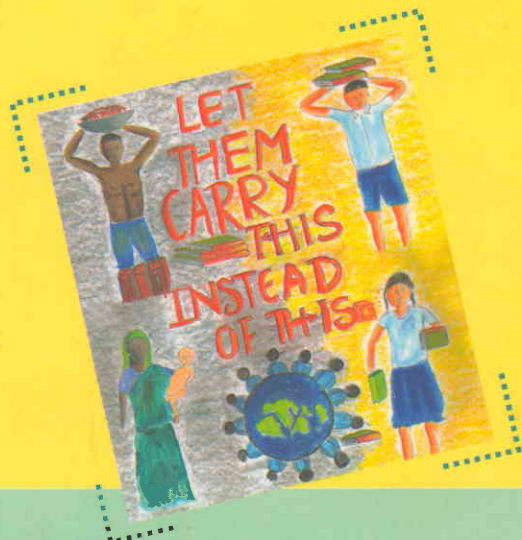
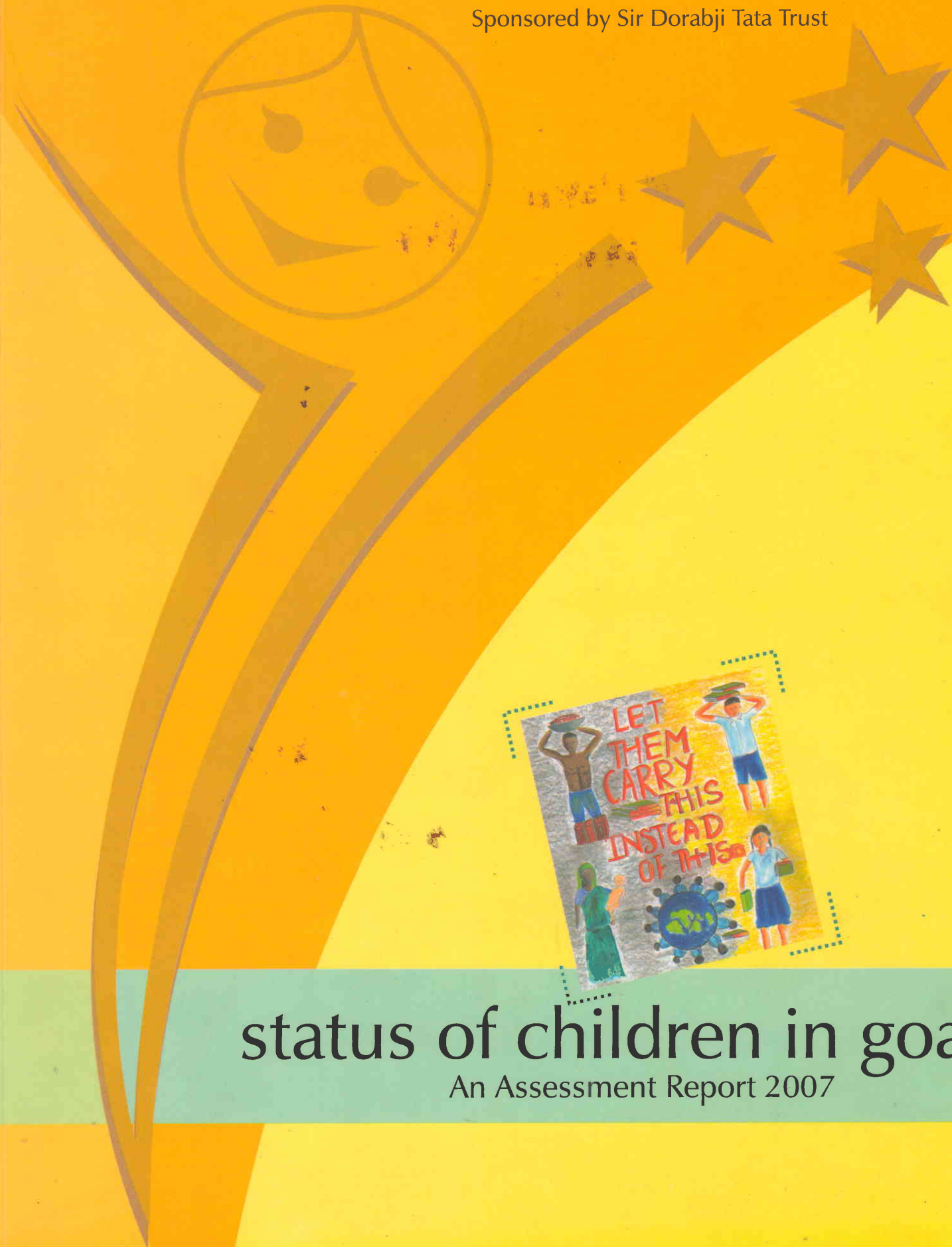




GOA INITIATIVE FOR MAINSTREAMING CHILD RIGHTS

Sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust



# status of children in goa

An Assessment Report 2007

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Drawing by: A  
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## 3.2

# Women's Issues

### Literacy Rate

In 2001, Goa's literacy rate was 82.3 per cent, 88.9 per cent among males and 75.5 per cent among females. This is the fourth highest in India and much higher than the all-India literacy rate of 65.4 per cent (75.9 in males and 54.2 in females: Goa, 2001). The Economic Survey of Goa, 2004-05, shows that the literacy rate ranges from 85.5 per cent in the Bardez taluka to 74.8 per cent in the talukas of Quepem and Canacona. The literacy rates in the talukas of South Goa is lower than the state average. According to

this source, the overall rural-urban differences are not as high; 79.7 per cent persons in rural areas compared to 82 per cent persons in urban areas are literate. However, there are taluka-wise gaps, the literacy rate in rural Quepem is 69.2 per cent, whereas in urban Satari it is 88.3 per cent. The literacy rate of women in rural Quepem is 61.4 per cent, whereas it is 82.1 per cent in urban Sattari. The biggest gap in literacy rate is between 94.2 per cent among men in urban Sattari, compared to 61.4 per cent among women in rural Quepem. This shows that there are stark urban-rural and gender differences in the literacy rate in Goa. (See table)

### Talukawise Literacy Rates (2001 Census, per cent)

State/ Taluka	Dist/ Taluka	Rural			Urban			Total		
		P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Goa		79.7	87.4	71.9	84.4	89.5	79.0	82.0	88.4	75.4
N Goa		82.0	89.9	73.8	85.4	90.2	80.3	83.5	90.0	76.7
Pernem		80.6	89.5	71.1	82.1	89.0	74.8	80.8	89.5	71.6
Bardez		86.6	92.1	81.2	84.8	89.1	80.2	85.5	90.3	80.6
Tiswadi		82.4	89.4	75.6	86.3	91.1	81.1	84.9	90.5	79.2
Bicholim		81.7	90.6	72.3	86.8	92.9	80.3	83.8	91.5	75.6
Satari		74.5	84.7	63.9	88.3	94.2	82.1	76.4	86.0	66.3
Ponda		82.0	90.6	73.0	84.7	89.2	79.7	82.9	90.1	75.1
S Goa		76.0	83.2	69.0	83.3	88.7	77.6	80.1	86.3	73.7
Mormugao		79.0	86.0	72.4	83.7	89.6	77.0	82.9	89.0	76.1
Salcete		79.5	85.5	74.0	83.7	88.3	79.1	81.9	87.1	76.8
Quepem		69.2	76.9	61.4	81.4	87.6	75.2	74.8	81.8	67.7
Sanguem		74.2	83.5	64.5	82.6	89.9	75.3	75.7	84.6	66.4
Canacona		72.8	80.6	64.9	80.1	85.9	73.7	74.8	82.1	67.2

Source: Economic Survey 2004-2005, Government of Goa

### Labour Force Participation

The labour force participation in 2001 was 39.9 per cent, almost the same as the all-India average, 39.3. However, the gender difference is higher in Goa. While in India, 51.9 per cent of males and 25.7 per cent of females participated in the labour force, in Goa 54.9 per cent of males and 22.3 per cent of females participated in the labour force. The problem is particularly significant in rural areas, where 26.1 per cent of the total workers are female in Goa as compared to 31 per cent in India. On the contrary, in urban areas, 18 per cent of the total workers are female in Goa compared to 11.5 per cent in India (Goa, 2001).

### Marriage

Mean age at marriage for females in 1993 was 25.1 for Goa compared to 20 for all of India. The percentage of married women in the age group of 15 to 44 years in 1981 was 59.21 in Goa, compared to 80.51 for India (Goa, 2001).

### Sex Ratio

A look at the sex ratio in Goa over the last 100-odd years

shows a decline in the sex ratio starting with the time Goa was liberated from colonial rule. It was around the same time that Goa featured on the holiday seekers map. Goa's tourism potential was discovered in the late '60s.

### Sex Ratio for Goa 1900 – 2001

Year	Sex ratio (Females to 1,000 males)
1900	1,091
1910	1,108
1921	1,120
1931	1,088
1940	1,084
1950	1,128
1960	1,066
1971	981
1981	975
1991	967
2001	961

Source: Economic Survey 2003-04, Government of Goa

The sex ratio in Goa has been steadily declining from 1066 in 1961 to 975 in 1987, and 961 in 2001, though the latter higher than 933 for India as a whole. Goa ranks 22<sup>nd</sup> in the

country in its sex ratio in urban areas (919 females to 1,000 males) being surpassed in this even by states like Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and others. It ranks 20<sup>th</sup> in its sex ratio in rural areas (948 females to 1,000 males). It is often argued that this decline in the sex ratio is a result of the improved medical facilities in the state, which has resulted in a lower mortality rate among men. Others opine that it is a result of out-migration of women for work and in-migration of male labour. Under-enumeration in the census is another of the arguments. However there exists no data to support these hypotheses. There is available data also that points to women's neglect of their health, poor nutrition status and lower access to health care due to the inflated cost of living (National Commission for Women, 2004).

### Crime against Women

Alcoholism in males is 28.7 per cent in Goa, which ranks third in India. Around 4.5 per cent of Goan women drink, compared to 2.2 per cent of women in all of India. Interestingly, 3.1 per cent of Goan women smoke compared to 2.8 per cent of women in India. There is a need to understand the linkages between alcoholism in the state and its correlation to violence against women. With over 15,000 legal and illegal bars in the state (approximately one for every 93 citizens

- men, women and children included), there is an urgent need for the government to relook at its policy on the sale of alcohol and the enforcement machinery (Increase in Crime..., 2003).

Goa ranks 12<sup>th</sup> with regard to the rate of crime against women according to the National Crimes Record Bureau Report for 1995. The average rate of crime against women for the small state of Goa is 11.3, while the national average is 11.6. Domestic violence is fairly common in Goa according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2, International Institute of Population Sciences, 2000). Eighteen per cent of ever-married women have experienced beatings or physical mistreatment from their husbands since the age of 15. This is corroborated by the approximately 820 cases of crimes against women that have been reported to the Goa State Commission for Women between 1997 to May 2004. The Family Counselling Centre, which was started under a Central Social Welfare Board scheme, attended to 760 cases of crimes against women between 1996 and May 2004. The Women's organisations in the state have also handled numerous cases, not all of which reach the formal state redressal agencies. Additionally, there are cases that do not enter the violence register and get dismissed as one-off incidents, like human trafficking through adoption, cyber crimes and bonded labour. The official police figures of crimes against women are given below:

### Crimes Against Women (IPC) reported and detected in Goa 1999-April 2004

Sr. No	Crime	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003		2004 up to 30.04.04	
		R	D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R	D
1	Rape	18	18	21	20	12	12	13	12	31	29	9	8
2	Kidnapping	6	2	7	2	6	5	5	5	13	12	3	2
3	Eve Teasing	7	4	9	8	6	5	7	7	6	5	1	1
4	Molestation	27	23	19	17	19	16	18	18	20	16	6	6
5	Cruelty to married women by husband or relatives	10	8	13	13	10	9	6	6	22	22	6	4
6	Dowry Deaths	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	0
7	Abetment to Suicide	5	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1
8	Dowry Prohibition Act	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
9	Procuration of Minor Girls	0	0	1	0	2	2	2	2	5	5	0	0
	Total	75	61	75	64	60	54	55	54	103	93	26	22

Source: Goa Police

The gender difference in the suicide rate in Goa is shown below. Dowry dispute is not a cause for suicide in Goa.

### Incidence of Suicides, 2000

Area	By Sex		By Age Group				
	Male	Female	Up to 14 years	15-29	30-44	45-59	Above 60
India	66,032	42,561	3,324	38,711	36,739	21,326	8,493
Goa	185	87*	5	98	101	45	23

Source: Statistical Abstract, India 2002, by Government of India: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

### Incidence of Suicides by Cause of Suicide - 2000 - Part 1

Area	Sudden change in eco. status	Illness	Death of dear person	Dowry dispute	Drug abuse	Failure in Examination	Fall in social reputation	Family problems
India	2,669	22,784	925	2,446	1,397	2,320	866	23,038
Goa	-	53	3	-	-	6	-	52

Source: Statistical Abstract, India 2002, by Government of India: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

## Incidence of Suicides by Cause of Suicide – 2000 - Part 2

Area	Love affairs	Poverty	Property dispute	Unemployment	Causes not known	Other causes	Total
India	3,189	2,743	1,911	2,600	20,758	20,947	108,593
Goa	15	-	-	20	105*	18	272

Source: *Statistical Abstract, India 2002*, by Government of India: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

\* For nearly 40 per cent of the cases of suicides, the causes are not known.

### Sex Related Trafficking in Goa

Prostitution in Goa, like everywhere else, is an age-old profession. In Goa, historians, travellers and other social scientists have written about the *kolvonts* or 'dancing girls' who were dedicated to the temples. However, prostitution has taken on a new face with the advent of tourism in Goa.

Goa emerged on the international holiday seeker's map in the late 1960s, and since then the inflow of tourists into the small 3,702 sq km state has been constantly on the rise. The first tourists were backpackers, often referred to by the locals as 'hippies'. Sections of the locals then feared the impact on their children by the rather permissive sexual behaviour of the tourists, including their nudism. The big spurt in tourism, however, was seen in the 1980s. Women's organisations like Bailancho Saad, Bailancho Manch and anti-tourism organisations like the Jagrut Goenkaranchi Fauz have voiced their fears at several public meetings about the impact of tourism on the local population, particularly women; today children are also included in this vulnerable group. Prostitution was often voiced as a concern, being one of the possible impacts of tourism. However, hard data on the extent of the problem or the exact incidence of tourism-related prostitution is not easy to procure. Prostitution is not always accompanied by trafficking. Roughly, prostitution in Goa, which has elements of trafficking involved, can be divided for better understanding of the problem into:

1. Prostitution in red light areas
2. Tourism related prostitution
3. Exploitation of children for Prostitution
  - a) Tourism related
  - b) Religious dedication of children into prostitution

These are not exclusive categories and they might overlap in reality.

### Goa's Common Civil Code

While the rest of the country debates the pros and cons of a Uniform Civil Code, many are unaware that in Goa there is already a Common Civil Code in existence. The 'Codigo Civil Portugues' or the Portuguese Civil Code (PCC) of 1867, (often referred to as the Common Civil Code), which is based on the French Civil Code (Code Napoleon), has been in effect in Goa since 1870. The PCC includes laws of marriage, divorce, inheritance and succession, children and adoption, and so on.

Under the Civil Code, registration – of births and deaths and marriages – is mandatory. This proof or recognition of marriage is meant to ensure a certain amount of security to a married woman as the law also assures the wife a

share in her husband's assets. Although registration is mandatory for all communities in Goa, the drawbacks are the cumbersome and often confusing procedures that do not apply uniformly to all communities.

In Goa, there exists a high awareness of the law. A contributing factor to the general awareness of the provisions of the Civil Code is the tax benefit that couples can avail of on registration of marriage. Income from all sources is considered joint property and taxed likewise, that is each partner is taxed on only half the total amount of assets owned. All children have a share in the family property, and sons and daughters are treated alike. Legally, it is almost impossible for parents to disinherit their children as only their share of the property can be disposed of. In the absence of descendants, ascendants are entitled to the share and, in their absence, brothers and sisters and their descendants are entitled to equal shares.

The experience has, however, been contrary to expectations of the law. Property rights of women exist only on paper. Very often daughters receive a certain amount of assets (normally gold and other movable assets) at the time of their marriage and are asked to sign off their rights to the family property. It is uncommon that daughters fight for their share of the parental property.

Women's organisations point to practical problems that arise with regard to inheritance of property and sharing of assets. When registering property, it is the husband's name that is recorded in the land records, unless the wife is aware of her rights and insists that her name be included, which is very rare. Therefore, a man wishing to dispose of his property and disinherit his wife can do so by concealing the fact that he is married.

According to *Bailancho Saad* and the Goa State Commission for Women, bigamy is not uncommon in Goa. It was opined that Articles 3 and 4 of the section on 'Usages and Customs of Gentile Hindus of Goa' in the Family Laws made provisions for polygamy. However the women's organisations have noted that cases of bigamy in Goa are not legal. In the Family Laws, polygamy is permitted only under certain conditions. Interestingly, however, bigamy is reportedly prevalent in all Hindu, Catholic and Muslim communities. This is despite the fact that Section 494 of the Indian Penal Code considers bigamy as an offence.

### Recommendations for Plan of Action

Bailancho Saad demands a well-defined policy on alcohol, with specific reference to the following:

- Strict implementation of the excise law, which includes timing for bars, ban on sale of liquor to children and no liquor outlets in the vicinity of educational institutions.
- Stop surrogate advertisements of alcohol in print and visual media, and through government-supported festivals like the Carnival.

- **Special levy on all alcoholic drinks to open detoxification centres for alcoholics and crisis management centres for alcohol-affected families.**
- **Increase the staff and bed capacity from 10 to 100 in the two detoxification centres in North and South Goa (National Commission for Women, 2004).**

Following are some recommendations by women's organisations in Goa:

### Recommendations for Police

- Prompt action in terms of recording and pursuing complaints.
- Providing for sensitised police personnel, both male and female, at each police station.
- A people-friendly atmosphere in police stations.
- Panchanama to be done immediately on the death of a woman.
- Quality of investigations to be improved by having a separate investigating agency.
- Police stations to be equipped with mobile vans with wireless sets, to reach out to women when needed
- Setting up of a special cell to deal with crimes against women, to monitor crimes and coordinate action
- Non-cognisable offences registered by women complaining of violence should be categorised as such while maintaining records.
- Dying declarations should be taken without delay and on a priority basis by a magistrate.
- A full-fledged forensic laboratory to be set up immediately to hasten investigations.
- A 24-hour helpline for women.
- Specific measures to arrest human traffickers and those forcing women into the flesh trade.
- Strict surveillance of entry points into the trade.

### Recommendations for the Goa State

#### Commission for Women

- The Goa State Commission for Women (GSCW) should collaborate with the Goa State Legal Authorities Board to set up a legal cell with sensitised lawyers.
- The GSCW to network with other redressal mechanisms available for women victims of violence.
- The GSCW should have at least one person attending to cases every day, so as to avoid delay.

### Recommendations for the Dept of

#### Women and Child Development (DWCD)

- Immediate framing of rules and budgetary allocations in the budget for the 'Yashasvini' scheme.
- Shelter homes for women with special needs.
- Committees to be set up to deal with sexual harassment at every place of work.
- Rescue and rehabilitation for trafficked women.
- The state must evolve a policy to deal with all forms of trafficking – for women and children trafficked from Goa or from elsewhere into Goa.

### Recommendations for hospitals

- Hospitals to inform the police immediately in medico-

legal cases involving women, so that prompt action can be taken.

- A social worker to be appointed in the hospital, the burns ward in particular, to assist victims of violence.
- Hospitals should maintain a record of the number of cases where women have come to seek medical treatment as a result of violence, irrespective of whether they want to lodge a police complaint or not.
- The female staff in hospitals should be entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out procedures related to sexual offences, whether it is at the police station, the hospital or the court.
- Though effective legislations are desirable, till such time the existing ones can be used effectively to stop violence (for example, Section 151 – dealing with disturbance of peace – can be used in cases of marital violence).
- The proposed Domestic Violence Bill to be widely discussed and passed.
- The initiation of Family Courts should be discussed.

### Recommendations for training

#### and sensitisation

- Gender sensitisation of all people working in departments dealing with crime against women; for example, police stations, hospitals, judiciary, jails remand homes, shelters, counselling centres.
- Legal training for effective use of law to safeguard the rights of women should be conducted for the police.
- Professional gender sensitised counselling centres to be set up.
- A professional counselling course to train counsellors to be started at the Goa University
- Counselling courses to train people in counselling skills.
- Gender concerns to be introduced in the school curriculum.

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