

FINAL

**Evaluation Research Study of the
Counseling Units at Special Police
Units for Women and Children
(Special Cells), New Delhi**

(2016)

Commissioned by National Commission for Women

By

ERU Consultants Pvt Ltd

New Delhi

Acknowledgements

This Evaluation Study of the Special Cells in Delhi would not have been possible without the opportunity provided by National Commission for Women and the Delhi Police. The ERU team gratefully acknowledges the support received from the Joint Commissioner Delhi Police CAW Cell, and the other officials the DCP, ACP, and Inspectors and Enquiry Officials in the SPUWAC Units at Nanakpura and the ACP and other officials and staff at Pitampura Special Cells. Without their continued support this study would not have been possible.

The Social Workers in the Counselling Units of both Special Cells were extremely helpful in contacting the survivors, inviting them for the interviews and following up on appointments. We were able to use their office space to conduct the interviews. Without their collaboration we would not have been able to contact the women to document their inputs for the study. We are also thankful to the Mediators in the Special Cells who helped provide insights into the legal aspects of the cases and the women's struggles to attain their rights through the judicial system.

It is the women survivors who so graciously shared their personal struggles, revisiting painful memories that has brought alive this report. It is their voice and spirit that has brought substance to our evaluation. They very candidly shared with the researchers their experiences, concerns and expectations to shape the future of the Special Cells. We are indeed highly indebted to the survivors for contributing to the study by way of their time, emotions, ideas and concerns to better their life opportunities in the face of growing domestic violence they encountered.

To the RCI-VAW team at Tata Institute of Social Sciences we say a big thank you for guiding us about the Special Cells initiative, introducing its perspective and sharing all background materials and studies to enable ERU to build its understanding before undertaking the study. The TISS team provided feedback on the tools during the course of developing them before pre testing.

Above all we are thankful to the National Commission for Women in commissioning the study and extending full support to undertake it even within an extended timeframe. We hope the findings and recommendations of the study will guide the expansion of the pilot to a full scale project in the future. We do anticipate that the tripartite partnership of NCW, Delhi Police and TISS will continue to grow steadfastly in reaching out to more and more women who are encountering violence in their lives.

The research team who collaborated to put together this study through field work, sharing their insights, writing up notes and the report is worthy of a big thank you too. It was a wonderful team with appropriate perspective for this task. THANK YOU!

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May 2016

Abbreviations

ACP	Assistant Commissioner of Police
CAW	Crimes Against Women
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CWC	Crimes against Women Cell
DCP	District Commissioner of Police
DCW	Delhi Commission for Women
DWCD	Department for Women and child Development
FAPs	Field Action Projects
GRC	Gender Resource Centre
EMRI	Emergency management and Research Institute
HQ	Head Quarter
IDIs	In depth Interviews
IPC	Indian Penal code
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSSK	Mahila Suraksha evam Sahayata Kendra
NCW	National Commission for Women
NGOs	Non Government Organisations
PBSC	Police Based Support Centre
PCMA	Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2006
PPO	Protection cum Prohibition Officer
PWDVA	Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005
RCI- VAW	Resource Centre on Interventions - Violence Against Women
SPUWAC	Special Police Units for Women and Children
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Empowerment of Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Evaluation Research Study of the Counseling Units at Special Police Units for Women and Children (Special Cells), New Delhi

Section A

A.1 Background

What is and ought to be the role of the state and its institutions (the judiciary, the police, the government) in addressing issues of violence against women? This has been a major rallying point of the women's movement over the past three decades in India. The outcomes of this direct engagement with issues of Violence Against Women (VAW) led to a dynamic understanding, defining and unravelling the multi faceted nature and forms of violence against women and in analysing the role and nature of the State, its institutions and civil society players in addressing VAW.

The story of the Special Cells is located in this rich and dynamic history. While analysis and critique was the bedrock of the engagement of women's movement with the State, the partnership led to some remarkable outcomes-formulations of women centred laws, policies, and programmes, creation of a separate Ministry for Women and Child (MWCD) Development, and above all bringing women's issues and gender and equity concerns centre stage.

The issue of custodial rape was one of the first public protests against VAW. This initiated the engagement of the women's movement with the Criminal Justice System (CJS) to bring to the fore complexities of cases related to VAW, in particular domestic and family violence. As the convolutions and multiple dimensions of violence began to be unravelled changes in the CJS, and new sections of law have been introduced in the Indian Penal Code (IPC) (specifically 498A & 304B, to address dowry-related deaths).

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) 2005 has been a major milestone in this regard as in law there is now recognition of the critical role of support and counselling for women survivors of DV. Consequently a provision has been made for the role of volunteers, voluntary organisations and community-based organisations (CBOs). Within this overall context, the police system too responded and initiated some sporadic, reactive and experimental efforts such as the setting up of vigilance committees, all-women police stations, Crime against Women Cells (CAW Cells) and counselling centres within police stations.¹

The Special Cell for Women and Children (hereafter, Special Cell) is one such effort aimed at redressing cases of VAW. It is a service provided to women survivors by trained social workers, located in the police system with a clear understanding that VAW is a criminal offence and that it is the responsibility of the State to prevent it and provide redressal to the cases. The strategic location within the police station aims to lead to a more co-ordinated, coherent and in-depth response to the issue by integrating social services within the police system. The first Special Cell for Women and Children was established in 1984 as a strategic

¹ Mission Statement and Monitoring Indicators for Special Cells for Women and children 2004, TISS included in Background note for NCW 2014

collaboration between Mumbai Police and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences to provide professional support services to women and children facing domestic violence.

Designed as a multipronged response to the complex issue of domestic and marital violence, the Special Cell is located within the framework of and informed by the fundamental principles of social work practice. Some non-negotiable principles that underpin the Special Cells is the recognition of women as “individuals, with equal rights and opportunities in society, including the right to live a violence free life.” The aim is to “provide emotional support and strengthening the psychological self of the violated woman, negotiating for non-violence with various stakeholders, building support systems for violated women, engaging police help in the interest of violated women, arranging shelter for violated women, working with men in the interest of violated women, the re-establishment of women's relationships with their economic assets, advocacy for group entitlement in the interest of violated women, development counselling with violated women, and Legal Aid to facilitate the violated woman’s journey through the criminal justice system².

Box 1: Guiding Principles of Special Cells³

Guiding Principles of Special Cells

Empowering the woman, providing information and support to the client and her/his partner, respecting her decisions, confidentiality and involvement of the male partner in the process is the bedrock of the Special Cells approach.. The Special Cell addresses the issue of violence at both individual and systemic levels. The guiding principles of the Special Cell are in line with the guiding principles of the social work practice

- “Self Determination , where a woman is encouraged and supported to make decisions about her own life
- Individualization, where a woman is respected in her own right as a person and not on the basis of her relationships.
- Adopting a non judgmental attitude
- Participation of the woman in the problem solving process
- Maintaining Confidentiality and privacy”

Setting up Special Cells in Maharashtra

The first Special Cell was set up in 1984, a first of its kind intervention in the country. A unique feature was the location of the Special Cell within the office of the Commissioner of Police of Mumbai city. This location was to prove a key determinant of the development of the Special Cell as it established the commitment of the Police to addressing the thorny issue of VAW.

Over the years this space expanded to more police stations of the city. With support from UNIFEM, the Special Cell was initiated for a short-term when UNIFEM, TISS, and the Government of Maharashtra (Departments of Women and Child Development, and Home) signed a memorandum in 2001 that made Special Cell a joint programme of all three partners and with an agenda to expand the work of the Cells across the state. Thereafter, the Cells were established in Thane district and then other districts of the State as well. Finally, in 2005, the DWCD (Government of Maharashtra) took up the funding of the all Special Cells, to be run with the official collaboration of the State Department of Home.

² Mission Statement and Monitoring Indicators for Special Cells for Women and children 2004, TISS

³ Project Report, Special Cell for Women and Children, TISS, January 2010

In this process the role of TISS has transformed into that of a coordinating, monitoring, part-implementation and technical support agency. At present, the Special cells initiative is a scheme of the State Government under which expansion to the district and even taluka-level (block level) is underway. Under the scheme, TISS and local NGOs are implementing the Cells in districts. Currently, 144 Special Cells are sanctioned for various locations across Maharashtra and are at various stages of development. (In 2014-15, 60 Special Cells were operational, and 30 are in the process of initialisation.)⁴

Moving from a single point intervention to a Resource Centre for Interventions Against Violence on Women (RCI-VAW), TISS

After a successful partnership with the Government of Maharashtra to implement Special Cells across the state since 1984, TISS set up the Resource Centre for Interventions on Violence Against Women (RCI-VAW) in 2007 to scale up its work on VAW across the country. Further the interest and support received from other organisations working for women's rights, as well as multilateral/ international funding agencies, gave a fillip to the RCI-VAW to scale up TISS's work on VAW issues. This Resource Centre extends support for capacity building and advocacy needs of Special Cells in Maharashtra and other states. It also extends support in the capacity building of other stakeholders to work on VAW with the State system, and to initiate and advocate for institutionalisation and strengthening of Special Cells across the States. Special Cells Maharashtra and RCI-VAW therefore remain organically linked FAPs (Field Action Projects) of TISS as well.⁵

Overview of institutionalised Special Cell Programmes in 4 States

Box 2: Special Cell Model

The Special Cells⁶ are units with trained social workers within police stations, providing psycho-socio-legal services and serving as a nodal point for women facing violence. Their key features of the Special Cell model include:

- **Working within the police system:** The location of Special Cells helps them gain legitimacy, increase accessibility for women, and better coordinate the police's response to violence; the police being the first point of access for the survivor in the criminal justice system.
- **Providing a holistic response to VAW:** The cell workers address a victim's immediate needs in a crisis, and work with the woman to empower her to take action and protect herself from violence in the future; they also provide the necessary referrals for other services.
- **Applying a pro-woman approach:** Special Cells provide a much needed alternative to the pervasive patriarchal attitude and apathy that a woman faces whether she approaches her family, community, police or other groups for support.

Each Special Cell typically provides at least 150 women with extensive one-time intervention and guidance, and registers about 250 new cases per year, where it works with women over a longer period to address their needs

The Special Cell model gained momentum throughout the 2000s, with the Maharashtra government taking over and expanding cells from 10 to 144, and pilots implemented in five

⁴ TISS presentation for NCW 2015

⁵ Tata Institute of Social Sciences : RCI -VAW Draft Report on Data from Monitoring Reports 2015 of the Delhi Special Cell for Women (2008-2014).TISS

⁶ RCI-VAW TISS note for NCW, 2015

states from 2006-2009. RCI-VAW played an instrumental role in this expansion, conducting research, advocacy and trainings to strengthen the model and mobilize state governments to take on funding and administration of Special Cells.

The Maharashtra Special Cells approach derived through innovations, skills and advocacy, developed over 30 years of partnership with the Police. TISS constantly drew upon Police support in advocacy with State and the Judiciary for strengthening, providing sustainability, expanding and streamlining of the. This model led to the expansion of the concept of Special Cells in varied forms across other states too where TISS has helped demonstrate the Special Cells viz. Madhya Pradesh (2006-07), Delhi (2009 & continued as NCW-funded Cells till date), Odisha (2010), Andhra Pradesh (2010), Rajasthan (2002), Haryana (2006-07) and Gujarat (2010). Institutionalisation of these Cells with the support of the State Governments (as a regular administrative measure of the DWCD) has been possible in some States like Rajasthan (since 2011), Haryana (since 2008) and Gujarat (since 2013).⁷

While the fundamental principles underpinning the Special Cells remain the same across various states, there are some variations in the implementation models. Broadly there are four models. See Box 3 below for details. The Delhi Special Cells Pilot which started in 2009 drew upon the experience of these models to design its own pilot with the support of NCW and TISS.

Box 3: Some Special Cell Models ⁸

<p>Maharashtra Field Action Project of TISS' School of Social Work, in partnership with Mumbai Police –Located first in the office of the Commissioner of police in 1984, then expanded to Dadar Police Station in 1988, Kandivali Police Station in 1994. Funded with resource support from Ford Foundation, private individuals and other partner agencies. Though located within the police stations the counselling unit has a distinct and separate identity. Cases come first to the counselling Cell. In 2005, the DWCD, Government of Maharashtra took up the funding and joint administration (with Police & Home Departments) of the Special Cells as a State programme in 3 locations in Mumbai, and 7 at district Police headquarters; By 2013-14 144 Cell units across the State (3 taluka-level & 1 district H.Q. Level Cell units in each of 36 districts) were started An analysis of the data from 14 Special Cells in Maharashtra implemented by TISS over ten years from 2003 to 2012 shows that a total of 17,962 women approached the Cells for help.</p>	<p>Haryana RCI-VAW project started on invitation of UNDP under SAJI Phase-I in 2006 and institutionalised as a DWCD programme in November 2008. 1 Special Cell in each of 21 districts of the state, is located in office premises of Superintendent of Police. The DWCD itself decided to adopt the Special Cells approach as a State Government programme to fulfil its mandate to implement the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) 2005 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) 2006. Hence, one person is appointed in each Cell as a Protection-cum-Prohibition Officer (PPO) and is empowered legally to intervene using Police & Judicial help in cases of violence against women and girls within the system, as well as at community-level. The Special Cells in Haryana handled a total of 34,497 cases from November 2008 to October 2014 Of these 33,095 (96%) pertained to Violence against women and the rest were cases pertaining to child marriage under the PCMA 2006.</p>
<p>Gujarat Oxfam India & local partner organisations including women's groups and NGOs in 4 States – one of them Gujarat (Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh & Odisha) initiated pilot special cells. TISS partnered in the demonstration of pilot Special Cells from 2009.</p>	<p>Rajasthan Women's groups including NGOs, connected with TISS were keen learn about and initiate Special Cells in Rajasthan as a collective effort; advocacy efforts with Police Department started in 2001. The Model was established in 2002 - through first</p>

⁷ Background note for NCW, 2014, TISS

⁸ Existing Projects in Various States, Source RCI-VAW, TISS, 2014

<p>In 2013, the DWCD approved and invested in the establishment of 1 Police-based Support Centre (PBSC) for Women per district (26 in all), as a regular administrative measure of the State.</p> <p>This model of the Special Cell approach links up with other State Government programmes and Departments – i.e. 181 ERS Helpline (run by DWCD & GRC in collaboration with GVK-EMRI) and Nari Sanrakshan Gruh (Shelter Homes, run by DWCD with Social Welfare Department) apart from the Police Department. The processes and protocols for the ERS Helpline for Women in Distress were based on the Special Cells' experience woven into the technology-driven telephonic-and-outreach model of GVK-EMRI. The PBSC and 181 Helpline converge to provide telephonic, emergency outreach (in Police vehicle/with Police constabulary and trained social worker) and sustained/medium-to-long term (vide the PBSC trained social workers) psycho-social-legal services to violated women in particular.</p>	<p>Mahila Suraksha-evam-Salah Kendra (MSSK) in Jaipur with 2 trained personnel located in Police Station/office providing psycho-social legal, need and choice based services to women and child survivors of violence.</p> <p>The DWCD, GoR, took ownership of the MSSK programme as a State Scheme in 2011. Now there are 40 MSSKs in 33 districts, of which 9 have been temporarily suspended due to administrative issues. DWCD is bringing in new NGOs for the smooth operation of all MSSKs.</p> <p>During Feb 2011-May 2015 over 2000 cases were handled in the districts of Jodhpur, Kota and Jaipur districts of Rajasthan.</p> <p>The MSSKs are an example of the combined efforts of women's groups and civil society on ground in collaboration with the State Government departments and TISS, to establish and sustain the provision of quality psycho-social-legal services for violated women from within Police locations.</p>
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Inception of Special Cells in Delhi

Given the worrisome state of women's security and rise in crimes against women particularly in the domestic arena, Delhi police which already had `Crimes Against Women Cell (set up in 1983), decided to rope in technical expertise to address domestic violence through a multi agency response system. In early 2008, the New Delhi Police sent a team of police officials led by a DCP to visit the TISS Special Cells for Women and Children at police stations in Nanded, and Mumbai in Maharashtra, and to one cell in Haryana. After visiting the Special Cells, the National Commission for Women (NCW) and the Delhi Police approached TISS to provide technical assistance in establishing a psycho-socio-legal units within their Crime against Women Cell (CWC) modelled on the Special Cells in Maharashtra.

The design of the Special Cells in Delhi was envisaged to locate trained Social Workers within the Crimes against Women's Cell. A MoU was signed to this effect between the three partners – NCW, Delhi Police and TISS. Work at the Special Cell was initiated with a month-long training of police personnel in 2008. Since then the Crimes against Women Cell has been restructured. The CWC itself was renamed as Special Police Unit for Women and Children - SPUWAC. Over a time period, the SPUWAC added other services such as Mediation services and then the Special Cell got re-designated as the Counselling Unit. As per the MoU between NCW, Delhi Police and TISS, six trained social workers were initially appointed to the SPUWAC Headquarters in Nanakpura, New Delhi to provide psycho-socio-legal services to women facing violence. In 2010-11, the services of the social workers were also extended to two other SPUWAC units (Pitampura and Malviya Nagar) for similar crisis intervention.

Box 4: Strategic aims of the Delhi Special Cells⁹

- Giving visibility to violence against women and legitimizing the violated woman's concerns and needs within a pro-woman perspective.
 - Working with the individual and the larger system simultaneously within the context of trained social worker practice.
 - Developing a strategic alliance with the police system for a more coordinated, coherent, and in-depth response to violence; and integrating social services for violated women within the system.
 - Engaging with the woman in problem solving through process oriented work to empower her.
 - Providing social services within the criminal justice system focusing on socio-legal aspects of the issue of violence against women.
- Achieving the above within the framework of the ethics and values of the profession of social work, and through services provided by trained full time social workers”

The basic objectives of Special Cells are as follows

- ✓ Provision of Counselling
- ✓ Referrals to medical, psychiatric, educational and vocational services
 - Police assistance
 - Placement in institutions
 - Legal aid
- ✓ The Cell to serve as a liaison between police and other organizations for women and children
- ✓ Create critical awareness among women, professional groups and general public, on the atrocities committed against women and children
- ✓ Document the work of the Special Cell for critical review and reflection
- ✓ Develop material for training, programme and policy on Violence against Women, specifically for social workers and police persons.

There are multiple aspects and expectations of the role of the social worker in the Counselling Unit in the design of the Special Cells in Delhi:

- Negotiating for non-violence with various stakeholders
- Building support systems
- Engaging police help
- Facilitating Legal aid
- Providing emotional support and strengthening the psychological self
- Development counselling
- Advocacy for group entitlement
- Re-establishing women's relationships with their economic assets
- Arranging shelter
- Working with men in the interest of violated women

Box 5 : A Brief overview of the work of the Counselling Unit at Nanakpura and Pitampura from the Monitoring Report of TISS¹⁰

At the time of the Evaluation Study in March 2016, the Counselling Units located at Nanakpura and Pitampura were functional. A brief analysis of the monitoring reports compiled by the Social Workers at these [two](#) units done by TISS in 2015, gives an overview of the work they have

⁹ Tata Institute of Social Sciences, 2006; p:2; Project Report: “Special cell for women and children” , January 2010

¹⁰ TISS Monitoring Report 2015

accomplished. (See annexure 1 attached).

- Between December 2009 to November 2014, the two counselling cells handled 3245 cases.
- In addition, more than 5000 persons, mostly women, visited the cells for information, referral or specific guidance (labelled as one-time interaction).
- 97% of the women approaching the counselling units are between the ages of 18 to 44 years with 51% falling between 25 and 34 years of age.
- Only 12% of the women are functionally literate or non-literate, 28% are educated up to High Secondary level, 26% are graduates and 13% are post graduates. (of 3245 cases)
- 27% of women accessing services, reportedly belong to the low socio-economic class, 31% from lower middle class, 9% from the upper middle class and 2% of women are from the upper class.
- 40% of women approach the counselling unit after facing violence for 2 to 5 years. Less than one third of the women (33%) approach the unit after facing violence for a year. 22% of women have faced violence for more than 5 years.
- Very few women have come to the unit for help as soon as the violence started (3.75%).

Most women who come to the Special Cells also reported accessing other solutions to stop the violence before coming for counselling. In two-thirds of the cases, (66%), parents had tried to intervene to stop the violence but to no avail. The data indicates a wide range of abuse, humiliation and impoverishment faced by women (Refer Figure 1 in Annexure 1).

Analysed as per the framework of the monitoring indicators, the most frequently provided interventions of the Counselling Unit were negotiations to stop violence against the woman (81% of women), providing emotional support to the woman (78%) and providing developmental counselling (56%). 27% women received legal aid and 14% were aided to access financial support. 13% needed help to rebuild their support system and for 7% the social worker engaged police help. Fewer women sought negotiations for separation (14%) or Divorce (4%). (Refer Figure 2 in Annexure 1).

A.2 A.2 Purpose, Objectives and Methodologies

It is in this background and ~~the~~ interest of the Delhi Government to expand the Special Cells initiative across the city, that the National Commission for Women (NCW), New Delhi commissioned this evaluation research study of the Special Cells in Delhi. The evaluation was taken up in order to assess the effectiveness of the strategy to inform advocacy efforts with Government and others for introduction of similar interventions in other contexts/locations as well.

The mandate of the evaluation study was to provide:

- a) Information on the impact of the programme in the lives of the women who use the services of the Special Cells and to describe how their life situations may have changed;
- b) Determine the utility of these services to Police and other stakeholders in strengthening their response to women and children survivors;
- c) Identify key aspects/features of programme coordination and organisation systems that enable sustenance of quality service provision to survivors of violence, and
- d) Provide substantive data about the scheme's impact from users and stakeholders and provide programme managers information related to improve service delivery.

The findings of the evaluation are to be used for programme process and quality strengthening (including training) and also for structural advocacy in best interests of the

programme on larger VAW issues, with the respective State and Central Governments, by NCW.

The specific objectives of evaluation of the Special Cells in Delhi were:

- To document the pathways by which women experiencing violence reach the Counselling Unit at the SPUWAC.
- To examine the manner and extent to which the Counselling Unit at the SPUWAC is able to match the needs and expectations of women survivors of violence.
- To ascertain the outcomes of women survivors who access the Counselling Unit two years after they have registered at the SPUWAC.
- To determine the extent to which the social workers at the Counselling Unit meet the stated objectives of the Counselling Unit.

Research Methodology and approach

Box 6 : Steps followed to undertake the study

- Submission of proposal to NCW
- Sanction by NCW
- Preliminary introductory meeting with Delhi Police and TISS team – discussions on methodology, sampling, tools, data collection process, timeline, ethical considerations etc
- Development and review of research tools
- Pretesting of tools in two locations
- Permission from the Police to conduct the study
- Orientation of team
- Data collection
- Data cleaning and tabulation
- Analysis and writing draft report
- Finalisation of report

Preliminaries

After the approval of the project a preliminary meeting between the CAW Cell of Nanakpura ERU and TISS took place. The meetings over the two days involved:

- Introduction to the officials of the CAW cell and meeting with the Jt. Commissioner Mr Robin Hibu to seek formal permission to commence the evaluation.
- Meeting with the Social Workers of Nanakpura (4) and Pitampura (1) SPUWAC Units to understand their roles and responsibilities and introduce them to the purpose and objectives of the study. The ERU team also developed an understanding of their work methodology to reckon the operating systems and procedures, scan the registers to visualise how the records are maintained.
- A discussion was held with the Social Workers upon the process and procedures they adopted to handle the cases. Discussion was held at length to ascertain the types and categories of survivors' cases that were handled by the Cells in order to develop the sampling plan. A decision was taken to indentify cases old and new from the period May 2013- June 2015 (old) and July 2015- Dec 2015 (new).

- Following this, the sample size was discussed and it was decided that a total of 192 cases from both SPUWAC unit will be interviewed covering 48 new and 48 old cases i.e. 96 cases, from each Cell. The process by which survivors' cases would be identified was mutually decided. As a first step a listing of survivors' cases for the period would be made by the SPUWAC Units category wise (counselling, mediation, legal, referral), after which cases would be selected randomly to arrive at the sample numbers. This identification done with the assistance of the Social Workers, who were later involved in inviting the cases to come for the interviews to the SPUWAC units.
- Further the first cut of the draft research tools were discussed with the TISS team in the context of the feedback received from them. It was resolved to further revise them and share the second draft before field testing them.
- A tentative timeline was developed subject to revision and finalisation based on permissions received for commencement of the study.
- ERU shared with the DCP the consent form developed, to seek the formal consent of the survivors before the interviews, in pursuance of conforming to research ethics to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of cases.
- After the meeting in Delhi formal permission to conduct the evaluation study and to seek the support of the CAW Cell for data access and other requirement was sought from the Joint Commissioner. The apprehension of the DCP about not sharing data regarding the clients was allayed through written commitments by both ERU and TISS to this effect.
- ERU identified and interviewed the Research Assistants, who were from Delhi to complete the research team for the assignment.

Approach to the study

ERU adopted a mixed method approach using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This involved primary as well as secondary data collection. The primary data was elicited from interviews with survivors (former and current), counsellors, police personnel and other stakeholders. The secondary data review involved screening and accessing all the registers, files and computerised records pertaining to survivors who approached the Special Cells in Delhi during Jan 2013- Dec 2015. The finalisation of the period and survivors to be interviewed was decided in consultation with the officials in the SPUWAC Unit.

The Research Team

The Research Team comprised of 6 members, composed of two Senior Consultants, 2 Senior Researchers from ERU and 2 Field Researchers. All members of the research team have vast experience of working with women, and on issues of VAW and have a deep knowledge of qualitative research methodologies.

Development of research tools and rolling out the study

The ERU team developed the draft interview schedules (tools) for the survivors, social workers, police and mediators. These were shared with the TISS team and the Police in the first preliminary meeting in Nanakpura. The consent forms too were shared with the police at the same time. The tools were revised based on feedback received from TISS and from the

field testing process. The consent forms (Annexure 3) were translated into Hindi, so that the survivors could easily understand them.

The set of In-depth Interview Tools developed for primary data collection were:

- Interview schedules for different stakeholders, (special cell social workers, mediators, enquiry officers, police officials heading the SPU/WAC, representatives of the NCW) with open-ended and closed questions.
- Interview schedule with current survivors (with standardised instruments, open-ended and closed questions).
- Interview schedule with past survivors (with standardised instruments, open-ended and closed questions).

Tools preparation

- Interview Schedules were prepared in English and as peer feedback received from TISS team before field testing, finalisation and coding for data collection. The schedules for others - Social Workers, Police and Mediators were also revised based on feedback from TISS.
- The interview schedules for survivors were pretested in 2 locations –a) Lucknow, with a client from an NGO and b) in Delhi in the Nanakpra Cell prior to finalising and coding the tool.
- Finally interview schedules were coded for quantitative and qualitative data collection.
- Interview Guidelines were prepared for the research team (Annexure 3).

Team Orientation

Prior to the actual field work, the entire research team was oriented on the research tools to be used, the process of recording and coding the field data. The focus of the orientation was on:

- Purpose and objectives of the evaluation study
- Timeline of the study – deliverables of the project
- Sharing of Responsibilities
- Sampling plan selection of survivors
- Conducting Interviews
- Coding and Data Recording

Ethical considerations

The Research Team was oriented regarding ethical concerns, as per the guidelines of WHO document titled Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against Women (WHO, 2001)¹¹. This ensured that:

- The participation by survivors and other stakeholders in the evaluation study was entirely voluntary.
- Interviews with, and observations of, survivors were conducted only after informing them about the purpose of the study and obtaining consent from them.
- Social workers contacted the current and former survivors and requested them to come to the Special Cells on dates convenient to them obtain consent before researchers interviewed them.

¹¹ Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety 2001 Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against Women. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organisation.2001

- Interviews were conducted in spaces providing privacy and safety to the women. Research participants had the right to opt-out at any stage during the interview and a few of them even did so.
- In case of unintended events occurring during the data collection period, social workers were on call, and research investigators were provided referral numbers.
- Data gathered has been anonymised other than for the purpose of selecting a sample. Confidentiality has been maintained in all aspects of the evaluation.

Area and Sampling

In Delhi the sample was selected from two Counselling Units at Nanakpura and Pitampura, which dealt with around 3245 women in distress during the period December 2009 to November 2014. An analysis of the monitoring reports compiled by Social Workers of the 2 units showed the achievements over a period of 5 years.¹²

Table 1 : Nos. of Survivors' Cases (2009-2014)

	Dec 2009- Nov 2010	Dec 2010- Nov 2011	Dec 2011- Nov 2012	Dec 2012- Nov 2013	Dec 2013- Nov 2014	Total
New registered cases	527	646	597	631	844	3245
One time interaction	1499	2224	1386	217	154	5480

Source: Monitoring Report of TISS 2015

Sample size

According to the table above, the number of survivors registered in the two Special Cells in Delhi, in the last three years shows a 3 year average of 631 cases in 2012 -13. So the median average of 631 cases for 2013-14, 15% of 631 would be 94.65. Hence a round figure of 98 (in case some do not participate or cannot come for interviews), survivors' cases per Special Cell unit was suggested. During 2011-2014 around 58 survivors per month were handled.

As per the agreement with NCW and TISS it was decided that the sample size for the study would be 196 cases, equally divided between old and new survivors, representing around 15% of the average number of new 631 survivors handled by the Special Cells in 2013-14.

The two sets of sample were a) those survivors who approached the Counselling Unit during July – December 2015 and b) those survivors who had registered earlier, that is, from July 2013- June 2015 were approached for interviews. So the sample of 196 survivors was selected from the survivors who had approached the unit two years prior to the time of data collection, i.e. from January 2013 to December 2015.

A systematic random sampling method was used to select the sample. Using the list of survivors registered during the period mentioned above, every sixth case was selected to yield a 15% sample. The sample selection process had to be repeated several times as some of the selected survivors could not be contacted or were unwilling to be interviewed. In order to get

¹² TISS Monitoring Report 2015

the requisite number of survivors for interviews, the sample selection process was repeated to get the desired number of sample size, by preparing four back up lists for each Cell.

The Table below provides the list of diverse stakeholders interviewed as well as the number of interviews that were conducted during the course of the study.

Table 2: Interviews to be conducted

2 Special Cells in Delhi – Nankpura and Pitampura		
	Cases 15% of 631 registered; every 6 th survivor	
A)	Cases of survivors registered prior to data collection (approximately 24 months) from July 2013- June 15 (old)	96
	Cases of survivors registered during data collection period (approx. 6 months = new cases) July 2015- Dec 2015	96
	Sub- total A	192
B)	Social Workers (from 2 cells)	5
	Mediators - 2 from each cell	4
	Key informants from NCW (2); Women org./SSH/PO (4)	6
	Sub - total B	15
C)	Police officials heading CWC/SPUWAC	2
	Sub - total C	
	Total Interviews	224

(Note: ERU was not permitted to interview police personnel under category C for the study).

Sample selection at the two locations – Nanakpura and Pitampura

Prior to the commencement of the study the breakup of sampling was discussed in Delhi with the police officials, Social Workers, TISS team and ERU to decide on the time period to select the survivors, old and new survivors, selection of types of cases of survivors and the selection methodology.

Table 3 a: Sampling of Survivors' cases

Nanakpura	Sample	Mediation+ legal action + PWDVA + Others	Reconciliation	Ongoing /pending
Old cases	48	29 survivors (60% approx)	19 survivors (40% approx)	
New cases	48	19 survivors (40% approx)	10 survivors (20% approx)	19 survivors (approx)

Survivors' cases sorted out from dataset for Nanakpura to prepare sample lists:

Table 3b: Sampling (New Survivor's Cases, Nanakpura)

New cases	255	%	Total	Selected
Closed	3	1.2%	143	
D.V.Act	8	3.1%		

				19
Legal Action	30	11.8%		
Mediation	57	22.4%		
Others	47	18.4%		
Re –counselling	1	0.4%		
On Going	74	29.0%	75	19
Pending	1	0.4%		
Reconciled	27	10.6%	27	10
Re Opened	5	2.0%		
Transferred	2	0.8%		
Total				48

Table 3 c: Sampling (Old Survivor’s Cases, Nanakpura)

Old cases	884	%	Total	Selected
Case Not Received	1	0.1%		
D.V.Act	77	8.7%		
Legal Action	99	11.2%	660	29
Mediation	229	25.9%		
Others	255	28.8%		
Reconciled	223	25.2%	223	19
Blank	8	0.9%		
Total old				48

There were some blank records which have been deleted. Amongst the new survivors there are 2 that have been transferred so they were left out of the listing process. Also there were 5 survivor’s cases marked as “re-opened”, so they too were left out. Cases of survivors sorted out from dataset of Pitampura to prepare sample lists are given below:

Table 3 d: Sampling (New Survivor’s Cases, Pitampura)

New Cases	Nos.	%	Total	Selected
Legal Action	119	38.4%		
Mediation	102	32.9%	248	31
Others	27	8.7%		
Ongoing	7	2.3%	7	7
Reconciled	55	17.7%	55	10
Total new	310			48

Table 3 e: Sampling (Old Survivor’s Cases, Pitampura)

Old Cases	Nos.	%	Total	Selected
	1			
Legal Action	414	48.3%	726	29

Mediation	234	27.3%		
Others	78	9.1%		
Reconciled	131	15.3%	131	19
Total Old	858			48

Since there were only 7 ongoing survivor's cases (new ones) so they were all taken (against 19 cases to be selected). And to reach to the total 48, additional 12 survivor's cases have been added to Mediation, Legal Action, Others category.

After this process the sample lists were drawn up of 48 old and 48 new survivor's cases for each Cell. To account for the inability of survivors to come for interviews 4 back up lists for each Cell were also drawn up, which were also used to access the survivors to complete the sample size.

Challenges and limitations

The availability of and reaching out to old survivor's in Pitampura and also to some extent in Nanakpura was an issue, as getting in touch with them on phone was a problem - in many instances the phone contact did not materialise for varied reasons viz. phone was switched off, number had changed, there was no response, or it was not reachable. Some of the survivors who were contactable, did not want to come and some were not available due to reasons like child not well, parent not well, not in town etc – despite giving them another date to come.

The Social Workers pursued contacts with survivors to enable interviews with them. At one point after contacting almost 270 survivors from 3 lists in Pitampura and 287 survivors from the 3 lists in Nanakpura -36 survivors from old cases (6.4%) responded and finally came for interviews. Consequently, in Nanakpura, partial purposive sampling was attempted. A few old survivors were interviewed who had come to the Cell for their Counselling on one particular day, but were not in the randomised list. The researchers interviewed a few survivors who came for counselling, but were not in the sample list. We also attempted to seek survivors which had registered in the police cell and had moved on to the Social Worker, but they were already in the sample list. However, this did indicate how the case of a survivor moves from there to the Social Worker, in terms of time elapsed from entry to reaching the Social Worker. (Only those that come to her, as not all reach her).

The idea of individual house contacts for cases was also explored with a list of those who live around Pitampura (names drawn from the sample list), in a radius of 5-10 km from the Pitampura Police station. The search for them was given up, as reported by several persons, this proved a herculean task as the *bastis* and homes are highly concentrated with chaotic house numbering ; and with phone contacts not reliable/or not contactable – locating them would be highly time consuming. Also when given that option, survivors were not open to the idea of researchers visiting their homes.

Those survivors whose cases were closed or were reconciled were hesitant to come for interviews citing reasons that coming to the Cell would arouse suspicions from husband as to why she wanted to go back to the Cell. It might raise the issue of upsetting the domestic harmony that had been achieved after the case was closed. They were even concerned about the recurrence of violence should the husband become suspicious that they had come to the

Cell after closure. While a few came with their husbands, some came without their husbands and were in a hurry to leave as they did not want the husband or the family to know that they came to the Cell after resolution of the case.

Several survivors agreed to come on a particular date and time, but could not make it that day as they were either living very far, or were out of station and did not get back, or there was some emergency at home/at work. Their time and availability were accommodated as they were willing to come, but it did result in the fact that on certain days there were very few survivors interviewed, while on other days there were many more than those who had agreed to come.

Another issue was the communication given to the survivors for coming to the Cell by the Social Workers. Many survivors were not aware as to why they had been called. They were just asked to come and report to the Cell on a particular date. So a few of them were quite uninformed about the reason why they were asked to come, especially those whose cases had been closed or reconciled. Even some others were concerned as to why they were called when their usual session was slotted for another date.

Data Collection and process

- Daily schedules for interviews of survivors were obtained in advance from Social Workers so that a number of survivors could be interviewed each day.
- The women survivors were interviewed initially jointly by teams of a senior researcher along with the field researcher. After a few such interviews the entire team conducted the interviews on their own. Interviews of other stakeholders such as counsellors, mediators and police personnel were conducted by the senior investigators.
- Daily team sharing, completion of schedules/ notes was conducted in post data collection meetings, before the data entry was done.
- Secondary data was accessed from the case intake registers, files and computerised records at the Special Cells and other records.

Interviews with Social Workers (5) were conducted at the Special Cells. Four Mediators were interviewed – 2 at Rohini Court and 2 at the Special cells. All the social workers were currently working in the 2 cells. Interviews with select police officials (2) were held to understand their perceptions about the Special cells, and the ways in which this programme can be strengthened. Detailed Case studies of 10 survivors have been prepared. The Researchers did not have the permission to interview police constables and IOs.

The primary data was obtained through IDIs conducted in Hindi with the survivors. The survivors were explained the purpose of the interview and were given the consent form in Hindi. They read it and then both the survivor and the interviewer signed it. In the case where the woman could not read, she was read out the consent form to obtain her consent prior to the interview. In some cases survivors refused to sign and gave verbal consent only, which was duly noted by the researchers. Copies of English consent forms were also available in case any survivor wished to use one. The survivors were clearly informed about the confidentiality of the interview and the data recorded before commencing the interview. The identity of survivors was kept anonymous as the interview schedules were coded – having serial number, case intake number and police registration number. The filled interview schedules and the electronic versions are all available for submission to NCW. All data from interviews and registers/ computerised records has been anonymised prior to analysis.

Case studies (see annexure)

Ten case studies were identified by the researchers to show how the survivors emerged as exceptional women in dealing with violence and struggling with the post violence experience to emerged as changed women. They were selected keeping in mind the following points –

- agency of the survivor in facing the challenge of violence
- agency of survivor from difficult circumstances
- timeliness and quality of inputs by the special cell
- factors that influence her agency - family, education, economic autonomy etc
- linkages and other facilitation for the survivor to break out of her situation
- impact of counselling and other services of the cell
- spaces for own decision making, self expression and desire to break out of the mould.

Data compilation and analysis

The data from the interview schedules was entered electronically into datasheets that were created to translate the recorded data into digital form in excel. The format was coded for qualitative and quantitative data, with provision for notes and observations. After individual entries of each interview, the entire quantitative data was tabulated for each Special Cell separately for preliminary analysis. The first phase of error checking was done by examining the sheets manually. Subsequently, the data captured was put through a validation sheet which highlighted the areas of logical data-entry mistakes. The Consolidation Sheet was created where all the data from various sheets was arranged in a tabular format. Further, tables were analysed by using the various analytical functions. Filters were applied to the data to obtain summarised values for the New and Old cases to do a comparative analysis. Textual data was extracted for further qualitative analysis. Then the two sets were combined for overall analysis. Similarly, the qualitative data was collated from the schedules. This collated data was used to for analysis, graphical and tabular representation and to draw inferences.

Section B

This section covers the trajectory of survivors from the time they enter the Cell till they meet someone to address their concerns. The structure of the Special Cells within the SPUWAC, the CAW cells where they meet personnel to help them is outlined. The three key units of the cells – Counselling, Mediation and Legal Aid as well as the personnel who are responsible for the delivery of assistance to them are their contacts within the Special Cell. It covers the procedures in the different units, experiences of the survivors in dealing with the police, mediators and counsellors and the personnel’s own experiences. The survivors’ profiles, their own experiences of violence, their expectations when they reach the Cell and their experiences are illustrated.

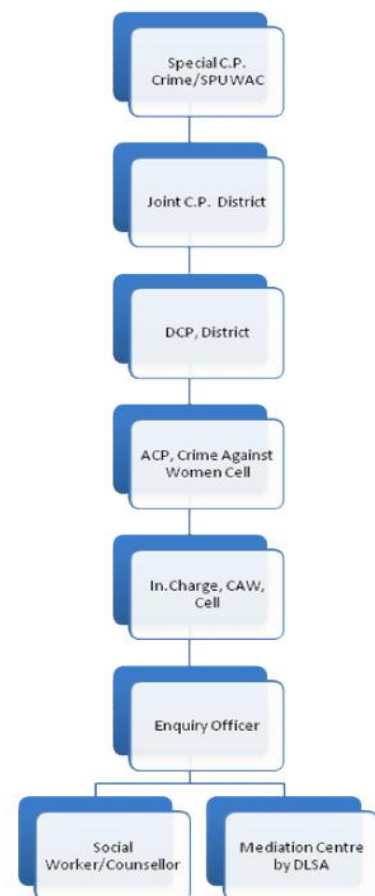
B.1 Special Cells: Structure, system and processes

“As the special police unit is basically a reconciliatory body it tries to work out for mutual settlement and reconciliation.” (Source: SPUWAC website). SPUWAC at Nanakpura and Crime against Women (CAW) Cell at Pitampura facilitate to resolve and reconcile survivors cases of matrimonial disputes under the overall supervision and guidance of the Office of the Joint Commissioner of Police. CAW Cells have their presence all over Delhi, in each District, to reach out to women in need of help/services of police. SPUWAC was also made the State Nodal Unit on Juvenile issues. Further to empower women through exposure (demonstration) and training in techniques of Martial Arts, Self-defence training was started in the year-2002 by this unit. In a recent effort more Counsellors (22) have been hired for including a Counselling Unit in the CAW cells in each district.

SPUWAC, Nanakpura is an independent body, operational under the supervision of Joint Commissioner of Police. SPUWAC Delhi & CAW cells also are working under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Delhi at district level. The organization and reporting structure of CAW Cell and SPUWAC is separately illustrated herewith (Fig.1)

In Pitampura the ACP is in charge of the CAW cell which handles only complaints of matrimonial disputes reported by women. When a complaint is received an Inquiry Officer (IO) deals with complaint at the entry level for preliminary counselling and mediation efforts. In case both parties do not come to any conclusive results, then the complaint is referred by IO to Special Cell’s Counsellor along with a counselling form. And the Social Worker/Counsellor deals with the case as per the principles of the Special Cell; i.e. recognizes the human rights of the woman and enables her to recognize and claim these rights. Social worker also refers the complaints, if required, to the Mediation Cell

Fig 1: Structure SPUWAC



located in same premises or reverts to the IO for further action if the complainant is not agreeable to resolve the issue at her level.

In Nanakpura, which is located in the CAW Headquarters, the counselling is rendered to survivors at 2 desks – a) the police level, by the IOs and b) the Counselling Unit by the Social Workers. The Inspector/In-charge of SPUWAC personally handles the complaints or refers the complaints to the Sub-Inspector/s for primary intervention at the entry stage. If the complaint does not get resolved at their level, and they are of the view that Counselling will work, then they refer the case to the Special Cell’s Social Workers/Counsellors. Cases that are referred to Social Workers may also be referred back to IO for further action. IOs even refer cases to the Mediators as a next step, if necessary. Cases may be referred back to the IO who may then refer them to the Mediator in turn. The cases with the Counsellors may also be referred for Domestic Violence (DV) and Maintenance. This is a time consuming and expensive process for the women.

One Cell may have 14-15 *thanas* in the district associated with it, which refer cases to it and local district court linked with it. For Nanakpura Saket and Dwarka courts and for Pitampura it is Rohini district court.

Table 4: Staff Strength in SPUWAC Units

Staff	Nanakpura	Pitampura
EOs	9	3
Social Workers	4	1
Mediators	6	2
Physical Space		
Rooms for Eos	6	2
Rooms for Social Workers	4	1
Rooms for Mediators	3	2 (shared with IOs)
Space/Waiting area for Survivors and other visitors	1 open veranda with few chairs	1 cramped corridor, with seating on both sides

The Social Workers

Social Workers are the fulcrum within the Special cells that bring in social service component within the criminal justice system, focusing on the immediate needs of the violated women. In assisting the women to solve their problems “the Social Workers intervene in the interest of the violated woman.”¹³

Largely the Social Workers’ intervention includes the following components (which are also **key indicators of quality** in services being provided to violated women, to be used for monitoring, supervision and training in the programme):

- Negotiating for non-violence with various stakeholders
- Building support systems
- Engaging police help
- Legal aid
- Providing emotional support and strengthening the psychological self
- Development counselling
- Advocacy for group entitlement
- Re-establishing women’s relationships with their economic assets

13

- Arranging shelter
- Working with men in the interest of violated women

During the study five Social Workers of the two Special Cells were interviewed, whose experience within the counselling unit ranged from 8 months to 8 years and among whom two were single (more on this in further section). They had past experience of Social Work and had received training inputs from TISS for capacity building over the years. Among them they have a pool of skills through induction trainings from TISS of 23 days, and then one week. One of them had also participated in Delhi Police Gender Sensitisation training, sexuality and gender organised by CREA, basic counselling skills by Sanjeevani, Delhi and another had participated in Delhi Government training on DV. They developed clarity on their roles, responsibilities and work after having undergone induction and other trainings conducted by TISS and Jamia Milia University.

Mediators

There are 7 Mediators, placed in Nanakpura and 2 in Pitampura – all of them are practising lawyers, trained in mediation and appointed by the Delhi Legal Services Authority (DLSA). Mediators come to the Special Cells in rotation, in the post lunch Session. While both the mediators in Pitampura are male, three out of seven in Nanakpura are women. In Nanakpura there is a complete, separate section reserved for the Mediators where they meet the survivors and their partners for mediation, while in Pitampura they share the rooms with the EOs, as they come after lunch. The percentage of survivors' cases handled by Mediators in the 2 Cells are as in the table below, with a larger number of cases under mediation in Pitampura.

Table 5: Percentage of survivors' cases handled by Mediators¹⁴

Special cell	New cases	Old cases	Mediators
Nanakpura	22.4%	25.9%	7
Pitampura	27.3%	32.9%	2
Total	49.7%	58.8%	9

The Mediators interviewed (4) reported that mediation is a strenuous process particularly because at the Cell it is pre-litigation process and the focus is on 'saving the family'. The mediation process, however, sets the basis of a settlement in over 50% (see table above) of the cases they handle. This is when the cases received inputs by the IOs and the background counselling rendered by the Social Workers. All this is preparatory or the pre-litigation phase. For legal aid the survivors have to seek the services of an external lawyer – they can get free legal aid from DLSA or they can hire a private counsel. The counselling and mediation prepares the survivors to know their rights and understand the litigation and post litigation processes and consequences. The Police do the follow up and provide the security to the cases according to the requirement, provided the documentation for the case is complete.

One Mediator was of the view, that even with so many mediators (9 in the 2 Cells), there are too many survivors' cases to handle for mediation. Expansion of mediation services in the other Cells, will perhaps help to shift the cases in each district locally with more mediators. It

¹⁴ Source: Secondary data, shared by SPUWAC, Nanakpura, 2014-15

is not clear whether mediators will also be appointed in each district where social workers have been appointed.

Mediation does provide challenges, as each case is different. The major problem faced is a lack of trust between the couple, which is why they are here. The breakdown of communications and interference of parents is another or cause of marital discord and subsequent violence in families. Also there is no advocacy or public education by the government (NCW, Police) regarding domestic violence and women's rights within the marital home. Women do not have adequate documentary evidences/ proofs and proper guidance before they go in for litigation, which impacts the trajectory of their case during mediation or litigation causing delays. Before coming to the Cell, women's parents engage other lawyers who may not give the right advice or even many times advise them to simultaneously register a case in the Special Cell. We did meet women who had parallel cases registered in the courts for return of *streedhan*, maintenance under DV Act.

Police Support to counselling unit/ in the CAW Cell and SPWAC

The Special Cells have 8 IOs (2 in Pitampura and 6 in Nanakpura) and other 4- 5 Inspectors (women) who undertake the counselling apart from the Social Workers in the Special Cells. In the 2 cells at least 57% survivors sought help for counselling. One Inspector reported that she handled 150 survivors' cases in 6 months, of which 30 did not need further action, that is, referral for mediation or legal action. She was of the view that at least 80% of the women who come do not want legal action. Though most survivors came to seek assistance for claiming maintenance, which is hard to get without legal procedures. She observed that if women do not have parents, and they separate they have a hard time as no one is there to support them. The Special Cell has no such linkages or arrangements to support women in such circumstances. She was of the view that the counselling rendered by the Police Officials had an edge, as they were married and even older than some of the counsellors in the Social work Unit (it has 3 young unmarried counsellors who do not have any experience of marital life); whereas for women coming to the Cell, reconciliation is the main purpose. Hence the conflicting parties are not satisfied by their counselling (presumption).¹⁵

One official reported that at least 90% of the IOs have been trained so far, though due to the turnover of staff the refresher trainings have not been held for quite some time. The sessions on key issues such as gender, laws related to women, psycho- social counselling are included in the capacity building trainings. In many of the trainings TISS, Jamia faculty and those from Delhi University have been involved for capacity building of IOs and Social Workers. However, joint trainings for both staff have been very few.

The difference in the parallel process of counselling with the Police and the Social Workers is that with the former there is no time limit to resolve the case, whereas with the latter there may be dual cases of DV and maintenance (involving referrals), which are more time consuming and more expensive for survivors. Police counsellors do refer cases to Social Workers if they feel the need – e.g. in cases “love” marriages as Social Workers are able to give more time to the case and even meet the entire family when required. People have a certain comfort level with the Social Workers, which they do not have with the police, because of their label. If there are cases referred by DCW and NCW then the settlement takes longer as the Commissioners have the power to issue summons and a warrant of arrest. Then

¹⁵ This was expressed during the interview 7.3.2016

photocopies of all the documents need to be submitted, not the original as is required by the police system. The Cells get enquiry reports from *thanas* in their jurisdiction or transfer it if they come to learn that the case is with the Cell. About 60-70% cases are referred to the counsellors directly from the duty room desk at entry point.

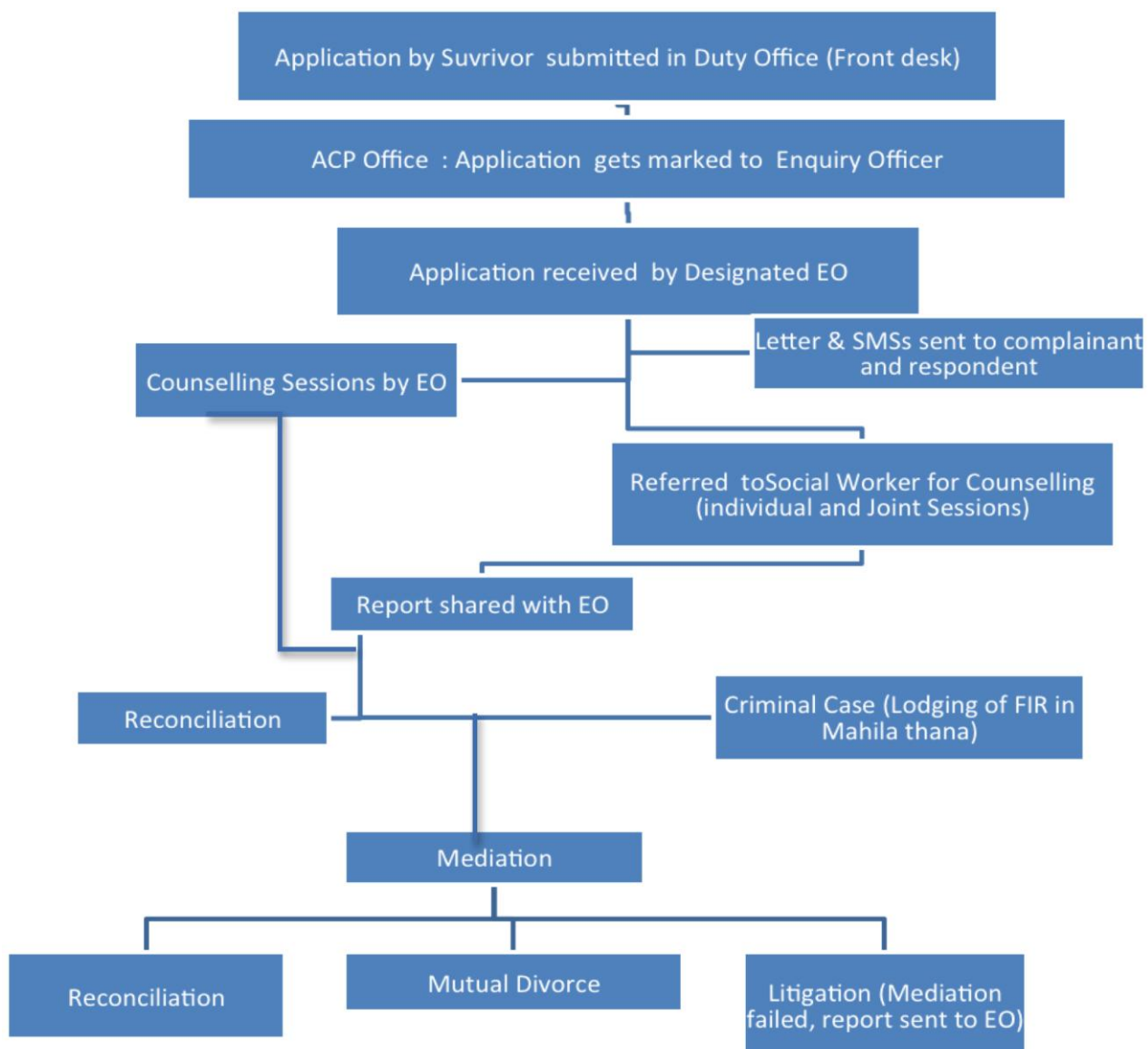
Process undertaken by the Survivor

Any survivor, who is a resident of Delhi and is experiencing violence, cruelty and dowry demand from husband and in laws, is eligible to contact SPUWAC or CAW Cells. She can give a written application personally or send it through post or E-mail to the officials of SPUWAC. In case of emergency, an aggrieved woman, may Dial 100 or 1091 for immediate relief, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, when the Cells are closed. She can also go to the nearest Police Station and from there she can be referred to the Cell. After registering the complaint in the duty room, the woman's case is assigned to an Inspector or Sub-Inspector level Inquiry Officer (IO) where the complainant and respondent speak about their issues of discord. The complainant is explained the procedure and based on what she seeks, further referrals are made – either to the Social Worker or to the Mediation Cell. The case is referred to the Social Worker, by the IO as per circumstances/ situations of the case. During the trajectory of a case through different procedures at the SPUWAC, the IO of a case remains the same until either the closure of the case or the registration of FIR.

Counselling is the second step: The Social Worker or the Police Counsellor (as in Nanakpura) carry out detailed discussions with the survivor and the spouse, facilitate negotiations between the survivor and the spouse through individual as well as joint sessions. At the Counselling Cell negotiations are conducted with the concerned parties for stopping violence, reconciliation or separation, based on the needs/ request of the survivor. During counselling the survivor is provided with psychological support, orientation to the reality of her situation; then assisted in making an informed decision about her future. For past few years IOs and Social Workers have stopped conducting home visits. But in selected cases some Counsellors do follow up on cases over phone.

Mediation and Legal Action (if required) is advised if counselling “fails” (i.e. case is not reconciled) or when counselling does not fulfil the needs of the survivor or the case is at a stage where legal action is necessary. In both instances the case is referred by the IO to the mediation cell for negotiations between both parties for amicable reconciliation/separation. In case of the survivor's decision to separate, negotiations are carried out for retrieval of *streedhan*, compensation/ maintenance amount, closure of all court cases and divorce by mutual consent. Further, if the survivor fails to reach a common decision/or the couple is not able to resolve their issues through mediation and counselling and if there is no elimination of violence, then an FIR may be filed U/S 498A, 406 or other relevant laws of IPC. The FIR is registered on the basis of the written complaint submitted by the complainant at the initial stage and FIR is registered after approval by the DCP and the Joint CP. Though counselling/mediation is not time bound, but the case is supposed to be finalised within a reasonable time limit as per the facts and circumstances. The Cell has a limitation of a period of three years to file an FIR and the time is counted from the date of the application received from the survivor. Figure 2 given below gives a glimpse of process undertaken at the Cells.

Fig 2: Process undertaken at Cell



For the period January 2013- December 2015 the total number of survivors who accessed the Special Cells were:

Table 6: Old and new cases of Survivors – between Jan-2013 – Dec 2015

Period	Nanakpura	Pitampura
Total Old cases – Jan 2013-June 2014	255	310
Total New cases- July 2015- Dec 2015	884	858
Total old+ New	1139	11 68

(Source: Data from Special Cells 2016)

B.2 Survivors Coming to the Special Cells

The Special Cells serve women who approach them for help and support to redress violence being inflicted on her by her marital family. “The woman who approaches the Special Cell for help is one who is severely affected by violence inflicted on her...after living through the

experience is now ready to engage in a problem- solving process and to and to challenge her context of violence.”

Profile of Survivors:

The study sample of 191 cases (from both the cells) who were interviewed reveals that women who had approach the Special Cells represent a fairly broad urban spectrum. Out of the total number of women interviewed 92 (48%) were those whose cases were registered between July 2015 - Dec 2015 (categorised as new cases), while 99 (52%) were those whose cases were registered in the period Jan 2013 – June 2015. The profiles present the background of the violated women whose multiple domestic violence issues were addressed by the cells through counselling and other interventions. The profiling ranges from social group, relative age sets, place of residence, marital status, type of marriage, children, education, skill/professional training and employment/ work in relation to economic self reliance etc.

The socio-religious-economic profile that emerged from the sample is as illustrated. Women from the general community were 51%, while 10% were OBCs, 26% were SCs and 8% belonged to minority communities. There were 4% women who did not know/share their social group– 10%. Only 3% had some physical disability, while 2 % reported some mental health issues (undergoing psychiatric treatment). Refer Figure: 3

Fig 3: Survivors’ Social Groups

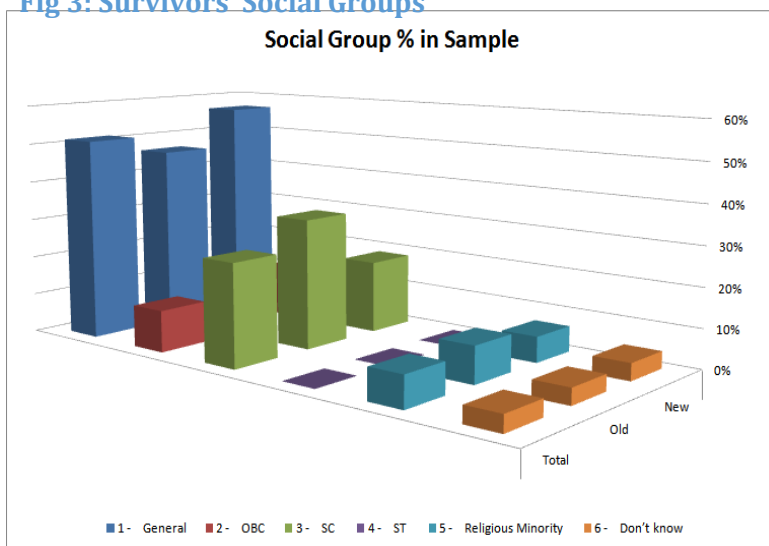


Table7: Ave. age

Average Age		
New	Old	Overall
28	30	29

The average age profile of survivors coming to seek assistance from the Special Cells was 29 years, with a marginal difference between old and new cases (Table 7). The average age of new cases was 28 years, while that for old ones is 30 years. So in 2 years the survivors coming to the Cells are younger than before.

Table 8: Age Group

Age Group	Percentage Spread		
	New	Old	Overall
<=25	35%	21%	28%
Between 25 - 35	54%	60%	57%
>35	11%	19%	15%
Age Group	Count		
<=25	32	21	53
Between 25 – 35	49	59	108
>35	10	19	29
Total	91	99	190

Table 8, given alongside shows that 57% of survivors form the bulk of the group between the age group 25 years to 35 years. Even younger survivors, below 25 years of age comprise 28% of the sample. Again, of these 35% of the new cases are below 25 years of age. So, it can be inferred that more and more younger women are seeking assistance for marital violence and at an earlier stage of their marriages. The sample showed 15% women over the age of 35 years seeking assistance for violence.

As Cells are addressing survivors' cases of marital violence only, all the clients were married. The majority of survivors, 70% were married but were staying separately from their spouses, while 28% were staying with their husbands/marital families. As shown in Table 9 only 1% were widows and another 1% were divorced. Among those not staying with their spouses 60% were staying with the natal family, 15% were staying with the husband in a nuclear family set up, while 13% were staying in joint families. Only 8% women were staying by themselves in a rented place. There were 2% women who were staying alone in placed owned by friends/ relatives. Only 1 survivor was staying with a friend.

Table 9: Marital Status of Survivors

Marital Status	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Married, residing with spouse/marital family	22	32	54	24%	32%	28%
Married not residing with spouse	70	63	133	76%	64%	70%
Divorced	0	2	2	0%	2%	1%
Widowed	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Live in relationship	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Survivor assumes that she is married but actually marriage is not legally recognized (as first/full rights holding marriage)	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

Out of the entire sample, 85% marriages were arranged by families and 15% of survivors chose their spouse. Almost all the marriages (97%) were solemnized by religious rites. Only 3% women in the sample had entered into court marriages and 1% had notarised marriages. (Table 10).

Table10: Type of Marriage & Marriage Ceremony

Type of marriage	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Arranged by family	75	87	162	82%	88%	85%
Self arranged	16	12	28	17%	12%	15%
Other (Arranged by community)	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Type of marriage ceremony	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Religious rites	89	96	185	97%	97%	97%
Court marriage	2	3	5	2%	3%	3%
Notarised marriage	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

In the sample 39% had no children, while 36% had one child and 20% had two children and only 4% had 3 or more than children (Table 11).

Table 11: Number of children of Survivors

No. Of Children	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
None	38	37	75	41%	37%	39%
One	34	35	69	37%	35%	36%
Two	14	25	39	15%	25%	20%

Three or more	5	2	7	5%	2%	4%
Information not shared	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

The education profile as reflected in the sample illustrates that 41% of women were graduate and above, 17% up to senior secondary level, 21% up to High School, 10% up to class 8.

Table 12: Educational level of survivors

Educational level	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Not literate at all	2	4	6	2%	4%	3%
Never been to school but knows how to sign name	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Has attended school but can't read/write (except name)	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%
Upto 5 th std	7	6	13	8%	6%	7%
Upto 8 th	8	11	19	9%	11%	10%
Upto 10 th	19	21	40	21%	21%	21%
Upto 12 th	12	20	32	13%	20%	17%
Graduate and above	43	35	78	47%	35%	41%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

As shown in Table 12 above, 7% of survivors had studied up to class 5, while 3% and 1% had never been to school or were not literate respectively. In terms of professional/ technical education 18% had a professional degree, 7% had done a technical course, 26% had done a short term professional course and 12% had done non professional courses.

Table13: Types of training/ skills among Survivors

Type of training/skill	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Technical course	11	3	14	12%	3%	7%
2 - Professional education (degree)	16	18	34	17%	18%	18%
3 - Short term professional training/ course	20	29	49	22%	29%	26%
4 - Non-professional training/course	6	16	22	7%	16%	12%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

As illustrated in Table 13 above, 60% of survivors had received some skill based training for employment purposes whereas 27% had no skill/ professional training of any sort. The sample shows that 38% had part time or full time paid work or employment, while 48% were doing unpaid work at home/farm. Of the women who were working only 18% had regular full time jobs with benefits, whereas 23% had contractual / short term work and 33% were doing daily wage work that was temporary. On an average the women worked 23 days in a month. As regards work site, 52% worked outside the home, while 4% did home based work and only 1% survivors work both at home and outside.

Table14: Number of days of work taken up by Survivors and Avg. Income

	New	Old	Average
Average No of days of work in a month	24.2	21.6	22.9
Average monthly income (In INR)	21953	13616	17784

The combined average income of the survivors was about INR.17,000 per month (Table 14). The women who worked part time earned between Rs 10,000 (eg as a cook/ domestic help) – Rs 15,000 (eg.in a parlour or other contractual job). Those who earned more than Rs 15,000 were working as teachers, middle level executives and there (very few) as senior executives (in a bank or company) and those working with the Government (earning up to Rs 80,000). Of the 38% women who were working part time or full time 8% did not spend their earnings as they wished, 29% spent them partially as they wished and 63% spent them fully as they wished. In the sample 48% women had no paid work as mentioned above.

Table15: How survivors spend their earnings

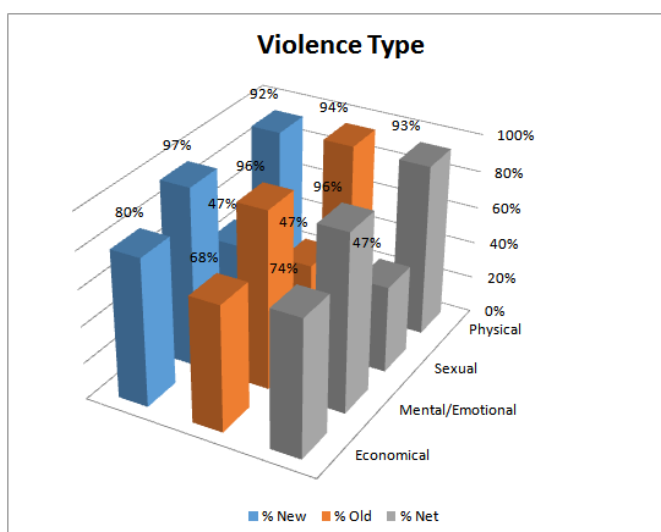
Does she spend her earnings as per her wish	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - No	3	6	9	6%	10%	8%
2 - Yes Partial	12	19	31	25%	32%	29%
3 - Yes Fully	33	34	67	69%	58%	63%
Total	48	59	107			

The nature of violence survivors' experience

The survivor's experience of violence in the domain of her marital family (as is the case with Special Cells, in Delhi) make her seek assistance is that “after she has lived through the threatening experiences, she is now ready to engage in a problem solving process and to challenge her context of violence. ... As a result of this realisation she decides to seek external intervention.”¹⁶

This sub-section illustrates the kind of violations the survivors underwent, before taking a decision to approach the Special Cells. Given the mandate of SPUWAC, the focus of experience of violence by women is centred in matrimonial homes and the perpetrators too range from the husband, his parents, siblings and their wives/ husbands. Women spoke about the perpetrators of the violence, the types of violence they encountered, why it was inflicted, its periodicity and the impact of it on their psyche and they bodies. The key perpetrator of violence is the husband as reported by the women – 98%. Along with him others in the family are also party to the violence perpetrated on her – his mother 71% cases, father in law 41%, sister in law 40%, brother in law 31%, others 15%, other partner of husband 1%. Among the types of violence experienced by survivors (Fig 4) experienced by 96%, while other forms of violence like physical was 93%,

Fig 4: Type of Violence inflicted upon Survivors

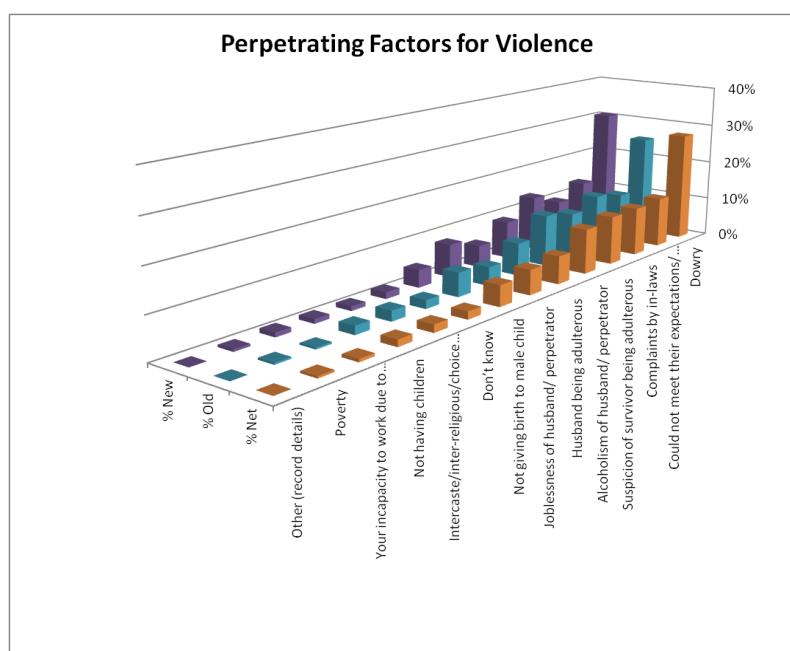


¹⁶ Mission Statement and Monitoring Indicators for Special Cell for Women and Children, TISS. 2004

economic violence by 74% and sexual violence 47%.

It must be pointed out that women experienced the three or four types of violence in different degrees and in different intensities which made them seek assistance. The reasons for experiencing violence ranged from not having children – 4%, not having a male child – 12%, dowry - 61%, inter-caste marriage - 4%, alcoholism of husband - 27% or his joblessness - 14%, complaint by mother in-law - 27%, could not meet expectations/ demands - 28%, adulterous husband - 15%, suspicion over the survivor being adulterous 27%. In 4% cases women did not know the reason behind violence inflicted on them.

Fig 5 : Precipitating factors for violence



In 4% cases women did not know the reason behind violence inflicted on them.

Table16: Reasons for perpetration of Violence

Reasons (Precipitating factors for violence)	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Don't know	3	5	8	3%	5%	4%
2 - Not having children	2	5	7	2%	5%	4%
3 - Not giving birth to male child	12	10	22	13%	10%	12%
4 - Dowry	56	61	117	61%	62%	61%
5 - Inter-caste/inter-religious/choice marriage	3	5	8	3%	5%	4%
6 - Alcoholism of husband/ perpetrator	23	24	47	25%	24%	25%
7 - Joblessness of husband/ perpetrator	18	9	27	20%	9%	14%
8 - Survivor's incapacity to work due to illness/age	1	2	3	1%	2%	2%
9 - Poverty	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%
10 - Complaints by in-laws	27	24	51	29%	24%	27%
11 - Could not meet their expectations/ demands	23	19	42	25%	19%	22%
12 - Husband being adulterous	20	33	53	22%	33%	28%
13 - Suspicion of survivor being adulterous	14	17	31	15%	17%	16%

Additionally responses regarding reasons for violence varied considerably - some of them ranged from husband's mental illness, him being aggressive, sexual advances by brother in law and father in law; forcing survivor into prostitution, children from previous marriage, survivor's mother staying with her; her share in natal family; caste discrimination, husband being a gambler, survivor being illiterate etc, see Table 16 above.

The frequency of violence as experienced by survivors was that for 60% women the violence started immediately after getting married, for 48% it started within one year of the marriage. The violence started with in 5 and 7 years for 7% and 1% women respectively and later for only 2% women. The periodicity of violence experienced by women was that 45% experienced it daily, 20% went through it several times a day, 9% experienced it weekly, 34% randomly and only 2% sometimes.

Fig 6: Periodicity of Violence

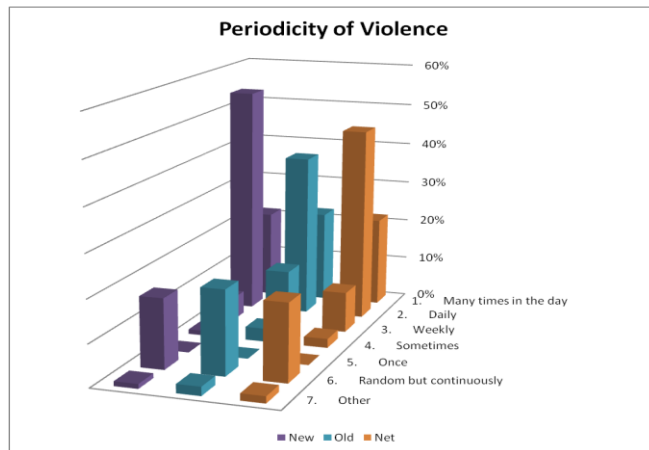


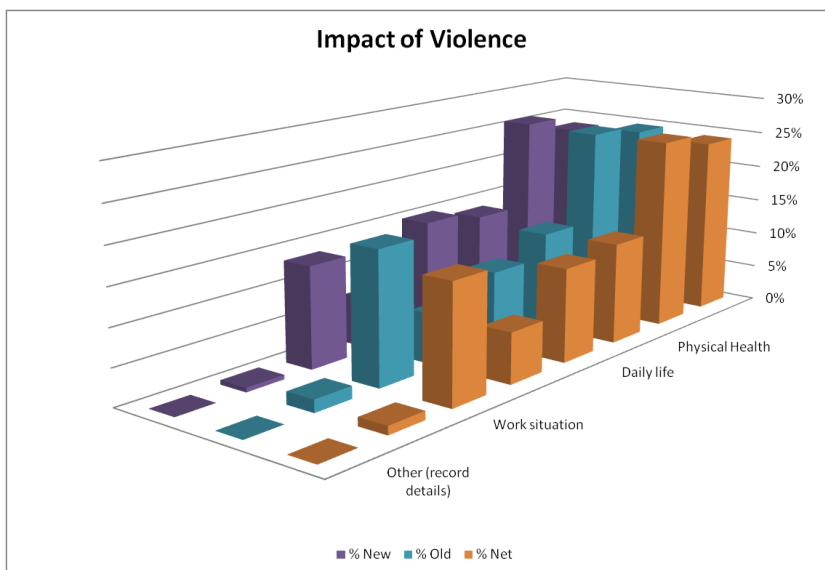
Table17: Periodicity of Violence

	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Many times a day	19	21	40	21%	22%	22%
Daily	49	37	86	54%	39%	46%
Weekly	5	13	18	6%	14%	10%
Sometimes	1	3	4	1%	3%	2%
Once	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Random but continuous	15	19	34	17%	20%	18%

Impact of violence on Survivor

Violence inflicted on women left a tremendous impact on their physical and mental health which made them seek help to address the situation through the Special cells and even other means.

Fig 7: Impact of Violence



Most seriously their mental and emotional health was affected, which impacted their ability to focus and their self confidence levels – 93% (Table 18, Fig 7). Aside from this even physical health was impacted for 87% women. Certainly women have even gone through both simultaneously too. For 94 % their daily life was disrupted, resulting in an impact on the work front and economic situation. For 46% their economic status was

affected and for 25% their work situation was compromised. The impact on social life was detrimental for 57% and other issues for 4% women.

Table18: Impact of Violence

	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Physical Health	79	87	166	86%	88%	87%
Mental and Emotional Health (ability to focus, self confidence etc.)	87	91	178	95%	92%	93%
Daily life	47	47	94	51%	47%	49%
Economic status	51	36	87	55%	36%	46%
Work situation	23	24	47	25%	24%	25%
Social Life	46	63	109	50%	64%	57%

Approximately 3% of survivors interviewed shared that the violence inflicted on them also impacted their children and natal family; one woman observed that her own behaviour has changed because of the violence being faced by her – according to her she has become aggressive, rude and has started abusing her also.

The impact of violence has not only scarred women's psyche, but even affected their physical conditions making them prone to health issues, food deprivation, economic dependence for personal expenses and even hampering their decision making regarding their children's and their own lives. What they expressed is illustrated here-

Survivors' experience of violence

Several survivors had miscarriages due to physical violence. It is matter of conjecture whether it was by design to make her lose the child or it happened because of the severe bashing. One survivor reported giving birth to 4 girls and undergoing 7 abortions – his family wanted her to have a boy. Another survivor had to seek admission to hospital due to injuries. One wanted to commit suicide, while another suffered from stroke because of violence and cannot hear from left ear. One reported having blood from eyes because of severe physical violence and constant illness. She had to leave job because of poor health.

Most of the women reported living in tension with regard to when the flash of violence would be inflicted, whether verbal, physical, emotional or economic. This made them live in tension, besides the fact that some of them were not permitted to talk to people. One lady said she was always stressed; used to roam around aimlessly without realising where she was going; "pagal jaisi ho gayee thee", (was roaming around as if deranged). She had to leave work because she wasn't regular at work. She was even earning more than what she is earning now. Another survivor was told to quit her job. She was not given enough food everyday so she became weak and she was constantly under tension due to the violence. Several women reported sleeplessness due to tension.

Economic deprivation through loss of job due to not being permitted to work or due to poor health on account of violence was quite evident from some stories of women. One survivor said that earlier she was not economically independent. Her husband abused and harassed her as he was not supportive of her taking up a job. In another case the survivor reported going through depression. She was deprived of money for daily personal and household expenses. Also she did not have any training or skills for taking up economic activities. He

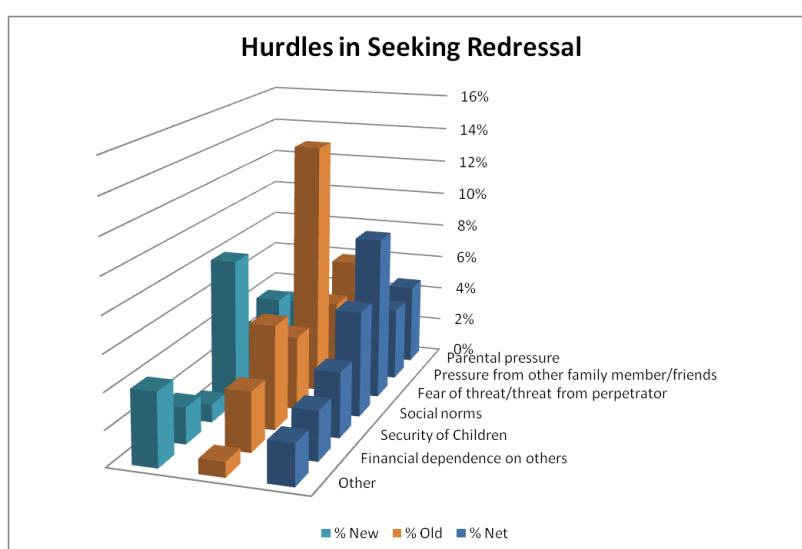
virtually has starved her and the 2 children and is still not giving maintenance. Another says that hers and the child's health have been affected. She has no money for personal expenses so is dependent on her parents. One says that “main hasna bhool gayee”, (I had forgotten to laugh.”

Women’s decision making abilities have also been impacted by the experience of violence. One said that she does not trust her own decisions now; she is not able to focus at work; and has lost her sense of humour something she was known for in her social circle. The lack of money affected women’s health care interventions as they had no money for long term treatment like TB for instance. One survivor who was diagnosed with TB and bed rest in the hospital, had no money for treatment, as she had discontinued work. Socially she was cut off from friends. It was her natal family which came to her rescue.

Hurdles in the way of seeking justice

The hurdles experienced by women in seeking redressal for violence are critical as some are external and some are due to circumstances or even due to personal hesitation, (Fig 8). What emerged was that 61% women did not encounter any hurdles in coming to the special cells which is backed by the fact that in most of the cases survivors came to cell after moving out from the site of violence. This is also related to the fact that 70% were residing with their

Fig 8: Hurdles in Seeking Redressal



parents after the experience of violence. Fear of perpetrator was a major threat in coming forward to report their case which was faced by 10% women, while 5% women encountered parental/ friends/ pressure. The percentage of women who were deterred by social norms were 7%, and those who relented due to their children and compromised were 4%. While only 3% encountered financial hurdles in seeking redressal for violence. (Refer: Table 19, Figure 9)

Table 19: Hurdles faced by survivors in seeking redressal

Hurdles/ objections faced in seeking redressal (through Special Cell)	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
None	66	51	117	72%	52%	61%
Parental pressure	3	12	15	3%	12%	8%
Pressure from other family member/friends	5	9	14	5%	9%	7%
Fear of threat/threat from perpetrator	7	28	35	8%	28%	18%
Social norms	8	6	14	9%	6%	7%
Security of Children	1	7	8	1%	7%	4%
Financial dependence on others	2	4	6	2%	4%	3%

Others (Financial constraints, leave from work, self reluctance, general misguidance/misinformation given by people, pressure from marital family)	10	8	18	11%	8%	9%
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The Survivors' access to the Special Cells

Interviews with the survivors revealed that many of them were referred to the Special Cells by their local Police Stations (17%), where they had gone at the first instance of violence, see table 29. The largest percentage came after being informed by neighbours, friends and community (50%) and other cases who had been to the Cell earlier respectively (15%). A few even mentioned that staff working in the SPUWAC Unit had advised them to come to the Special Cell.

Fig 9: Source of information about Cells

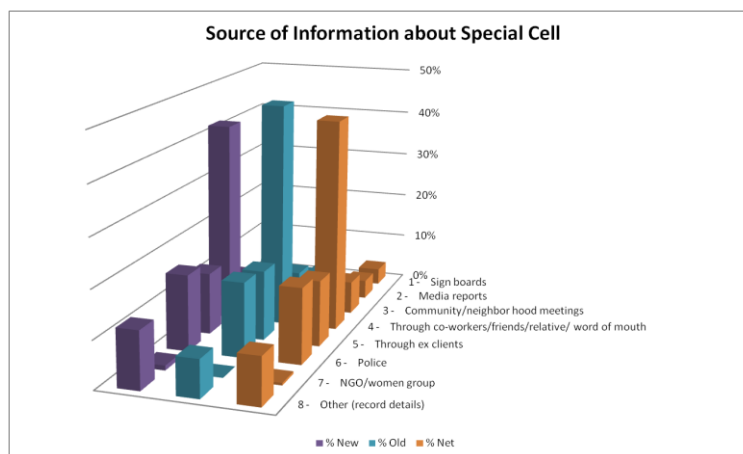


Table 20: How did the survivors come to know of the Special Cell

How did Survivors come to know about Special cell	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Sign boards	3	1	4	3%	1%	2%
2 - Media reports	4	4	8	4%	4%	4%
3 - Community/neighbourhood meetings	6	8	14	7%	8%	7%
4 - Through co-workers/friends/relative/ word of mouth	44	52	96	48%	53%	50%
5 - Through ex clients	13	15	28	14%	15%	15%
6 - Police	16	16	32	17%	16%	17%
7 - NGO/women group	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Others						
Through Lawyer	3	5	8	3%	5%	4%
Already knew about it	7	0	7	8%	0%	4%
DCW	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%
NCW	2	0	2	2%	0%	1%
Had heard about it in Self Defence Course	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Another Women's Cell in Rewari	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Internet	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

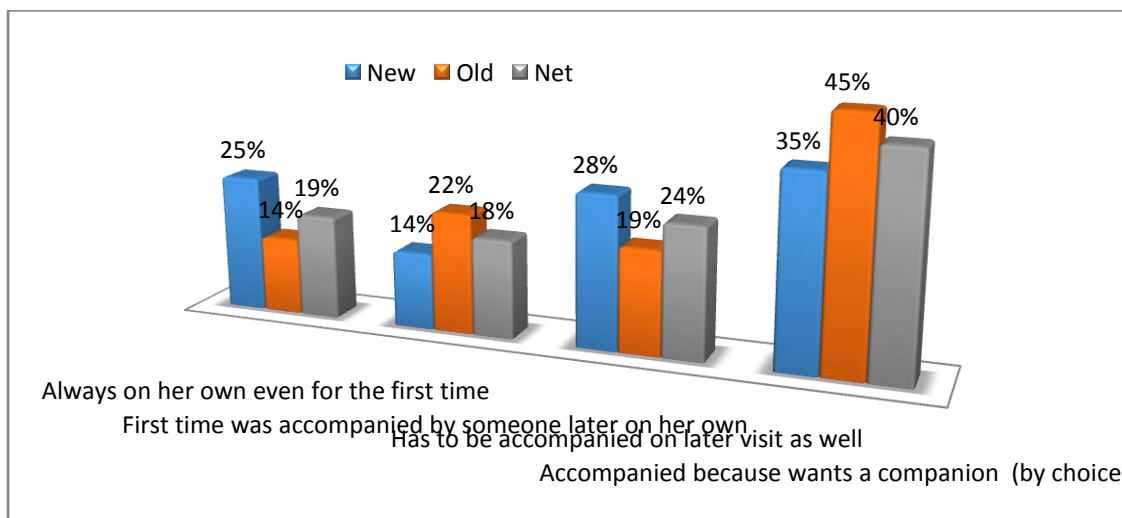
In sharing their experiences of the Cells the women clearly responded that they felt secure (51%) when they came to the Cells, even though they were located within the Police premises. And they were also quite clear that they would rather not go to a police station to file a complaint on their own should the need arise at sometime. At least 27% said that coming to Cell did not make any difference to them.

Table 21: How does a survivor feel when she comes to the Special Cell

How does she feel when she comes to Special cell located in police premises?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Feel secure	49	49	98	53%	49%	51%
2 - Scared	12	5	17	13%	5%	9%
3 - Odd	9	3	12	10%	3%	6%
4 - Doesn't make a difference	22	30	52	24%	30%	27%
Other reasons						
Sad	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Scared earlier but now OK	4	6	10	4%	6%	5%
Felt good	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Feel bad (Educated people shouldn't be coming to the police station)	1	2	3	1%	2%	2%
Get frustrated here as nothing happens	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Starts feeling low when she has to come here; can't focus on anything	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Earlier felt anxious; not anymore	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
Out of Total Cases	92	99	191			

When the survivors came to the Cell for the first time, 18% were accompanied by someone, but later too when they came they wanted a companion so 40% had someone with them - either with parent/s, brother or relative/s. Subsequently, too, they were not confident of coming to the Cell on their own (24%), the reason was more fear from the perpetrator and threats from him, not to lodge a complaint with the Police cell.

Fig 10: Whether the survivor was able to come on her own or was accompanied by someone



There were a few survivors who did come on their own because nobody was there or they did have the confidence to come on their own (19 %). Most of them, 77% reported that they had no difficulty during their first visit to the Cell, though 12% said they did not know whom to meet. Only 10% said they had other difficulties and 1% did not come with any documentation the first time and 1% said the staff did not have time to attend to them.

Table 22: Difficulties faced during first visit to the Cell

Did you face any difficulty on your first visit to the cell	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - None	73	74	147	79%	75%	77%
2 - Did not know whom to meet	11	11	22	12%	11%	12%
3 - Staff did not have time	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%
4 - Language was an issue	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
5 - Lack of documentation	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%

However, even though they came to the Special Cell with someone or on their own, they said they would rather not go to a Police station, even if they had been there earlier at some point of time.

Expectations of survivors from the Special Cells

The data from the sample shows the varied expectations with which survivors came to the Special cells. As shown in Table 23, primarily survivors wanted the violence to stop; 49% wanted the violence to end. About 40% women sought the assistance of the cell for other purposes, though 30% had expectations to seek justice for themselves. At least 26% women needed counselling and emotional support, while 25% women were seeking assistance for maintenance and for financial aid. About one fifth, 21% survivors wanted someone to hear them without being judgemental and 14% sought support as they did not have anywhere else to go, and no other alternative. Another 12% women expected the Cell to help them change theirs as well as their children's lives. About 9% women wanted the perpetrators to be punished through assistance from the cell. To seek legal aid 7% women had approached the cell and 4% had come to seek custody of their children. For 6 % women it was a matter of safety and security for themselves and their children. For medical assistance only 1% came.

Table 23: Survivors' Expectations from the Cell

	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Did not know where else to go/had no other options/choice but to seek some help/support	10	16	26	11%	16%	14%
Wanted someone to listen to me (without being judgmental)	24	16	40	26%	16%	21%
Wanted violence to stop	35	58	93	38%	59%	49%
Security issues (self/children)	4	7	11	4%	7%	6%
Immediate need for shelter	2	1	3	2%	1%	2%
Custody of children	4	5	9	4%	5%	5%
Maintenance/financial aid	20	27	47	22%	27%	25%
Medical help	0	2	2	0%	2%	1%
Legal aid	8	5	13	9%	5%	7%
Needed Counselling/Emotional support	22	27	49	24%	27%	26%
Wanted self /children's life to change	8	14	22	9%	14%	12%
Wanted perpetrator to be punished	10	7	17	11%	7%	9%
To seek justice for self	22	35	57	24%	35%	30%
Reconciliation	25	21	46	27%	21%	24%
Divorce	10	14	24	11%	14%	13%

Other expectations cited by survivors for coming to the Cell were retrieving their *streedhan* (5%), husband to change, husband to start living with her separately and some expected easy and quick solution from the Cell. In the sample 76% women stated that their expectations did not change after coming to the cell, though 24% women expectations did change after their experience. The survivors did appreciate the overall environment of the Special Cells, particularly the fact that there were women, IOs and Social Workers whom they could connect with and they had the ‘space’ to speak out (28% survivors appreciated the presence of women staff).

Services sought by Survivors

Among the services sought by survivors from the Special Cells, the majority of them, Table 24, 57% sought counselling and 48% sought reconciliation. Actually these are not separate but fairly linked needs of survivors. A survivor when she comes to a cell seeks multiple types of assistance at varying junctures in her case so she expresses her need for those services. For 30% survivors, emotional support and confidence building was a critical need for approaching the cell. 16% survivors wanted legal facilitation for their cases. As regards police interventions, 6% survivors wanted help to file FIRs and 3% wanted police protection and security. At least one third of the survivors, 32%, desired mediation/ reconciliation to stop violence, while 3% women wanted help in timely execution of court orders. Regarding paperwork and documentation, 8% women wanted retrieval of property and documents, while 4% wanted information sharing about rights/ laws. For custody of children 3% women sought the assistance of the cell. 8% women sought other information and 1% wanted to know other options for their case.

Table 24: Services sought by survivors from the Cells

Services survivors were seeking from the Special Cell	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Urgent steps taken to stop violence	1	9	10	1%	9%	5%
2 - Counselling	41	68	109	45%	69%	57%
3 - Emotional support /Confidence building	23	34	57	25%	34%	30%
4 - Assistance for lodging FIR	5	7	12	5%	7%	6%
5 - Police assistance for protection/security	3	2	5	3%	2%	3%
6 - Referral for Medical Assistance	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
7 - Shelter arrangement	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
8 - Legal facilitation	14	17	31	15%	17%	16%
9 - Reconciliation	42	50	92	46%	51%	48%
10 -Mediation/Negotiation to stop violence	19	42	61	21%	42%	32%
11 -Assistance in timely execution of court orders	1	5	6	1%	5%	3%
12 -Retrieval of property/documents	11	4	15	12%	4%	8%
13 -Custody of children	2	4	6	2%	4%	3%
14 -Information sharing about rights/laws	3	5	8	3%	5%	4%
15 -Information on alternative options for case	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
16- Facilitation in getting maintenance	3	6	9	3%	6%	5%
17- Divorce	5	3	8	5%	3%	4%
Out of Total no of cases	92	99	191			

The survivors whose cases were under reconciliation or had undergone the process for reconciliation (48%, Table 24), were clearly concerned about their safety in the matrimonial home /or husbands home if they set up a nuclear home after reconciliation. Women did report that they went back after several sittings with the spouse and the Social Workers (6-12 sittings or even more at times) and the violence recurred. They felt that some sort of follow up from the Cells was essential to keep the perpetrator from sliding back to his old ways. The monitoring by way of random home visits or phone calls would keep the pressure on him. If they went back to the joint family, even then the monitoring by the random monitoring by the police or the social worker would strengthen her position in the house instead of inviting taunts like – “Why did you go to the Police? You should have known better. What will they do now? After all you have come back.”

Aside from the taunts, very often the violence has recurred after reconciliations, so women have felt extremely unsafe as they feel further weakened to deal with the violence. So in many instances they have had to come back to the special cells

Impact of SPUWAC’s interventions: Survivors’ experiences and voices

As regards the impact of the intervention of the Special Cells, as shown in Table 25 below, women did point out that those of them who were staying with their natal families did not experience physical violence as they were away from the perpetrators. On the whole the violence decreased for 22% survivors, though 17% women continued to face other forms of violence. Actually violence stopped for only 10% of the women. For 8% women violence increase / recurred because of failed reconciliation or the other party did not want to reconcile.

Table 25: Impact of Cell interventions on the violence encountered by survivors

How has the intervention by special cell impacted the violence being faced by her	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Violence stopped immediately	7	12	19	8%	12%	10%
Violence has decreased	18	25	43	19%	25%	22%
Violence still continuing but the form has changed to Physical	1	3	4	1%	3%	2%
Violence still continuing but the form has changed to Verbal/Emotional	17	15	32	18%	15%	17%
Violence still continuing but the form has changed to Economical	2	2	4	2%	2%	2%
Violence still continuing but the form has changed to Sexual	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Violence has increased/ recurred (Why?)	5	11	16	5%	11%	8%
Violence had already stopped as survivor moved out/not living with perpetrator before coming to cell (so no impact of cell’s intervention)	17	24	41	18%	24%	21%

Voices of survivors

Different women reported individual instances of the recurrence of violence which made them feel “emotionally drained and more tormented” or that violence increased due to tension, as the case had not been resolved at the Cell. For one survivor, since the Cell’s

intervention has not resulted in any settlement for herself and her child, this has led to her being burden on her parents which has increased her mental stress.

Another reported that physical violence increased as her husband repeatedly taunts and says "bula cell walon ko"(call the Cell people). He feels he is powerful as he works in clerical grade in a Ministry; says Cell people cannot touch him.

One survivor reported two attacks on her (attempted acid attack; knife attack) which she reported in the police station. After that he was pressuring her to take back her complaint. Another woman revealed that after coming to SPUWAC husband has started drinking more and started abusing her more.

One reported that "there is no change in the violence, in fact tension has increased. "Earlier I had even forgotten that I am married. Since I have come here I get reminded of it."

a) Changes in survivors after coming to the Cell Mobility

As illustrated in Table 26, survivors reported the changes that have come about in their persona after coming to the Special Cells, especially after the counselling sessions, see table 36. Women spoke regarding their mobility for every day work. While 33% women reported they can go anywhere on their own, 18% informed that they do not go anywhere on their own. About one fifth, 21% survivors said they could go to the market by themselves and 17% said they could come to the Special cell alone. Visiting relatives and the natal family by themselves was reported by 12% and 11% women respectively. Only 8% attended social gatherings alone and 6% visited the children's schools. Another 6% said they could go to the court or police station unaccompanied.

Table 26: Which places Survivors can go to on their own

Which are the places she can go to on own now (but could not go earlier) –	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - None	18	17	35	20%	17%	18%
2 - Work	7	9	16	8%	9%	8%
3 - Market	18	22	40	20%	22%	21%
4 - Movie	0	2	2	0%	2%	1%
5 - Natal home	6	15	21	7%	15%	11%
6 - Relatives/friends' place	10	13	23	11%	13%	12%
7 - College	2	2	4	2%	2%	2%
8 - Children's school	2	10	12	2%	10%	6%
9 - Hospital	2	5	7	2%	5%	4%
10 - Religious sites/gatherings	6	2	8	7%	2%	4%
11 - Social gatherings	8	7	15	9%	7%	8%
12 - Public offices (paying bills etc)	3	3	6	3%	3%	3%
13 - Special Cell	14	18	32	15%	18%	17%
14 - Police station/court	2	9	11	2%	9%	6%
15 - Out of station	3	4	7	3%	4%	4%
16 - Can go anywhere	30	33	63	33%	33%	33%

Voices of survivors

While one survivor felt that a number of positive changes have come about, but she also said that these were more as a result of having moved out of marital home, where she was feeling

frustrated, felt claustrophobic and was unhappy. She felt liberated having moved out and is now free to do whatever she feels like.

Another said she never went out alone before marriage and even in the 5 years after marriage did not do so. Now she feels scared to go out alone, because husband can come in anytime and harm me. He has already threatened that he will throw acid on her.

“Cannot go alone anywhere.” This was a refrain from several women even though they had moved out from the violent environment of the marital home. They were either in the habit of not going out alone or were just too scared to venture out alone or were burdened with child care or other responsibilities or else health issues.

One said her husband stalks her and she remains in constant fear of his threats from him. Several women (33%) did say they can go anywhere as they were independent and working somewhere. Some went out, but with an escort, as threat to life continues. Many of them reported coming to the Special Cell with a family member (father, brother, mother) or a friend. Quite a few survivors we met did come alone.

b) Decision making

In the area of decision making, see Table 37, after coming into contact with Social Workers and undergoing counselling, the survivors were quite affected due to the violence and their dependency on other for financial support. While 41% women said they could take any decision related to self, 26% women said they could take decisions regarding their children. 23% could now decide what to eat, wear and where to go and at least 17% were able to take decision related to their own work. At least 12% survivors were unable to take any decision and among these the new cases comprised a higher percentage. Overall 50% women reported that they alone took the decisions regarding their case at the Cell and 25% took the decisions in consultation with family and friends. It is to be noted that many responses came with a caveat that now that survivor is staying with parents, she would consult them before taking any decision related to her education, mobility, work etc.

Table 27: Can survivors take any decisions independently (which they could not take earlier)

Do you think there are decisions that you can NOW take independently (which you could not take earlier)	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
None	13	10	23	14%	10%	12%
About household responsibilities	9	12	21	10%	12%	11%
Survivor’s own education	11	8	19	12%	8%	10%
Own work related	14	19	33	15%	19%	17%
Family’s health related	6	7	13	7%	7%	7%
Education of children specially girls (daughter/sister)	5	11	16	5%	11%	8%
About self (what to eat, wear and where to go)	13	30	43	14%	30%	23%
Purchasing property/assets	1	2	3	1%	2%	2%
Arranging marriage alliance for children/sibling	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
Any decision related to children	18	32	50	20%	32%	26%
Any decision related to self	33	45	78	36%	45%	41%

Voices of survivors

While a large number of survivors were not in a position to take many decisions for themselves, some of them took decisions about self and child/children and their education. A few were quite clear on their decision about divorce, not to marry again, about seeking maintenance for self and children, their own education, not go back to husband, mobility to come to the Special Cell and case related decisions

One said that she is still hesitant to take many decisions on her own as she feels it may upset her husband and the new equilibrium in her recently set up nuclear unit after reconciliation. She will gradually assert herself she says.

Another said, "Can't take any decisions until I become economically independent and my daughter completes college." She is dependent on the husbands support for her education, though it is erratic. Another survivor said she is still not emotionally or financially independent to take any life changing decisions - short term or long term- about her own or the children's future yet, though she does not want to depend on her father economically or marry again. Will possibly like to stay alone with her 2 girls and work for economic sustenance. She is determined to work to sustain herself and the children.

It is evident that women's decision making is influenced by the support they get, their education and economic independence, even the family circumstances. They have to weigh the pros and cons carefully so as not to jeopardise their position or that of their children and even their parents circumstances when they move out of their marital homes. Multiple factors influence their choices and the decisions they make. Many of them had no opportunities to exert themselves or options to take decisions when they were married. The world of decision making gradually unfolds for them through the circumstances of life.

Availability of information to survivors

As concerns new information given by Social Workers to survivors, 50% responded that they received information related to their particular case, while 44% said they did not learn anything additional. And 5% were not sure of what they had gleaned from the counselling. (See Table 28).

Table28: Did survivor receive any new information/ learnt anything new

Do you think your have recd. any new information/learnt anything new during the course of case intervention?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
1 - Yes	40	52	92	45%	55%	50%
2 - No	44	37	81	49%	39%	44%
3 - Do not know	5	5	10	6%	5%	5%

Those who had received any information, it was through the course of their interactions with the Social Workers, (see Table 29). About 41% women clearly developed the understanding that their husbands cannot abuse them. Another 35% women said their understood that violence is a crime and 33% had more clarity on their cases and legal rights and laws related to women. Only 24% women were familiar with the services provided by the Cells and similar percentage developed the understanding that violence is not their fault. It must be noted that among the old cases 35% women were aware of the services provided by the Cell, while on 10% were aware of the cells services from among the new cases; though 53% new cases were aware that their husbands cannot abuse them (33% old cases). Also 40% new

cases were familiar about women's rights and laws related to women as against 27% old cases. On the other hand 35% old cases had clarity of their problem/case and 33% knew that violence is unacceptable. As concerns information about police and judiciary only 10% survivors had information from the Cell.

Table 29: Information received by Survivors from the Social Workers

If yes - what	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
About services being offered by the cell	4	18	22	10%	35%	24%
Importance of papers/ documents	5	9	14	13%	17%	15%
Gained information on alternative options	1	4	5	3%	8%	5%
Clarity of problem /case	12	18	30	30%	35%	33%
Importance of self/ self expression	4	7	11	10%	13%	12%
Importance of taking decisions for one self	4	4	8	10%	8%	9%
Violence need not be accepted	6	17	23	15%	33%	25%
Violence is a crime	13	19	32	33%	37%	35%
This is not my fault	9	13	22	23%	25%	24%
Overall perception/understanding towards violence against women	8	3	11	20%	6%	12%
My husband cannot abuse me	21	17	38	53%	33%	41%
Know more about solutions/options available for women facing violence	10	13	23	25%	25%	25%
More about police/judiciary	4	5	9	10%	10%	10%
Livelihood options	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Women rights and laws related to women	16	14	30	40%	27%	33%

Around 24% women became aware with regard to information about services offered by the Cell, that violence need not be accepted, and it is not their fault, know more about solutions/options available for women facing violence. About 15% women were aware of the importance of documents and papers, 12% women gained information on importance of self and/self expression, 9% understood the importance of taking decisions for themselves.

Few women on an individual level reported that they received information about SPUWAC, women can get maintenance and even seek a divorce through the help of guidance of the Special cells. A few said that they were told that husband and wife should live together, husband cannot do zabardasti (cannot force her), how to lead a married life, 'yahan aoge to ghar bas jaega'.

Survivors got mixed messages that- women should be independent- "you should lead your own life," streedhan/ dowry belong to women, maintain and keep your documents/records properly, now options are available to women - they should not bear atrocities silently.

A few said they came to know about some rights - mental torture, DV Act, sexual exploitation in the family, about economic rights, children's rights, maintenance etc. One became aware that "Saas sasur per bhi case ho sakta hai" (cases can be filed on in laws too), and they can't ask for dowry/money/gifts etc.

One survivor said she knew about her rights, but during the course of her case picked up the courage to fight for them. She feels, "men want to oppress women at every juncture."

A survivor informed that she kept a meticulous record of entire processes - dates given by CAW cell, court dates; FIR details etc., and numbers from which she got threat calls etc. A couple of other too reported that they too have learnt to maintain their records now.

Another felt that the special cell is only for women. There needs to be a focus on men too as they are the ones perpetrating violence and MUST as a rule be called in for counselling, mediation etc. Unless they are included equally in the legal process things are not going to change.

One of them learnt that at the Special Cells an ordinary woman's voice is also heard. Another experienced that each Counsellor gives a different advice and that the Cell has more power than she anticipated.

One said that she has not learnt anything after coming to Special Cell. She learnt by observing the number of cases and corresponding that to what she has gone through

Survivors' Experiences of the Special Cells

With regard to the objective of “rebuilding the violated women’s self-esteem, self-worth and dignity, and offering immediate services in cases of family violence and atrocities against women through police assistance ... the Special Cells process is directed towards enabling the woman to make informed choices and decisions in relation to her own life. This “process of interventions emphasises joint problem solving between the social worker and the violated woman.”¹⁷

In the above context, this section takes up the survivors’ experiences of the Special Cells from the period when they decided to go there, when they come in with expectations, the services they are seeking, their experience within the system and when they are with the social worker. The support they get at different junctures in their cases is equally critical in the context of their expectations and needs. The survivors’ satisfaction/ dissatisfaction and the assessment of the services she has received are equally documented.

The majority of women who approached the Special Cells expected facilitation for reconciliation to restore their marriages, though a few did expect to seek assistance for separation or divorce in order to be free from violence. A few expected to lodge FIRs against husbands as they wanted them to be punished. Quite a few wanted to live in a separate house with their husbands. The survivors, whose husbands inflicted violence after drinking, wanted them to stop drinking after counselling. They even desired counselling for husbands to change to treat them better, or take up a job and become more responsible towards the family.

Voices of survivors

A few women expected their husbands to understand their needs and respect them. They desired that husbands become responsible for the children.

One clearly said, “husband ko dara do, jisse ghar bas jaye” (frighten my husband so that my family life is restored). They did not want to go to court and hence came to CAW Cell, expecting a divorce.

Another expected the Cell to help her to save her family, “ghar bach jaye” (my home should be saved); as she wanted husband to keep her and the child in separate house. One woman wanted her husband to provide a home and maintain her and the children. If not then provide maintenance so that she can bring up the children on her own.

¹⁷ Mission Statement and Monitoring Indicators for Special Cell for Women and Children, TISS 2004

Another said that she could not take a divorce because she wanted her children to be able to claim their share in the husband's property. A few had family constraints like this one who want to stay with husband; but how long could she stay with mother. The brother will have his own family; where will she go with her children after that. Several also wanted to get back streedhan from the marital families.

Another wanted to get a separation and maintenance for her son. She also wanted her jewellery and cash returned to her. One survivor wanted the husband and his family to be punished for treating her badly. While another wanted her husband to understand the problems and take her back. Before coming to CAW cell she had already filed a case for maintenance in Rohini Court.

Women's Experience of Police Stations/ Police

Survivors, who spoke of their experiences with the Special cells discerned a difference between the police stations and Cells (see Table 30), though 17% did not find the Cells' environment any different from the regular stations. The women did appreciate the presence of women staff, as was reported by 53% women. 43 % women felt comfortable with the atmosphere, while 41% appreciated the attitude of the police, which was different here.

Table 30: Difference between Police Station and Special Cells

If yes is there a difference between the two?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
No difference	14	4	18	26%	8%	17%
Physical space/fixtures-furniture	1	3	4	2%	6%	4%
Overall atmosphere	16	29	45	30%	57%	43%
Attitude of police	16	27	43	30%	53%	41%
Presence of women staff	22	32	54	42%	63%	52%

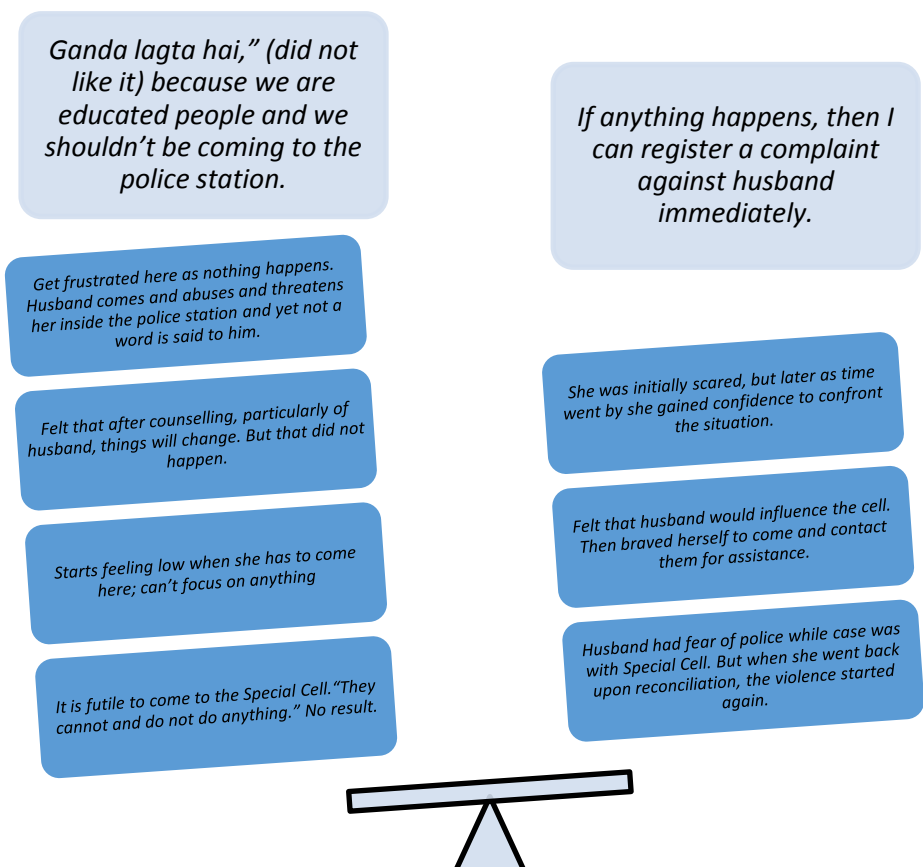
As illustrated in Table 31 below, only 25% women said they would come to the Special Cells again if they had a problem. And 27 % said they would access the nearest police station if the need arose to complain about the violence at home.

Table 31: Accessing the Cell in future?

	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Will come to special cell	21	26	47	23%	26%	25%
Will call 1090/helpline	19	34	53	21%	34%	28%
Will go to nearest police station	22	30	52	24%	30%	27%
Will handle on my own*	21	24	45	23%	24%	24%

According to the responses regarding time lapsed in reaching some conclusion or resolving the case, overall an average of 7 months time was taken.

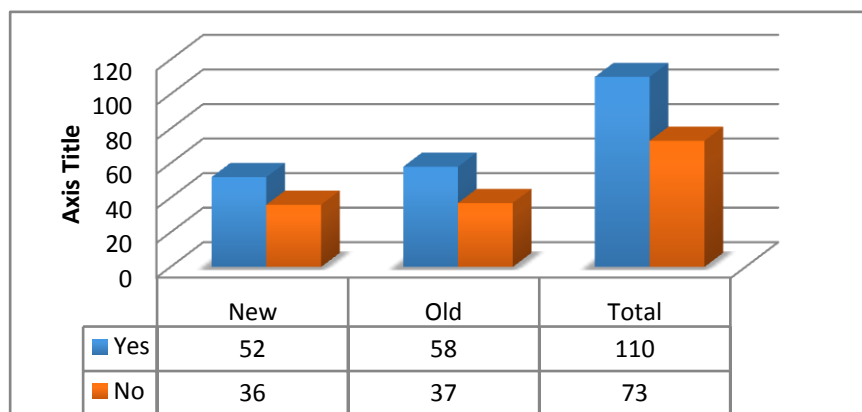
Fig 11: Experiences of Survivors on how they feel when they come to the Cell



Overall Usefulness of Special Cell Services

The women assessed the utility of the services provided by the Special Cells, which helped them. The services were rated on a 4 point scale. (see section ahead). In general 60% survivors found the services useful. And 40% did not find the services useful.

Fig 12 : Usefulness of Special Cells



The majority of survivors, (see table 32 below), 79% found counselling most useful, while 48% women felt that emotional support was very helpful. Confidence building by the Counsellor was another area which 28% women appreciated. One fourth of the

survivors, 25% expressed that reconciliation efforts were beneficial for them. Mediation and negotiation to stop violence was appreciated by 24% women. This was an area where the percentage of satisfaction was higher among the old cases, (reconciliation -34%, mediation/negotiation – 29%), almost twice that of the new cases. This is understandable as the new cases have had fewer sittings with Counsellors and their cases had not moved on for mediation. The understanding that violence is a crime was understood by 10% survivors, though 14% were clear that the experience of violence is not their fault. About 10% women found legal facilitation useful.¹⁸

Table32: Services that the Survivors found useful

If Yes, What all did you find useful ?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Urgent steps taken to stop violence	2	7	9	4%	12%	8%
Counselling	40	47	87	77%	81%	79%
Emotional support	23	30	53	44%	52%	48%
Confidence building	13	18	31	25%	31%	28%
Assistance for lodging FIR	2	3	5	4%	5%	5%
Police assistance for protection/security	2	3	5	4%	5%	5%
Referral for Medical Assistance	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Shelter arrangement	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Legal facilitation	4	7	11	8%	12%	10%
Reconciliation	8	20	28	15%	34%	25%
Mediation/Negotiation to stop violence	9	17	26	17%	29%	24%
Assistance in timely execution of court orders	1	1	2	2%	2%	2%
Retrieval of property/documents	3	1	4	6%	2%	4%
Custody of children	0	1	1	0%	2%	1%
Information sharing about rights/laws	3	7	10	6%	12%	9%
Information on alternative options	1	2	3	2%	3%	3%
Changes in self	3	4	7	6%	7%	6%
Clarity on the case	3	4	7	6%	7%	6%
Importance of papers/ documents	2	1	3	4%	2%	3%
Importance of self/ self expression	2	2	4	4%	3%	4%
Importance of taking decisions for one self	4	1	5	8%	2%	5%
Understanding that violence need not be accepted	1	3	4	2%	5%	4%
Understanding that Violence is a crime	3	8	11	6%	14%	10%
Understanding that this is not my fault	6	9	15	12%	16%	14%
Understanding that my husband cannot abuse me	5	3	8	10%	5%	7%

Survivors' dissatisfaction with the Special Cells

Survivors' dissatisfaction arose when their case did not move fast enough or the next steps did not take place in the way they wanted. At least 66% survivors (see Table 32), reported that nothing had changed for them after coming to the Cell. Those who were not satisfied with the way the case was responded to/dealt with comprised 55% of the not satisfied group. Survivors who reported that they were not satisfied with the counselling comprised 19% of the not satisfied group, while 4% felt that the Cell staff was not helpful enough in their cases.

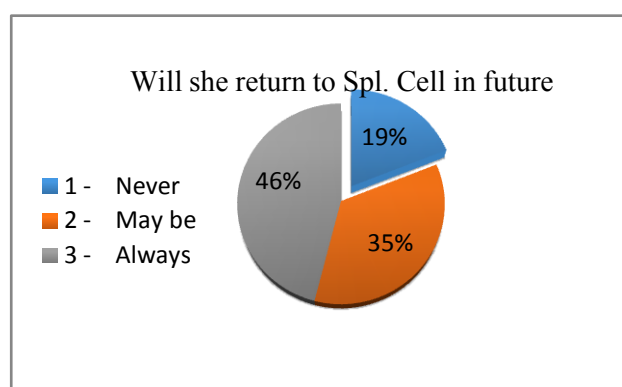
¹⁸ During interviews the researchers came to know that many survivors had privately engaged lawyers to register cases in Family Courts, who had guided them to register their cases in the Special Cells. This was also reported by the Mediators. Some survivors revealed that had done so, while others tried to cover the fact.

Table 33: Why survivors were not satisfied

If Not satisfied, Why?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Not satisfied with the way case was responded to/dealt with	18	22	40	50%	59%	55%
Not satisfied with the Counselling process	10	4	14	28%	11%	19%
Nothing has changed after going to special cell	25	23	48	69%	62%	66%
Did not like the atmosphere there	0	1	1	0%	3%	1%
Staff was not helpful	1	2	3	3%	5%	4%

When asked if in future, they would return to Special Cell for assistance in case they

faced a similar problem, only 19% said they would not come back to the Cell. While 46% were sure that they would return to Cell if needed, a substantial 35% were undecided (may be). 64% of the survivors said they would recommend the Cell to other women who face violence. As reflected in table 47 below, 64% of women said they would recommend the Cell to other women. A high percentage of older cases 74% said they would refer the cell to other survivors, in comparison to on 53% new cases.

Fig 13: Will Survivor return to Cell in future**Table 34: Would survivors recommend the Special Cells to other women**

Would you recommend this special cell to other women who face violence?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Never	8	6	14	9%	6%	7%
May be	29	15	44	32%	15%	23%
Always	48	72	120	53%	74%	64%
Can't Say	6	4	10	7%	4%	5%

Voices of survivors

"Here I could express anger. Felt safe and supportive that complaint has been registered. All parties are involved in the process".

"Yahan neutral kaam hota hai." (Here the work is neutral). It was good that I was given time to think. They listen to you.

She felt good that someone is saying the same thing as her, "Ladai sahi chal rahi hai." (the fight is in the right direction)

Case got stronger after coming to Special Cell. Husband was absconding. Because of intervention from CAW Cell, he came back.

"Tasalli di." (Gave consolation). Confidentiality was maintained. She could speak her mind in front of her husband. "Hausla mila, Insaf mila"

People understand women here and "jaldi sunvai hoti hai" (quick hearings take place) and immediate action is taken

Husband was told that if he wants a divorce, he will have to give alimony which he did not

Positive

want to do. Hence, he decided to reconcile, which is what the client wanted.
 Husband only spoke to the complainant because of counsellor- else he never spoke to her.
 She feels stronger, is able to speak in front of her in laws, though she does not stay with them in the village. She knows that 'right is right'
 Her understanding that violence is a crime is that even if she bears it; it is a form of violence.
 Reconciliation happened, but it did not work as husband did not change his attitude.
 She has faith in the police and the Special Cell to help her out of the circumstances, though the violence did not stop.
 Her husband followed the advice given at the Cell. Now drinking is only sporadic, not habitual on a daily basis. "Mera ghar bas gaya yahan aane se" (My home has been restored).
 She has come to cell for reconciliation twice. She has understood that husband should give her and the children what is rightfully theirs.
 People are ready to listen here; friendly environment; mediation worked. He agreed to take back his case and to return her jewellery etc (without taking any money)
 Application in the Special Cell acts a pressure on other party; at least someone can pressurise husband otherwise he doesn't listen to anyone (including his parents).
 Could talk to husband in joint sessions; that helped in putting herself together; this is an alternate to the court process.
 Survivor got better clarity after 8-10 months, and her expectations changed after sessions with the I.O. Though initially she came for reconciliation, she wanted separation as time progressed.
 Husband thought that survivor was unaware of what was happening in the world, did not know any processes, and will therefore not be able to do anything. But once she approached the special cell, they were scared, they reached a settlement and very quickly returned all the stuff.

"No follow up after they sent me back."
 "Madad to jab hoti jab main uske sath khushi se rehti." She doesn't want to reconcile but wants a divorce. She has lost self worth. Feels that case did not move forward as the perpetrator- opposite party did not come for joint sittings consistently. After 3-4 summons are sent, then he comes once, maybe.
 Nothing is moving ahead in 7 months. Feels very disappointed, but has confidence that some outcome will happen. When?? She is waiting.
 Husband reverts to violence even after being counselled, due to the alcoholism. He hasn't stopped drinking even in the day. He does not listen to anyone.
 Things at home have not changed. Survivor feels that had mother in law also been summoned as many times as survivor for counselling the situation at home could have improved. Survivor has changed, but she has to return to the same environment, which has not changed.
 Counselling has not been really helpful, as the second party does not show up. There is no pressure on husband to be present and attend counselling.

Negative

B.3 Social Workers – Bridge between Survivors and the Cell

The Social Workers in the Special Cells are broadly responsible for providing –

- “emotional support and strengthening the psychological self of the violated women through the problem solving process with special emphasis on acceptance of woman as a person strengthening her capacity to respond proactively to her life situation”.
- building commitment for negotiating non violence with various stakeholders and within the police system and with others to recognise violence against women as potential/ actual crime by understanding and damaging effects of violence in the interest of violated women.” “engaging police help and harnessing police authority to help violated women to establish their legal and normative rights”

- “preparing the women to make informed choices regarding her access to the law by demystifying the law and enabling her to obtain her legal rights and entitlements”.¹⁹

The five Social workers in the two Special Cells in Pitampura and Nanakpura were met during the course of the study. During interviews they expressed their perceptions regarding the objectives of the Special Cells in reference to their work experiences. A couple of them were rather confused regarding the objectives of the Cells and their roles / responsibilities as Social Workers.

Social workers understanding of the objectives most relevant in fulfilling needs of survivors

- Stopping Violence
- Providing emotional support
- Empowerment (for education, health, livelihoods, adjustment in family)
- Inform women that they are not responsible for the violence - violence is a crime
- Resolve marital issues mutually through discussions
- Awareness of violence - that it will not be tolerated in anyway.
- Women have emotional freedom.
- Family should adjust / accommodate to the needs of women
- Mobility of women is important

Social Workers though trained and committed to their work did find it difficult to handle certain situations when handling cases, as each woman’s situation and case is specific and so are her needs for seeking assistance to stop the violence. Social Workers expressed what they found most difficult to do while discharging their duties as counsellors.

Box 7: Challenges faced by Social Workers

- Working with men is difficult at times.
- Unable to follow the case once it is closed from the cell.
- After reconciliation - follow up is difficult, as husbands of clients do not permit clients to visit the cell and work towards closure of case.
- Non violent reconciliation is problematic, as even when the survivor reconciles, it is sustained very temporarily, and recurs almost all the time.
- If women are not secure in matrimonial home then it is risky for them. When women do not want to go back, then they should not be compelled by the EOs- ‘Ghar Basana’ is not the be all and end all.
- When men are addicted to alcohol and substance abuse reconciliation is difficult.
- Cases involving extra-marital affairs are difficult to resolve.
- Economic limitations of women compel them to reconcile in adverse situations.
- When men do not provide for the family medical / health issues create problems for women - pregnancy, severe violence.
- Desire for male child is predominant in families - post natal period difficult for women.

The reasons why they felt that the objectives of Special Cells were difficult to obtain were that:

¹⁹ Mission Statement and Monitoring Indicators for special Cells for Women and children 2004

- At times survivors were not serious, perhaps because similar situations arise again and women go through the same experiences again for which they had initially sought help.
- Particularly perpetrators/husbands were not bothered, so they did not heed counselling. They do not value women.
- Violence is beyond the control of women. Even poverty impacts relationships because it brings hardships, particularly for women - then VAW gets enhanced.

The Social Workers were fairly clear about their role as Counsellors and their placement within the system of operations of the Special Cells. They were at the second point of contact with survivors, after their cases were registered and the EO referred them to Social Workers. They were clear about the responsibilities assigned to them, though did not have the opportunity fulfil those responsibilities due to certain norms outlined by the Police.

Table35: Responsibilities of Social Workers (as cited by them)

Responsibilities assigned	Documentation
1. Case Dealing- Counselling and providing emotional support to survivors	1. Intake Register: Case History details (Referred by Investigating Officer)
2. Networking with other organisations	2. Record of fresh cases
3. Community awareness programmes	3. Record of one time interaction - included in the monthly report
4. Awareness programs in schools as resource persons	4. Counselling Report (For the I.O)
5. Home visits and networking when required	Same as the intake register but meant for I.O. 5. Events Diary
6. Preparation of monthly and quarterly reports and maintenance of case registers	6. Reports/Records Register - entries on reports sent to DCP with details 7. Attendance Register of cases with dates. (Some documentation work is assigned to specific counsellors for specific purposes in Nanakpura like no. 3 4, 5, 6, 7), others are maintained by all Counsellors. Case data records are maintained by the Police data cell

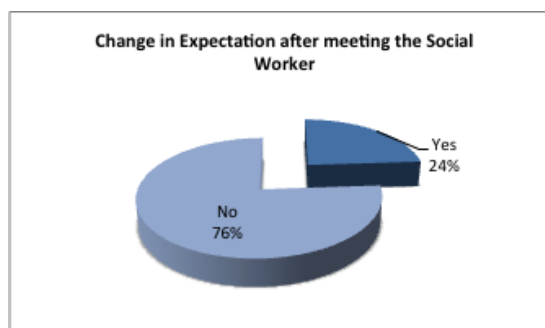
The Counsellors mentioned work related challenges encountered in the course of their work in the Special Cells. Despite these they were managing quite well in rendering their responsibilities towards the survivors. They expressed that their role is limited to only counselling, without going even one step further to help survivors. There is general perception in the Special Cells that counselling is only 'ghar basaana' and if this is not the outcome for a case, then the effort has failed. Some police officials are of the view that women misuse laws for their own ends, using violence as an excuse, so the survivors receive two different forms of advice in some cases – one from the Social Workers and another from the EOs. Hence they get confused many a time. Social Workers do have the capability to handle up to 4 cases a day, but routine documentation work – writing case registers, monthly reports, compilation, co-ordination is time consuming.

Survivors' Expectations from and Experiences with Social Workers

The survivors come to the Social Workers with great hopes as they are oppressed by the violence and equally by the impact of it on their lives. For them the Counsellor within the police station is a ray of hope for justice, who will not only provide guidance, but also help to draw out the survivor from the adverse situation that she is undergoing. Hence the survivors' experiences and expectations after coming into contact with the Social Workers mark a

turning point in their lives; as after much deliberation and consideration they have come forward to speak of their own trajectory of violence to seek help. The relationship that develops and the expectations that emerge are critical to capture from the viewpoint of the survivors.

Fig 44: Changed expectation of survivors



In the study sample 42% women (see Table 36 below), expressed that they expected the Social workers to help with reconciliation with the family/ other party and 32 % expected her to dialogue with the husband / his family. This is in itself an illustration of the women embedding faith in the Social Worker to resolve the issue of violence through a third party, which is neutral. Women particularly wanted someone to listen to them without being judgemental, which was reported by 26% cases, though 22% women expected that the Social worker would help to stop the violence. Women expected the social worker to render support for dealing with the emotional crisis at hand, 19% wanted this. On the other hand 17 % wanted negotiation with the opposite party to stop the violence. And 10% were not clear what they wanted from the Social Worker. 5% women expected a sensitive response when they met the Social Worker, while 2% wanted help for shelter for themselves and children, and 1% each for health and employment referrals respectively. Additionally 40% of the survivors interviewed, had several other expectations from Social Workers including facilitation for divorce, assistance in retrieving their *streedhan*/wedding expenses; or with her intervention stop the husband from drinking and start respecting the survivor.

Table 36: Survivors Expectations from Social Workers

What kind of expectations do you have from Social Workers working with the Special Cells?	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Don't know	4	15	19	4%	15%	10%
2 - Stopping violence	16	26	42	17%	26%	22%
3 - Someone to listen to me without judging me	24	25	49	26%	25%	26%
4 - Support for dealing with emotional crisis	19	18	37	21%	18%	19%
5 - Negotiation to stop violence (Mediation)	11	22	33	12%	22%	17%
6 - Reconciliation with family/other party	39	42	81	42%	42%	42%
7 - Facilitate dialogue with family/other party	30	33	63	33%	33%	33%
8 - Help for shelter for self and children when afflicted by violence	2	2	4	2%	2%	2%
9 - Referral for Health	0	1	1	0%	1%	1%
10 - Referral for Employment / rehabilitation	1	0	1	1%	0%	1%
11 - Sensitive response when you approach special cell	8	2	10	9%	2%	5%
12- Others	37	24	61	40%	24%	32%

There was a change in expectations after meeting the Social Workers for 24% survivors – at least 10 survivors mentioned that while they expecting facilitation of divorce. During the counselling period they have decided to reconcile. On the other hand while 8 survivors who had come for seeking reconciliation decided to file for divorce.

Voices of survivors

Initially she wanted reconciliation. She was willing to forgive and forget. However, when the husband filed for divorce, she wanted maintenance and compensation for physical, mental and economic losses. Her attitude shifted from forgiveness to revenge.

One of the survivors was counselled- “Ghar nahi banega agar divorce liya. Ye samjhaya gaya mujhe.”(I was guided that if you seek a divorce you will not have a home).

Another felt strongly that, “he is influencing procedures here since he is an IPS officer, therefore I have lost all hope of getting any justice.”

Survivors’ assessment of the Services provided by the Social Workers

Survivors reviewed and assessed the services rendered by the Social Workers during the course of their interaction with them, when they were counselling them, see Tables 37 and 38. Twenty two percent of survivors found the service provided by the Social Worker was effective, while 48 % were of the view that their services were partially effective. Fifty percent survivors felt that the Social Workers always gave sufficient time to their cases, though only one third felt that they gave sufficient attention most of the time. Regarding respect and courtesy accorded to survivors, 59% said the Social Workers always give due respect and for 35% it was most of the time this was so. 60% survivors felt that Social Workers were always patient, while 34% felt that it was only most of the time. The Social Worker were always empathetic and sensitive towards the problems of 57% of survivors, while for 27% it was most of the time. 49% women were of the view that the Social Workers always knew about marital disputes, family problems, family violence and how to intervene, though 27% almost always knew the same. The survivors fully comfortable with privacy of the counselling process comprised 57%, while those satisfied most of the time were 32% of the sample. As concerns satisfaction with the way the case was handled – 34% survivors gave a good rating, 29% said average, while 29% said there was scope for improvement, while 8% were not satisfied with the Social Workers’ assistance. Though 32% were satisfied with the way social workers handled cases, only 22% found them very effective while 48% found them partially effective given their limited role in the entire process.

Table 37: Effectiveness of the Special Cell

As per your experience how effective was Social Worker’s role in the entire process	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
Not effective at all	24	32	56	27%	33%	30%
Partially effective	48	41	89	54%	43%	48%
Very Effective	17	23	40	19%	24%	22%

Table38: Survivors’ assessment of the services provided by the Social Workers

	Total			
	Seldom	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always
<i>* Data records 20 Qualitative Responses where there were just 1 sitting or 2</i>				
Sufficient time was given by the social worker for case	6%	11%	33%	50%
Social worker was courteous/respectful and friendly	2%	5%	35%	59%
Social worker was patient with you and listened to you attentively	2%	5%	34%	60%
Social worker was/is empathetic and sensitive towards	4%	10%	28%	57%

the problems that you were/are facing				
Social worker knows about marital disputes, family problems, family violence and how to intervene	5%	12%	34%	49%
Were you comfortable with the privacy provided during counseling	2%	9%	32%	57%

Positive impact on men after coming to Social Worker

Voices of survivors

One case reported that, “SPUWAC aane ke baad zyada romantic bane. Tehzeeb se baat karte hain.” (He has become more romantic and speaks with courtesy.)

Another survivor is of the view that because of failed reconciliation things worsened; in laws used to say "humara kuch nahin bigad sakti case bandh kara diya"(You can't do anything against me, I have had the case closed). Since the second reconciliation, violence reduced – there was no physical violence, though was going through mental violence.

One reported that emotional violence has reduced somewhat.

Another, whose case had been resolved and had gone back to her husband said It has been 4 days since she has been living with her husband after reconciliation, but she feels confident.

Her child has to be admitted in school so both will go there together

A husband who had come to the Special Cell with his wife said that he has reformed completely. He said –“mujhe dhamkaya nahin, samjhaya counsellor ne.” (The counsellor did not threaten me, but explained to me. He is the one who said there should be male counsellors too in the cells. He said that now he in turn counsels other men who are violent with their wives.

Suggestions for Social Workers – by Survivors

At least 57% survivors had no suggestions for the Social Workers, see Table 39, though 38% had suggestions regarding their attitude and behaviour (including being stern and strong towards men). About 32% women had suggestions regarding counselling skills of social workers. They even had comments regarding availability for appointments (5%), documentation skills (4%) and referrals for other services (4%). Women commented on the follow up of their cases (10%), punctuality and promptness (6%) and co-ordination with other staff/police (Special Cells). Another 3% included suggestion for them to have more knowledge of laws, more information regarding health and livelihood options for survivors.

Table 39: Survivors suggestions for Social Workers

Suggestions for Social workers	Count			%		
	New	Old	Total	New	Old	Net
None	48	60	108	52%	61%	57%
Attitude/Behavior	39	34	73	42%	34%	38%
Availability	6	4	10	7%	4%	5%
Documentation skills	6	1	7	7%	1%	4%
Counseling skills	33	28	61	36%	28%	32%
Referrals for related services	4	4	8	4%	4%	4%
Punctuality and promptness in addressing cases	8	4	12	9%	4%	6%
Co-ordination with other staff/police (special cell)	5	3	8	5%	3%	4%
Follow up	14	6	20	15%	6%	10%

Survivors' suggestions -Skills of Social Workers

One of the key suggestions from a majority of survivors was that Social Workers should be very strict with the men. “Sakht hona chahiye. Dara ke rakhna chahiye ladke ko”(They should be strict, create fear in men). They should pressurise the husband to know the reason for the husband's decision. Give more time to each case. If man is not willing to change in 2-3 meetings, then case should get transferred. “Gender sensitive dabav dalna chahiye”on men. They also suggested that Social Workers need to be more gender sensitive.

“Logon ko parekhna ka skill hona chahiye.”(They should know how to assess people). Social Worker should remember what decisions were made in the last meeting. She should question both the client and respondent and should be harsh.

Regular training should be given to Social Worker. She was asking about what I want, but before that I need to know my options.

Counsellors should be experienced and mature. They should use psychological tools for counselling and bring fresh insights to the case.

Be more strict and regular on follow-up. Should give more time for counselling sessions

Assurance given by men should be written down. Be harsh with husbands such that they comply as they do not care about procedures here.

They should get to know clients (men and women) better to understand the case and suggest proper steps, should talk properly.

The counsellor should patiently help the couple deal with issues, talk to them and help them resolve differences. She should not be hasty to reaching conclusions and make them realise the consequences of the decisions both ways.

Knowledge of medical psychology as often times false cases are levelled against women by husbands accusing them of being mental patients. Also older, educated and experienced counsellors would be more beneficial.

About the process

Survivors complained heavily about processes in the Cell being too time consuming. In the given sample, on an average a case took 6.6 months time. There were also cases which were reconciled and closed within the stipulated timeframe but survivors had to come back to the Cell with same complaint from the same perpetrator after a while. Such cases (failed reconciliation cases) are reopened with new references, so technically these are seen as new cases, but actually they are old cases. The research team interviewed quite a few such cases.

Table 40 : Time taken for resolution of a case

	New	Old	Average
How much time did the phased/overall intervention by Special Cell social worker take/is taking?	5.8 months	7.4 months	6.6 Months

Voices of survivors

The time given for each meeting should be more. For 4-5 days after counselling session, husband is fine and then again he behaves the same as before.

Social Worker has no power, so men do not fear her. Social Worker should be given powers like police. They should be harsh with husbands such that they comply as they do not care about procedures here. They should not close/ transfer case after 1 meeting. More meetings should be conducted with men.

There should be men as counsellors to speak with men/ spouses.

There should also be medical/marital counselling for those who wanted to discuss any form of sexual intimacy issues.

There should be Saturday- Sunday shifts for Counsellors as it will help those survivors who are working.

Counsellors/ IOs should do home visits to check out on cases randomly.

They should try to resolve cases without court intervention. Take the case forward in fast track mode.

Support should be extended for further action to help women to take charge of their lives.

Many women reconcile because of children; they should be told about livelihood options to become economically independent

Most often they are talking to only husbands, but survivor felt that if problems are resolved and she returns to the household, situation will not change as she has to still return to the same mindsets.

Section C

The findings of the evaluation study, both quantitative and qualitative have been presented as above. This section is an abstract of the observations that have emerged from the findings that will lead the way forward to the next steps. Several suggestions have come up from different stakeholders, which certainly need to be taken into account for long term sustainability of the pilot as programme.

During the past eight years, the Special Cells pilot in Delhi has shown that institutionalisation of Social Work through counselling cells can be effectively embedded within the formal police department and become a viable, functional and responsive system. .

The affirmative action and sensitisation of police to women's issues through the model has been amply illustrated through the pilot. The Social Workers have been provided the physical space for rendering psycho-socio support services for violated women to achieve justice. The trained team of officials, IOs, Social Workers and staff at different levels in the police system have supported the SPUWAC units to respond sensitively to VAW. They have been able to provide emotional, physical, and legal spaces for survivors, where women can seek redressal for their needs and concerns pertaining to marital discord, within a facilitative environment. There is adequate infrastructure to provide space for counselling services and make the survivors feel comfortable, especially at SPUWAC Nanakpura. Systems and procedures have been drawn up to facilitate and regulate the intake of cases and provide assistance to the survivors within the vertical and hierarchical processes and rules of the police department system. The survivors we interviewed were, by and large satisfied with the quality of counselling given by Social Workers.

The pilot project also demonstrates the coming together of social work services within the Criminal Justice System and a process that at least visibilises VAW. In a state like Delhi, with a high incidence of domestic and public crimes against women the Special Cells are a critical requirement, even though their services are primarily for marital conflicts. Their expansion to other districts is a right step forward. The pilot illustrates the model is ready for expansion, albeit with some change, measures and preparations.

The police system has inter- linkages with the DCW, NCW, police *thanas* and the courts through various mechanisms. However, there is a need to factor in the interests and needs of women survivors of VAW in these processes and mechanisms. Police *thana* referrals to the cells are a common occurrence apart from references by the community and other people. Through the Special Cells the Police, to some extent, have worked towards ensuring violence-free and safe homes for women and their children. While at one level physical and emotional violence is being addressed, there is still the need for addressing economical and sexual violence and also to address cases of non-marital domestic violence.

C.1 Accessibility and Availability of Counselling Unit at the SPUWAC

Most of the survivors accessing SPUWAC are from lower economic strata and 60% of women interviewed had attained education up to and below class12; and also more than half of them were not earning so they were dependent on their marital/natal families. Even for

coming to the cell most survivors were accompanied by someone from the family. They came to know about the Cell through word of mouth and didn't know about 1091 Helpline. In many cases women made distress call to 100 which they did not find very effective. Though the majority of survivors did not encounter any hurdles in coming to the Special Cells (also because in most of the cases survivors came to cell after moving out from site of violence), some of the survivors did face opposition and impediments from different quarters. These challenges continue even as they engage with the Cell during the course of their cases. Some survivors constantly felt threatened by their husbands, who were present outside the Police station but did not attend the counselling session. At times they even harassed them through phone calls and messages to make them withdraw their complaints.

Though very few survivors come in a state of apparent emergency, almost all cases need emotional support; but the processes and procedures involved delays their direct interaction with Social Workers. Unlike in Maharashtra Special Cells where the survivor first meets the Counsellor and other processes follow, in Delhi the women are referred by the IO to the Counsellor which might take 2-4 visits by the survivor, thereby delaying any immediate counselling assistance to her. What follows is that survivors have to repeat their case to the IO and the Counsellor separately. As IOs reports are not shared with the Counsellors, she has to make her own notes/ entries in the Case Register. Follow up of cases is taken up by the IOs only, which they share with the Senior Police Officials.

The survivors feel that the processes and procedures are extremely long drawn, especially in cases of severe violence where immediate action may be required. As shared by survivors and endorsed by Social Workers, on several occasions women wait for the joint counselling session only to learn that the respondent (husband/ partner) is not coming and a new date is given to her. They get anxious and feel harassed as some of them have to juggle between job, housework and children to make it for the dates.

C.2 Expectation of Survivors, their needs and outcomes of cases

Primarily the expectation of survivors from the Cell is to stop the violence being inflicted upon them. While half of women interviewed wanted the Cell's intervention to end violence others sought support for other reasons ranging from counselling, seeking maintenance/financial support from husband, reconciliation or judicial separation. The majority of survivors sought counselling assistance in negotiating, reconciling with spouses and their families to stop further violence. *Counselling, most women interviewed felt, was the most effective intervention that provided comfort and confidence to the woman. They said that they did develop the 'himmat' – courage to confront the situation in future. The emotional support and sharing of their experiences reduced the burden of guilt that "it was their fault". The fact that someone listened patiently to their story of violence was relief at first instance.*

Most of the women wanted to stay in their marital homes to make their marriages work as they have been encultured to do so. There were also instances where women had decided to live separately but were suggested to reconcile with the husband for the sake of family, children and their own future. While some of the survivors who had reconciled were satisfied with the decision taken, some saw it as a compromise and were dissatisfied after reconciliation. This was particularly so when the physical abuse was intensive. Parental pressure often compelled survivors to make compromises in their marriages, so as to agree

for reconciliation. This is largely in the context of the social norm that 'women have to adjust'. Some survivors are unable to move out of the marital homes for reasons of not having the financial resources, or lack of natal family support to cope with the existing situation. The inhibiting factors which surfaced were: fear of being thrown out and becoming homeless, economic survival, fear of children not being permitted to move out with her, threats to her life and life of her natal family members. Thus survivors continue to brave it out in the matrimonial home – revert back through unconditional reconciliation.

As shared by the survivors, social workers and mediators, and endorsed by the research team, survivors were economically dependent upon either their husband or father/brother. Survivors require financial assistance for themselves and their children which is not easy in the matrimonial home or the natal home as they have not been capacitated that way. They still have many miles to go before they can attain freedom from emotional, economic and verbal violence. They need to be empowered economically and emotionally to take charge of their lives. Survivors are not given sufficient/ any information on livelihood options to become economically independent. The fact that they continue to undergo economic constraints as they have no income or earnings of their own is one form of violence. They are unable to meet expenses for litigation or even transport costs for coming for counselling sessions.

Most of the survivors said the physical violence stopped (90% cases) as soon as they left the marital home and moved back with their parents. Those survivors who continued to live in marital homes continued to face violence (some to a lesser degree after the Cell's interventions). Even emotionally and mentally, when the violence has been severe they find it difficult to cope with everyday life. *Counselling can help to an extent, but women do need to connect with other sorority/ support groups, which they need to be linked with to recover from the violence holistically.*

A large number of survivors who came had been advised by their private lawyers that registering their case with the Special Cell will strengthen the case in the court. This was even reported by the Mediators that about 90% survivors, who had registered their cases, engaged private lawyers and sought the help of the Cells too. Though a large number of cases reported economic violence (lack of financial resources, without her own personal earning or income) by husband/marital family no strong steps were being taken by the Cells (besides reconciliation). Women who also reported sexual violence by husbands reconciled without any counselling with the husband or addressing issues of sexual violence. Some survivors wanted counselling to be extended to their husbands, parents in - law and other family members. This is because when/if the matter gets resolved, the survivor returns to the same abusive environment, their attitudes and behaviour are more positive towards her.

For spouses who repeatedly refused to come for joint or independent sessions/ meetings, survivors felt that some kind of pressure, threat, punishment needs to be imposed. Overwhelmingly large number of women interviewed spent hours waiting for their husbands who never arrived for the counselling sessions. This was even reported by Counsellors, Police Inspectors and Mediators. Though the Cell is a conciliatory body some measures need to be taken up for ensuring that respondents appear on the said date for counselling. Also there is no follow up action being taken by the Cell after women return, post reconciliation, to their marital homes. The Social Workers did mention about holding some awareness camps in schools, and going into the community for awareness earlier. Neither the Social Workers, nor Mediators nor Inspectors reported any linkages with health/hospital/medical assistance; emergency shelters etc. These are strictly under the domain of the Police Officials.

The emotional support and confidence instilled by Counsellors greatly helped the survivors deal with and in some instances resist violence. Services are largely limited to only ‘counselling’ by the Social Workers and mediation referral are facilitated for those survivors who seek maintenance or divorce. From the cases interviewed it was observed that neither the Social Workers nor the IOs are sufficiently trained in psycho-social counselling, whether of survivors or their spouses and families. In some cases the husband’s family retains the survivors’ documents and papers like education degrees and identity documents. This creates hurdles for her from carrying on with her studies, or getting a job, in the duration of her case. Responses from survivors indicate that they do require gender sensitive, quick and readily available referral services. They do not have the means or the finances to access them, many times due to lack of mobility too.

For survivors referral services for physical health/mental well being and equally employability, are a criticality to not only empower them, but also to help develop a sense of self worth; as they often feel bad about being dependent on their parents or brother/s for economic sustenance and health care of themselves and their children. This leaves the whole arena of developmental counselling unavailable for survivors to enable them to reconstruct their situation outside the family norm, if they desire to turn around their lives. So while the emotional strengthening and confidence building does take place, simultaneous inputs for personal development are equally essential to make the survivors’ struggle to lead a better life with economic and decision making autonomy.

C.3 Effectiveness of Counselling Unit

Survivors who accessed the Special Cells were no longer willing to be victims of physical violence – in fact some said they would hit back. Some became firm in their decision making – to seek justice through the court, take up a job, enhance their education etc though this process was influenced largely by their natal family. Those whose cases were under mediation and some others became more aware of their legal rights in the context of their cases. However, the battle for freedom from economic, emotional and mental violence continues for them until they get addressed with other support mechanisms. Women are eager to pursue their lives by going in for higher education, some professional training or job and becoming financially independent. Financially and emotionally survivors want to carve out a new life of their own. In cases where reconciliation had taken place positively, women appeared cheerful. Some came with their husbands for interviews and both expressed their happiness to be back together again.

Many respondents required information with regard to laws to help them move on. Most of all they needed clarity on the procedures for lodging FIR under 498A and its implications. If they do not have documentary proof it is difficult to lodge an FIR, as it is a criminal case. The Social Workers therefore, in the above context, would like to be capacitated further in the knowledge of legal norms and processes. They do need to know what is happening with mediation or with the IO’s investigation/ counselling, or at least have shared notes prepared by IO and vice versa. The process of counselling, both IOs and Social Workers could be helped with de stressing workshops to enable them to get over the work stress.

Most survivors considered the SPUWAC counselling cell to be a space for reconciliation irrespective of the issue- such an impression reflected the manner in which counsellors handled complaints. As observed in some cases counsellors also brought in their personal

biases while advising survivors. Given the time pressure and case work load, Counsellors seemed detached from the process and seemed to be engaging mechanically without any thorough discussion with the survivors as was observed by the researchers.

Some clients who were employed said that they found it inconvenient to attend sessions on working days – the Cells do not open on Saturdays and Sundays. They had to take leave or take time off from work and many times this was not possible. Weekends would work out well for them. A few others said that the Cell should remain open in the evenings, so that they come after work. Information on the number of cases registered per day reveals that the numbers increase on Fridays and Mondays, as weekends the Cell remains closed.

Many of the respondents, irrespective of outcome of case or stage, said half of the cases coming to the Special Cell would be resolved if the husbands and their families were spoken to in a stern way. There is no fear of law or action and therefore the husband and his family unabashedly continued to behave in the same manner.

In the above context, the core of the Special Cell Concept will need to be safeguarded within SPUWAC. In keeping with the objective of “saving the family”, focus of the counselling unit is primarily reconciliation. This approach, at times, is at the cost of the survivors’ safety, as it does push her back into the abusive situation as before. When a survivor reconciles to live with her husband and/or his family she should be enabled to live there with autonomy, dignity and respect, not as someone who they have to keep because they have been told to do so. Each and every attempt to reconcile the couple has to ensure that the ‘family being saved’ is one where the rights of all members, especially the violated women and children are protected. The fundamental principle towards case resolution is to ensure the survivors security, well being and foster her autonomy.

C.4 Institutional arrangements and effectiveness

In the management of the Special Cells there is a systemic hierarchy and vertical linkages to channelize services to survivors, though no horizontal linkages among the three units of Special Cells- the police IO, the social worker and the mediator. This horizontal communication across the three is imperative as the cases; at least some of them are moving across all three in sequence or otherwise from IO to mediators directly. Or even from IO to Police Counsellor to Social Worker and then back to IO or Mediator. Though each unit sends monthly reports to DCP/ACP for review separately, separate instructions/ guidelines are issued for action to each unit; there is no joint meeting or review across the units (IO, SW and mediators).

In structure, the Special Cell is designed to combine the critical counselling skills of the Social Workers along with legal support from Mediators and Police. The Social Workers have to do a sharp balancing act within the police system as they are located in the Counselling Unit within it, but are not from it. This leaves a feeling among them that they are placed to handle a specific task with the specific role of the Special Cell. It appears that they are by the system, though not a critical part of it. This is even so for the Mediators who come in and render services on a short term basis as consultants. This raises some questions about the extent to which counselling as a critical part of the Special Cells, is being appreciated by the system. It also brings forth the consideration of the principle of the Special Cell design objectives - of ensuring and enabling the survivor’s self determination as underpinning the

work of the Special Cells. The autonomy and empowerment of the Social Workers is as critical as that of the survivors who come to seek support. Clearly this is an area that needs further discussion and work.

C.5 Areas requiring attention

Upon reviewing the observations and suggestions elicited, certain gaps have been identified and highlighted which need to be addressed by the NCW, Police Department and TISS after joint consultations. Basically they are issues which have emerged as lessons from the pilot and have direct implications for the next phase of expansion.

The figure below lists some of the key issues under various categories that need to be taken on board and addressed in the next phase. The teams at various levels are already aware of them. These need to be reviewed internally to be addressed for empowering and assisting the survivors in the best possible way through the Special Cells.

Fig 15: Areas Requiring Attention



Currently, the Delhi Special Cells model is placed at the right juncture to introduce and to engender fresh inputs with learnings from other Special Cell models, which are operational in states like Haryana, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Each model is different and unique, based on the states' initiatives and support mechanisms drawn from various departments. It would be worthwhile for the Delhi Police and NCW to study them and adapt what would be workable in Delhi SPUWAC Units too. These would help to strengthen the Cells further, especially as 11 new Cells are coming up to cover all districts of Delhi. In the perspective of the New Empowerment Policy for Women, NCW will be in a position to draw upon the schemes and programmes for single and working women for facilitating linkages with the Police to strengthen the special Cells.

C.6 Some Recommendations for the Programme

The recommendations herein are for the purpose of addressing some of the issues that have emerged after rolling the pilot for a considerable period. They do require to be reviewed for joint action in order to make the Special Cells programme successfully sustainable in the long term, keeping the violated women in focus. Since there are three key partners the

recommendations are specific to each – the Police Department, NCW and TISS. The first is the implementer responsible for delivery of services to the violated women, the second is the support agency enabling inclusion of Social Work Services within the Criminal Justice System and the third is the developer behind the concept of addressing VAW within the government system. Since each stakeholder has a key responsibility to fulfil, there are separate recommendations for each agency, though the coordination among the three is crucial to reach out to and empower the violated woman to stand tall on her own eventually.

One common thread that binds all the three key players is a shared perspective and understanding of what is the key principle that underpins the whole initiative ie. Ensuring and enabling women to take an informed decision and not to push the prevalent stereotype that the marital home alone is the place for a woman. This is an area that needs continuous reiteration and strengthening. And the importance of counselling in this process is pivotal, since it is the primary need of a survivor when she contacts the Special Cell.

Police Department

The SPUWAC headquarters may consider the following steps drawn from the study –

Strengthen internal coordination, review and implementation

- Facilitate the formation of a Core Group within the Department under the DCP - CAW, to review the issues and recommendations of the Evaluation Study Report for reviewing and revising systems and strategies for Special Cells, in consultations with TISS and NCW.
- Develop a system of joint Quarterly Review meetings including the Social Workers, IOs and Mediators, which will even help in the analysis of issues being faced in dealing with certain types of cases, and the resource support being given and used by the different stakeholders.
- Facilitate Social Workers to analyse cases/ data etc to visualise trends and develop new strategies along with the Enquiry Officers to handle such cases. The older/senior Social Workers could also be included as team members in planning/training of the newer ones to strengthen the Counselling Cells, data analysis and management of cases and referrals.
- Organisation of two to three refresher workshops or trainings jointly for IOs and Social Workers annually. This will even help in reviewing and monitoring the good practices and the issues that come up.
- For information dissemination about the SPUWAC Units to reach out to women to a) inform about its services more widely and b) access documents/ materials on women's rights, laws, employment opportunities, education training from other government departments/ NGOs and agencies to share with survivors, NCW can help facilitate this for the Police.

Building a referral network

- In view of the needs of the survivors, NCW takes steps to facilitate a referral network with other government departments to assist survivors to access skill development

courses in the local area, to become economically independent. For this the Referral Group can be constituted to help develop a data base and contacts for referral services. They will assist in developing partnerships for arranging for the needs of survivors.

- The Referral Group will help facilitate /explore linkages for economic development, health, education and training resources for survivors. Even referral services for the perpetrators who are alcoholic / substance abusers are equally imperative as survivors situation often does not improve is she goes back after reconciliation.
- **Suggestions for improvements/upgrade the operations of the Special Cells**
In view of the above there is need for Policy decisions to upgrade the operations of Special Cells -
 - Some alternative arrangement so that clients can come on weekends and after office upon their convenience. An alternate off, instead of Saturdays, or else off days could be staggered.
 - Appointment of a few male Counsellors (even on short term basis) – to work with spouses / partners who are rigid and adamant in harassing survivors.
 - Joint meetings with IOs, Social Workers and Inspectors for review and monitoring and resolving issues or cases.
 - Revival of the practice of joint home visits by IOs and Social Workers in *select critical cases*, in order to review the situation of the survivors in their marital home and follow up on cases of severe violence/ critical cases.
 - Consider the position of a Director (who reports to DCP-CAW) especially for Special Cells for supervision and management. The person would have specific responsibilities for - review and monitoring of all Special Cells, coordination with NCW and TISS for capacity building, refresher courses, linkages with other stakeholders, advocacy/ information dissemination, data base development and analysis and systems revision/ development.

NCW

NCW as a national level institution for women's rights and issues has a key role to play for the Special Cells, both nationally and at Delhi state level. For Delhi Special Cells NCW can consider –

Review processes

- Set up a Joint Review/ Monitoring Committee for Special Cells – Delhi. The Review/ Monitoring Committee may review the Special Cells on a half yearly basis with members drawn from a) National Advisory Group, b) Police Department c) TISS and others.

Networking/ dissemination

- Develop a directory of resource organisations/ government departments which can be accessed by survivors. Social Workers may be introduced to organisations/ agencies

and have regular contacts with them through the police and NCW. This will not only enable but even empower the survivors to access services such as training for seeking employment, health related consultations, for seeking some employment or starting home based work. Access to these services will widen their sphere of interacting with other women to change the course of their lives towards autonomy and self reliance.

- NCW can undertake to print/ disseminate materials on VAW, Legal Rights of women and children, information about Special cells, posters and stickers for the information of the public to enable them to access the services of the Special Cells. The public/ community (particularly men) will be made aware that VAW will not be tolerated by women. Both advocacy and outreach are critical to help women come out and seek justice for themselves and their children.
- As a key institutional player, NCW can make provisions or organise to have an interstate sharing workshops/ seminars to share experiences of different models of Special Cells. It can facilitate Delhi Police and Social Workers teams to visit other models to see plan for the Special cells in Delhi with refreshed guidelines.

Adequate allocations

- NCW will be required to facilitate adequate financial resources for a committed time frame in order to make the Special Cells in Delhi sustainable. The resources should be allocated for not only Social Workers, but even for capacity building, review and monitoring, linkages/ networking, information sharing and dissemination as well as for advocacy. This will be possible under new Policy for Women 2016.
- In partnership Delhi Police, NCW may draw up short term and long term action plans to ensure that the Special Cells to fulfil their objectives by being more accessible for women affected by violence, as they are being set up in each district of Delhi. At the same time they need to reach out to the women affected by violence to enable them to move out of the cycle of violence.

TISS – RCI-VAW

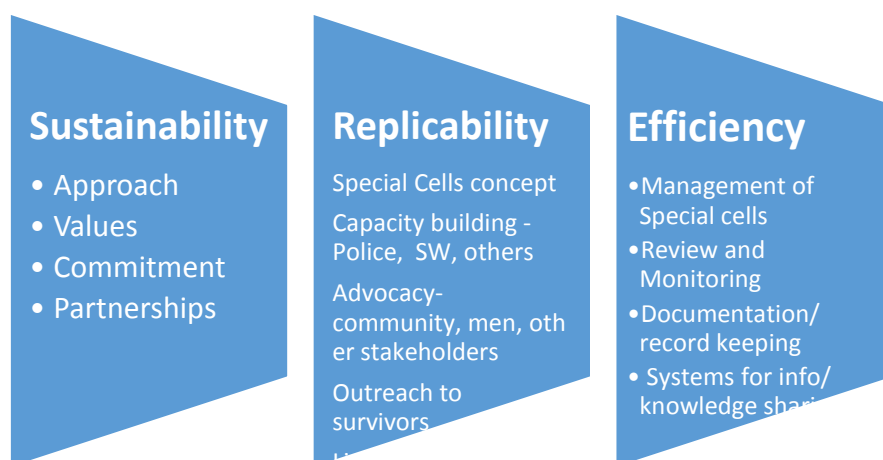
As in academic institution, and as the birth organisation of Special Cells TISS, particularly RCI-VAW, has played a key role and will continue to render valuable support to Special Cells, both nationally and for Delhi. The recommendations for TISS therefore are more wide ranging as follows:

- TISS may be invited as a member of the National Advisory Group along with the police and NCW. For the present even at state level RCI- VAW has a critical role to play which will have to be defined during consultations.
- The TISS team could be involved in developing and sharing guidelines for joint training of IOs/ Social Workers. A compendium for Social Workers has been developed, but it also needs to be supplemented with participatory training methodologies and resource materials.

- RCI-VAW might assist in the formation of a local Resource Support Group for VAW comprising of gender experts, trainers, and academicians in order to facilitate NCW and the Police for the capacity building of Social Workers and IOs from time to time by providing refresher inputs.
- TISS may render support by way developing mechanisms and systems for review of Special Cells half yearly. With the increase in the number of Special Cells, intensive inputs and hands on support is required to sustain the expansion of Cells in every District of Delhi.
- The experience of TISS may be drawn upon to engender the research on issues of VAW and the role and impact of Special Cells in turning around their lives or enabling them to deal with VAW. This will help to reflect on what is needed and how evolve strategies to meet the needs and expectations of women.
- Facilitate the Police department to disseminate research findings within the SPUWAC Units among the personnel, the mediators and the judiciary through different means – workshops, seminars etc.

Many more suggestions have come up from different stakeholders, which certainly need to be taken into account for long term sustainability of the pilot as programme. All suggestions may not be workable or doable in the immediate future, However, they need to be kept in mind for incorporation into the programme at the appropriate time, with due consultations at various levels with stakeholders. At the same time efforts are required to mitigate the gaps to ensure sustainability, replicability and efficiency of the future Special Cells programme with continuing adaptations over time. Nevertheless the key approach, the perspective and the values of the programme towards violated women/ survivors will have to remain as a non-negotiable. The following points do need consideration as they are likely to impact the long term vision and mission of the Special Cells through sustainability, replicability and efficiency of interventions.

Fig: 16: Future Sustainability



What has come forth quite sharply from the interviews and the data is that survivors clearly need and are accessing the Special Cells to resolve issues of violence, including other

concerns in their marital homes. More women in the 20-35 years age group are approaching the Cells, within a year of their marriages. And they are quite aware of how they should be treated and what they expect in the marital home. They are aware of their rights a person, even if it only through the media (may not be in great detail). It has emerged from the sample that the newer cases are more aware and they want to seek justice in a “fast track mode”. As against 2-3 decades earlier more women are having the support of their natal families in resolving marital issues. Parents are willing to have their daughters back and support them even if there are questions from the community and economic pressures do compel them.

There is also an attitudinal shift among survivors – they want to give the negative marital experience a chance, but do not want to let it impact their lives or that of their children’s negatively in the long term. They do want to get on with their lives in a positive way even it means a struggle for livelihoods and economic sustenance. And lastly, with the social shift towards nuclear family norms women would rather stay separately with the husband, rather than with in laws. In joint families the oppression is doubled – by the family and the husband, so at least in the nuclear family she has to bear the violence from one person, which she thinks she can handle if it is not excessively overboard.

(Annexure)

CASE STUDIES

(All names have been changed)

Case Study 1

Beena*, 27 was married twice. Her father married her to a man much older when she was 16 year old. However, she never left her natal home to live with her husband; and within a few years the husband died. Subsequently, she got married to another man whose proposal had come for her sister, but he expressed a desire to marry B instead. Within a month of her marriage, B became pregnant. Soon after, her mother-in-law started harassing her for bringing less in dowry and for burdening her son with a child at such a young age. All this happened while her husband supported his mother. In addition to physical and emotional abuse, she was sexually abused. She soon contracted TB and on one such treatment visit, her family abandoned her at the hospital. She sought her brother's help and moved in with her mother. Shortly, her mother-in-law filed a case against B in the Delhi Commission of Women accusing her of torture on the advice of a lawyer. Since B could not travel to DCW to answer her summons owing to her illness, she was sent an arrest order. In return, B was advised to file a case at SPUWAC.

Impact of intervention by Special Cell:

Beena felt she had not received much support from the SPUWAC Cell. The mediators upon knowing that Beena's mother-in-law had filed a case against her at DCW told Beena that they considered her case to be a cover up. They continuously disbelieved her and did not pay any heed to her complaint. Given the torture at her marital home, Beena demanded that she stay separately with her husband. According to Beena, the mediators kept questioning her, saying her complaint was fraudulent. They even did not pressurise her husband for a settlement. He was not reprimanded for missing out on dates or for refusing to provide any financial support or give money for Beena's treatment. Beena was living with her mother who is a domestic house help and barely able to survive on the income. Beena's request to the Counsellor at SPUWAC was that her husband be asked to withdraw the case filed against her at DCW as part of resolution of her complaint. According to Beena, the counsellor was only interested in knowing from her if she would go back to her husband's place or not, so that she can close the case from her end. The counsellor was unable to explore a resolution to her complaint. Despite her repeated requests for maintenance for her child and herself, no action was taken. In order to attend meetings at DCW and SPUWAC, she often borrowed money from neighbours and carried her infant along. She had no support, was a school drop-out and was surviving on her sheer grit.

Case Study 2

Anu*, 23 met Anil* through a social networking website when she was 21. Anu's family lived in a small village in Bihar where her father was a junior rank Police official. She was living by herself in Delhi as she was preparing for her Civil Services examination. On the other hand, Anil had recently been selected in the IPS and was awaiting his posting orders. As they began meeting, Anil asked Anu to come to Allahabad at his quarters, where he raped her and bought her a return ticket to Delhi the same day. Shaken she returned to Delhi and narrated the incident to her friends. The friends threatened Anil by saying they had gotten Anu's medical examination done and would report to the Police. Scared that it might affect his career Anil came to Delhi and married Anu at an Arya Samaj temple. He then took Anu to Goa on a honeymoon trip and sexually and physically abused her. A friend of Anil's came to Anu's rescue and sent her back to Delhi. After that, for many months Anil did not respond to her calls and they didn't meet. Hassled Anu began looking for him and reached the IPS training venue. Despite his refusal to recognize her, she showed the marriage certificate to Anil's seniors and forcibly met him. At that point, he said he didn't want to marry her and instead wanted to marry someone who could give about Rs. 2 crore as dowry, given his IPS status. She complained to SPUWAC and Anil in turn filed a police complaint against Anu for blackmailing him.

Impact of intervention by Special Cell:

Anu had high expectations from SPUWAC. Since she was preparing for Civil Services, she was well versed in the legal processes and laws and had a clear understanding of her case when she approached SPUWAC. Her assigned Counsellor gave Anu emotional support and helped her regain her lost confidence. Anu restarted her studies and also found a job. However, despite agreeing with her and understanding her case, Anu said the Police at SPUWAC were intimidated by Anil, as he was an IPS officer and did not support her. They did not send him summons regularly and when she inquired, they sent him summons via email 'requesting' his attendance. He repeatedly missed dates and has appeared once at SPUWAC in six months since her case was in progress. In such a situation, the Counsellor's intervention were one sided as Anil had not attended a single counselling session. Even the counsellor had requested her police colleagues to call and summon Anil but no action was taken on her request. Meanwhile, Anu works part time to support herself, is fighting her case on her own, as her family has broken all ties with her. She is determined to file a rape complaint against Anil and has been running from pillar post at the police station requesting the highest officials.

Case Study 3

R was 21 when she got married to S. She had completed her under graduation in Business Administration when her parents arranged her marriage with S. She recalls that the demand for dowry from S and his family started from the evening after their engagement. She had asked him over the phone as to why he sounded aloof and he confessed that he wasn't happy with the amount of gold that was given to him and his family and expected more during the wedding. She conveyed this to her brother and her family went out of their way during the wedding, by giving them more than they could even afford.

Immediately after the wedding, the demand for dowry continued and escalated. Her husband, parents in law, brother in law and his and sister in law and her husband all perpetrated violence against her. Her husband was also suspicious of her having relationships with other men. Her interaction with her natal family was completely cut off and because her parents lived in Delhi and she, in a small town, her communication with her natal family was close to nothing.

R got pregnant soon after the wedding and she decided to come to her natal home due to the escalating violence she faced. The physical violence had not stopped despite of her pregnancy and she was kicked in her stomach in this vulnerable stage. Her declining physical health led to her to be admitted in the hospital and all this while no one from her marital family came to visit her and neither enquired about her.

Intervention at the Crime against Women Cell/ SPUWAC:

After facing continuous physical, mental, financial and sexual violence for eight months, R decided to register her complaint at the Crime against Women Cell on advice from her advocate. In the meanwhile she had already filed her case under section 498A of the IPC for the mental cruelty that she had faced because of the demand for dowry. She wanted to reconcile with her husband, but also wanted him to treat her with respect. She was not satisfied with the Inquiry Officer's (I.O.) behaviour and hence got her case transferred to the Headquarters.

By the time she came to the Headquarters, she also had delivered the child and wanted her husband to provide her and the child with maintenance till the time they reconciled. The proceedings at the SPUWAC did not go according to her wishes. She had a total of six meetings with the Social Worker at the SPUWAC and three with the I.O. During this time, her husband did not show up for all the meetings and neither the other members of her marital family who were called for the meetings. She felt that the Counsellor did not put enough pressure on her husband and was too soft for him to take her seriously. He was relentless and did not want to take her and the child back.

One day her husband met her outside the SPUWAC and begged her to withdraw her complaints- at the court as well as the SPUWAC, saying he would take her and their child back. S thought that the meetings at the SPUWAC have helped him change his mind. This change in him is what R always wanted to see and she did as she was asked by him. She did not inform her parents of her decision to take back the cases. She waited for him with her child at the decided place and time, but S never turned up.

Present situation:

After realizing that S never wanted her back and that he did this just to make her withdraw the cases, she came back to the SPUWAC to continue the processes from there, only to realize that her case had been closed. Her husband had informed them to do so and she now had to register her complaint again at the SPUWAC as well as the Court. Despite of not being satisfied with the way her case was handled by the social worker, R wants to reopen her case and wants to divorce her husband.

Case Study 4

M is in her mid 30s and has studied up to the class 5. She has three daughters and works as a domestic help. Her husband, A, and she got married thirteen years ago. Within the first year of marriage, A started physically and verbally abusing her. He was also in a relationship with another woman during this time. She suffered from a fractured hand a head injury due to the severe physical violence.

Eight years after their wedding, A got arrested for a murder he had allegedly committed, because of which M and her brothers were also locked up for a few days. A was in jail for three and a half years and during this time, M was in a relationship with another man, who was her neighbour. After A came out of jail, M told him about her relationship and told him that she has cut off all ties with him. But, the violence only got worse from there on. An alcoholic, A started perpetrating severe physical, sexual and mental violence on M. She suffered from constant tension and also attempted to commit suicide.

After thirteen years of violence, M decided to come to the SPUWAC about which she got to know from an ex-client.

Intervention at the SPUWAC:

M had come to the SPUWAC wanting the violence to stop and seek divorce from her husband. She had a total of five meetings with the Counsellor and said that during this time the Counsellor made her understand that divorce would not lead to a happy home (*'divorce se ghar nahi banega'*). She was also told that for seeking divorce, she would have to go to court and there is a possibility that the custody of her daughters may be given to their father. She feared for her children's safety and as she lacked family and any kind of support, she eventually decided to reconcile with her husband. M feels that if she was given shelter or livelihood options, she would not have reconciled with A. She also felt that the Counsellor did not support her in her decision to divorce her husband. M expressed that in case there is escalation in violence in the future (verbal violence still continues and physical violence has stopped), she will come back to the Counsellor, but at that time she should not stop her from seeking divorce. M also feels that the social worker did not pressurize A enough during the meetings and he was not told to stop violating M's and the children's rights.

Case Study 5

Shikha is 29 years and married for more than 5 years. Hers was an arranged marriage performed as per the demands of her in-laws, which included all rituals and provision of gifts, clothes and money, much beyond the means of her parents. On arrival in her matrimonial home, she sensed immediately that she was not really welcome. Her mother in law took away her jewellery and locked it up. Over the next few days Shikha realised that her mother in law was always locking things up, including food items- to keep them beyond reach for Shikha. Verbal cruelty commenced within a week of marriage and physical violence after three months. Shikha is educated till class 12 and is not working. She has a younger sister who unfortunately has met a similar fate after her marriage. This is reason enough for Shikha's in-laws to blame her entire family, saying that this perhaps is the general norm in her natal family. Shikha continued to be a victim of violence – physical, emotional, and economic. She realised that she could not conceive and went through IVF treatment successfully. Her son is 2 years old now.

Shikha went to her natal home for delivery and was never called back by her in-laws. She then decided to seek help from the Special Cell, which she had heard of through the Helpline. She went through several sessions. During the conversations she spoke of the possible reasons for this behaviour; one that perhaps since her age was a couple of years more than her husband's (this fact was known to her in-laws prior to settling the match), and two her husband was in a relationship with a female relative (this was known to his mother and she thought that getting him married may help her son overcome this relationship).

She came to the Cell with the expectation of reconciliation. She was brought up to believe that her marital home is the one where she belongs, and no matter what and how the husband behaves she has to learn to 'adjust'. Time will sort out all issues her parents advised her. However, husband did not attend any counselling session. A one sided counselling session was meaningless to her. She wished that some pressure could be exercised by the counsellor on her marital family members to be present and discuss, or some threat to be issued to them, but no such thing happened. In the absence of the husband case was transferred to the mediator. Here too the story remained unchanged. Marital family failed to attend any session. Shikha was driven to a desperate situation. She has now filed an FIR and would like to have all her jewellery and *streedhan* returned and action taken against her husband. She says that all the physical and mental torture, the scars of which she still she carries on her body, have now been forgotten and the language of communication is only materialistic. This was not what she wanted or desired initially as she wanted to go back to her husband's home and live a happy life with him, but the system she approached to seek help made her think and take action for something she was not willing.

Case Study 6

“I have taken ‘nonsense’ for far too long. It’s been 25 years of emotional and mental torture and I can take it no more. I am 59 years old and due to retire in a years’ time. I need to sort out my affairs urgently.” Garima is a highly educated and sophisticated lady, from the upper economic strata. She holds a position of power in the organisation she works at and draws a handsome salary. Arvind, her husband was her own choice. She had a widowed mother and a sister 2 years younger to her. Marriage was a simple affair, she bore all the expenses as her mother did not have much resources. All was well and happy for 9 years. Her mother and sister spent a lot of their time in Garima’s home and Garima had two daughters in the meantime. After the death of her mother things began to change. Garima noticed a change in her husband’s behaviour towards her – there was less and less communication and no physical relationship. Initially she dismissed as age catching up – though she was also the same age, but later discovered to her dismay that Arvind was now more attracted towards her sister. Sister, an heir hostess, would come late from flights and both she and Arvind would sit together for hours and enjoy their drinks and laugh and talk, while she was there to only look after them. She gathered the courage to confront Arvind, and he passed it off as her ‘imagination’. She confided in her daughters and they too dismissed it as her being ‘jealous’, as the aunt had bought off the girls too with expensive gifts each time she came. Garima could see her family life coming to an end in front of her eyes and yet was unable to take any step and carried on. Years passed by, and it was only when her daughters turned teenagers and discovered emails and messages between their aunt and their father that they came to their mothers rescue. Their house was now made completely out of bounds for the aunt, though Garima felt and did not rule out the possibility of them meeting elsewhere. She has been in this misery for the last 25 years. She is due for retirement in another years’ time, and has only now realised that she owns nothing. All property and bank accounts do not have her name anywhere. She is educated and has been earning well all these years but has not saved much as she spent most of her salary in running the house. She has suddenly woken up to realise that nothing belongs to her. The life of trust and faith she had hoped for has suddenly been shattered. She continues to stay in her marital home, as she has no other home. She approached the Special Cell for counselling and assistance. She is also pursuing matters legally and was advised to register at the Special Cell. Doing so would hasten her legal process and also add strength to her case she was informed. She has been through 3 sessions with the E.O and 6 sessions with the Counsellor. Husband has also attended some sessions, in fact on the day of interview, he was sitting outside, waiting for the counsellor to call him in. Her expectations from the Cell were that her husband would be counselled and made to understand his mistakes. Lost years would not return, but at least some harmony could be restored. She does not want divorce at this stage of her life. After a few sessions there was some noticeable change in her husband’s behaviour – but no visible action at home. Garima feels that coming to the Cell has not been of any particular help to her. She also expressed the view that perhaps Counsellors here do not belong to the same social strata and therefore cannot understand the social hierarchy of women in such families and are unable to relate to these issues. A marriage counsellor would be more appropriate to advice on such matters.

Case Study 7

Suman walks in for the interview with a smiling face...rarely seen with the women who visit the Special Cell. Sitting down comfortably she says, I have suffered a lot, but I refused to move out of my marital home. "After all it is MY home too. Today, I am in the shelter of MY home. I want to move on with my life and the lives of my children". 37 year old Suman, a graduate and a government employee, lives in a joint family, where her husband Vinod, his parents and his younger brother's family stay together. The three males are doctors and run their own clinic. All three are in adulterous situations off and on. Suman has even caught her husband Vinod in compromising positions many times but each time was beaten up and tortured mentally. She decided to move to her natal home, but Vinod came, apologised for his behaviour and gave assurances and she returned to her marital home. But soon she discovered that Vinod had installed cameras to check on her movements, changed his sim cards on his mobile to contact women and there was no change in his behaviour. She was taken by surprise when she complained to her mother in law and she responded by saying that "men will be like this...try and accept this. After all I have also accepted it". Suman has a son and twin daughters. Her sister in law also delivered twins (boys) almost at the same time that her twins arrived. Mother in law refused to take care of 5 children, especially the girls and pressurised Suman to give away one of her twin daughters to her (Suman's) sister. Suman's sister has now legally adopted her daughter who is 8 years old.

Suman works in the Health Department of the State Government and draws a handsome salary. For the first 10 years of her marriage she gave her entire salary to her mother in law. Because of social and parental pressures – which advised her to try and adjust – she did not seek external help. Silently she suffered mentally, physically and emotionally for 12 years. On one occasion she was beaten up black and blue and had to be hospitalized. This visit to the hospital changed her life course. She met a visitor of another patient who informed her of the existence of the Special Cell. She then gathered courage and approached the Cell after 12 years of suffering. She has since been through 5 sessions and on one occasion her brother and sister in law were also summoned. Vinod also came for one session but attached no importance to 'just talking'. Suman has filed a parallel FIR against her husband. In the meantime she has stopped giving her salary to her mother in law, and is determined to live life on her own terms in her marital home. She has learned to ignore many things and focus only on the lives of her children, which is a source of happiness to her. She continues with her job and on retirement plans to work on domestic violence issues and conduct home visits to counsel mothers in law in particular.

Case Study 8

This is the story of A, whose case was registered earlier in the Special Cell, was closed after reconciliation and then re-opened recently. She is about 30 years and has been married for 10 years, having 2 girls aged 8 and 5 years. She comes from the lower economic strata. Currently she is residing with her mother and newly married brother. She is sustaining herself and the two daughters by working as a cook, earning about Rs 8000 per month as she does not want to be a burden on them. Her problem started two years after marriage, when her husband did not have a regular job and whatever he earned through odd jobs he squandered away by gambling and drinking. The physical violence also started at the same time when he could not meet the household expenses. He beat her up severely, verbally abused her publicly and at home. He even tried to put a hot press to her face to disfigure her. His problem is he cannot hold a job, regular or temporary.

This was when time she went to the local police thana, which referred her to the Special cell in 2013. Then she went to stay with parents, but returned after 2 months on the assurance that he would stop the violence. In her heart she felt that he would revert to violence, but agreed to go back because she through the Cell would keep a tab on hm. She closed the case in 2014, under duress as she feared he would create problems for her natal family. She had agreed to close the case as he threatened not to take her back if the case was on. Her brother was to be married so she compromised and went back. But after the wedding he was back to the same old behaviour. Then the violence recurred even after reconciliation as he was just not serious about keeping her. So since Dec 2014 she is with her parents and does not want to go back.

At the Special Cell she and her husband had 4 short sittings with the Counsellor, within short intervals, only 2 long counselling sessions were held. After that she got fed up, when he refused to heed or mend his ways or even come to the Cell for counselling. She wants a divorce as she cannot tolerate the daily disturbance of her life and that of her children. She says “Madad to jab hoti jab main uske sath khushi se rehti”. She feels that the real help would have been if she was staying happily with him. The violence did not stop, which compelled her to move out and live with her parents. Now she is decided that she wants a divorce as he will not change. She does not want her children's life to be affected. She did follow the advice of the Counsellor, but every time had concerns about going back. Earlier she agreed to reconciliation on the husband's false assurance. But now, “Haunsala badha hai”. She has got determination to seek a divorce. Even now she is being treated for a head injury - parents are paying for it. She wants to educate her daughters and get on with her life. She has even obtained a ration card in her name and has a voter card has well. She wants to open a bank account to save money for her girls' education. “Aurat apna farz poori tareh se nibhati hai” she says. Even after going through all the violence and harassment by her husband she does not want to break away from his family, as they are supportive of her decision.

Case Study 9

Thirty year old N has come for several sessions for counselling as she is very disturbed, since as her husband is not communicating with her. He refuses to keep any contact on phone or even come for the joint counselling sessions with the Counsellor. N wants to go back to live with him to try to make efforts to make her marriage work. She says this is her second marriage as the first was annulled after couple of months of marriage. For her husband too it was a second marriage. Currently, she is living with her father and brother, who earlier tried to have a dialogue with his family through the community and relatives, but to no avail. N was thrown out by her husband and his family after severe physical and mental violence. While living in her marital family she discovered that there is a history of violence. She learnt that his first wife died under mysterious circumstances, so he and he family were in jail for a year or two. His brothers too ill treat their wives and make demands on them to bring cash and jewellery from their parents.

Though N is perturbed by the fact that that her husband may have killed his former wife and he abuses her too, she still wants to go back to him. She feels compelled to make a go of the second marriage due to social norms, pressure from family and community. She is worried about what people will say if her second marriage breaks up finally. Secondly, she feels she has been cheated, so she wants him to recompense her for throwing her out, by paying alimony, which is her right. Thirdly, she wishes to have a happy settled married life with children. Earlier she had an abortion and lost one premature baby. So, deep down she wants to go back and start a family life, even with a violent and criminal (?) husband. But at the same time she wants to have him punished for inflicting violence both emotional and physical. Her private lawyer has advised her to seek maintenance and return of her household effects. He even advised her to come to the Special cell. She fears that a third marriage may not be possible for her.

N is of the view that her case is not moving ahead, as her husband does not come for the sessions. She is quite self- determined to move on with her life. She is already doing a course in designing clothes to set up her own outlet. She wants to be prepared for a divorce should it happen so she has economic stability, though she requires counselling to take a decision either way. N needs support for moving out of the whirl of her own in decisions at present. There are similar cases in which social norms and legal entanglements confuse women to take decisive steps.

Annexures

Annexure 1

Figure 1

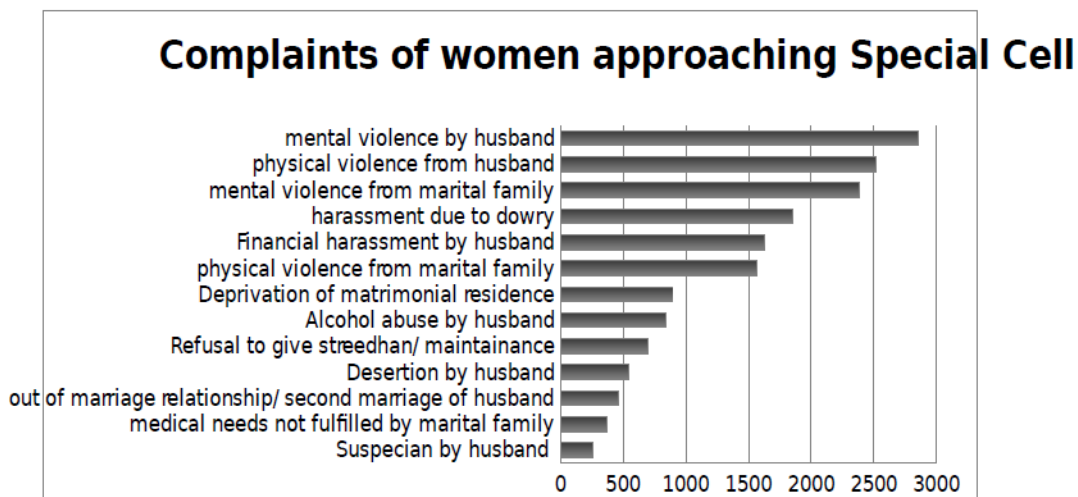
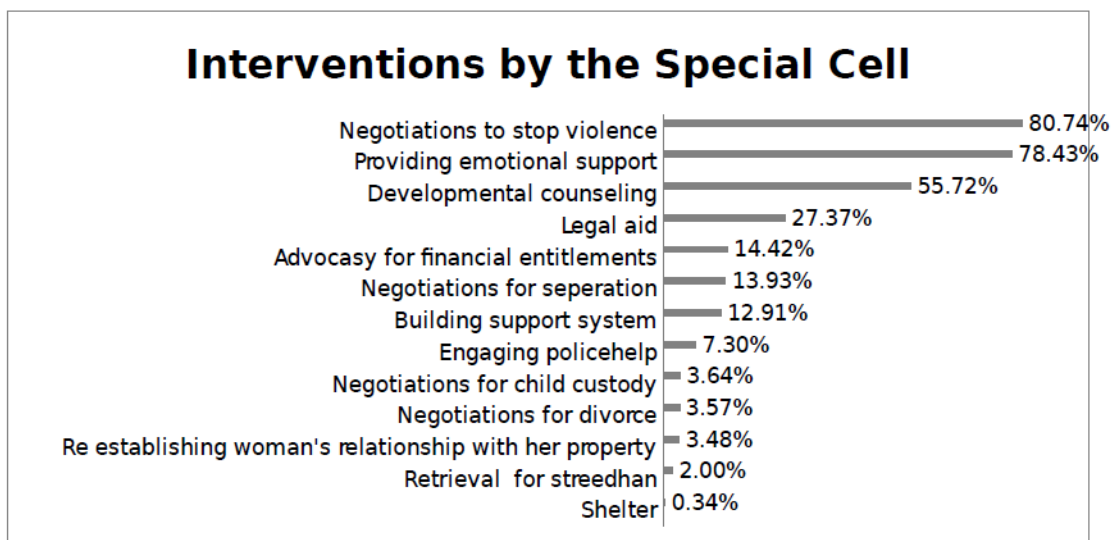


Figure 2



Annexure 2

Guidelines for conducting the Interviews

1. Invite the client/ survivor/ stakeholder for the interview – inform them in advance the date, time and place of interview. Ensure that the time and place of interview is convenient to the respondent. When talking to the client or other respondent ensure their privacy and comfort in answering the questions.
2. Conduct the interview in a quiet place/room (allocated by the SPUWAC Cell of other space as convenient to the respondent).
3. At the outset the researcher must identify herself. She must share a brief but succinct note (in Hindi/or local language) on the evaluation study, with details of the proposed objectives and purpose as well as the methodology being followed or explain verbally about the study and the purpose of the interview. (Give time for reading and any clarifications that may be sought).
2. Explain the ethical procedures being followed and get written/ oral consent for the interview and record it. One signed copy to be kept with the researcher. In case of oral consent, researcher notes that the respondent was explained the purpose of the interview and an informed oral consent has been received. In case the person is not keen to sign the consent form, note down the reasons for not agreeing to sign the consent form.
3. Explain to the respondent that she/he can withdraw consent to the interview anytime during the interview if she/he so wishes. Also explain to the respondent that she/he can refuse to answer any of the questions asked and request to move to the next question in case they find a question uncomfortable to answer.
4. Ensure that the respondent feels confident and is encouraged to talk.
5. It would be better to have 2 people to conduct the interview so that as one is facilitating the discussion the other can take notes.
6. Do not rush through the interview, please give adequate time to the respondent to respond to the queries.
- 5 Do not force any answers if the respondent is hesitant to answer any particular question as it may disturb her/ him
6. Share a written copy of questions and issues that are going to be explored during the interview or verbally brief the respondent about the nature of questions and issues that are going to be explored.

During the interview -

- Record important points/quotes that are uttered by the respondent to develop themes and perspectives later on.
- Focus on “silence” of the respondent at any time. Prod the person speak up or give their ideas/opinions.
- Monitor for class/caste/gender dynamics during the interview - in what tone, body language/voice/emotion.
- Make thorough notes and record important quotations – one person asks questions and one takes notes.
- If both take notes then share your notes / points from memory after the interview to ensure consistency and then transcribe.
- Dig deep and ask probing questions for gathering information on all the pertinent questions.

(A) After the interview -

- Facilitator and note taker meet to debrief on what happened during the interviews during the day, including challenges, problem solving, main themes
- Facilitators will transcribe notes within 24 hours as per the transcription protocol
- Note taker will finalize their field notes
- Upon completion of the transcript and field notes, the facilitator and note taker will meet to and will integrate field notes per expanded field notes protocol
- Submit finalised transcripts (as and when completed) and field notes to ERU consultants.
- The research director/ ethics /advisory team/ review and see if there are any queries.

(B) Entering the field notes -

- Both team members discuss and make the field notes of the interview under the key headings of the questionnaire.
- The observations should be noted at the end of the note.
- Even the key quotes/ opinions should be noted and put down for future reference.
- The format can be shared with researchers in advance so that there is a commonality.
- The transcription of the interview is really useful as it helps to check the data – views, quotes, emphasis etc to later corroborate with notes.
- Strictly maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents in all documentation.

NOTE

No part of the research material will be broadcast shared or published without written permission of Delhi police Head Quarters or National Commission for Women, New

Annexure 3

Consent Form for Survivors
(Used Hindi version for sharing with them and obtaining formal consent)

Research Ethics and Qualitative Analysis Steps in the evaluation study

This is a step by step process for conducting interviews as an ethical requirement of informing the respondent/participants followed by other steps before, during and after the interviews.

Before the interview

My name is _____.

I am working with _____, a research agency. We are working with the NCW, New Delhi. You are being asked to take part in the study/interview so that we can understand -----

Your participation will help us understand how the Special Cells have helped you -----

If you agree to take part in this research, you will participate in the interview for about an hour.

Being a part of this survey may not directly benefit you, but it will help in improving the lives of many other women in the community who undergo violence in their lives. Your ideas and suggestion will be very valuable for the study.

Confidentiality

The information shared by you will be held in strict confidence by us, nobody outside of our research team will learn of anything you have told us. This information will not be shared with your family or friends or even anyone close to you. Your name will not appear on any reports or documents or papers brought out at the end of the study. We will protect information about your participation to the best of our ability.

This evaluation study has been approved by NCW and the Delhi Police.

Possible Risks

Participation in this study poses very minimal risk to you. You will not be required to answer any question that you do not want to answer. In addition, you can refuse to participate in the research study at any point.

Your decision to not participate in the evaluation study

You are free to decide if you want to be a part of this survey or not. If you decide that you cannot participate, your decision will not affect your ability to receive services from the Special Cells or the Police in anyway.

If you wish to leave the study, you may exit the interview at any point of time.

If you need to contact us after the interview with any questions, please contact:

ERU Consultants Pvt Ltd – Name and phone number of person

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, please contact the above.

Do you agree to participate in this survey?

Yes = 1

No = 2 ? STOP

INTERVIEWER:

You must sign below before taking ascent from the person/s

I certify that the individual being surveyed has provided his/her verbal consent. I further certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the person being interviewed and a copy of this consent form has been offered. I also certify that I have answered his/her questions. Interviewers please sign at the appropriate place.

Signature of interviewer _____ Date _____

Respondent:

I have understood the nature of the research being done and questions that will be asked to me and I am consenting for the same.

Signature of respondent -----Date -----
GIVE A COPY OF THE INFORMED CONSENT TO THE RESPONDENT

People met

Mr Robin Hibu, Jt Commissioner Delhi Police
Ms Varsha Sharma, DCP CAW Cell, Nanakpura
Ms Lakshmi Kanwat, ACP, Nanakpura
Ms Anuradha Chhabra, Inspector Nanakpura
Mr Rajendra Bhargava, ACP, Pitampura
Ms Rajni Dhobal, Inspector, Nanakpura
Ms Ranu Kalra – Social Worker, Pitampura
Ms Amrit Kaur – Social Worker, Nanakpura
Ms Anuradha – Social Worker, Nanakpura
Ms Shefali Behl – Social Worker, Nanakpura
Ms Mohini Bansal – Social Worker, Nanakpura
Ms Anjali Dave – Prof. and Chair, School of Social Work, TISS
Ms Trupti Jhaveri Panchal – Assistant Prof, School of Social Work, TISS
Ms Amita Pitre – Former Strategic Coordinator, RCI-VAW, TISS
Ms Taranga Sriraman – Programme/Strategic Coordinator, RCI-VAW, TISS
Mr Balwant Singh – Programme Officer, RCI-VAW, Haryana Special Cell
Mr Pramod Kant Saxena – Mediator, Nanakpura
Ms Esha Khanna – Mediator, Nankpura
Mr Durga Prasad – Mediator, Pitampura
Mr Manish Kumar – Mediator, Pitampura
Ms Richa Ojha - Senior Research Officer, NCW