

# **GENDER SENSITIVE APPROACH TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: BUILDING CAPACITY OF POLICE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERED DELIVERY SYSTEM**

**(Project No. 105534-001)**

## **FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

(January 2009 to December 2009)

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## I. ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

The project was a multi-sectoral collaboration of police/community partnered NGOs institutionalised as Community Policing Resource Centres (CPRCs) with membership of respective service delivery departments. The CPRCs are both a horizontal and vertical network that delivers citizen safety-related services. The project aimed to develop the capacity of CPRC functionaries to promote a gender-sensitive approach to gender-based violence. It evolved in three phases. The first phase constituted a gender analysis of CPRCs and its functionaries (including health, education, women and child, Panchayat, SC/OBC department, civil society members and NGOs). It assessed the delivery system with special reference to the Domestic Violence Act. This analysis was used to initiate the second phase. This involved the preparation of an evidence-based training guideline to be used by boundary partners to build gender responsive capacities in staff. The third phase pertains to dissemination of gender-friendly support services and the provision of the Domestic Violence Act through the CPRC functionaries. The project involved revamping the CPRCs to strengthen the service-delivery of women cells prior to the incorporation of protocols of the Domestic Violence Act. It further included broadening the mandate of the CPRCs to be service providers under the provision of the Domestic Violence Act and supportive services of protection officers. Enhanced services pertaining to gender-based violence were incorporated through the reforms commission. This remains a continuous process both in terms of penetration of CPRC led activities from the district level to the sub-district and police outreach centres and simultaneously the bolstering of associated services related to gender-based violence from the various departments.

## II. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The CPRCs in Punjab are part of a community-policing programme to build community stakes in public safety and citizen security. They represent a shift from an enforcement approach of the police to a service-oriented perspective with consideration for vulnerable groups including women.

However, gender capacities of service providers to prevent, protect and respond to women victims remain a challenge. The mandate of the current project is to build capacity to CPRC functionaries to provide procedural assistance and gender sensitive response to women victims, particularly under the Domestic Violence Act, for which the state has provided systems of support.

The CPRC have a democratic structure, partnered by civil society members, functionaries of department of Health, Women and Child, Education, Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Classes, Rural Development and with the Police as the nodal agency. The CPRCs are a registered NGO in each district and form part of the state structure after a notification was passed by the Government in 2003.<sup>1</sup> IDC worked along with the Police and the State Policy makers to establish these multi sectoral centres for community police collaboration to improve the citizen security and service delivery.<sup>2</sup> The CPRCs have four units catering to grievance redressal, community service-cum-information centre, victim relief assistance and child unit. It provides 26 extensions services and include a service 'counselling for women'.

However, inspite of state strictures, passing of laws and creation of institutional structures to address violence against women, the processes and mechanism to both provide relief to women victims and check violence against women continue to remain unaddressed. While the Domestic Violence Act that lays down the scope, procedures and services that have to be instituted to prevent, protect and redress the occurrence of VAW (Violence Against Women) and the police and health sectors well positioned to implement these legal directives they are ill-equipped to intervene in what is clearly perceived to be intimate

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<sup>1</sup> *Community Police Resource Centre: Punjab Police*. Chandigarh: Institute for Development and Communication.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2004. *Resuming Punjab's Prosperity: Opportunities and Challenges Ahead*. Delhi: The World Bank, p. 66.

and interpersonal space. The cultural values and social ethos not only tolerate VAW, but women's placement is closely woven with cultural practices such as dowry, male child preference, family honour and violent masculinities that promote power dynamics, which in turn leads to victimisation of women. Historically, Punjab has had an unfavourable status of women. The sex ratio as a composite standard of gender positioning remains the most adverse in the country and has been since the past century.<sup>3</sup> Crime against women has increased in the last decade, with domestic violence contributing maximum to this rise.

The State of Punjab has created community partnered policing and delivery centres which have a multi sectoral support base drawn from five departments (Health, Women and Child, Education, Scheduled Caste and Other Back Classes and Land Rural Development). Thus, while an institutional structure exists it is without a defined agenda, protocol or mechanism to cater to domestic violence or initiate prevention strategies to address violence against women. Training forms part of the Punjab Police budget, it however remains small and is not dedicated to gender sensitisation. While police leadership is committed to respond to violence against women, they remain limited in conceptual and monetary resources to advance measures to implement the Domestic Violence Act. Given this background, the project was conceived with the following objectives:

#### **Specific objectives of the project**

- (i) To evolve a gender sensitive approach to victims of violence by building capacity of the police and CPRC functionaries. (Which includes civil society members, personnel of health, women and child, rural development, education, Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Classes and Rural Development)
- (ii) To revamp the support services provided to women in the CPRCs in response to the Domestic Violence Act.
- (iii) To develop an evidence-based plan of action for addressing violence against women for boundary partners.
- (iv) To create and disseminate training and resource manuals for boundary partners Phillaur Police Training Academy and CPRC.
- (v) To undertake process documentation of the programme.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

#### **Process**

The project would draw on the existing partnership of IDC-CPRC to initiate an evidence-based action plan and resource materials for boundary partners to train functionaries and disseminate information on gender-friendly support services.

The victim relief units in CPRC are equipped as a crime centre with counselling services, first aid and tie-up with government hospitals for treatment of burn, rape victims etc. The provision to network and draw on services of the education department (sensitise students, inform them of services available) women and child departments (to provide rehabilitation by accessing existing schemes, networking with Anganwadi workers) rural development department (panchayats can arrange vehicles for women's activities) etc. exist. Yet these linkages remain ad hoc and without the powers of the Domestic Violence Act, with gender sensitivity of counsellors also suspect. IDC will utilise these two resources: of an IDC-CPRC collaboration and institutional arrangements within the CPRC

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<sup>3</sup> In 1901, the sex ratio was 832 and in 2001, it is 876 in constant to Indian average of 972 and 933 respectively. Government of India. 1994. *Census of India 1991: India: Primary census Abstract: General Population*. New Delhi: Office of the Registrar and Census Commissioner, Series 1, pt. II-B(i), vol. 1. Government of India. 2004. *census of India 2001: India: Final Population Totals*. New Delhi: Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Series 1.

as the platform from which a gender sensitive approach to violence against women will be launched. It involves:

- (i) Gender analysis of CPRC as an organisation and gender perspective of functionaries.
- (ii) Preparation of training and resource materials for boundary partners, with particular reference to the Domestic Violence Act.
- (iii) Workshops and training of personnel by boundary partners.
- (iv) Preparation of an action plan for capacity building and dissemination of gender friendly services.
- (v) Process documentation.

### **Boundary Partners**

The project will be implemented with two boundary partners – the Phillaur Police Academy which would provide gender sensitive training to all police personnel and district level CPRCs which would be involved in the action research and training of CPRC and health functionaries.

### **1. Project preparation**

- (i) Meeting with senior police officers in Punjab to incorporate a gender sensitive approach to violence against women in the CPRCs in a holistic manner would be held to evolve ownership of this project among these stakeholders. A review of gender sensitisation and people-friendly projects such as the one is run by Karnataka Police and Meghalaya Police would also be part of the agenda. This would build support for addressing gender-based violence and domestic violence in particular through police networks in other states.
- (ii) A meeting with police planners and state representatives of the five departments that form part of the support base of the CPRCs i.e. Health Department, Women and Child, SC/ST, Rural and Education. This meeting would provide direction to the district level functionaries to coordinate to provide relevant services to tackle violence against women, in particular to the Domestic Violence Act and forward information through official channels to district level functionaries regarding operationalisation of this multi-sectoral project.
- (iii) Internal training of IDC staff to equip them to conduct action research, documentation and holding of workshops. Cultural sensitivities of Punjab and gender issues would also be addressed.

### **2. Action research**

While a number of gender manuals for training to addressing victims of gender violence exist, these need to be adapted to the Punjab context; in particular the provisions of the Domestic Violence Act and existing capacities of functionaries would need to be built in providing the services. An evidence-based documentation and preparation of resource materials would be culturally relevant, timely and help to build stakes of functionaries who would be part of the delivery system. While IDC has conducted studies on violence against women in Punjab, department-specific gaps in gender sensitisation programme would provide the relevant insight for police, health care providers, women department and rural development functionaries and their roles in addressing these issues. In specific, the Victim Relief Centres in the CPRCs would be analysed in-depth to link facilities as directed under the prevention of Domestic Violence Act. It would also study the services provided by the crisis centre and the nature of services required or expected from victims.

This research would be conducted in all 19 victim relief centres at the CPRCs. The gender perspective on violence against women would be gathered from all the five departments and police staff at each of the district headquarters, particularly the women cell.

### **3. Research Methodology**

- (i) An interview schedule would be undertaken with health, women and child, education, SC/SC, rural development and police to learn the existing understanding on gender and addressing gender-based violence.
- (ii) Gender analysis of all 19 CPRCs would be undertaken and their capacities to deal with gender-based violence and protocols of the Domestic Violence Act would be focused upon.
- (iii) The victim relief centres along with women cells would be analysed through participant observation and case study method. Police procedures, practices and institutional setting would be studied in relation to cases of violence against women. The Karnataka Police Gender Sensitisation and People-Friendly Police Project checklist of structures, procedures, attitude, resources and community connections would be used to supplement this assessment.
- (iv) Additionally, the coordinating and network system put in place to tie-up with hospitals, women and child department and panchayats would be analysed to see the efficiency and effectiveness of these mechanisms in dealing with women victim of violence cases including domestic violence.
- (v) A small sample of victims for a satisfaction survey would also be undertaken. These would be supplemented by follow ups of the cases of violence which have been counselled/settled by the CPRC. It is interesting to note that while the number of crime cases against women have been falling in Punjab in the past two years, the percentage increase of violent cases being reported in the women cells in CPRC has been increasing. If there are good practices which are being followed in resolution of cases of violence then these would be documented and disseminated.

### **4. Document analysis and intervention**

A process documentation of this project would be an invaluable resource for duplicating, improving and mapping the process of addressing violence against women. The documentation would be undertaken through a number of mediums not only written but visual including photographs and narratives. The emphasis would be on documenting the following:

- (i) A report to document existing perspectives and capacities within the police, health, women and child, education, SC/ST functionaries on issues of gender and violence against women.
- (ii) Highlight gaps in capacity of the above functionaries on the basis of which training programme would be evolved with due emphasis on the Domestic Violence Act.
- (iii) Develop a cultural-specific resource and training materials that would be relevant to equip the functionaries in their campaign to address violence against women.
- (iv) Document the training sessions by the boundary partners along with the feedback and improvements from the field.
- (v) Process documentation of the project from its initial stage – the documentation would include visual forms, case histories and narratives and best practices to be used as a resource or data base.

### **5. Workshops/trainings**

A workshop to share research findings with state policy makers, in particular stakeholders of the six departments, would form part of building the stakeholder thrust to combat violence against women and promote the implementation of the Domestic

Violence Act in the state. A second workshop of specialists from the same department would be convened to evolve the main themes of the training materials after sharing findings of the action research.

Training on violence against women with senior police, health, education, rural development, SC/ST functionaries would be undertaken.

Training for each of the district level CPRC and supportive functionaries from five departments would be taken by the boundary partners.

#### ***Follow-up workshop***

The stakeholders from all five departments and police would be part of the follow-up workshop. This would help to strengthen the independent functioning of CPRCs with institutional support from five affiliated departments with multi-sectoral approach to tackle violence against women.

### **6. Evaluation and reporting**

On-going monitoring and evaluation after action research, development of resources and trainings would be undertaken. It is hoped that the funding agency would visit the project site and provide support and networks where required.

## **IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS**

The gender sensitisation programme is a part of an effort to build a gender capacity of the ongoing programme to make police service citizen-centric. It must be noted that the project outputs for the IDRC support programme were part of a larger multi initiative that includes revamping police services through the community research outreach centres, part of a strategic development of citizen-centred safety measures that include strategic police planning within the larger government initiative of the Punjab State, international projects making geared to improve community policing engagement, built police accountability. It is in this context that the following project outputs were evolved with the IDRC support.

### **Research**

- (i) Gender-based violence: A guide for capacity building of police personnel
- (ii) Process documentation of stakeholder engagement to build a gender-sensitive approach to violence against women

### **Capacity**

- (i) Workshop to sensitise state policy makers to evidence-based mapping of gender responsiveness within the CPRCs.
- (ii) Workshop to evolve themes for training materials based on action research.
- (iii) Workshop to sensitise senior government functionaries on training issues.
- (iv) Training of CPRC functionaries on gender-sensitive response to violence against women by boundary partners (CPRC).
- (v) Feedback interactions with CPRC functionaries
- (vi) Posters and awareness materials on procedures and protocols of domestic violence, sexual harassment and dowry.

### **Policy**

Recommendations and engagement with Punjab Governance Reforms Commission to integrate gender responsiveness in ongoing police reforms.

## V. PROJECT OUTCOMES

### 1. Incorporation of project recommendations for citizen-centric policing

Institute for Development and Communication (IDC) is closely engaged with the Punjab Governance Reforms Commission (PGRC). Recommendations emerging from the project have been incorporated in sections dealing with the police and based on feedback from stakeholders. Other recommendations will be forwarded in the next report of the PGRC. The following are the recommendations that have been incorporated:

- (i) The women cell to be better integrated under the aegis of the CPRC. Findings from the field revealed that women-specific issues are dealt by the women cells and treated as a segregated stand alone unit. The women cells largely function as counselling centres for cases of domestic dispute. The functioning of the women cell need to be expanded first to provide all related victim service which include guidance for registration of an FIR, access to free legal services, skilled counselling and access to shelters. Secondly, to provide protection and prevention of violence against women. This includes provision of outreach services, including building of stakeholders through panchayats and NGOs, sensitisation to gender-based violence within the community and awareness of legal remedies and support for victims. These need to be incorporated in both the backbone activities of CPRCs which are common to all CPRCs and the network at the sub-tehsil and police station levels. The special activities for CPRCs are more culture-specific and can shape domestic violence issues in accordance to the local needs, capacities and responsiveness of functionaries.
- (ii) Allocate and utilise funds for spreading awareness on forms of gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence.
- (iii) Adopt the guide for capacity building of police personnel as part of the capacity building of the police rank and file in Punjab Police Academy, Phillaur.
- (iv) Distribute the guide among CPRC functionaries and community stakeholders to equip them to enhance their gender responsiveness.
- (v) To strengthen the CPRC network and coordination with the government departments whose functionaries are members of the CPRCs. In particular, to institutionalise coordination mechanisms with the Health Department and the Social Welfare Department. Health services must be better integrated to provide victim relief. With the Social Security and Women and Child Development Department, the CPRC would need to devise special coordination functions since the Protection Officer mandated under the Domestic Violence Act are the CDPOs of Social Welfare department. They are also the Dowry Prohibition Officers. The CPRCs should be designated as service providers and also Protection Officers.

### 2. Learning

- (i) Gender continues to be a low priority of governance at the cutting edge level. In spite of political commitment to certain forms of gender violence and the executive awareness to mainstream gender, gender responsiveness continues to be a low priority with police, with the functionaries of health, rural development and education. Also, specific aspects of gender violence are responded to by different sections, for instance, reported rape cases and dowry deaths is a priority with the police, dowry harassment and familial adjustment concern of women cells who may not respond to issues of sexual harassment with the same involvement. Sexual harassment at the workplace continues to have no visibility with the gender interventionists. A cogent comprehensive gender responsiveness needs a consistent support from political leadership and civil society stakeholders.

- (ii) Dovetailing gender issues with priority areas; The Community Policing Resource Centres (CPRCs) promote better governance and citizen-friendly police services are the priority of Punjab Government. Efforts to enhance CPRC network capacities are responded to and have been the mainstay in the project outcome.

#### **OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) International visibility and links also provide enthusiasm for community stakeholders and CPRC functionaries to take gender in the ambit of international concern.
- (ii) Promote local led initiatives: While functionaries from CPRC were boundary partners, engagement was confined with preliminary meetings and feedback sessions. Evolving a team with the CPRC functionaries to undertake monitoring and motivate grassroots engagement may be more effective in the long run.
- (iii) Timely intervention with the Punjab Government which is already revamping and strengthening the CPRC network. The IDRC support on enhancing the gender responsiveness of CPRCs was exceedingly well-timed and could strengthen the gender capacities and part of the overarching aim to make police services more citizen responsive.