Therefore the actual sample size comprised of 181 women survivors of violence.

Total WSV identified	= 211 women
Declined to cooperate	= 16 women
Preliminary interviews held with	= 195 women
Denied having suffered violence	= 14 women
Complete interviews held with	= 181 women

### 2.3 Development of Questionnaire & Translation into Urdu

The research team first made an initial tour of Tehsil Sohawa of District Jehlum to get a first-hand knowledge of the ground realities and to meet our field office personnel as well as the representatives of various CBOs operating in the area. Many of these CBOs are associated with CHIP and had offered to assist our research team in all its endeavors. Based on the information so gathered by them, the research team members prepared the principal tool of research to be used in the study, namely an Interview Guide. This guide had seven sections, each dealing with a different aspect of gathering information, means of reaching to the core issue, ways of eliciting the correct response, sensitivities of the issues, social and cultural norms to be observed, etc.

The Interview Guide also included the questionnaire to be used by the research team. It had the following sections.

- Section A collected background information on matters like personal details, age, marital status, source of income, etc.
- Section B explored social activities, including participation in such activities and reasons for not attending them.
- Section C was aimed at collecting views about a happy family. It had questions intended to identify reasons for anger, sadness, fear and happiness in a family.
- Section D dealt specifically to violence against women and sought information on nature of violence experienced, the perpetrator, effects of violence, ways of coping/dealing with violence, etc.
- Section E explored the state of current support structure of the survivors
- while Sections F and G solicited suggestions for program and dreams about the future.

The first draft of the questionnaire was sent to our field office who discussed it with partner CBOs to ensure a comprehensive coverage as well as practicality and validity of questions contained there-in.

Based on the feedback received from the field, the research team had a review session with CHIP's senior officials at Islamabad. The outcome of these deliberations was the final draft of the questionnaire to be used for collection of data.

The questionnaire was then translated into the national language Urdu to ensure that no difficulty is faced by research officers and interview teams when they communicate with the intended participants.



## **2.4 Hiring of Interview Teams**

Four teams of field researchers were hired after conducting formal interviews and evaluation process. Each interview team comprised of (a) one male researcher, (b) one female researcher and (c) a leader. All team leaders were CHIP staff members who had been properly briefed about the survey exercise. In addition, the partner CBOs provided the services of an “assistant or informant” who was well versed with local situations to each interview team. This ensured that the task of collecting data could be carried out without any undue hitch.

## **2.5 Training of Interview Team members**

The teams of field researchers were given full formal training at CHIP headquarters as well as in the field on all aspects of project, techniques of conducting interviews and ensuring accuracy of the collected data. They were also sensitized about violence towards women and inclusive development approaches. All participants were also trained in the art of drawing social maps. These maps serve two main purposes: firstly they are a part of Village Profile and secondly they enable the team to reach the exact location of WSV and their families.

## **2.6 Mock Interviews and assessment there-of**

In order to check the validity and practicality of the questionnaires, each field researcher was asked to conduct mock interviews and fill-in the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were assessed by the senior researcher. Appropriate feedback and instructions were issued to field teams in light of senior researchers’ observations.

## **2.7 Conduct of real interviews and completion of questionnaires**

The twenty villages in the tehsil covered by this survey were divided into four clusters – each cluster being assigned to one research team. Research teams, accompanied by assistants (or informants), and led by senior CHIP staff, met the various persons living close to or having interaction with WSV. At each such meeting, a representative of local CBO or community was present. Questionnaires were distributed and completed through personal interviews in presence of afore-said persons to ensure accuracy of the data being collected.

The senior researchers kept meeting the field teams on a regular basis, providing them on-the-job assistance and clarifications where needed. This process also served the cause of monitoring and quality control.

## **2.8 Data entry**

A specialized data entry staff entered the data in SPSS software package. It was rechecked for accuracy. The package then produced a number of statistical reports and charts in accordance with the pre-defined objectives.

## **2.9 Analysis of Data**

The various statistical reports generated by SPSS software were analyzed by a team of researchers including CHIP’s senior staff and a specialist report writer. The data was looked at from various angles and interpreted.

## **2.10 Report**

The present report is the outcome of all the above deliberations.

### 3. Findings and Discussions

#### 3.1 Survivors Profile

A total of 181 women survivors of violence were interviewed. The first segment of the questionnaire aimed at collecting data relating to the personal profile of these women which is appended in the following paragraphs.

##### 3.1.1 Data by age groups of respondents

Respondents belonged to the following age groups:

Age group	No. of WSV	% of total
Between 14 to 30 year olds	84	46.40%
Between 31 to 40 year olds	58	32.04%
Between 41 to 50 year olds	27	14.92%
Over 50 year olds	12	6.63%
Total number of respondents	181	100.00%

It is apparent from the above data that greatest prevalence of violence is against women aged between 14 years and 40 years, accounting for a little less than 80% of total respondents. It would appear that treatment of women improves once they cross the age of 40. This may have roots in social factors. For example, women older than 41 years have grown up sons who may not let others (including their fathers, uncles, etc.) to subject their mothers to violence. Nonetheless, a little over 20% of the victims were over 40 years old.

##### 3.1.2 Data by education level of respondents

A classification of respondents by level of education is given below.

Education Level	No. of WSV	% of total
Illiterate	111	61.32
Less than primary	8	4.42
Primary (5 years of education)	40	22.11
Middle (8 years of education)	6	3.31
Matriculation (secondary school, 10 years of education)	12	6.63
Matriculation plus (more than 10 years of schooling)	4	2.21
Graduate (14 or more years of schooling)	0	0
Total number of respondents	181	100.00%

Quite understandably, the highest percentage (61.3%) of sufferers of violence is totally illiterate. Again, women with only primary education constitute another big chunk (22.1%) of the total number of WSVs. None of the respondents had a college degree. Their illiteracy may be a contributory factor to the incidents of violence as they fail to understand the causes, implications and methods of handling violence. Their ignorance of these basic elements may invoke anger, resentment or similar feelings of displeasure among the perpetrators of violence.

##### 3.1.3 Data by marital status of respondents

A classification of respondents by marital status is given below:

Status	No. of WSV	% of total
Married	93	51.38
Unmarried	6	3.31
Widow	21	11.60

Divorced	36	19.89
Separated	25	13.82
Total	181	100.00

Married women constitute the largest percentage of WSVs. If we consider that the survey included both past and present occurrences of violence, it can be assumed that widows, divorced and separated women also suffered violence while they were married. While some of them may still be suffering from incidents of violence even after divorce or separation, it is quite apparent that marital status has a strong link with incidence of violence against women.

### 3.1.4 *Data on number of children, by age and gender, of WSVs*

The following information was collected regarding the number of children of women survivors of violence:

	No. of WSV
Women survivors of violence, having no child	44
Women survivors of violence, having one child	14
Women survivors of violence, having two children	53
Women survivors of violence, having three child	41
Women survivors of violence, having four or more children	29
Total respondents	181

#### 3.1.4.1. The following further information was collected regarding the total number of WSV's children, their age and gender groups:

Age Group of children	Male	Female	Total
Under 4 years of age	40	48	88
Between 5 to 10 years of age	47	52	99
Between 11 to 14 years of age	24	26	50
Between 15 to 17 years of age	14	13	27
Between 18 to 25 years of age	39	45	84
Over 25 years of age	25	15	40
Total	189	199	388

It is difficult to draw any significant inferences from the above data, except for the fact that presence or absence of children, or their ages, does not seem to make much of a difference in cases of violence against women.

### 3.1.5 *Data on children of survivors regarding access to school*

Children of women survivors of violence, classified according to access to school, were as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Had access to school	75	73	148
Did not have access to school	114	126	240
Total	189	199	388

It is unfortunate that only 38% of the children of WSV are going to school. While the percentage of children going to school is much higher than for the WSVs themselves, no evidence was forthcoming that this is related to the incidence of violence.

### 3.1.6 *Data on sources of income of WSV*

Respondents were asked if they had independent means of income. Means of income were

further classified into two groups: those who earned income and actually received it and those who helped the family in earning income like tending to farm animals, tilling family farm, minding father or husband's shop, etc. The second group did not receive the income in their hands. For ease in understanding, we have called the first group as Direct Earners and the second group Indirect Earners.

	No. of WSV	% of Total
Direct Earners	44	24.3%
Indirect Earners	62	34.3%
Not earning at all	75	41.4%
Total	181	100.0%

Contrary to common belief, women who do have an independent source of income (like job, shop, etc.) also suffer from violence. Those helping their respective families in earning an income (34%) and those who do not earn at all (41.4%) constitute a bigger slice of total number of WSV.

### 3.1.7 *Economic Dependence of WSV*

Respondents were asked to name their source of income for livelihood. Their responses were:

Source of Income	No. of WSV	% of Total
Myself	54	23.28%
Husband	78	33.62%
Brother	43	18.53%
Father	30	12.93%
Zakat	5	2.15%
Other (other relatives, charities, etc.)	22	9.48%
Total	232	100.00%

It is apparent that some of the women victims of violence were being supported for livelihood by more than one person, or source. However, a very large percentage (76.3%) depended on others for their livelihood which perhaps contributed to their tolerance of violence.

## 3.2 **Victims' Participation In Social Activities**

Data was collected in respect of participation in various social activities by women survivors of violence. It has been classified according to frequency and reasons for not participating.

### 3.2.1 *Participation in Social Activities By Victims*

Respondents were provided a list of various social activities and asked to name the top three that they participated in most often. Based on their responses, the following ranking of commonly attended social activities emerged:

Social Activity	No. of Times cited	% of Responses
Bringing water	78	14.4%
Attending religious events	74	13.6%
Looking after livestock	68	12.5%
Attending funerals	66	12.2%
Visiting parents	55	10.1%
Cultivation / tilling the farm	51	9.4%
Going to WO's meetings	33	6.1%
Going shopping	30	5.5%

Attending weddings	26	4.8%
Visiting shrines	26	4.8%
Socializing in neighborhood	23	4.2%
Going to school, college, VTC	5	0.9%
Going for recreation	4	0.7%
Taking part in festivals / mela's	4	0.7%
Total	543	100.0%

It is interesting to observe that household chores like bringing water and looking after livestock is considered a social event by women in rural areas. WSV are no exception to this generalization.

### 3.2.2 *Frequency of participation in social events*

Respondents were asked about the frequency of participation in social activities. Their responses were as follows:

Social activity	Always	Moderate	Some times	Never	Total
Cultivation / tilling the farm	41	38	43	59	181
Attending weddings	21	58	82	20	181
Looking after livestock	54	33	33	61	181
Going to school, college, VTC	4	4	20	153	181
Bringing water	62	39	41	39	181
Attending funerals	53	49	57	22	181
Socializing in neighborhood	17	47	66	51	181
Visiting parents	44	74	48	15	181
Going to WO's meetings	26	22	40	93	181
Going shopping	24	39	64	54	181
Going for recreation	2	5	24	150	181
Taking part in festivals / mela's	3	11	14	153	181
Visiting shrines	22	46	59	54	181
Attending religious events	59	17	49	56	181
Total	432	482	640	980	2534
Percentage of total	17.05%	19.02%	25.26%	38.67%	100.00

Almost 39% of women victims of violence did not attend any social activity at all. This is a sorry state of affairs as such a situation further complicates the mental state of victims. Only 17% attended social events on a very regular basis while over 25% attended them only infrequently. While most of this can be attributed to social and cultural norms as disclosed by the table under Para 3.2.2, the researchers were not able to solicit comments from victims if they had been stopped from attending social events by the perpetrators of violence on them.

### 3.2.3 *Reasons for not participating in social activities*

Respondents were asked as to why they think women do not participate in social events. We had to frame this question in this manner due to the sensitivity of the issue. Hence, the following responses should be seen as a reflection of what WSV think about the issue, rather than the actual reasons for their personal non-participation.

Reason for non-participation in social events	No. of WSV	% of Total
People don't like women to go outside	57	30.64%
Lack of interest on part of women	42	22.58%
Poor financial condition	39	20.97%

Too busy to spare time for social events	48	25.81%
Total	186	100.00%

A few women named more than one reason for non-participation in social activities; hence the number of responses being larger than the number of respondents.

As stated earlier, the above chart does not tell us if the WSV were prevented from attending social events by the perpetrators of violence on them. However, this does tell us about the way WSV think about the issue. Over 30% of them do not go out due to social pressure as they feel that people (more so their family members and neighbors) do not approve of women leaving homes for socializing. 22.6% do not have interest in such events which is not so surprising given the general mental orientation about social events in rural areas of Punjab. Over-occupation in household chores and having poor financial means contribute over 46% of the responses. This is an area where social planners can assist.

### 3.3 WSV'S Perceptions on Family Happiness

In this segment of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to name the factors that contributed to a happy family, or an unhappy family, and to their own fears and anger.

#### 3.3.1 *Factors contributing to a happy family*

Respondents were asked to name the factors that contribute to a happy family. Their responses are tabulated below:

Area	Factor	No of Responses	% of Total
Attitude	Peace	60	20.48%
	Unity	79	26.96%
	Absence of quarrels	16	5.46%
	Pleasantness	74	25.26%
	Good behavior	10	3.41%
Economic	Prosperity	26	8.87%
	Good source of regular income	8	2.73%
Education	Awareness (of need for happy family)	15	5.12%
Health	Good health	2	0.68%
Others	Children	3	1.02%
Total responses		293	100.00%

Even though the questionnaire had requested the respondents to name the one factor that contributed most to a happy family, many respondents chose to name more than one factor. This explains the number of responses exceeding the number of respondents.

Not surprisingly, even in a rural part of the relatively less developed Punjab, the women felt that attitude was the most important element of a happy family. Over 78% of the factors named by them as the most important contributing element were related to attitude. Unity among family members and pleasantness in dealing with each other were, at 27% and 25% respectively, considered most potent of the factors.

Economics related factors came to just 11.6% of the responses which negates the common myth that wealthy families are happy families.

Education was not rated highly as a factor contributing to family happiness – and this can perhaps be attributed to lack of it and lack of appreciation for it among the respondents.

Considering that a child birth is often considered the happiest event in most rural families, the low level of importance (only 1.02%) attached to children as a provider of happiness to families surprised our researchers.

### 3.3.2 *Factors contributing to unhappiness in a family*

Respondents were asked to name the factors that contribute to unhappiness in a family. Their responses are tabulated below:

Factor	No. of Responses	% of Total
Conflicts and disagreements	93	47.45%
Lack of unity	36	18.37%
Unemployment	26	13.26%
Having no children	7	3.57%
Exchange marriages	1	0.51%
Diseases and sickness	18	9.18%
Gave no answer	15	7.65%
Total responses	196	100.00%

Once again, the respondents were asked to name only one (i.e. the most important) factor contributing to unhappiness in a family, but some of them chose to name more than one factor.

At 47.45%, conflicts and disagreements appear to be the main contributors of unhappiness in a family. Lack of unity in the family is a distant second, but it too is a shade of disagreements.

Unemployment (and hence lack of adequate income) was named in 13.3% of responses. If we look at the previous Table where factors contributing to happiness were tabulated, economic factors were named in only 11.2% of responses. It appears that while having a good income contributes to family happiness, a lack of it is less potent as provider of unhappiness in the family.

The next most important factor was sickness in the family. It comprised of 9.2% of responses. It has more to do with social and cultural norms than the disease itself as presence of a sick person brings considerable strain on the whole family in rural areas.

### 3.3.3 *Factors contributing to anger of victims*

Respondents were asked to name the factor that contributed to their anger. Their responses were as follows:

Area	Factor	No of Responses	% of Total
Injustice	Lying	14	7.73%
	Blaming attitude	17	9.39%
Disagreements	Conflicts	62	34.25%
Negative behavior	Low tolerance level	52	28.73%
Domestic	Divorce	2	0.55%
Economic	Poor financial condition	15	8.29%
Gave no answer		19	10.50%
Total responses		181	100.00%

Disagreements and conflicts (34.3%) are the main provider of anger to women survivors of violence, followed by negative behavior /low tolerance level (of perpetrators of violence) at 28.7%. Injustice that includes elements like lying and an attitude to blame everything on victims at 17% is the next most potent contributor to anger by women.

This table brings out one fact very clearly: any program intended to improve the lot of women survivors of violence must aim at educating not only the WSVs themselves but also their families, and in particular the perpetrators of violence. If those provoking anger in women could be made to understand the repercussions of their behavior, the situation can improve significantly.

### 3.3.4 *Factors contributing to fear by victims*

Respondents were asked to name the factor that contributed to their fear. Their responses were as follows:

Factor	No of Responses	% of Total
Conflicts	45	24.86%
Fear of losing honor	20	11.05%
Diseases	10	5.52%
Evil acts	9	4.97%
Economic instability	10	5.52%
Sudden unexpected crises	20	11.05%
I have no fears	42	23.20%
I have no idea	21	11.60%
Total responses	181	100.00%

Conflicts and disagreements, at almost 25%, were the main providers of fear among the respondents. Other significant factors were fear of losing honor and sudden unexpected crises, both at 11% of total responses. Both of these factors are related to lack of confidence among the respondents.

A surprising 23.2% of women survivors of violence said that they had no fears while 11.6% said they had no idea about the source of fears. These are interesting responses and deserving of more research by anthropologists as they do not appear to conform to normal view point.

## 3.4 **Data on Violence Experienced By WSV**

Questions contained in this segment related to the nature of violence, its frequency, perpetrators, causes and impact on women survivors of violence.

### 3.4.1 *Types of violence experienced by victims*

Respondents were provided a list of various forms of violence and asked to name the top three that were meted out to them most often. Based on their responses, the following ranking of commonly administered types of violence emerged:

Factor	No. of Times cited	% of Responses
Physical beating	244	45.0%
Mental torture	81	15.0%
Verbal abuse	75	13.8%
Depriving of economic support	52	9.4%
Being suspicious	47	8.7%



Restriction on socialization	44	8.1%
Total	543	100.0%

Physical violence (45% of incidents) that includes kicking, hitting with an object, punching, slapping, pushing, etc is clearly the most prevalent of forms of violence meted out to women. Mental torture is a distant second at 15%, verbal abuse at 13.8% comes next, followed by withdrawal of economic support at 9.4%. Being suspicious and placing restriction on socialization ranked lowest in this table.

### 3.4.2 *Frequency of each type of violence*

Respondents were asked to state, in respect of each form of violence, how often was it meted out to them. Their responses were as follows:

Type of violence	Always	Moderate	Some times	Never	Total
Restriction on socialization	49	17	44	71	181
Physical beating	32	37	49	63	181
Kicking	29	27	34	91	181
Punching	30	25	48	78	181
Hitting with an object	28	23	39	91	181
Slapping	42	35	36	68	181
Pushing	38	36	36	71	181
Mental torture	100	32	26	23	181
Depriving of economic support	58	21	39	63	181
Verbal abuse	79	43	34	25	181
Being suspicious	53	21	30	77	181
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>1991</b>
Percentage of total responses	27.02%	15.92%	20.84%	36.21%	100.00%

The above table shows the overall situation. Due to the importance of the data contained in this table, it is necessary to discuss each of the types of violence individually before analyzing the big picture.

#### 3.4.2.1 *Restriction on socialization*

While 39% of women never experienced this type of violence, 27% of them suffered it all the time and 24% suffered it infrequently. In a rural setting where levels of education are generally quite low, this form of violence is not attached much attention as it is considered to be a very mild form of violence.

#### 3.4.2.2 *Physical beating*

If we take various forms of beating like physical beating, kicking, punching, hitting with an object, slapping and pushing, these constitute the biggest slice of violence experienced by women. However, on an overall basis, 38% of the victims never suffered any form of physical beating.

#### 3.4.2.3 *Mental torture*

55% of the respondents experienced this form of violence “always” and another 18% experienced it frequently which is alarming. Only 12% never experienced it and 14% experienced it infrequently.

If we consider being suspicious and verbal also as forms of mental torture, the overall picture changes only slightly. 42% of the respondents experienced this form of violence “always”, another 18% experienced it frequently, 23% never experienced it and 16% experienced it infrequently.

This is an area to which the program designers will need to pay a lot of attention.

#### **3.4.2.4 Depriving of economic support**

32% of respondents were always deprived of economic support as a form of punishment of consequence of a disagreement. 12% of them experienced it frequently, 22% experienced it infrequently while 35% were never deprived of economic support.

#### **3.4.2.5 Overall analysis on types of violence**

If we look at the form of violence that is always inflicted on women victims, mental torture (including verbal abuse and being suspicious) forms the largest slice at 43%. Physical violence (including beating, kicking, punching, slapping, pushing, hitting with an object, etc.) constitute 37% and only 11% of victims were always deprived of economic support as a means of violence. Restrictions on socialization at 9% rank lowest in this category.

If we look at the form of violence that is never meted out to women physical violence (including beating, kicking, punching, slapping, pushing, hitting with an object, etc.) forms the largest slice at 67%. Mental torture (including verbal abuse and being suspicious) constitutes 17% while only 9% of victims were always deprived of economic support as a means of violence and 10% were never restricted socially.

#### **3.4.3 Perpetrators of violence**

Respondents were asked to name the perpetrator of violence to them. Their responses were:

Perpetrator	No of Responses	% of Total
Husband	110	39.15%
Father in law	14	4.98%
Mother in law	70	24.91%
Sister in Law (husband's sister)	48	17.08%
Others	39	13.88%
Total	281	100.0%

The fact that the number of responses is much greater than the number of respondents clearly indicates that many women were subjected to violence by more than one person.

The largest percentage of perpetrators is that of husbands at over 39% while not surprisingly the next in line are mothers in law (at nearly 25%), followed by sisters in law (at 17%). Fathers in law weigh in at nearly 5% while other perpetrators (including brothers, brothers in law, off-springs) constitute nearly 14% of perpetrators.

A notable feature of the above data is that women are almost as frequently subjected to violence by other women as men. A further research may perhaps divulge if women perpetrators of violence were themselves victims of violence at some stage in their respective lives. And if so, why have they chosen to perpetuate the cycle rather than learn lessons from it.

#### **3.4.4 Causes of violence**

Respondents were asked about the causes of violence in their particular cases. They responded

as follows:

Cause of violence	No of Responses	% of Total
Dislike between husband and wife (arranged marriages)	37	20.44%
Conflicts	20	11.05%
Lack of trust	45	24.86%
Poverty	42	23.20%
Anger	17	9.39%
Exchange marriages	6	3.31%
Gave no answer	14	7.73%
Total	181	100.0%

It is surprising to note that while poverty does not rank very high in the list of factors contributing to unhappiness in a family, it ranks highest among the causes of violence meted out to women. The next most common cause of violence against women is dislike between husband and wife, presumably borne out of arranged marriages which are a norm in rural areas of Punjab. Exchange marriages (i.e. a boy's sister is married off to the brother of his wife) are also a potent cause of violence. It means that if woman in one marriage suffers violence, the other one in parallel marriage is also subjected to a similar treatment. This area needs more research and attention from social organizations as inter-marriages have been diagnosed as the main cause of disability among children.

Conflict (11%) and anger (9%) are other main causes of violence against women.

### 3.4.5 *Impact of violence on women survivors*

Respondents were asked to name the feeling that they had when they were subjected to violence. Their responses were as follows.

Impact / feeling	No of Responses	% of Total
Mental frustration	76	41.99%
Bad health condition	18	9.94%
Humiliation leading to a lack of confidence	87	48.07%
Total	181	100.0%

While in 90% of the cases, the impact was more of mental type, in 10% of cases it led to bad health condition. Here, the bad health does not refer to the physical injury that was inflicted on the women in the course of violence, but to subsequent illness and deterioration in health condition.

### 3.4.6 *Impact on the children when violence is meted out to their mothers*

Women survivors were asked about the impact that the violence experienced by them had on their children. Their responses were:

Impact / feeling	No of Responses	% of Total
It damaged their personality	26	14.36%
They were upset	42	23.20%
They felt humiliated	61	33.70%
They felt sad	23	12.71%
Didn't know, or had no children	47	25.97%
Total	181	100.0%

While most of the children whose mothers suffered violence were affected in mental way (23% were upset, 34% felt humiliated and 13% felt sad), the personality of an alarming 14% of them were damaged in the process. It means these children were likely to carry the scar into their adulthood and perform well below par in their practical lives. This is one aspect of violence against women that needs a great deal of attention from program designers and social planners of the country.

### 3.5 Post-Violence Reactions

In this segment of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about the after-effects of violence on them and the attitude of neighbors.

#### 3.5.1 *How did the victims feel after violence?*

Respondents were provided a list of reactions and asked to name three reactions most commonly experienced by them after violence. The following table shows a ranking of reactions, in order of prevalence:

Factor	No. of Times cited	% of Responses
Started thinking a lot	44	8.10%
Cried and were sad	42	7.73%
Poor physical health	40	7.37%
Were terrified	39	7.18%
Were angry	38	7.00%
Felt despair	37	6.90%
Were embarrassed	36	6.81%
Change in eating habits	35	6.44%
Surrendered	34	6.26%
Tried to ignore the incident	33	6.08%
Lost interest in daily life	32	5.89%
Relocated to parent's home	30	5.52%
Change in attitude	30	5.52%
Felt stigmatized	28	5.16%
Thought of leaving, or actually left, home	27	4.97%
Thought of committing suicide	18	3.31%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The most prevalent reaction was to start thinking a lot. This can be treated as a form of worry. The next most common reaction was to cry and feel sad. The rest of the list is fairly evenly distributed.

#### 3.5.2 *The intensity of reactions felt*

Respondents were requested to state in respect of each of the listed reactions, as to which they felt most deeply, moderately, mildly or never. This time they were not asked to rank the various reactions themselves, only to state the intensity of the named feeling that they experienced. Their responses were as follows:

Reaction	Deeply	Moderately	Mildly	Never	Total
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Change in attitude	42	50	56	33	181
Change in eating habits	42	71	59	9	181
Were terrified	88	33	44	16	181
Thought of leaving, or actually left, home	36	35	36	74	181
Tried to ignore the incident	50	46	48	37	181
Lost interest in daily life	48	50	46	37	181
Relocated to parent's home	53	25	48	55	181
Cried and were sad	105	41	26	9	181
Were embarrassed	75	49	28	29	181
Started thinking a lot	125	34	17	5	181
Poor physical health	89	43	37	12	181
Surrendered	59	38	46	38	181
Felt despair	78	41	45	17	181
Felt stigmatized	48	38	52	43	181
Thought of committing suicide	34	20	29	98	181
Were angry	88	34	42	17	181
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>2896</b>
Percentage of total	36.6%	22.4%	22.8%	20.3%	

If we try to analyze the overall result, we find the intensity of various reactions experienced by 36.6% of victims was deep, while 22.4% experienced the listed feelings at a moderate level, 22.8% at a mild level. While it would be incorrect to infer that 20.3% of victims had no reaction to violence at all, it however shows that not all the women felt all the reactions with the same intensity. We will now look at each of the reactions briefly:

- Violence mildly changed the attitude of 31% of victims, moderately changed the attitude of 28% of the victims and deeply changed the attitude of 23% of the victims.
- 39% of the victims changed their eating habits moderately after experiencing violence, 23% changed them intensively, and 33% did so only mildly.
- 48.6% were deeply terrified, 24% were mildly terrified and 18% were moderately terrified after the violence.
- 40% of the victims did not think of leaving the house, nor actually left it, after the violence. Almost 20% thought deeply about it, 20% thought moderately about it and 20% thought mildly about it.
- 28% of victims felt strongly about ignoring the incident, 26% felt mildly in this direction while 25% felt moderately this way. 20% of victims however felt that they cannot ignore the incident.
- 27% of victim completely lost interest in daily life, 28% lost it moderately, 25% lost it somewhat while 20% lost no interest in daily life.
- 29% of victims felt strongly to relocate to their parent's home, 14% felt the urge moderately, 27% felt so only mildly while 30% did not feel any urge to leave their husband's (or in-law's) house.
- 58% of victims cried and were deeply saddened by the violence, 23% were moderately

affected in this way while 14% cried and were saddened only mildly. A very small percentage (less than 5%) said that they did not cry or felt sad after the violence.

- 41% of the victims felt deeply embarrassed by violence, 27% felt moderately embarrassed while 15% were only mildly embarrassed. The rest 15% did not feel embarrassed by the incident of violence.
- 69% of victims started thinking deeply or intensely after the violence. 19% of victims started brooding moderately, and 9% infrequently. Only 2.7% said that violence did not lead them to start thinking. This can be attributed to low levels of education and perhaps to lack of alternatives.
- 49% of the victims became very ill after the violence, 24% were moderately sick, 20% were mildly sick while 6.7% did not experience any physical sickness after the violence.
- 33% of the victims felt strongly to surrender (to the perpetrator, or to his demands), 21% felt so to a moderate extent and 25% to a small extent. However, 21% did not feel that they ought to surrender to the perpetrator.
- 43% felt strong despair, 23% felt moderate level of despair, 25% felt a low level of despair while 9% did not feel despair at all.
- 27% of the victims strongly felt stigmatized, 21% felt moderately so, 29% felt mildly so while the rest 23% did not feel stigmatized after experiencing the violence.
- 19% of the victim thought deeply about committing suicide after experiencing violence, 11% thought about it frequently, 16% thought about infrequently and 54% did not entertain any such thought.
- 48% of the victims felt very angry after the incidence of violence, 19% were moderately angry while 23% were mildly angry. A surprising 9% of the victims did not feel any anger after the violence.

### 3.5.3 *Neighbor's attitude towards victims of violence*

Respondent were asked to state the attitude of their neighbors towards them (the victims). Their responses were:

Response	No of Responses	% of Total
They were sympathetic	49	27.1%
They were supportive, tried to solve the problem	26	14.4%
Tried to aggravate the situation	13	7.2%
Watched as mere spectators	35	19.3%
Did not want to get involved, did not show any reaction	58	32.0%
Total	181	100.0%

27% of the female victims of violence said that their neighbors were sympathetic. 14% said the neighbors were supportive and even tried to resolve the problem. 7% of the victims said that their neighbors actually aggravated the situation through improper conduct. 19% of victims said that their neighbors watched as mere spectators while 32% of the victims reported that their neighbors did not want to get involved in the matter at all and did not show any reaction. This table shows a considerably high level of apathy (over 51%) which is not a good social sign and

deserves serious attention from program designers and social planners.

**3.5.4 Reaction of Immediate Family towards the victims after violence**

For clarity reasons we have grouped these reactions into two parts: first the reaction of in-laws where the victims usually dwell and in the second part the reaction of the victim’s own family have been recorded.

**3.5.4.1 Reaction of In Laws towards victim**

Respondents were asked about how their in-laws reacted the incidence of the violence against them. Their responses were as follows:

Relative	Tried to resolve the issue	Supported the perpetrator	Tried to aggravate the situation	Felt happy at victim’s misery
Mother in law	3	7	52	-
Father in Law	6	8	19	-
Daughter in Law	1	-	6	-
Husband	11	-	48	1
Brother in law	6	8	21	
Sister in Law	2	8	29	
Total	29	31	175	1
Grand total	236			

An alarming 74% of the total reactions by in-laws were to aggravate the situation. 12.3% tried to resolve the issue while 13% plainly sided with the perpetrator of the violence. There have been instances where in-laws actually egg on the perpetrator to inflict more injury (or injustice) on the women. All this is primarily a product of poor educational standards and lack of awareness. These aspects need to be kept in mind when the program is actually drawn for intervention in the situation, and by the country’s social planners.

**3.5.4.2 Reaction of Victim’s own family members**

Respondents were asked about how members of their own family reacted to the incidence of violence against them. Their responses were as follows.

Relative	Tried to resolve the issue	Blamed the victim	Proposed separation	Was upset	Was very angry
Mother	15	2	2	2	-
Father	17	-	1	3	-
Brother	14	1	1	3	6
Total	46	3	4	8	6
Grand Total	67				

Quite expectedly, in accordance with the norms of rural family life, 69% of the reactions from victim's own family members were geared towards resolving the issue. About 4.5% of reactions were to blame the victim for having provoked the perpetrator. About 6% of the reactions were to ask the victim to seek separation from the perpetrator while 12% reactions were that of being upset at the situation. Brothers were the only ones who were actually angry at the situation.

### **3.5.5 Awareness of rights**

Respondents were asked if they were aware of their legal rights and redress as a victim of violence. Their responses were:



Response	No of Responses	% of Total
Fully aware	0	-
Moderately aware	2	1.1%
I know a little bit	24	13.3%
Totally unaware	155	85.6%
Total	181	100.0%

It is distressing to note that over 85% of victims had no awareness of their legal rights, or of the legal redress that is available to them in the event of violence. None had full awareness and around 14% had only a little knowledge. This calls for a massive awareness campaign.

### 3.5.6 *Legal redress sought after violence?*

Respondents were asked if they sought any legal redress after suffering violence like reporting the matter to police, local councilor, or filing a case against the perpetrator, etc. Their responses were:

Response	No of Responses	% of Total
Yes	31	17.1%
No	150	82.9%
Total	181	100.0%

The response to this question is quite consistent with the response to the previous question. However, we had two further questions in this regard for the respondents.

### 3.5.7 *Why was legal redress not sought?*

Those respondents who said that they had not sought any legal redress in the matter, were asked to give reasons for it. Their responses were as follows:

Response	No of Responses	% of Total
My family prevented me as it hurts the family honor.	56	37.3%
I did not know what to do	47	31.3%
What is the point? Nothing happens any way.	20	13.3%
The process is too long and costly	14	9.3%
The issue was soon resolved	13	8.8%
Total	150	100.0%

Social or family pressures at 37.3% were the biggest cause of silence of victims. As long as this social network helps to resolve the issue, it is fine. However, if this pressure is applied solely to protect what is deemed as family honor, it is unfair and unrealistic. Such an attitude leads to perpetuation of an oppressive behavior of the perpetrators of violence. 31.3% of victims simply did not know what steps to take. 13% had no faith in the legal redress system while another 9.3% found the redress system too tiresome, long and costly. All this leads to the simple need for spreading awareness of rights and redress available to victims. This awareness campaign should be aimed at not only the victims but the entire society. It also calls for establishment of better, inexpensive and sympathetic modes of settling such issues at family and community levels.

### 3.5.8 *Did the legal redress help?*

Those victims who had sought legal redress were asked about the outcome of their efforts in that direction. Their responses were:

Response	No of Responses	% of Total
I was persuaded by the family to withdraw the case/complaint.	8	25.8%
The case is still pending (its taking too long)	7	22.6%
I was threatened with dire consequences so withdrew the case	6	19.4%
The issue was resolved outside the court / police station.	7	22.6%
The case was decided in my favor	2	6.4%
I do not want to disclose	1	3.2%
Total	31	100.0%

This table also displays strong social pressures. 26% of victims withdrew the case from court, or complaint from police or council due to family pressure and another 19% withdrew it due to threats ostensibly from the perpetrator. 22% claim that the issue was resolved outside the court/police station. One can imagine that this too had social pressures behind the declaration of resolution. In only 6% of the cases were victims successful in getting the redress. Some 3% refused to respond to this question for (what the researchers believe to be) family honor reasons.

## 3.6 **Current Ways of Violence Management Used By Victims**

3.6.1 Respondents were provided a list of common means of handling or managing the impact of violence and asked to name the three means that they chose most commonly. Their responses are tabulated as follows:

Response	No of Responses	% of Total
To remain silent	89	16.4%
To cry and try to win sympathy from perpetrator	84	15.5%
To express feelings to someone else	75	13.8%
To apologize	74	13.6%
To pacify the perpetrator	60	11.1%
To take out anger on someone else (mainly children)	60	11.1%
To shout at the perpetrator	59	10.8%
To reciprocate violently	42	7.7%
Total	543	100.0%

The most commonly used tool was remaining silent (and suffering). Crying and trying to win the sympathy of the perpetrator (a sign of weakness, or admission of weakness) was the next most commonly used means. While other means were fairly evenly distributed, reciprocating violently was the least common means of handling violence used by victims.

### 3.6.2 *Frequency of use of different means of managing violence*

Respondents were asked as to what means, tools or actions were they using to manage the violence inflicted on them. They were given a list of common ways of handling the consequences of violence and asked to name the degree with which they used or agreed with each of those means.

Means of handling violence	Strongly Agreed / Mostly used	Agree / use to moderate level	Agree or use some what	Do not agree / Never used	Total
To remain silent	69	41	44	27	181
To apologize	29	44	48	60	181
To shout at the perpetrator	17	24	42	98	181
To pacify the perpetrator	22	20	45	94	181
To reciprocate violently	6	8	14	153	181
To cry and try to win sympathy from perpetrator	52	36	51	42	181
To express feelings to some one else	24	52	57	48	181
To take out anger on someone else (mainly children)	21	20	44	96	181
Total	240	245	345	618	1448
Percentage of total	16.6%	16.9%	23.8%	42.7%	100.0%

The most prominent observation emerging out of the above table is the prevalence of “do nothing” as a means of managing violence. Almost 43% of the responses center on this option against all proposed means of handling violence. If we take, each factor separately:

- 38% mostly chose silence as a means of coping with violence, 22.6% stay silent frequently and 24% stay silent infrequently. There appears to be no realization that silence simply emboldens the perpetrators.
- 16% women use ‘offering an apology’ in most of the situations to handle violence, 24% use this technique frequently, 26.5% use it infrequently and 33% do not use it at all.
- 9% of women said that they most commonly shout back at the perpetrator, 13% frequently shouted back, 23% infrequently shouted back as a means of handling violence. A whopping 54% did not use this means at all.
- 12% of respondents tried to pacify the perpetrator in most situations, 11% tried it do so frequently, and about 25% do so infrequently. 52% of WSV do not use even this means of handling violence.
- A tiny 3% of women reciprocate violently in most situations, 4.4% do so frequently while 7.8% do so infrequently. 85% of victim do not use this means, perhaps for the reasons of safety or physical weakness.
- Almost 29% of women cried and tried to win sympathy of the perpetrator through emotional blackmail in most situations, 20% did so frequently, 28% did so infrequently and 23% did not use this means of handling violence at all.

- 13% of victims opened their hearts to someone (a friend, a neighbor, a close relative) in most of the cases, 28% did so frequently while 31% did so infrequently. 26.5% of victims did not do even this and thereby internalized the pain and suffering.
- 11.6% of victims took out their anger for the perpetrator on someone else (mostly children) in most of the cases, 11% did so frequently, 24% did so infrequently while 53% did not do so at all.

### 3.7 Suggestions for a Happy Family

Respondents were asked for suggestions for improving the level of personal happiness and family happiness.

#### 3.7.1 *Suggestions for a happy family*

The following suggestions were received from victims on ways and means of improving level of happiness in the family, or household:

Suggestion	No of responses	% of Total
Promote awareness of women's rights	45	24.8%
Promote peace and harmony	34	18.8%
Promote positive behavior	8	4.4%
Ensure access to resources for the victims	10	5.5%
Development of women's and other social organizations	9	5.0%
Enhance employment opportunities for women	36	19.8%
No opinion on the matter	39	21.5%
Total	181	100.0%

The table really speaks for itself. Almost a quarter of the victims feel that awareness of women's rights should be promoted. Almost 19% of them suggest promotion of peace and harmony in family which again depends on promoting awareness of women's and family's rights. Almost 20% of the victims suggested that employment opportunities for women, particularly less educated women, should be enhanced to enable them to stand on their own feet and escape violence perpetrated on economic grounds. Sadly, 21.5% of victims had no suggestion to offer which can perhaps be ascribed to their low level of education.

#### 3.7.2 *Suggestions for personal happiness*

The following suggestions were received from victims on ways and means of improving the level of their personal happiness:

Suggestion	No of responses	% of Total
Promote awareness of women's rights	51	28.2%
Promote peace and harmony	34	18.8%
Promote positive behavior	9	5.0%
Ensure access to resources for the victims	7	3.8%
Development of women's and other social organizations	5	2.8%
Enhance employment opportunities for women	42	23.2%
No opinion on the matter	33	18.2%
Total	181	100.0%

The above table is not much different from the previous one and virtually replicates the views offered for augmenting the family happiness. One obvious inference is happiness of a person is closely linked with happiness in the family. This is particularly true of rural areas where family sense is still very strong.

## **4. Analysis**

### **4.1 Basis for Analysis**

This survey was conducted to find out views of women survivors of violence and to determine the types of violence they have been, or are being, subjected to. While the field research teams had been properly trained and were experienced in their respective tasks, due to poor level of education of the respondents, some of the findings as enumerated in the previous chapter may appear less detailed than would have been preferred by the analysts.

However, the data and findings do provide valuable information about the WSV themselves, their social environment, their experiences and reactions and the attitude of their in-laws and other family members with which they have to contend with in their daily lives.

The real value of data provided by this survey lies in understanding these undercurrents and designing awareness programs for the women who suffer violence and the people living around WSVs in order to ensure a proper living environment for them and to ensure that they get their rights through social inclusion.

### **4.2 The Basic Situation**

The prevalence of violence against women is quite apparent. The sad observation that emerges from analyzing the data is that family members and neighbors tend to accept it as a way of life. They do not find it necessary to make any organized effort towards its eradication. Some of our researchers were told that “even white women are beaten by their husbands in Europe”, implying that a degree of violence is therefore acceptable. This state of mind needs to be addressed through proper design of program to spread awareness about the social and other ill-effects of violence against women not only among the victims but their family members and people living in their environs.

### **4.3 Survivors' Profile**

The following observations stand out:

- 4.3.1** The greatest prevalence of violence is against women aged between 14 and 40 years, accounting for almost 80% of the total cases. It would appear that treatment of women improves as they cross the age of 40.
- 4.3.2** A very high percentage (61.3%) of WSV were totally illiterate and those never went to a secondary school (i.e. primary school and less) constituted 87.8% of the respondents. This state of low education appears to be a contributory factor to violence against women.
- 4.3.3** 51% of women who suffered violence were married. Only 3% were unmarried, the rest of the sample comprised of widowed, divorced or separated women. It can be inferred that these women must have suffered violence while they were married. In this sense, 97% of the victims were married women. This relates to the data on perpetrators of violence which shows that almost all of them were in-laws of the victims.
- 4.3.4** Most women who suffered violence had more than one child. The children also suffered as a consequence of violence meted out to their mothers. 62% of the children (of WSV) did not go to school.
- 4.3.5** Only 23% of victims had any source of income of their own. Even these women were not fully independent economically. Economic dependence may be factor that leads women to put up with violence and not seek legal or other similar redress.

**4.3.6** Almost 39% of victims did not attend any social activity at all. This is a sorry state of affairs as it further complicates their mental state. The prime reason for non-attendance of social activities was a perception that people do not think well of women who leave their houses to socialize. This needs to be rectified by spreading awareness and encouraging social inclusion of such women.

**4.3.7** Almost 80% of the victims said that the factors that contribute to a happy family relate to attitude, e.g. peace, unity, absence of quarrels, pleasantness and good behavior. Economic factors were named by 11.5% of the respondents as a source of family happiness while other factors named (like education, health, etc.) accounted for less than 7% of responses. On the other hand, conflicts and disagreements were cited as the prime cause of unhappiness in the family. Similarly, issues related to attitude were again found mainly responsible for creating anger and/or fear among the victims. All these observations point to a need for mounting awareness campaigns for the entire family and communities.

#### **4.4 Violence and Its Perpetrators**

**4.4.1** Physical beating constituted the bulk of type of violence meted out to victims. Only 38% of victims never experienced physical violence. Placing social restrictions, depriving them of economic support and mental torture were other forms of violence that the victims were subjected to.

**4.4.2** More than 86% of perpetrators of violence on women were their in-laws, with husbands forming the largest slice at 39%.

**4.4.3** Among the causes of violence named by the victims were lack of trust (25%), poverty (23%) and dislike between spouses (20%) borne out of arranged marriages. Most of these factors can be reduced significantly through sustained awareness campaigns.

**4.4.4** 48% of women felt humiliated and lost personal confidence, while 42% were mentally frustrated and around 10% actually suffered poor health consequences. The children of victims were also affected by the violence meted out to their mothers as 33% of them felt humiliated, 23% were upset and 13% felt sad. In 14% of cases, the personality of children was damaged. Any awareness campaign must point out these consequences to families and communities as children living in houses where women are subjected to violence grow up with damaged personalities and distorted ideas of family life.

#### **4.5 Post Violence Reactions**

**4.5.1** Reactions of victims of violence were fairly varied, but all of them were damaging to their self-confidence and family happiness.

**4.5.2** 27% of neighbors were found to be sympathetic by victims, 14% were supportive and actually helped in resolving the issue, while 51% preferred to stay aloof, watching from a distance. In effect, this translates to approval of perpetrators' actions. This calls for a series awareness campaign so that the family and community recognize their responsive responsibilities in the matter. Passive reactions need to be converted into an active show of concern.

**4.5.3** The in-laws were generally more aggressive and unsympathetic to victims where their own family members were generally supportive. However, there were pockets of family members who were either unconcerned or blamed the victim.

**4.5.4** 85% of victims were not aware of their rights and redresses available to them. Less than 17%

sought legal redress after the violence; others were mainly constrained by a lack of knowledge or persuaded by the family to refrain from seeking the legal route of redress. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of those who did go for a legal redress had any luck in the matter. Social pressures led to withdrawal of the case, or the case took too long and the process of was expensive or tedious.

#### **4.6 Current Ways of Violence Management**

Silence, apologizing, and trying to pacify the perpetrator were prominent among the means of handling violence. Other forms of passive measures was crying and trying to win sympathy of the perpetrator. In certain cases, shouting at the perpetrator, reciprocating violently also took place. But most distressingly, some victims took out their anger on someone else, mostly their own off-springs. This leads to a chain of undesirable social reactions.

#### **4.7 Suggestions From WSY on Personal And Family Happiness**

Promotion of awareness of women's right was cited as the single most important factor for improving the happiness of both the persons (victims) and the family. Enhancing opportunities for employment of women was the next most potent suggestion, indicating the economic empowerment is a real issue in controlling violence against women.



## **5. Recommendations**

### **5.1 Design of Awareness Programs at Individual Level**

There is a great and urgent need to mount awareness programs for WSV and the people living around WSVs to impress upon them the importance of:

- How to create an environment in families that will promote unity and understanding among spouses and prevent violence to women.
- Being sensitive to the feelings of women who have suffered violence.
- Encouraging WSVs to become members of social organizations/CCBs.
- Impressing upon all the ill-consequences of violence, its effect on children and their mental growth.
- Seeking involvement of WSVs in matters relating to analysis and solution of communal problems.
- Granting basic rights to WSVs and assisting them in getting such rights legal redress.

These programs should be run on a regular basis, perhaps a semi-permanent set up should be created that could carry out the following activities for both WSV and the people living in their environs:

- a. Encourage WSV to join social organizations and restart their communal/social life.
- b. People at large be made aware of gender-balanced approach in family relations.
- c. Train young volunteers who could facilitate socio-economic participation of WSV and spread concept of a happy family.

### **5.2 Design of Awareness and Capacity Building Programs at Institutional Level**

The institutions existing in rural areas do not appear to have adequate capacity or capability to deal effectively with issues relating to violence against women, and to help WSV to cope with the after-math. There is therefore a need to design and run awareness and capacity building programs for staff members of such institutions like municipal bodies, governmental agencies, the judicial set up, etc. This is a major task and requires assistance at considerable scale, but its results will have long term benefits not only for WSV but for the society as a whole.

These programs should be run on a regular basis, perhaps a semi-permanent set up should be created that could carry out the following activities for both WSV and the people living in their environs:

- a. Enable CBOs and other such bodies to launch their own programs for promoting gender-balanced approach in family relations.
- b. Assist CBOs and other such bodies to maintain regular correspondence and contact with all relevant authorities on issues relating to violence against women in order to be able to draw on their support when needed.
- c. Form volunteer groups or committees comprising of lawyers, police officers, medical experts, media representatives who could provide knowledge and assistance in matters that are beyond the capacity of smaller local CBOs etc.

### **5.3 Formation of Advisory or Supportive Units**

Governmental planners or social organizations need to set up formal units that could offer advice, support and other assistance to women survivors of violence, or those women who fear that they may soon face violence. In essence they should provide an avenue for airing grievances to victims so that they are heard and consoled.

These supportive units could also offer psychological/psychiatric help to husbands who are likely to inflict violence on their wives, or those who have done it in past and wish to mend their ways.

These units could also be used to:

- a. Promote participation in social events by WSV in particular and women in general.
- b. Disseminate information and knowledge about improving the quality of home life, methods of dealing with normal and more-serious-than normal disagreements, how to get legal help where necessary, the rights of different parties involved in a dispute, etc.
- c. Liaise with media to ensure proper coverage of violence against women in order the positively influence the perception of society at large.
- d. Liaise with the legal system to ensure that reported violence cases receive due justice through the legal and social systems.

### **5.4 At Work, Family and Immediate Environment Level**

While the project aims at working with the women survivors, some activities need to be geared towards the family especially men and in laws.

- Under the umbrella and concept of a ‘happy family’ work must be done with men on issues of gender and violence against women. Their own ideas about masculinities, use of power must be clarified. The impact of violence on the children as well as on the mental and physical well being of the women and overall family happiness must be discussed.
- Changing men’s attitude will not happen with one off awareness raising sessions, thus the program can look at long term interventions either as part of this project or based on experiences of sessions with men, in the next project cycle.
- Campaigns can be organized around the themes of respect, assertive handling of conflicts, equal rights for all under the umbrella of work on ‘happy families’
- It would be useful to present to the community positive male and female role models and advocates. Men who do not resort to violence in their relationships can share their experiences and views with other men. Similarly women who have faced adversities, are economically independent, educated etc. can share their experiences and life stories with other women as well as families.

### **5.5 Provincial and National Level Intervention**

Government should plan for:

- a. Providing more employment opportunities to women, particularly in rural areas.
- b. Promote education among females particularly in rural areas.
- c. Provide more healthy recreational activities for women.
- d. Simplify the system of legal redress for victims of violence.

## 5.6 For the Project Staff

- Experiences from work on issues of violence against women, sexual and reproductive health etc. has shown that care provider/ community worker's misconceptions about the issues, own personal biases and views, and lack of respect, confidentiality of the survivors etc. leads to ineffective and gender blind programming. Thus, it would be essential, that the team involved in project activities is trained and sensitized towards all the above mentioned issues. Regular refreshers, debriefs and supervision by experienced supervisors would be extremely essential to ensure acceptance and effectiveness of the interventions.
- All the women interviewed are survivors of violence. After being part of interventions planned by CHIP, it is expected that there will be increased awareness about dynamics of domestic violence, ability to understand their feelings and impact of violence and increased access to income generation activities etc. As a result many of the women may choose to end violent relationships, or take other drastic actions. In such instances, it is essential that the project team is neutral, non-judgmental and provides access to services that the women wish to seek. CHIP must also be prepared to handle backlash from the community in such instances and create enough community based structures and support so that such decisions are accepted by the community.
- Linkages with psychological, medical and legal services must be developed prior to starting the intervention as many of the women have reported health concerns as well as symptoms of depression, which may require immediate attention.
- Direct work with survivors of violence may make the survivors and families of the survivors apprehensive and uncomfortable, it may be useful to involve some women from the neighborhood who are interested and willing as part of the intervention.