

Baseline Survey on the Level of Awareness and Impact of CEDAW on Rural Women in West Bengal

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

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Submitted by
SURUL CENTRE FOR SERVICES IN
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SNAPSHOT

Title of the Study: **Baseline Survey on the Level of Awareness and Impact of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

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Chapter – 1. Statement of the Problem

The History of CEDAW

Equality of rights for women is a basic principle of the United Nations. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations sets as one of the Organization's central goals the reaffirmation of "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women". Article 1 proclaims that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to achieve international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to, inter-alia, sex. By the terms of the Charter, the first international instrument to refer specifically to human rights and to the equal rights of men and women, all members of the United Nations are legally bound to strive towards the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The status of human rights, including the goal of equality between women and men, is thereby elevated: a matter of ethics becomes a contractual obligation of all Governments and of the UN.

The International Bill of Human Rights strengthens and extends this emphasis on the human rights of women. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims the entitlement of everyone to equality before the law and to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction of any kind and proceeds to include sex among the grounds of such impermissible distinction. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of 1966, which translate the principles of the Declaration into legally binding form, clearly state that the rights set forth are applicable to all persons without distinction of any kind and, again, put forth sex as such a ground of impermissible distinction. In addition, each Covenant specifically binds acceding or ratifying States to undertake to ensure that women and men have equal right to the enjoyment of all the rights they establish.



The International Bill of Human Rights, combined with related human rights treaties, thus lays down a comprehensive set of rights to which all persons, including women, are entitled. However, the fact of women's humanity proved insufficient to guarantee them the enjoyment of their internationally agreed rights. Since its establishment, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has sought to define and elaborate the general guarantees of non-discrimination in these instruments from a gender perspective. The work of CSW has resulted in a number of important declarations and conventions that protect and promote the human rights of women.

Originally established in 1946 as a sub-commission of the Commission on Human Rights, but quickly granted the status of full commission as a result of the pressure exerted by women's activists, the mandate of the CSW included the preparation of recommendations relating to urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights with the object of implementing the principle that men and women should have equal rights, and the development of proposals to give effect to such recommendations. Between 1949 and 1959, the Commission elaborated the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1952, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, adopted by the Assembly on 29 January 1957, the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages adopted on 7 November 1962, and the Recommendation on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages adopted on 1 November 1965. Each of these treaties protected and promoted the rights of women in areas in which the Commission considered such rights to be particularly vulnerable. But it was believed that, except in those areas, women's rights were best protected and promoted by the general human rights treaties.

Although these instruments reflected the growing sophistication of the UN system with regard to the protection and promotion of women's human



rights, the approach they reflected was fragmentary, as they failed to deal with discrimination against women in a comprehensive way. In addition, there was concern that the general human rights regime was not, in fact, working as well as it might to protect and promote the rights of women. Thus, the General Assembly, on 5 December 1963, adopted its resolution 1921 (XVIII), in which it requested the Economic and Social Council to invite the CSW to prepare a draft declaration that would combine in a single instrument international standards articulating the equal rights of men and women. This process was supported throughout by women activists within and outside the UN system. Drafting of the declaration, by a committee selected from within the CSW, began in 1965, with the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ultimately being adopted by the GA on 7 November 1967. Although the Declaration amounted only to a statement of moral and political intent, without the contractual force of a treaty, its drafting was none the less a difficult process. Article 6, concerning equality in marriage and the family, and article 10, relating to employment, proved to be particularly controversial, as did the question of whether the Declaration should call for the abolition of the customs and laws perpetuating discrimination or for their modification or change.

The 1960s saw the emergence, in many parts of the world, of a new consciousness of the patterns of discrimination against women and a rise in the number of organizations committed to combating the effect of such discrimination. The adverse impact of some development policies on women also became apparent. In 1972, five years after the adoption of the Declaration and four years after the introduction of a voluntary reporting system on the implementation of the Declaration by the Economic and Social Commission, the CSW considered the possibility of preparing a binding treaty that would give normative force to the provisions of the Declaration and decided to request the Secretary-General to call upon UN Member States to transmit their views on such a proposal. The following year, a working group was appointed to consider the elaboration of such a



convention. In 1974, at its twenty-fifth session and in the light of the report of this working group, the Commission decided, in principle, to prepare a single, comprehensive and internationally binding instrument to eliminate discrimination against women. This instrument was to be prepared without prejudice to any future recommendations that might be made by the United Nations or its specialized agencies with respect to the preparation of legal instruments to eliminate discrimination in specific fields.

The text of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was prepared by working groups within the Commission during 1976 and extensive deliberations by a working group of the Third Committee of the General Assembly from 1977 to 1979. Drafting work within the Commission was encouraged by the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year, adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico City in 1975, which called for a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women, with effective procedures for its implementation. Work was also encouraged by the General Assembly which had urged the Commission on the Status of Women to finish its work by 1976, so that the Convention would be completed in time for the 1980 Copenhagen mid-decade review conference (World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace). Although suggestions were made to delay completion of the text for another year, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979 by votes of 130 to none, with 10 abstentions. In resolution 34/180, in which the General Assembly adopted the Convention, the Assembly expressed the hope that the Convention would come into force at an early date and requested the Secretary-General to present the text of the Convention to the mid-decade World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women.



At the special ceremony that took place at the Copenhagen Conference on 17 July 1980, 64 States signed the Convention and two States submitted their instruments of ratification. On 3 September 1981, 30 days after the twentieth member State had ratified it, the Convention entered into force - faster than any previous human rights convention had done - thus bringing to a climax United Nations efforts to codify comprehensively international legal standards for women.

CEDAW and India

India signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 30th July 1980 and ratified it on 9th July 1993. In the Indian Constitution women stand on equal footing with men in all spheres. The Constitution guarantees equality and equal protection in law for men and women. The obligation of the State to protect and promote are contained in the directive principles of State Policy.

Even after 20 years of India's ratification to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), there was no known baseline surveys that have looked into the level of awareness of this international Convention among the rural women in light of National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001 and number of laws that have been enacted for the protection and various legal safeguards of women. The Indian Government's Draft Report on CEDAW of 2011 proposes policy measures designed to incorporate gender concerns in civic education as well as raising gender awareness in all sectors of the economy. While concerted efforts are being made to improve the status of women in India, the slow pace of domesticating CEDAW holistically can be traced to a number of factors social, economic, legal and cultural among others. It is worth noting that the Convention was ratified by the government in 1993, and twenty years down the lane, much still needs to be done in terms of implementing the rights entrenched therein.



To understand the level of implication and internalisation of CEDAW in reality among women, particularly who resided in rural habitations, or who are working in the rural areas and even who are coming to city / town for livelihoods from rural areas have been included to a baseline survey in order to find out whether those women are at least aware of the existence of this international convention and subsequent policy and legal framework provisioned and implemented by the Government. It is also important to find out what has so far been implemented in order to address women's issues and which gaps still need to be filled in. On this backdrop, CSRA- West Bengal, a research and grassroots development organisation, realized the need to carry out a baseline survey to verify the level of awareness and impact of CEDAW among women in the rural areas. Particularly rural women have been taken as respondents for this study because 70% of people in India live in the rural areas and nearly half of them are women. So, it can be assumed that, possibility of risks and discrimination among rural women is greater than their urban counterpart. Similarly, access to information and availability of legal support to the rural women is comparatively lesser as well.

Salient features of the National Policy for Women 2001

Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious bring the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the last few decades. Social stereotyping and violence at the domestic and societal levels are some of the other manifestations. Discrimination against girl children, adolescent girls and women persists in parts of the country. The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal and formal norms, and practices.

The access of women particularly those belonging to weaker sections including Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes/ Other backward Classes and minorities, majority of whom are in the rural areas and in the informal



unorganised sector - to education, health and productive resources, among others, is inadequate.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The National Commission for Women as set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitutions of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committee to secure equal rights of women. The Mexico Plan of Action (1975), the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985) where concept of empowerment was introduced, the Beijing Declaration as well as the Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome Document adopted by the UNGA Session on Gender Equality and Development & Peace for the 21st century, titled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing declaration and the Platform for Action" have been unreservedly endorsed by India for appropriate follow up. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.

However, there still exists a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes, and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other.



Chapter 2. Review of Literature

CEDAW was adopted by United Nations General Assembly on the 18th of December 1979. It was signed by 64 countries and it came into force on 3rd September 1981.

186 countries have ratified the Convention and 99 countries have ratified the optional protocol which recognises and describes the role of the Committee on Elimination of the Discrimination against Women (the Committee the monitors States' compliance with the Convention) to receive and consider complaints from individual or groups.

The signatory countries are obligated with submitting a report to the Committee on the measures taken for compliance of the Convention once in every 4 years.

The Convention has clearly re-defined the term "discrimination" for common understanding of all its signatories under Article-I, which says 'any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field'.

By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including:

- to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women;
- to establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination; and
- to ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.



According to UN Division of Advancement of Women, Department of Social and Economic Affairs, the Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life - including the right to vote and to stand for election - as well as education, health and employment. States parties agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Convention is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. It affirms women's rights to acquire, change or retain their nationality and the nationality of their children. States parties also agree to take appropriate measures against all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of women.

Countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

CEDAW Committee consists of 23 experts on women's rights from around the world.

Countries who have become party to the treaty (States parties) are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of the Convention are implemented. During its sessions the Committee considers



each State party report and addresses its concerns and recommendations to the State party in the form of concluding observations.

In accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention, the Committee is mandated to: (1) receive communications from individuals or groups of individuals submitting claims of violations of rights protected under the Convention to the Committee and (2) initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women's rights. These procedures are optional and are only available where the State concerned has accepted them.

The Committee also formulates general recommendations and suggestions. General recommendations are directed to States and concern articles or themes in the Conventions.

Here is a brief review on all the Articles (Article 2 to Article 30) that explicitly describes the issues that were discussed, debated, agreed upon and documented during the Convention for compliance of all its signatories:

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

- a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realisation of this principle;
- b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;
- c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and



- other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;
- d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;
 - e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organisation or enterprise;
 - f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;
 - g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

Article 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

Article 4

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.
2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.



Article 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

- a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;
- b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

Article 6

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
- b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- c) To participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.



Article 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organisations.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.
2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure for them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;
- b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;



- c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;
- d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;
- e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;
- f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organisation of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;
- g) The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;
- h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and wellbeing of families, including information and advice on family planning.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:
 - a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;
 - b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;
 - c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and



- the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;
- d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;
 - e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;
 - f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.
2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:
- a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;
 - b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;
 - c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;
 - d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.
3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.



Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Article 13

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

- a) The right to family benefits;
- b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;
- c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetised sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a



basis of equality of men and women that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

- a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;
- b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;
- c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;
- d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;
- e) To organise self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment;
- f) To participate in all community activities;
- g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;
- h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

Article 15

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.
2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.



3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.
4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

Article 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:
 - a) The same right to enter into marriage;
 - b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;
 - c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;
 - d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;
 - e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;
 - f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;
 - g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;



- h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.
2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

Article 17-24

Refers to the functioning and role of the CEDAW Committee and reporting procedures

Article 25-30: Refers to the Administration of the Convention



Chapter 3. Relevance of the Study

West Bengal is one of the progressive states of India. It has the known geographical significance as corridor to the east to reach other states of eastern region vis-a-vis it also shares three international borders with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. According to National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) records in 2011, West Bengal ranked one in crime against women; among the reported crimes, 75% have been committed against rural women. In such a scenario, West Bengal has been selected to conduct the baseline survey assuming the necessity to ascertain the level of awareness among rural women on legal safeguards enacted by the Government of India.

Objectives of the Study

In the backdrop described under “relevance”, this study intends to work on two (2) specific objectives:

1. Assessment of the level of awareness of CEDAW among rural women and other members of the community in the Eight Districts of West Bengal.
2. Enumerate the extent of implementation of CEDAW among rural women in the state of West Bengal.

Attempts has been made to gather relevant information to ascertain the level of awareness on CEDAW issues mostly among the rural women vis-à-vis their perception on implementation of CEDAW issues through Government Policies, Legislations and Administrative initiatives to ensure women rights including their protection.



Chapter 4. Methodology

(a) Universe of the Study

With a population of about 82 million according to the 2001 Census, West Bengal is the fourth most populous state situated in the eastern region of India. Accounting for about 2.7 per cent of India's area (88,752 square km) but about 7.8 per cent of the country's population, this state ranks first in terms of density of 904 per sq km as per the 2001 Census. The boundaries of the state are Nepal, Bhutan and the state of Sikkim on the North, Goalpara district of Assam and Bangladesh on the East, Orissa and Bay of Bengal on the South and Bihar on the West. About 72 per cent of the people live in rural areas. According to the Planning Commission, the proportion of population below the poverty line in 1999-2000 in West Bengal was 31.85 per cent. The percentages of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe populations are 28.6 and 5.8 respectively in the rural areas and 19.9 and 1.5 respectively in the urban areas. Among the minorities, the Muslims are the dominant section and they account for about 28.6 per cent of the total population in West Bengal. The corresponding figures for rural and urban areas were 33.3 per cent and 11.8 per cent respectively.

Eight out of 18 districts (leaving out Kolkata, the State Head Quarter) has been selected for conducting the proposed study. The districts have been selected on the basis of HDI ranks. Categorically, attempt has been made to accommodate highly progressive, moderately progressive and progressive districts in terms of HDI ranks. For the purpose of this study, indicators like total rural women population, total SC women population, total ST women population, women literacy rate, sex ratio and percentage of women worker to the total has been considered. Following table has a rationale with the HDI ranks that establishes the fact that a diverse universe has been selected for this study for diversified interpretation of facts and analysis.



Rural Women in West Bengal (Census 2001)							
District	Total Rural Women Population	Total Schedule Caste Rural Women Population	Total Schedule Tribe Rural Women Population	Literacy Rate among rural women	Sex ratio (females per 1000 males)	No. of Rural Workers to population (%)	HDI Rank
North 24 Parganas	1981131	586125	82860	72.13	927	5.29	3
Darjiling	532107	101070	89138	63.92	943	10.18	4
Barddhaman	2109279	677264	173663	61.93	921	7.5	5
Hugli	1654396	487978	99813	67.72	947	7.71	6
Nadia	1757626	548812	50425	60.06	947	6.76	9
Coachbihar	1096296	583596	6281	57.04	949	10.73	11
Dakshin Dinajpur	636528	193591	116941	55.12	950	12.14	13
Birbhum	1342905	403832	99014	52.21	949	9.47	14

Source: Human Development Report, West Bengal, 2004

(b) Sampling Method

The sample strategy used to choose eight (8) districts out of total 19 districts in West Bengal is a combination of Stratified and Convenience Sampling. Each of the 8 districts was considered a stratum and within the stratum 90 respondents each were selected purposively making the total sample size to (8 x 90) 720. Sometime, the snowball technique was adopted to reach one respondent from another. Based on preliminary assessment of vulnerability from secondary sources and depending on availability, nine (9) categories of women has been interviewed as respondents from each district for this baseline survey with following numbers:

Sl. No.	Category of Respondents	Occupation/Association	Number of Respondents
1	Women in any social / economic group	Leader / Member of any SHG or Cooperative	10
2	Women involved Local Self Governance and Political activities	Member of three tier Panchayat bodies as well as MLA, MP or leader of any political party	8
3	Women in Government Service	Employed in any State and Central Government office in any post	10



Sl. No.	Category of Respondents	Occupation/Association	Number of Respondents
4	Women in Private Service	Employed in Private Agencies in any type of women e.g. Sales girl, Peon, etc	8
5	Adolescent Girls	Students of Secondary, Higher Secondary, Graduate & Higher level of education	12
6	Women at Home & involved with CBOs	Housewife under 40 years of age group	12
7	Women as development service providers	Working with NGO, ICDS, SSK, ASHA, etc.	10
8	Women as Teacher	Working as teacher or faculty in any State, Central and Private School or college	12
9	Women as Labourers	Women as Agriculture labour, Daily wage labour, Micro Entrepreneur, Hawker, etc	8
Total Women Respondents in Each District			90

The selection of these women respondents has been done using purposive sampling method to address the purpose of the study as well as importance of CEDAW implementation in women lives in general and rural women in particular. Both Qualitative and Quantitative data has been collected through a semi-structured interview schedule by using 10 point rating scale while 10 being the maximum awareness level and 1 being the least among the rural women on implementation of CEDAW through acts, programs and policies along with Focus Group Discussion. The collected data has been entered into appropriate software with built-in validation mechanism. The analysis has been done mostly in tabular form. Bivariate and multi-variate tabulations have been adopted appropriately for presentation of facts and figures.

(c) Tools and Techniques

A semi-structured interview schedule was designed for interviewing the respondents at their courtyard or place of work with their prior permission and convenience. The study team members were selected from the



respective districts for locational advantage and convenience of being accustomed with local culture and geography. Apart from the schedule, the field level enumerators have also facilitated guided interaction during the focused group discussion exercise on issues pertaining to CEDAW. The semi-structured interview schedules (both in English and local language Bengali) have been enclosed with this report as Annexure-I and Annexure-II respectively.

(d) Limitation of the Study

The scope of the present study restricts urban women to be included in it as respondents. Therefore a comparison between the rural and urban women in terms of the level of awareness on issues concerning CEDAW was not possible. Besides, a larger sample size would have been appropriate to extrapolate the findings of this study for larger geographical area and population. Considering the resource limitations, the study has been conducted and report has been prepared keeping aside the limitations as envisaged above.

(e) Brief Analysis of case study

The case studies are presently being documented by the field investigators and the research assistant. The case studies would be shared in required details through the draft report which would be submitted shortly.

(f) Engagement of the Study Team

The Study team was finalized and engagement process was completed much before the actual disbursement of fund from NCW. This was done to facilitate adequate preparation for the team including orientation on the tools of data collection and interviewing process. While forming the team, utmost care has been taken to ensure that each of the selected members possess required knowledge and skill to undertake the assignment in right spirit and context.



(g) Finalization of the semi-structured interview schedule for data collection

The semi-structured interview schedule has been developed in English and later translated to Bengali for the convenience of field investigators and that of the respondents. The final schedule was piloted with 10 rural women outside the sampling frame for quality check.

(h) Orientation of the entire study team

The entire study team has been given two rounds of comprehensive orientation on issues of the present study for their understanding and role clarity. The orientation was facilitated by the Project Director.

(i) Field Work and Data Collection

The field investigators were deployed in their respective districts for field work. Data collection has been completed by the field investigator with an in-built back-check mechanism for validation and the filled-in interview schedules have been submitted to the analysis team for data entry and data analysis.

(j) Data Entry

Data entry has been completed in a pre-validated spread-sheet application (MS-Excel). Findings from the focused group discussion has been documented for incorporation in the draft and final report. After an initial round of data checking, pivot table tool has been used to arrive at the data tables that have been elaborated in line with the objectives of the study.



Chapter 5. Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter represents the data collected through a semi-structured questionnaire for specific inquiry to the respondents. The responses received from 720 respondents in 8 selected districts have been presented through various tables to address the study objectives

A. Demographic Data

Table 1. Respondents Summary and Geographical Outreach

District	No. of Respondents	Villages Covered	Blocks Covered	Sub-Divisions Covered
Birbhum	90	27	6	3
Burdwan	90	14	8	6
Cooch Behar	90	15	1	1
Dakshin Dinajpur	90	38	5	2
Darjeeling	90	27	7	1
Hooghly	90	29	15	2
Nadia	90	60	19	4
North 24 Parganas	90	33	9	3
Grand Total	720	243	70	22

A total number of 720 respondents have been interviewed under the present study. The geographical stretch of the respondents have covered 8 districts of the state of West Bengal, the criteria of which has been articulated in methodology. Among the selected districts, 22 sub-divisions, 70 community development blocks and 243 villages have been covered. Stratified random, snowball and convenient sampling method have been deployed to reach the respondents in compliance the respondents' profile.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Age Group - Number of Respondents

District	Less than 25 Years	Between 26 and 40 Years	More than 40 Years	Grand Total
Birbhum	21	41	28	90
Burdwan	26	51	13	90
Cooch Behar	17	49	24	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	18	49	23	90
Darjeeling	15	51	24	90
Hooghly	11	53	26	90
Nadia	23	55	12	90
North 24 Parganas	23	47	20	90
Grand Total	154	396	170	720
Percentage	21.39	55.00	23.61	100

The distribution of age of the respondents ascertains that majority of the respondents (55%) belongs to the age group of 26 to 40 years followed by 23.61% from the age group of above 40 years. The table reveals that majority of the respondents are youth and lower mid-aged rural women. Therefore more than half of the respondents have spoken from their own life experience with regard to measures taken by the state in various facets of issued in the gamut of CEDAW.

**Table 3.** Distribution of Caste - Number of Respondents

District	General	OBC	SC	ST	Grand Total
Birbhum	53	5	30	2	90
Burdwan	43	10	29	8	90
Cooch Behar	49	1	40		90
Dakshin Dinajpur	35	13	35	7	90
Darjeeling	33	11	41	5	90
Hooghly	80		10		90
Nadia	61	7	22		90
North 24 Parganas	25	18	44	3	90
Grand Total	379	65	251	25	720
Percentage	52.64	9.03	34.86	3.47	52.64

The cast distribution of respondents depicts that majority of the respondents (52.64%) are represented by general caste rural women followed by 34.86% SC. Overall the representation of caste has produced a mixed picture. Despite general caste and scheduled caste has substantive representation, ST and OBC representation has been found to be meagre. Ratio-wise the caste distribution portrays a mix picture of general and backward casts.

**Table 4.** Distribution of Religion - Number of Respondents

District	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Others	Grand Total
Birbhum		89	1		90
Burdwan		85	3	2	90
Cooch Behar		68	22		90
Dakshin Dinajpur		75	14	1	90
Darjeeling	3	81	5	1	90
Hooghly		80	10		90
Nadia	1	73	16		90
North 24 Parganas		65	25		90
Grand Total	4	616	96	4	720
Percentage	0.56	85.56	13.33	0.56	100

Distribution of respondents in terms of religion clearly suggests that an absolute 85.56% are Hindu followed by a meagre 13.33% Muslims. Only about 1% of the respondents are represented by religions other than Hindu and Muslims.

**Table 5.** Distribution of Educational Qualification - Number of Respondents

District	Graduate and Above	Higher Secondary	Illiterate	Literate	Primary	Secondary	Upper Primary	Grand Total
Birbhum	22	15	3	4	4	27	15	90
Burdwan	36	16	7	3	4	17	7	90
Cooch Behar	26	16	3	2	4	21	18	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	17	15	10	6	9	15	18	90
Darjeeling	20	11	14	8	7	23	7	90
Hooghly	41	19	2	2	8	12	6	90
Nadia	21	13		4	7	33	12	90
North 24 Parganas	23	20	1	3	4	24	15	90
Grand Total	206	125	40	32	47	172	98	720
Percentage	28.61	17.36	5.56	4.44	6.53	23.89	13.61	100

Distribution of respondents in terms of educational qualification depicts that as many as 28.61% of the respondents possess graduation or higher qualification followed by 23.89% having completed secondary level education. 17.36% respondents have completed higher-secondary level education. Significantly only 5.56% respondents are not literate. The key feature of the above table suggests that about 70% of the respondents have substantive education to comment on various issues pertaining to CEDAW and their perception on women empowerment, women safety, economic opportunity etc.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Occupation - Number of Respondents

District	Business	Daily Labour	Farmer	Govt. Employee	Govt. Teacher	NGO Worker	Others	Private Employee	Self Employed	Student	Grand Total
Birbhum		8		10	13		23	18	6	12	90
Burdwan	2	1	6	12	12	2	32	5	5	13	90
Cooch Behar	5	1	3	11	17	4	27	8	2	12	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	2	6	2	11	7	1	28	15	5	13	90
Darjeeling	5	9	1	20	9	2	24	7	1	12	90
Hooghly	1	1	1	11	10	1	41	9	3	12	90
Nadia	4	14	3	4	4	2	17	7	23	12	90
North 24 Parganas	4			9	11	10	24	10	10	12	90
Grand Total	23	40	16	88	83	22	216	79	55	98	720
Percentage	3.19	5.56	2.22	12.22	11.53	3.06	30	10.97	7.64	13.61	100

Distribution of respondents in terms of occupation shows a mixed picture and portrays presence of a variety of occupation among the respondents. Majority of the respondents (30%) have been found to be in various type of occupation, mostly prevalent in the rural West Bengal, are related to home based small business that are usually undertaken by housewives who are self-help group members. Categorically, 12.22% of the respondents are Government employees, 11.53% of them are teachers, 10.97% are working with private establishments, 13.61% of them are students and the rest of the respondents are surviving with occupations like small business, farming, NGO workers or self-employed in some form or the other. The bottom line of the table above is that more than 80% of the respondents are connected to the external world by virtue of their occupation and therefore are in a good position to issues related to CEDAW.



B. Demographic Data

Table 7. Awareness on CEDAW - Number of Respondents

District	No	Yes	Grand Total
Birbhum	82	8	90
Burdwan	73	17	90
Cooch Behar	85	5	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	84	6	90
Darjeeling	83	7	90
Hooghly	77	13	90
Nadia	64	26	90
North 24 Parganas	78	12	90
Grand Total	626	94	720
Percentage	86.94	13.06	100

Distribution of respondents with regard to awareness on CEDAW reveals a very one sided image. Only 13.06% respondents have been found to have some sort of awareness about CEDAW. The remaining 96.94% have never heard about CEDAW nor India being one of the signatories to the convention meant for elimination of discrimination against women. Table 5 has established the presence of substantially high percentage of educated (more than secondary level) women among the respondents. Those who have never heard about CEDAW are also found to be unaware about National Policy for Women 2011. While responding questions for such lack of awareness during a focus group discussion in a process of guided interaction, the respondents revealed that both Central and State Government should take more and more campaign initiatives using the print and electronic media to make people, especially women aware of relevant policies meant for women.



Table 8. Awareness on National Policy on Women (NPW) 2001 - Number of Respondents

District	No	Yes	Grand Total
Birbhum	74	16	90
Burdwan	67	23	90
Cooch Behar	72	18	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	56	34	90
Darjeeling	73	17	90
Hooghly	71	19	90
Nadia	57	33	90
North 24 Parganas	66	24	90
Grand Total	536	184	720
Percentage	74.44	25.56	100

Distribution of respondents in terms of awareness on National Policy for Women (NPW) – 2001 suggests that only 25.56% of them have been found to have some kind of awareness on NPW. This is a significant findings out of the present study with regard to the number of respondents aware of CEDAW. It appears that more number of rural women are aware of the more recent NPW over comparatively older CEDAW. Despite presence of interrelations between CEDAW and NPW because provisions of the later is derived from CEDAW agendas.



Table 9. National Policy for the Empowerment of Women is properly implemented by the Government: Number of Respondents

Row Labels	No	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
Birbhum	8	8	0	16
Burdwan	7	16	0	23
Cooch Behar	6	7	4	18
Dakshin Dinajpur	18	10	6	34
Darjeeling	9	8	0	17
Hooghly	12	5	2	19
Nadia	12	18	3	33
North 24 Parganas	7	16	1	24
Grand Total	79	88	17	184
Percentage	42.93	47.83	9.24	100

While responding to the question on whether the Government initiated relevant measures in compliance with the National Policy for Women – 2011, as many as 42.93% of the respondents opined that the Government did enough to ensure the provisions under the policy are properly implemented. 47.83% of the respondents thought otherwise and responded that the Government have been able to implement the provisions under NPW-2011. 9.24% of the respondents did not want to take a stand on this. The computation of the table above is based on the number of respondents (184) who responded affirmative to have known about NPW-2011 as depicted in Table 8.

**Table 10.** Responses on various aspects of National Policy for Women

Sl No.	Description of the Provision under NPW-2011	No	To some extent	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
1	Government has adopted appropriate policy for social and economic development of rural women	9.86	49.17	14.03	26.94	100
2	Rural women are enjoying equal freedom and rights with men in political, social, cultural and economic sectors	13.61	45.14	13.75	27.5	100
3	Rural women are enjoying equal stake in the decision making process in their social, political and economic lives	14.03	41.67	16.81	27.5	100
4	Rural women are getting equal access to health care, quality education, vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational security, social security, public offices	11.53	40.97	20	27.5	100
5	Rural women are getting necessary help and co-operation due to strengthening of administrative effectiveness and law implementation	16.39	45.42	11.11	27.08	100
6	Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women	10	47.22	15.42	27.36	100
7	Rural women are mainstreamed through avoiding gender discrimination	8.33	44.03	20	27.64	100
8	Elimination of all unfair activities towards girl child and women	32.36	33.61	6.94	27.08	100
9	Women are empowered by forming self-help groups and	6.25	36.11	30.42	27.22	100



Sl No.	Description of the Provision under NPW-2011	No	To some extent	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
	partnership & networking with civil society organizations.					
	Percentage on Overall response	13.6	42.59	16.5	27.31	100

Distribution of the overall response of the respondents under various provisions of NPW-2011 revealed that only 16.5% acknowledged that Government did everything possible to implement the provisions under NPW-2011. 13.6% of the respondents thought that nothing has been implemented under NPW-2011 by the Government. Significantly, 42.59% agreed that Government has been able to implement the provisions under NPW-2011 to an extent, which has contributed to improved quality of lives of rural women. Some of the important observations from the table above has been (1) only 14.03% responded affirmative to acknowledge the role of the government towards social and economic development of women, (2) 13.75% women thought that women in rural West Bengal enjoyed equal rights with men in terms social, economic, political and cultural opportunities, (3) 16.81% respondents thought they had active stake in household level decision making, (4) 20% respondents thought they had access to health care, proper education, vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational and social security, (5) A meagre 11.11% respondents thought that rural women were receiving necessary administrative and legal help, (6) 15.42% of the respondents opined that the societal attitude towards women are gradually changing for good, (7) 20% of the respondents thought gender discrimination have reduced to a large extent, (8) Merely 6.94% of the respondents believed that unfair activities towards girl child and women have reduced and (9) A significant 30.42% respondents attributed women empowerment through self-help group movement which has been reinforced by NPW-2011.



Table 11. Responses on acute problems identified by the respondents that have been perceived to have affected the women severely

Rank	Description of the Problem	Yes	No	Grand Total
1	Lack of adequate laws to protect women against domestic violence and sexual abuse	74.86	25.14	100
2	Female Infanticide and early marriage due to traditional prejudices	64.17	35.83	100
3	Domestic works are never valued and given accreditation	59.44	40.56	100
4	Sexual Exploitation, women & girl child prostitution and pornography	52.5	47.5	100
5	Denial of educational opportunities at various levels	39.17	60.83	100
6	Citizenship laws fails to protect the women in case of intra-religious and intra caste marriage	30.83	69.17	100
7	Inequality in the field of employment, e.g. promotions, equal remuneration and equal treatment in respect to work of equal value.	26.94	73.06	100
8	Rural women gets inadequate administrative and legal opportunities due to poor implementation of the concerned departments	24.31	75.69	100
9	Inadequate representation of rural women in holistic development	22.78	77.22	100
10	Inadequate participation of women in social, cultural, economic and political life.	22.5	77.5	100
11	No equal representation in decision-making organs e.g. ministerial, high-level commissioners, civil service etc.	22.36	77.64	100
12	Inadequate health facilities including family planning and maternity services	21.81	78.19	100
13	Inadequate access to economic opportunities like bank loan, property and land rights	21.25	78.75	100
14	Inadequate information and care for women infected with HIV/AIDS.	15.56	84.44	100



Rank	Description of the Problem	Yes	No	Grand Total
15	Lack of adequate statistical data on the status of women in the various sectors e.g. political, economic, and social sectors.	11.53	88.47	100

Table 11 lists out the problems affecting lives women as perceived by the respondents in order of ranking. Rank has been made with the most acute problems affecting the lives of women severely. The table suggests that lack of adequate laws for protecting women from domestic violence and sexual abuse has been identified as the most acute problem (Rank 1) by as many as 74.86% women respondents followed by female Infanticide and early marriage due to traditional prejudices has been identified as Rank 2 problem by 64.17% women. Contribution of women as domestic workers are not valued neither accredited has been Ranked 3 problem opined by 59.44% respondents. The problem of sexual exploitation, women and girl child prostitution and pornography has been Ranked 4 by 52.5% respondents. Denial of educational opportunities for girls at various levels including family has been Ranked 5 by 39.17% respondents. The other problems are Ranked 6 to 15 by the respondents. The bottom-line of Table 11 refers to the fact that there is a lot to be done to address the problems of rural women in line with what has been resolved in the international convention for women against all sorts of discrimination and subsequent National Policy for Women 2001.



Table 12. General perception of the respondents on the most prominent problem (from the issues listed in Table 11) that is affecting women

Problem No.	Description of the Problem	Perception of majority of the respondents with regard to the problem in the context of West Bengal
2	Female Infanticide and early marriage due to traditional prejudices	Early marriage of girl child continues to be a challenge in our state despite all efforts.
4	Sexual Exploitation, women & girl child prostitution and pornography	Many of the respondents have personal life experience of being the victim of sexual abuse in some form or other. It was unanimously opined by them that this is one area where the state has to intervene more strongly to ensure protection of women from sexual exploitation
3	Domestic works are never valued and given accreditation	The respondents who thought being housewives and not having role in contributing to family earning makes them insignificant within the family. They opined more and more economic opportunity for rural women is the only solution to this problem.
13	Inadequate health facilities including family planning and maternity services	Regardless of age or occupation, this is one area the respondents have expressed themselves strongly. Absence of proper health facility for the rural populace, particularly for maternity services is far too inadequate.



15	Denial of educational opportunities at various levels	The respondents thought it is only increased education among the women can empower them to fight against all evils. The believed that in rural areas, girls are not encouraged for education and there are strong gender discrimination when it comes of opportunity for education for girls
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Table 12 depicts the responses offered by the women on the perceived problem as listed in Table 11. It was imperative to learn the experience of the respondents in order to understand the cause and effect relationship which can further strengthen policy measures and address the existing flaws.



Table 13. State Government's role in ensuring rights of the rural women:
Number of Respondents

District	No	To some extent	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
Birbhum	15	61	14		90
Burdwan	11	69	9	1	90
Cooch Behar	28	48	12	2	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	7	65	18		90
Darjeeling	30	54	5	1	90
Hooghly	5	82	1	2	90
Nadia	6	71	11	2	90
North 24 Parganas	11	64	10	5	90
Grand Total	113	514	80	13	720
Percentage	15.69	71.39	11.11	1.81	100

Distribution of respondents on whether they believed that the State Government has been working effectively to protect rural women rights, a meagre 11.11% responded affirmative. As high as 71.39% opined that their Government has been working on this issues to some extent and 15.69% said they did not think so. The respondent's stressed more on the increasing violence against women and proactiveness of the Government to enforce strong legislation to ensure women safety. They thought that rural women were a lot more vulnerable in this aspect than their urban counterpart. They however believed that the Government has done something in this direction and need to be a lot more proactive to address women issues.



Table 14. State Government's effective role (represented by percentage) in enforcing laws to ensure human rights of women: Number of Respondents

District	20%	50%	Can't say	Less than 5%	More than 80%	Not at all	Grand Total
Birbhum	17	40	20	6	7		90
Burdwan	21	14	30	21		4	90
Cooch Behar	35	8	34	13			90
Dakshin Dinajpur	5	66		2	16	1	90
Darjeeling	35	11	32	12			90
Hooghly	46	10	5	29			90
Nadia	27	30	27	5		1	90
North 24 Parganas	25	33	13	13	2	4	90
Grand Total	211	212	161	101	25	10	720
Percentage	29.3	29.4	22.4	14.03	3.47	1.39	100

While responding to what percentage represents the State Government's role in ensuring human rights of women, majority (29.4%) thought it would be 50%. The next highest 29.3% respondents would rate it to 20%. Apart from others, 3.47% said State Government's role could be represented by 80%. 22.4% respondents did not want to take a stand on this issue. As a whole, the respondents expects the State and Central Government to be more sensitive towards ensuring women rights.



Table 15. Measures needed from the Government to ensure rights of the rural women in our state: Distribution of Respondents

Rank	Description of the Measure	No. of Affirmative Response	% Affirmative Response
1	Judgement procedures in court should be made faster and need of punishing offenders with mentionable punishment to set examples	562	70.25%
2	Strengthen law and administration where condition of women is pathetic	533	63%
3	Deploy adequate female police staffs in all police stations	488	61%
4	Self Defence Training for the women	395	49.38%
5	Simplify Legal Instruments and generate awareness among women	375	46.88%
6	To change the mind-set of the society through gender sensitive drive	312	39%
7	If any other, please specify: More rural women needs to be encouraged to join politics	124	15.50%

The respondents, while responding to what measure should be taken by the Government to ensure rights of the rural women, came up with many options. Among many of such options, 7 have been ranked in terms of affirmative response. The table ascertains that court trial and judgement procedure needs to be made a lot faster for cases with regard to women rights. Punitive measures also need to be exemplary to the offenders so that a fear factor comes to their mind before repeating crime against women. 70.25% respondents gave their nod to this issue and therefore this has been Ranked 1 in the list of measures needed for women rights. Measures for Strengthening law and administration where condition of women is pathetic earned affirmative response from 63% respondents. Another very important observation came from the respondents is deployment of more police personnel in each and every police stations. As many as 61% respondents agreed to this proposition. Some of them has been victims themselves where some of them witnessed other in their neighbourhood to be victim of some sort of crime.



Table 16. Whether State Government should act on protection of women's legal rights followed by CEDAW norms: Distribution of Respondents

District	No	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
Birbhum		90		90
Burdwan		89	1	90
Cooch Behar		90		90
Dakshin Dinajpur		81	9	90
Darjeeling		87	3	90
Hooghly		84	6	90
Nadia		86	4	90
North 24 Parganas	1	80	9	90
Grand Total	1	687	32	720
Percentage	0.14	95.42	4.44	100

An absolute majority of 95.42% of the respondents through that the State Government should act on protecting women rights in line with CEDAW. Only 4.44% of the respondents preferred not to have a stand on this issue.



Table 17. Issues recommended for inclusion in CEDAW framework – Number of Respondents

Rank	Description of the Measure	No. of Affirmative Response	% Affirmative Response
1	Free legal aid	589	81.80%
2	Eliminate discrimination against women in the areas of legal rights, education, employment, healthcare, politics and finance	576	80%
3	Ensuring women's rights into every institution	497	69.02%
4	Development of an appropriate human rights language for women	380	52.77%
5	If any other, please specify: Required more police station for women safety and surveillance	231	32.08%

While offering suggestions for inclusion in the framework of CEDAW, five most relevant and most important suggestions have been captured on the basis of the issue that received maximum number of affirmative response. Following the order, free legal aid to women has been Ranked 1 among all other issues by 81.80% respondents. They felt this is one area that needs strong attention of the policy makers and legislators. The next issue which has drawn the second highest response of 80% respondents is measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the sectors of legal rights, education, employment, healthcare, politics etc. Among the other issues, one of the significant suggestion that was offered by 32.08% respondents was to setup more police station for women safety and surveillance. They had also categorically demanded for more women police personnel in every police station.

**Table 18.** Awareness of important Acts: Number of Respondents

Women specific legislations:

Rank	Description of the Measure	No. of Respondents responded Affirmative	% Affirmative Response
1	The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956	249	34.58%
2	The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) (Amended in 1986)	568	78.88%
3	The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986	95	13.49%
4	Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005	275	38.19%
Other Legislations			
1	The Married Women's Property Act, 1874 (3 of 1874)	256	35.55%
2	The Parenthood and Child Act, 1890	100	13.88%
3	The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (19 of 1929)	553	76.8%
4	The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937	32	4.44%
5	Employer's Liabilities Act, 1938	42	5.83
6	The Minimum Wages Act, 1950	217	30.13%
7	The Special Marriage Act, 1954	108	15%
8	The Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955	146	20.27%
9	The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (28 of 1955)	265	36.80%
10	The Hindu Adoptions & Maintenance Act, 1956	101	14.02%
11	The Indian Divorce Act, 1969 (4 of 1969)	92	12.77%
12	The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 (34 of 1971)	425	59.02%
13	The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (53 of 1961)	155	21.52%
14	Code of Criminal Procedure Act, 1973	7	0.97%
15	The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976	149	20.69%
16	Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act, 2005	385	53.47%



Rank	Description of the Measure	No. of Respondents responded Affirmative	% Affirmative Response
17	The Family Courts Act, 1984	16	2.22%
18	The Muslim women Protection of Rights on Dowry Act 1986	52	7.22%
19	Mental Health Act, 1987	35	4.86%
20	National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (20 of 1990)	58	8.05%
21	The Human Rights Act, 1993	90	12.5%
22	The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act	497	69.02%
23	The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of misuse) Act 1994	358	49.72%
24	Right to Information Act, 2005	220	30.55%

Distribution of the respondents in terms of awareness on various acts depicts a mixed picture. Since a large number of respondents have completed secondary level education, it was quite expected that a significant number of them would have heard about some of the acts, especially those mostly applicable to women issues. It has been found that a large number of respondents are aware of some of the very commonly known acts like dowry prohibition, child marriage, medical termination of pregnancy, child labour, MGNREGA etc. It has also been found out of the above table that acts related to immoral traffic, hindu marriage, pre-natal diagnostic technique, minimum wage are also known to quite a number of the respondents.



Table 19. Benefits received out of the existing legislations: Distribution of the Respondents

District	No	Yes	Can't say	Grand Total
Birbhum	75	15		90
Burdwan	73	15	2	90
Cooch Behar	73	17		90
Dakshin Dinajpur	82	6	2	90
Darjeeling	63	13	14	90
Hooghly	71	10	9	90
Nadia	68	22		90
North 24 Parganas	74	7	9	90
Grand Total	579	105	36	720
Percentage	80.42	14.58	5	100

Distribution of respondents in terms of having the benefit of the laws protecting them suggests that only 14.58% of the ever needed to seek the assistance of laws meant to protect the women. 5% of the respondents failed to respond on this issue. Those who ever needed to take the help of the Hindu marriage act and domestic violence act. There has been cases where some of the respondents had to seek assistance of the married women's property act to claim what they believed to be rightfully theirs.



Table 20. Reason for being unaware of the Acts: Distribution of Respondents

Sl No.	Reason for being unaware of the Acts	No. of Respondent	% of Respondent
1	No awareness / Never heard about these acts	52	7.22
2	Never felt like knowing these acts	295	40.97
3	Government or Media never generated awareness about these acts	104	14.44
4	In spite of several acts, it can't be applied for rural women	131	18.19
5	Never required any legal assistance	138	19.17

Distribution of respondents in terms of reasons for being unaware of the most important legislation meant for women rights, safety and security suggests majority (40.97%) felt that there was no need to know about these acts. According to them acts are needed for those who indulge themselves in some kind of unlawful activities. About 51% respondents came up with three different reasons to justify their unawareness, the most of them being lack of initiative by the Government and media to generate public awareness on such acts. Some of them also opined that despite presence of so many acts, it does not make any difference to their life unless it is brought into the priority policy issue. Some has said that they never needed any legal assistance for any reasons therefore never really needed to know those acts. The key findings of the table above is the wrong conception among women who felt that acts were needed for those who indulge themselves in unlawful activities. It is beyond their realization that being a victim of any crime has nothing to do with being indulgent.



Table 21. Awareness of Government Schemes for rural women: Distribution of Respondents

Sl No.	Description of the Government Scheme/Programme	No. of Respondents responded Affirmative	% of Respondent
1	Mid-Day Meal	678	94.17%
2	Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)	619	85.97%
3	Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)	528	73.33%
4	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	498	69.17%
5	Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOPAS)	485	67.36%
6	Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)	419	58.19%
7	Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)	401	55.69%
8	Janani Suraksha Yojana	368	51.11%
9	Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)	349	48.47%
10	Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)	319	44.31%
11	Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY)	287	39.86%
12	Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana(RSBY)	283	39.31%
13	Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)	222	30.83%
14	Kishori Shakti Yojana	192	26.67%
15	National Rural Drinking Water Programme	190	26.39%
16	National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)	184	25.56%
17	Provident Fund for Landless Agricultural Labourers (PROFLAL)	154	21.39%
18	National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation	151	20.97%
19	National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP)	120	16.67%
20	Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojna	95	13.19%
21	Scheme for Working Women Hostel	95	13.19%
22	Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)- Sabla	94	13.60%
23	Swayam Siddha	82	11.39%
24	Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) - A Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme	79	10.97%



Sl No.	Description of the Government Scheme/Programme	No. of Respondents responded Affirmative	% of Respondent
25	Short Stay Home For Women and Girls (SSH)	77	10.79
26	Ujjawala- A Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration	69	9.58%
27	Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme	65	9.02%
28	STEP (Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women)	59	8.19%
29	National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation	44	6.11%
30	Swadhar - A scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances	28	3.88%
31	Entrepreneurship Development Institutions (EDIs) Scheme	22	3.05%

Distribution of respondents in terms of being aware or knowing an array of Government programmes meant for employment generation, creating economic opportunities, social security, livelihoods development, food security etc. The above table depicts the number and percentage of respondents being aware of respective Government programmes. This table however does not capture whether the respondents have been the beneficiaries themselves of those programmes. The distribution of respondents suggests that national programmes like mid-may meal, ICDS, IGWPS, MGNREGS, IGNDPS, SGSY, IAY, Janani Suraksha Yojana are known to a large number of respondents, programmes like SWADHAR, National Backward Class Finance Corporation, Enterprise Development Institute, STEP, Rajib Gandhi National Creche Scheme, Ujjwala, Short Stay Home, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana are known to a meagre number of respondents. An important findings of this table is that programmes implemented by Panchayati Raj institutions are known to more number of rural women than those which were implemented by Block, District or State administration.



Table 22. Benefitted from Government Programmes: Number of Respondents

District	No	Yes	Grand Total
Birbhum	44	46	90
Burdwan	19	71	90
Cooch Behar	64	26	90
Dakshin Dinajpur	47	43	90
Darjeeling	56	34	90
Hooghly	44	46	90
Nadia	22	68	90
North 24 Parganas	45	45	90
Grand Total	341	379	720
Percentage	47.36	52.64	100

The distribution of respondents having benefitted directly from either of the Government programmes meant for employment generation, creating economic opportunities, social security, livelihoods development, food security etc depicts that 52.64% have received the benefit whereas the remaining 47.36% have not been benefitted from any of the programmes listed in table 21. One of the significant feature of the table is that respondents from Districts of North Bengal like Darjeeling, Cooch Behar etc. seemed to have benefitted relatively lesser than the districts of South Bengal region.



Table 23. Benefitted from Specific Government programme: Distribution of Respondent

Sl No.	Sl No.	Description of the Programme	No. of Respondent	% of Respondent
1	10	Mid-Day Meal	84	11.67%
2	3	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	81	11.25%
3	12	Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)	74	10.28%
4	2	Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)	68	9.44%
5	22	Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)	24	3.33%
6	24	Janani Suraksha Yojana	7	0.97%
7	5	National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation	6	0.83%
8	13	National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP)	6	0.83%
9	9	National Rural Drinking Water Programme	5	0.69%
10	11	Kishori Shakti Yojana	4	0.56%

Among 379 who had responded to have received benefits of the Government Programmes listed in table 21, majority (11.68%) of them had received benefit from mid-day meal in ICDS Centre or their children have received the benefit of mid-day primary school. About 10% of 379 respondents have reportedly received benefits from programmes like MGNREGS, TPDS and ICDS. There are also a meagre number of respondents received benefits from National Rural Drinking Water, Kishori Shakti Yojana, NIDDCP, Janani Suraksha Yojana etc.



Table 24. Reasons for not getting the benefit of National Programmes: Distribution of Respondents

Sl No.	Description of the Programme	No. of Respondent	% of Respondent
1	Any other reason (please specify)	7	7.22%
2	Government or Media didn't create awareness on these schemes	80	40.97%
3	Never tried to get benefit out of these schemes	215	14.44%
4	Not aware	18	18.19%
5	Did not respond	400	19.17%

The distribution of respondents for not having received the benefits of the programmes is unidirectional where more than 40% of the respondents have blamed lack of initiative by the Government to use public media to popularize the programmes among the rural masses with specific information on the services/benefits offered.

Table 25. Perception on Government Departments entrusted with the responsibility to look after women safety and legal issues: Distribution of Respondents

Sl No.	Name of the Government Department	No. of Respondent	% of Respondent
1	Department of Health & Family Welfare	68	9.44
2	Department of Home Affairs	56	7.78
3	Department of Law	137	19.03
4	Department of Panchayats & Rural Development	57	7.92
5	Department of Women & Child Development & Social Welfare	175	24.31
6	Do not know	150	22.22
7	None of them	5	0.69
8	State Commission for Women	49	6.81
9	State Human Rights Commission	23	3.19
	Grand Total	720	100

The distribution suggests that the respondents lacks basic awareness on the Government Departments responsible for implementation of various women safety and legal issues.



Table 26. Rating the contribution of state in the area of following rights of women: Percentage of Respondent

Sector	Did not respond	Not at all	Less than 10%	25%	50%	50-75%	More than 75%	Total
Health	9.44%	3.19%	16.81%	29.86%	28.33%	7.92%	4.44%	100%
Education	15%	2.78%	14.44%	25.28%	27.92%	11.81%	2.78%	100%
Legal Aid	10.56%	11.94%	25.28%	25.83%	19.44%	5.83%	1.11%	100%
Economic Development	22.78%	4.03%	23.19%	28.33%	15.28%	5.14%	1.25%	100%
Employment Opportunity	16.39%	7.78%	22.36%	25%	21.11%	5.14%	2.22%	100%
Political Participation	20.28%	3.89%	23.61%	29.17%	16.67%	4.58%	1.81%	100%
Social Recognition	23.75%	13.06%	24.58%	18.89%	13.19%	4.58%	1.94%	100%
Right to Property	22.36%	16.53%	25%	15.56%	15%	3.75%	1.81%	100%
Average (on absolute number)	17.57%	7.9%	21.91%	24.74%	19.62%	6.09%	2.17%	

The distribution of respondents in terms their rating on the contribution of the Government towards various rights of women in the sectors listed above. Apart from the fact that most of the parameters portrays more or less the same facts including sectors like health, education, economic opportunity, political participation etc, a similar trend has been observed in remaining all other sectors. Majority of the respondents have rated the contribution of the Government in protecting women rights and enforcing legal framework between 10% to 25%. This means there is a lot more to be done by the Government in this direction.



Table 27. Contribution of the State in a 10 Point Scale in the area of following Rights on Women as perceived by the Respondents

Sl No.	Sector(s)	Total Respondents	Percentage of Respondents Answered	(Average) Out of 10 Marks
1	Health	720	86.11%	5.45
2	Education	720	83.61%	5.39
3	Legal Protection	720	87.92%	5.25
4	Financial Empowerment	720	73.61%	4.90
5	Employment	720	82.08%	5.35
6	Political Representation	720	74.17%	4.44
7	Ending Violence	720	80.97%	4.79
8	Property Rights	720	71.67%	4.76
9	Social Security measures	720	81.39%	5.10
10	Gender specific budget	720	70.69%	4.75
	Overall Average	720	79.22%	5.02

Perception of the respondents on State's role in various sectors of women rights have been captured in a 10 point scale. In sectors like health, education, legal protection the average score given by the respondents is marginally above 5 (50%) as rated by more than 80% of 720 respondents in 8 districts. The scores in sectors like employment, social security etc. is also little over 50%. When it comes to gender budgeting, women right to property, action against violence, political representation, and financial empowerment, the respondents rated the contribution of the State with a score of around 40%. To summarize, it would be logical to say that the expectation of rural women in securing their rights in various sectors is much more than the Government have been able to do so far.



Findings from Focused Group Discussion:

Eight Focused Group Discussions (FGD) was organized in eight district with the respondents and women from the neighbourhoods. The interaction was guided and facilitated by the field level enumerators. The broad issues discussed within the group and key findings from the FGD is summarized below:

- The State should play a lot more supportive role to foster positive economic and social policies.
- The State must ensure fundamental and human rights of women particularly in rural areas.
- The State should create more and more public awareness and sensitization campaign to promote equal access to participation and decision making process in every sphere of life.
- The State should delegate more functions and functionaries at the Gram Panchayat level for providing women centric services to citizens which should mandatorily involve economic opportunity
- The State must take more active role in strengthening legal systems to reduce violence against women. The rural women are more susceptible and vulnerable when it comes to crime. The present situation in West Bengal makes it even more relevant to initiate stronger action.
- The State must create conducive environment for mainstreaming a gender perspective and changing societal attitudes.
- The State must take measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, particularly rural women.
- The State must involve more and more civil society organization to create a stronger network for partnership development to act against all forms of discrimination against women and run massive public campaign for sensitizing common people on women specific issues.



While discussing on the provisions of National Policy for Women (NPW-2001) and the same was compared with the ground realities of rural West Bengal, the following opinions were offered by the members in the FGDs:

- NPW-2001 has emphasized economic empowerment of women as one of the strong pillar to empowerment.
- NPW-2001 has prioritized women education, health and sanitation
- NPW-2001 recognized the special needs of weaker sections, SC/ST, minorities etc.
- NPW-2001 comprehensively listed the action plan and institutional mechanisms needed.
- NPW-2001 prescribed measures to achieve gender sensitization

Having discussed the provisions of NPW, the groups opined that followings were the ground realities:

- Inadequate fund in gender budgeting
- Lack of intra department coordination to implement women specific programmes
- Evaluation of the status of women with respect to NPW-2001 and CEDAW through periodic gender auditing
- Very limited economic or livelihoods opportunities for rural women
- Absence of social security for rural women as an informal sector



Chapter 6. Key Findings

This chapter summarizes the key findings out of the study drawn from the analysis of primary data collected from field through the study team. Findings have also been drawn from FGDs organized in all the districts covered under the study in light of awareness level among rural women on CEDAW and NPW-2001.

- The study has covered 720 rural women respondents spreading over 8 districts, 22 sub-divisions, 70 blocks and 243 villages. The districts were selected keeping in mind the HD indices and geography of the state to incorporate a variety of geographical, social and cultural aspects more scientific extrapolation of the findings
- More than half of the total number of respondents were found to be in the age group of 26 to 40 years and. Significantly, about a quarter of the respondents have represented the age group of below 25 and above 40 year thereby making the responses received from the respondents even more relevant covering all age groups.
- The caste-wise representation of the respondents saw more than half of them coming from general caste and more than a quarter from scheduled caste. There has been meagre representation from scheduled tribe and OBC communities in the sample size.
- The religion of the respondents have shown true representation of the share of population of various religion in the national scenario. More than 80% of them being Hindu, about 13% being Muslims and less than 1% being Christian and others.
- Educational qualification of the respondents portrayed a bright picture as more than 70% of the respondents have been found to have completed secondary level education. More than a quarter of them have attained graduation. Only 5% of the respondents have been found to be illiterate. Therefore the responses received from them makes it relevant and worthy in terms of level of awareness on CEDAW or NPW issues.



- The occupational pattern among the respondents' representatives a large variety. Respondents have been found to be in government service, private sector service, small business, working with NGOs, member of self-help groups etc. Significantly, more than 80% of them are involved with some economic activity and therefore connected to external world in some form or the other. This brings relevance to the responses offered by the respondents on CEDAW and NPW issues.
- As little as 13% respondents have been found to have heard about the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Only 25.56% respondents have been found to have heard about the National Policy for Women – 2001 (NPW) and could share their own perception about what the policy is meant for to partially validate what they had claimed to have known was actually true.
- Among 25.56% (184 out of 720) who were aware of NPW-2001, 47% thought the Government did enough to implement the provisions of NPW-2001. 42.93% did not think so and 9% did not comment on the role of the State in implementation of the provisions of NPW-2001.
- While analysing the responses received on various provisions of NPW-2001 (in compliance with CEDAW), about 14% respondents acknowledged the role of the government in social and economic development, 13% felt that government has done something to ensure equal rights, 16% thought the same on empowerment of women in household level decision making. In a nutshell, it was evident that the ground situation in terms of implementation of the provision of NPW-2001 is far from satisfaction. It is true that there has been sporadic responses from the responses on various aspects but that did not establish presence of a direction driven intervention.
- While offering observations regarding the severity of problems, as many as 74% of the respondents felt that domestic violence being the most acute problem coupled with sexual abuse followed female infanticide and early marriage vetted by 64% respondents. Issues like domestic work



not getting recognized, denial of education and health rights, lack of economic opportunity for rural women were among the most prominent problems being experienced by the respondents. The respondents felt:

- Early marriage of girl child continues to be a challenge in our state despite all efforts.
- Many of the respondents have personal life experience of being the victim of sexual abuse in some form or other. It was unanimously opined by them that this is one area where the state has to intervene more strongly to ensure protection of women from sexual exploitation
- The respondents who thought being housewives and not having role in contributing to family earning makes them insignificant within the family. They opined more and more economic opportunity for rural women is the only solution to this problem.
- Regardless of age or occupation, this is one area the respondents have expressed themselves strongly. Absence of proper health facility for the rural populace, particularly for maternity services is far too inadequate.
- The respondents thought it is only increased education among the women can empower them to fight against all evils. They believed that in rural areas, girls are not encouraged for education and there are strong gender discrimination when it comes of opportunity for education for girls
- Only 11% respondents thought that the State Government's role on ensuring women rights have been very positive. 71.39% agreed to some extent that the Government role has been positive to ensure women rights.
- Only 3.47% rated the efforts of the Government has been able to secure women rights in more than 80% cases on various facets. As perceived by 58.7% respondents, the role of the Government has been somewhere between 20 to 50%. A significant 22% respondents have rates such role to be below 5%.



- While offering suggestions on the measures to be taken by the Government to ensure women rights, as many as 70% respondents thought that the court judgement procedure needs to be made a lot faster along with the trial process. Most of them advocated for capital punishment for the offenders committed grave crime against women including sexual assault. Strengthening women sensitive law and administration, deploying more women personnel in the police stations, self-defence training for women, generating more legal awareness among rural women, use of public media for building citizen awareness etc. were among the other key suggestions offered by more than half of the respondents.
- An absolute majority of 95% respondents felt that the Government should act immediately to protect women rights in line with CEDAW norms.
- Free legal aid, elimination of discrimination in areas like legal rights, health, education, employment and economic opportunity, developing appropriate human rights language for women were among the most important recommendation suggested by the respondents for inclusion in CEDAW framework with special focus on rural women. The respondents felt that rural women were lot more vulnerable than their urban counterpart in every facet of life.
- While making an attempt to ascertain the level of awareness of relevant legislations, a substantive level has been observed among the respondents on acts like dowry prohibition, child marriage restraint, medical termination of pregnancy, child labour prohibition, immoral traffic, protection of women from domestic violence etc. As many as 40% respondent (on average) have been found to be aware on those acts. For the other acts, the level of awareness has been found to be very meagre. Questions were asked on 28 contemporary acts.
- Among the respondents interviewed, only 14.58% found to have received any benefit from the existing legislations. Those who ever needed to take the help of the Hindu marriage act and domestic violence



act. There has been cases where some of the respondents had to seek assistance of the married women's property act to claim what they believed to be rightfully theirs.

- While attempting to learn the reasons for being unaware of the acts and legislations related to women issues, it was known from the majority (40.97%) that they never felt like knowing them. 14% said the Government never took any initiative to propagate the legal safeguards available for women. 18% opined that despite availability of so many acts, the number of crimes against women are increasing therefore it hardly makes any difference. During FGD, all women participants unanimously voiced that more and more rural women need to know the basics of these acts to empower themselves.
- The level of awareness among the respondents regarding major Government programme has produced a mix image. While programmes being implemented by Panchayati Raj Institutions appeared to be a lot more popular and known to the respondents, other programmes registered negligible level of awareness. The issue was discussed during FGDs as well where women regardless of cast, class or religion said that massive public campaign needs to be initiated by the Government whenever a programme is being launched targeting to benefit the women.
- While tracing the number of women benefitted out of the programme, it was ascertained that 52.64% of the respondents have been beneficiaries themselves. One of the significant feature of the table is that respondents from Districts of North Bengal like Darjeeling, Cooch Behar etc. seemed to have benefitted relatively lesser than the districts of South Bengal region.
- Among the respondents benefited from either of the programmes it was found that majority (11.68%) of them had received benefit from mid-day meal in ICDS Centre or their children have received the benefit of mid-day primary school. About 10% of 379 respondents have reportedly received benefits from programmes like MGNREGS, TPDS and ICDS.



There are also a meagre number of respondents received benefits from National Rural Drinking Water, Kishori Shakti Yojana, NIDDCP, Janani Suraksha Yojana etc. Those who

- The distribution of respondents for not having received the benefits of the programmes found to be unidirectional with than 40% of the respondents have identified lack of initiative by the Government to use public media to popularize the programmes among the rural masses with specific information on the services/benefits offered.
- It has been observed that the respondent lacks basic awareness on the Government Departments responsible for implementation programmes related to various women safety and legal issues. This requires strong attention by the Government.
- Rating on the contribution of the Government towards various rights of women in the sectors listed above. Apart from the fact that most of the parameters portrays more or less the same facts including sectors like health, education, economic opportunity, political participation etc, a similar trend has been observed in remaining all other sectors. Majority of the respondents have rated the contribution of the Government in protecting women rights and enforcing legal framework between 10% to 25%. This means there is a lot more to be done by the Government in this direction.
- Perception of the respondents on State's role in various sectors of women rights have been captured in a 10 point scale. In sectors like health, education, legal protection the average score given by the respondents is marginally above 5 (50%) as rated by more than 80% of 720 respondents in 8 districts. The scores in sectors like employment, social security etc. is also little over 50%. When it comes to gender budgeting, women right to property, action against violence, political representation, and financial empowerment, the respondents rated the contribution of the State with a score of around 40%.



Chapter 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

To conclude the study, it would be worthwhile to mention that India being one of the signatories of CEDAW in 1980 to implement the major provision through subsequent policy amendments till National Policy for Women, this baseline suggests that we stand far from what needs to be achieved to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. During one to one interview with the respondents and focused group discussion with rural women, it was felt that their expectation from the state is much more than the present scenario.

The women under study reported a number of constraints which are given in the preceding chapter which could be encountered bravely by the women only if certain measures were taken care of by the family, society, policy makers, legal institutions etc. They first of all wanted that support of family members to women should be there in family life such as taking care of children, help in household work and they also wanted opportunities for more and more exposure to every sphere of life with more free avenues of expression. The women under study wanted that education to the girls should be provided free of cost and more and more educational institutions should be established in nearby areas. Functional literacy to rural women should be provided. Strict Government and social compulsion should be there for educating the girls. Training to rural women about income generating enterprises so as to engage them in self-employment. Reservation of women or girls is necessary in every area of development. Provisions should be made for maintaining equal status of women with that of men in the society. There should be implementation of various programmes for empowering the women, both economically as well as socially. Strict law should be exercised against the injustice of women so that the women can feel safe, secured and self-dependent.

pjfr; fæ

pjfr;| thou : jQm;দের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে তৈরি জাতীয় নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা ও এগুলির hfhq;| আর্থিক সহযোগিতা: জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন, ভারত সরকার

এই সমীক্ষাটি শুধুমাত্র মহিলাদের জন্য। ১৯৯৩ সালে আন্তর্জাতিক স্তরে মহিলাদের বিরুদ্ধে সবধরনের বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ সভায় [Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)] ভারত সরকার, পৃথিবীর অন্যান্য সকল দেশের সঙ্গে একসাথে সহমতের ভিত্তিতে এই দেশে j হিলাদের সুরক্ষা, বিভিন্ন ধরনের বৈষম্য ও অপরাধমূলক কার্যকলাপের বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ abj মহিলাদের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে একটি জাতীয় নীতি [National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001], ২০০১ তৈরি করে এবং ঐ নীতির বাস্তবায়নের জন্য বিভিন্ন উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প রূপায়ন করেছে। যেহেতু ভারতের ৭৫% মানুষ গ্রামে বসবাস করে এবং বিভিন্ন উপায়ে নিজেদের জীবিকা নির্বাহ করে, সেহেতু এই সমীক্ষার মাধ্যমে জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন [National Commission for Women] Sje;| চেষ্টা করছে, কেন্দ্রীয় ও রাজ্য সরকার দ্বারা সৃষ্ট মহিলাদের ক্ষমতায়ন নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলারা, বিশেষতঃ গ্রামীণ মহিলারা কতটা সচেতন এবং প্রণীত নীতি, আইন ও প্রকল্পগুলি থেকে তাঁরা কতটা সাহায্য ও সুবিধা পাচ্ছেন। HC pjfr;|W pjNE পশ্চিমবঙ্গের ১৯-টি জেলার মধ্যে ৮-টি জেলায় সংগঠিত করার জন্য সুরুল সেন্টার ফর সার্ভিসেস ইন রুরাল এডিয়া বা সি.এস.আর.এ নামক বীরভূম জেলাস্থিত একটি স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থাকে দায়িত্ব দেওয়া হয়েছে।

ej :			hup:	hRI	Nj :
Bfe; jaja pCfZ	গোপন রাখা হবে, গোপনীয়তার স্বার্থে, আপনি আপনার নাম না ব্যবহার করতে পারেন				
গ্রাম পঞ্চায়েত:	hL:	j qLj ;	জেলা:		
S;fa:	ag: S;fa - 1	ag: EfS;fa - 2	Ae;fe; Aeæa S;fa - 3		pid;le - 4
dj	Q;c-1	j pQmj -2	MØVje-3		Ae;fe;-4
Qr; Na যোগ্যতা:	elr -1	ü;ri - 2	f; b; L - 3	f; b; L J a; EU - 4	j; df; L - 5
	E; Qj ;df; L - 6	p; aL J a; EU - 7			
পেশা :	ce; S -1	LoL-2	ü;ekS?-3	h;hp;uf-4	pl; f Qr; Lj-5
	pl; f Lj; -6	বেসরকারী কর্মী-7	R;æf -8	He;S.J Lj; -9	Ae;fe; -10

- আপনি কি ১৯৯৩ সালের আন্তর্জাতিক স্তরে jQm;|র বিরুদ্ধে সবধরনের বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ সভার সম্বন্ধে শুনেছেন? q;| - 1 / ej - 2
- আপনি কি ভারত সরকার দ্বারা ২০০১ সালে তৈরি মহিলাদের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে যে জাতীয় নীতি আছে সে সম্বন্ধে শুনেছেন? q;| - 1 / ej - 2
- মহিলাদের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে যে জাতীয় নীতি আছে সেটা আপনার এলাকায় তথা আপনার জেলায় তথা সমগ্র পশ্চিমবঙ্গ রাজ্যে সঠিক ভাবে রূপায়িত হচ্ছে? q;| - 1 / ej - 2
- ঐ নীতির কোন কোন দিকগুলি সঠিকভাবে পরিচালিত হচ্ছে বলে আপনার মনে হয়?

1	মহিলাদের সক্ষমতাকে মাথায় রেখে রাজ্য সরকার, গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের সামাজিক ও অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নের জন্য সঠিক পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি তথা নীতি গ্রহণ করেছে বা করছে	QLRV;	ej	Q;
2	গ্রামীণ মহিলারা পুরুষদের সঙ্গে সমানভাবে রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক, সাংস্কৃতিক এবং অর্থনৈতিক স্তরগুলিতে নিজেদের অধিকার সুনিশ্চিত করতে পারছে তথা স্বাধীনতা উপভোগ করছে	QLRV;	ej	Q;
3	সামাজিক, রাজনৈতিক ও অর্থনৈতিক ক্ষেত্রে গ্রামীণ মহিলারা তাঁদের জীবনে সমানভাবে অংশগ্রহণ ও সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার সুযোগ পেয়েছে / পাচ্ছে	QLRV;	ej	Q;
4	স্বাস্থ্য পরিষেবা, গুণগত শিক্ষা, কর্মক্ষেত্র ও বৃত্তিমূলক সহায়তা, রোজগার, সমান মজুরী / মাইনে, পেশাগত সুরক্ষা ও স্বাস্থ্য, সামাজিক সুরক্ষা, সরকারী দপ্তরে গ্রামীণ মহিলারা তাঁদের জীবনে সমান সুযোগ ও সুবিধা পেয়েছে / পাচ্ছে	QLRV;	ej	Q;
5	সরকারী প্রশাসন ও আইন প্রণয়ন ব্যবস্থা শক্তিশালী হয়েছে যারফলে গ্রামীণ মহিলারা তাঁদের বিরুদ্ধে ঘটা বিভিন্ন ধরনের বৈষম্য ও অপরাধের ক্ষেত্রে প্রয়োজনীয় সাহায্য পেয়েছে / পাচ্ছে।	QLRV;	ej	Q;
6	গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের জীবনযাত্রার মান উন্নয়নের ক্ষেত্রে তথা গ্রামোন্নয়নের সকলকাজে সক্রিয় অংশগ্রহণ ও সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে সমাজের সকলবর্গের পুরুষ ও নারীর মধ্যে চিন্তাধারার পরিবর্তন হয়েছে / হচ্ছে।	QLRV;	ej	Q;

pj&ri f&e

pj&ri| thou : j&qm;দের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে তৈরি জাতীয় নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা ও এগুলির হf&hqi|
আর্থিক সহযোগিতা: জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন, ভারত সরকার

১৯৯৩ সালের আন্তর্জাতিক স্তরে মহিলাদের বিরুদ্ধে সবধরনের বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ সভায় ঘোষিত নীতিগুলিতে সহমতের ভিত্তিতে অন্যান্য দেশগুলির মত ভারত সরকারও স্বাক্ষর করেছে এবং দেশে মহিলাদের প্রতি যেকোন প্রকার হিংসা বন্ধ করতে অঙ্গীকারবদ্ধ হয়েছে। এই pi|l h|d|বোধকতা অনুযায়ী বিশ্বের আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আইন অনুযায়ী ভারতের প্রতিটি রাজ্য পুরুষ ও j&qm; নির্বিশেষে সকলের মানবাধিকার গুলিকে শ্রদ্ধা করবে, সুরক্ষা প্রদান করবে এবং সম্পূর্ণতা প্রদান করবে।

7. আপনার মতে রাজ্য সরকার L গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের অধিকার সুনিশ্চিত করার প্রতি সঠিকভাবে কাজ করছে? q|j| - 1/dLRWj - 2/ej - 3

8. আপনার মতে মহিলাদের মানবাধিকার বলবৎ করার ক্ষেত্রে রাজ্য সরকারের সফলতা শতকরা কত ভাগ?

৮০ শতাংশের অধিক = ১	50 % = 2	20 % = 3	৫ শতাংশের কম = ৪	HLCj eu = 5	Btj S e ej = 6
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9. আপনার মতে কি করা প্রয়োজন ?

1	মহিলাদের অবস্থা যেখানে শোচনীয় সেখানে আইন এবং প্রশাসনকে আরও সুদৃঢ় করা প্রয়োজন।
2	সমস্ত থানায় আরও বেশি সংখ্যায় মহিলা পুলিশ নিয়োগ করা প্রয়োজন।
3	আদালতের বিচার প্রক্রিয়া আরও দ্রুত হওয়া প্রয়োজন এবং অপরাধীদের দৃষ্টান্তমূলক শাস্তি হওয়া প্রয়োজন।
4	সমগ্র সমাজে লিঙ্গ সংবেদনশীলতার অভিযান করে বদ্ধমূল ধারণার পরিবর্তন প্রয়োজন।
5	মহিলাদের আত্মরক্ষার প্রশিক্ষণ প্রয়োজন।
6	আইনের রক্ষাকবচ গুলির সরলিকরণ করে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি।
7	অন্য কিছু, নির্দিষ্ট করে বলুন :

১৯৯৩ সালের আন্তর্জাতিক স্তরে মহিলাদের বিরুদ্ধে সবধরনের বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ সভায় ঘোষিত নীতিগুলির মধ্যে অন্যতম নীতি হল "i|j|a J a|j| প্রতিটি রাজ্য অবশ্যই মহিলাদের অধিকারগুলিকে রক্ষা করবে.....সাম্য, কর্ম স্বাধীনতা, অথবা অন্যান্য মানবাধিকার অক্ষুর রাখতে অবশ্যই উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থা নেবে।

10. আপনি কি মনে করেন যে এই নীতি অনুসরণ করে রাজ্য সরকারের উচিত মহিলাদের আইনগত অধিকার গুলিকে রক্ষা করা? q|j| - 1 / ej - 2

11. যদি আপনার উত্তর হ্যাঁ হয়, তবে আইনি পরিকাঠামোই কি কি প্রধান বিষয় আপনি দেখতে চান?

1	মহিলাদের জন্য উপযুক্ত মানবাধিকারের ব্যবহারিক ভাষার উন্নতি।
2	প্রতিটি প্রতিষ্ঠানের সঙ্গে মহিলাদের অধিকার গুলির সংযোগ স্থাপন।
3	আইনি অধিকার, শিক্ষা, কর্ম, স্বাস্থ্য, রাজনীতি এবং অর্থনীতির ক্ষেত্রে মহিলাদের প্রতি বৈষম্য দূরীকরণ।
4	বিনামূল্যে আইনি সহায়তা।
5	অন্য কিছু, নির্দিষ্ট করে বলুন :

12. নিম্নলিখিত আইন গুলি সম্বন্ধে আপনি শুনেছেন কি?

বিশেষত মহিলাদের জন্য আইন			
1	অনৈতিক পাচার (প্রতিরোধ) আইন, ১৯৫৬ [ইমোরাল ট্রাফিকিং (প্রিভেনশন) অ্যাক্ট, ১৯৫৬]		
2	fZfbj &e&U BCE, 1961 (1961-এর ২৮) ১৯৮৬ সালে সংশোধিত [ডাওরি প্রোহিবিশন অ্যাক্ট, ১৯৬১]		
3	মহিলাদের অশ্লীল উপস্থাপনা (নিষিদ্ধ) আইন, ১৯৮৬ [দ্য ইনডিসেন্ট রিপ্রেসেন্টেশন (প্রহিবিশন) অ্যাক্ট, ১৯৮৬]		
4	পারিবারিক হিংসারোধে মহিলাদের সুরক্ষা আইন, ২০০৫ [প্রোটেকশন অফ উওমেন ফ্রম ডোমেস্টিক ভায়ালেন্স অ্যাক্ট, ২০০৫]		
মহিলাদের জন্য কিছু গুরুত্বপূর্ণ আইন			
1	2	3	4
fhj&qa j&qm; p&f&si BCE, 1874 (1874-HI 3)	A&i i hL Hhw p&je BCE, 1890	বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধ আইন, ১৯২৯ (1929-HI 19)	মুসলিম ব্যক্তিগত আবেদন (nd uv) BCE, 1937
5	6	7	8
নিয়োগ কর্তা দায় আইন, ১৯৩৮	e&eaj j S f BCE, 1950	বিশেষ বিবাহ আইন, ১৯৫৪	e N&L A&dL i p&r i BCE, 1955

পঞ্জি ফে

পঞ্জি ফে : জগতের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে তৈরি জাতীয় নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা ও এগুলির ফলাফল আর্থিক সহযোগিতা: জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন, ভারত সরকার

9 ১৯৫৬-১৯৬০ B.Ce, 1955 (1989-HI 28)	10 হিন্দু দত্তক ও রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ আইন, 1956	11 ১৯৬১-১৯৬৩ B.Ce, 1961 (1961-I 53)	12 ভারতীয় বিবাহ বিচ্ছেদ আইন, 1969 (1969-HI 4)
13 ১৯৭১-১৯৭৩ B.Ce, 1971 (1971 -HI 34)	14 ১৯৭৩-১৯৭৪ B.Ce, 1973	15 ১৯৫৫-১৯৫৬ B.Ce, 1955	16 ১৯৫৫-১৯৫৬ B.Ce, 2005
17 পরিবার আদালতের আইন, ১৯৮৪	18 মুসলিম নারী যৌতুক সুরক্ষা আইন, 1986	19 ১৯৮৭-১৯৮৭ B.Ce, 1987	20 ১৯৯০-১৯৯০ B.Ce, 1990 (1990-HI 20)
21 ১৯৯৩-১৯৯৩ B.Ce, 1993 (বাস্তবায়নের ন্যায়বিচার আইন, ২০০০)	22 ১৯৯৩-১৯৯৩ B.Ce (১৯৯৩-১৯৯৩ Hhw fihdje)	23 ১৯৯৪-১৯৯৪ B.Ce, 1994	24 ২০০৫-২০০৫ B.Ce, 2005

13. **ফলাফল** আইন গুলির কোনটা কি আপনি কখনও কাজে লাগিয়েছেন বা এই আইনগুলির সহায়তা পেয়েছেন? **১** - ১/ **২** - ২

14. যদি উত্তর হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে সেই আইনের উপরে **ফলাফল** **১** **২**

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15. যদি না হয় তাহলে কেন?

1 সচেতন নয়	2 এই আইন গুলিকে জানার প্রয়োজনীয়তা কখনও ১ ২	3 ১ ২ ৩ ৪ ৫ ৬ ৭ ৮ ৯ ১০ ১১ ১২ ১৩ ১৪ ১৫ ১৬ ১৭ ১৮ ১৯ ২০ ২১ ২২ ২৩ ২৪ ২৫ ২৬ ২৭ ২৮ ২৯ ৩০ ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩ ৩৪ ৩৫ ৩৬ ৩৭ ৩৮ ৩৯ ৪০ ৪১ ৪২ ৪৩ ৪৪ ৪৫ ৪৬ ৪৭ ৪৮ ৪৯ ৫০ ৫১ ৫২ ৫৩ ৫৪ ৫৫ ৫৬ ৫৭ ৫৮ ৫৯ ৬০ ৬১ ৬২ ৬৩ ৬৪ ৬৫ ৬৬ ৬৭ ৬৮ ৬৯ ৭০ ৭১ ৭২ ৭৩ ৭৪ ৭৫ ৭৬ ৭৭ ৭৮ ৭৯ ৮০ ৮১ ৮২ ৮৩ ৮৪ ৮৫ ৮৬ ৮৭ ৮৮ ৮৯ ৯০ ৯১ ৯২ ৯৩ ৯৪ ৯৫ ৯৬ ৯৭ ৯৮ ৯৯ ১০০	4 অনেক আইন সত্ত্বেও গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের পক্ষে এগুলি প্রয়োগ ১ ২ ৩ ৪ ৫ ৬ ৭ ৮ ৯ ১০ ১১ ১২ ১৩ ১৪ ১৫ ১৬ ১৭ ১৮ ১৯ ২০ ২১ ২২ ২৩ ২৪ ২৫ ২৬ ২৭ ২৮ ২৯ ৩০ ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩ ৩৪ ৩৫ ৩৬ ৩৭ ৩৮ ৩৯ ৪০ ৪১ ৪২ ৪৩ ৪৪ ৪৫ ৪৬ ৪৭ ৪৮ ৪৯ ৫০ ৫১ ৫২ ৫৩ ৫৪ ৫৫ ৫৬ ৫৭ ৫৮ ৫৯ ৬০ ৬১ ৬২ ৬৩ ৬৪ ৬৫ ৬৬ ৬৭ ৬৮ ৬৯ ৭০ ৭১ ৭২ ৭৩ ৭৪ ৭৫ ৭৬ ৭৭ ৭৮ ৭৯ ৮০ ৮১ ৮২ ৮৩ ৮৪ ৮৫ ৮৬ ৮৭ ৮৮ ৮৯ ৯০ ৯১ ৯২ ৯৩ ৯৪ ৯৫ ৯৬ ৯৭ ৯৮ ৯৯ ১০০	5 যদি অন্য কোনো কারণ থাকে তাহলে ১ ২ ৩ ৪ ৫ ৬ ৭ ৮ ৯ ১০ ১১ ১২ ১৩ ১৪ ১৫ ১৬ ১৭ ১৮ ১৯ ২০ ২১ ২২ ২৩ ২৪ ২৫ ২৬ ২৭ ২৮ ২৯ ৩০ ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩ ৩৪ ৩৫ ৩৬ ৩৭ ৩৮ ৩৯ ৪০ ৪১ ৪২ ৪৩ ৪৪ ৪৫ ৪৬ ৪৭ ৪৮ ৪৯ ৫০ ৫১ ৫২ ৫৩ ৫৪ ৫৫ ৫৬ ৫৭ ৫৮ ৫৯ ৬০ ৬১ ৬২ ৬৩ ৬৪ ৬৫ ৬৬ ৬৭ ৬৮ ৬৯ ৭০ ৭১ ৭২ ৭৩ ৭৪ ৭৫ ৭৬ ৭৭ ৭৮ ৭৯ ৮০ ৮১ ৮২ ৮৩ ৮৪ ৮৫ ৮৬ ৮৭ ৮৮ ৮৯ ৯০ ৯১ ৯২ ৯৩ ৯৪ ৯৫ ৯৬ ৯৭ ৯৮ ৯৯ ১০০
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16. গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের জন্য যেসব সরকারী প্রকল্প আছে সেগুলি সম্বন্ধে **১** আপনি জানেন?

1 ১ ২ ৩ ৪ ৫ ৬ ৭ ৮ ৯ ১০ ১১ ১২ ১৩ ১৪ ১৫ ১৬ ১৭ ১৮ ১৯ ২০ ২১ ২২ ২৩ ২৪ ২৫ ২৬ ২৭ ২৮ ২৯ ৩০ ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩ ৩৪ ৩৫ ৩৬ ৩৭ ৩৮ ৩৯ ৪০ ৪১ ৪২ ৪৩ ৪৪ ৪৫ ৪৬ ৪৭ ৪৮ ৪৯ ৫০ ৫১ ৫২ ৫৩ ৫৪ ৫৫ ৫৬ ৫৭ ৫৮ ৫৯ ৬০ ৬১ ৬২ ৬৩ ৬৪ ৬৫ ৬৬ ৬৭ ৬৮ ৬৯ ৭০ ৭১ ৭২ ৭৩ ৭৪ ৭৫ ৭৬ ৭৭ ৭৮ ৭৯ ৮০ ৮১ ৮২ ৮৩ ৮৪ ৮৫ ৮৬ ৮৭ ৮৮ ৮৯ ৯০ ৯১ ৯২ ৯৩ ৯৪ ৯৫ ৯৬ ৯৭ ৯৮ ৯৯ ১০০	2 উন্নয়নমূলক কর্মসূচি (H.P.S.H.P.Ju.C / H.M.E He.B.I.H.M.Hj)	3 জাতীয় অনুন্নত সম্প্রদায়ের অর্থ ১ ২ ৩ ৪ ৫ ৬ ৭ ৮ ৯ ১০ ১১ ১২ ১৩ ১৪ ১৫ ১৬ ১৭ ১৮ ১৯ ২০ ২১ ২২ ২৩ ২৪ ২৫ ২৬ ২৭ ২৮ ২৯ ৩০ ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩ ৩৪ ৩৫ ৩৬ ৩৭ ৩৮ ৩৯ ৪০ ৪১ ৪২ ৪৩ ৪৪ ৪৫ ৪৬ ৪৭ ৪৮ ৪৯ ৫০ ৫১ ৫২ ৫৩ ৫৪ ৫৫ ৫৬ ৫৭ ৫৮ ৫৯ ৬০ ৬১ ৬২ ৬৩ ৬৪ ৬৫ ৬৬ ৬৭ ৬৮ ৬৯ ৭০ ৭১ ৭২ ৭৩ ৭৪ ৭৫ ৭৬ ৭৭ ৭৮ ৭৯ ৮০ ৮১ ৮২ ৮৩ ৮৪ ৮৫ ৮৬ ৮৭ ৮৮ ৮৯ ৯০ ৯১ ৯২ ৯৩ ৯৪ ৯৫ ৯৬ ৯৭ ৯৮ ৯৯ ১০০	4 জাতীয় অনুন্নত সম্প্রদায়ের অর্থ Hhw Eæue teNj z
5 Sjæu agðm Sjæl AbilHhw Eæue teNj	6 আবেদনকারী হস্ত শিল্প বিকাশ যোজনা	7 I;Sth Njæf Sjæu শিশু রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ (ফ্রেস) প্রকল্প	8 p;ðhL ü;üð ðdje fLÖf (V. Hp. ð)
9 Sjæu Njæf fjeu Sm plhljq Ljððf	10 Gj X-ডে মিল।	11 কিশোরী শক্তি যোজনা।	12 টার্গেটেড পাবলিক ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন সিস্টেম (টি. পি. ডি. এস.) বা রেশন ব্যবস্থা
13 অন্তোদয়া অন্ন যোজনা (H. H. Ju.C.)	14 জাতীয় আয়োজন ঘটতি রোগ teu;e Ljððz	15 রাষ্ট্রীয় স্বাস্থ্য বিমা যোজনা (B.I. Hpð ð. Ju.C.)	16 ইন্দীরা গান্ধী মাতৃত্ব সহায়ক যোজনা-HLÖV naððe jjaeðp;r; fLÖfz
17 কিশোরী মেয়েদের ক্ষমতায়নের জন্য রাজীব গান্ধী প্রকল্প - HLLbj;u phm;z	18 ü;üjð;ü;	19 j হেলাদের জন্য ছাত্রী আবাস প্রকল্প।	20 নারী ও মেয়েশিশুদের স্বল্পকালীন থাকার হোম (শর্ট স্টেট হোম)।
21 নারীদের জন্য প্রশিক্ষণ ও কর্মসংস্থান Ljððz (স্টেপ)z	22 ppwqa ðnðhL;in fLÖf (B.C.ð.ð.Hp)	23 Sjæu Njæf ü;üð G;ne (He.B.I.HCQ.Hj)	24 জননী সুরক্ষা যোজনা
25 üðl - বিপদকালীন পরিস্থিতিতে নারীদের পুনর্বাসনের জন্য একটি প্রকল্প	26 E < ð; - পাচার রোধ, উদ্ধার, পুনর্বাসন এবং সমাজের মূলপ্রাচীরে নিয়ে আসার জন্য একটি প্রকল্প	27 ইন্দীরা আবাস যোজনা (B.C.H.Ju.C)	28 Cð;L; Njæf Sjæu h;ðl;li j;aj fLÖf (B.C.S.He.J.ð.H.Hp)
29 Cð;L; Njæf Sjæu ðndh; i j;aj fLÖf (B.C.S.He.Xhðf.Hp)	30 Cð;L; Njæf Sjæu f;ahæt i j;aj fLÖf (B.C.S.He.ð.ð.Hp)	31 ভূমিহীন কৃষকদের জন্য ভবিষ্যতনিধি প্রকল্প (প্রোফলাল)	

pj&ri f&e

pj&ri| thou : j&qm;দের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে তৈরি জাতীয় নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা ও এগুলির হf&h;ji আর্থিক সহযোগিতা: জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন, ভারত সরকার

17. উপরিলিখিত প্রকল্পগুলির কোনটির থেকে আপনি কোন সহায়তা পেয়েছেন কি? qf;ij - 1 / e; - 2

18. যদি পেয়ে থাকেন তাহলে তার ক্রমিক নম্বরটি উল্লেখ করুন।

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19. যদি না পেয়ে থাকেন তাহলে কেন?

1	2	3	4
সচেতন নয়	কখনও কোনো সহায়তা নেওয়ার চেষ্টা করিনি	p L; Abh; f& j;df; HC fL0f...&ml ওপর কোনো সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধির কাজ করেনি	যদি অন্য কোন কারণ হয় তাহলে তা নির্দিষ্ট করে বলুন

20. রাজ্যের কোন দপ্তর / দপ্তরগুলি মহিলাদের আইন তথা সুরক্ষা বিষয়গুলি দেখার দায়িত্বে রয়েছে ?

1	2	3	4	
j&qm; J &nö E&ue Hhw pj;S Lmf;Z c&	BCe c&	ü;U& J f&h; Lmf;Z c&	ü; & c&	
5	6	7	8	9
পঞ্চায়েত ও গ্রামোন্নয়ন দপ্তর	I;S& j;eh; dL; L;j ne	I;S& j&qm; L;j ne	এদের কোনটিই নয়	S; e e;

21. আপনার বা আপনার এলাকার মহিলাদের অধিকার পাওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে যদি কোনো বৈষম্য হয়েছে তাহলে আপনার অভিজ্ঞতার ভিত্তিতে শতকরা হারে তার একটি মূল্যায়ন করুন?

অধিকারের ক্ষেত্রগুলি	মূল্যায়নের হার							এককথায় মূল্যায়নের কারণ
	একেবারেই না	10%-HI Lj	25%	50%	75%	75%-র বেশী		
ü;U&								
&n;ri								
BCe pq;ua;								
Abf&e&L E&ue								
L;j &wU&e								
I;S&e&L AwnN&Z								
p;j; SL f&au;								
p&f&š								

22. আপনার মতে গ্রামীণ মহিলাদের জন্য রাজ্য সরকারের কোন কোন ক্ষেত্রে কাজ এবং বেশি বরাদ্দ করা প্রয়োজন?

thi ;N	১০ নম্বরের মধ্যে কত	HLLbju Bf&e; f&f;ri;
ü;U&		
&n;ri		
BCeNa p&ri		
Abf&e&L pr;ja;		
L;j &wU&e		
I;S&e&L f&e&da&		
&qp; / Af; d Ahp;e		
p&f&š AdL;		
p;j; SL p&ri		
মহিলাদের প্রয়োজনের ভিত্তিতে বাজেট		

pj&ri fœ

pj&ri| thou : jœqm;দের ক্ষমতায়নের উদ্দেশ্যে তৈরি জাতীয় নীতি ও উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পগুলি সম্পর্কে মহিলাদের মধ্যে সচেতনতা ও এগুলির হf&hqi| আর্থিক সহযোগিতা: জাতীয় মহিলা কমিশন, ভারত সরকার

এই সমীক্ষাটি বিভিন্ন কর্মক্ষেত্রের মহিলাদের মধ্যে করতে হবে, বিশেষতঃ যারা গ্রামাঞ্চলে থাকেন ও শহরাঞ্চলে থাকেন কিন্তু গ্রামাঞ্চলে কাজ করেন বা করতে যান এবং গ্রামাঞ্চল থেকে শহরাঞ্চল বা অন্যান্য জায়গায় কাজ করতে যান। সমীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণকারী মহিলাদের ধরণ নীচে দেওয়া হল -

œ²j L pwMÉj	সমীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণকারী মহিলাদের ধরণ	pwMÉj
1	মহিলা স্বনির্ভর গোষ্ঠীর দলনেত্রী বা সদস্যা বা কোনো সমবায়ের সঙ্গে যুক্ত মহিলা	10
2	গ্রাম পঞ্চায়েতের সদস্যা, পঞ্চায়েত সমিতির সদস্যা, জেলা পরিষদের সদস্যা, মহিলা বিধায়ক, মহিলা সাংসদ বা কোনো রাজনৈতিক দলের মহিলা নেত্রী	8
3	রাজ্য সরকার বা কেন্দ্র সরকারের অফিসে যেকোনো পদে কাজ করেন এমন মহিলা কর্মী	10
4	বেসরকারী কোম্পানীতে যেকোনো পদে কাজ করেন এমন মহিলা কর্মী	8
5	মাধ্যমিক , উচ্চমাধ্যমিক বা স্নাতকস্তরে পড়েন এমন ছাত্রী	12
6	গৃহবধু (৪০ বছর বয়সের মধ্যে)	12
7	এন.জি.ও, আই.সি.ডি.এস, শিশু শিক্ষা কেন্দ্রের মহিলা কর্মী	10
8	রাজ্য ও কেন্দ্র সরকারের যেকোনো শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে শিক্ষিকা বা অধ্যাপিকার কাজ করছেন	12
9	মহিলা শ্রমিক, মহিলা চাষী, মহিলা ক্ষুদ্র ব্যবসায়ী, মহিলা দোকানদার, মহিলা হকার ইত্যাদি	8
	মোট	90

উল্লেখযোগ্যভাবে একটি বিষয় মনে রাখতে হবে, বিভিন্ন ধরণের মহিলাদের ক্ষেত্রে সমীক্ষার উত্তর দেওয়ার ক্ষমতা বা pWLL EŠI œhŹDe LIj| rja; œL;‡Bm;c; হতে পারে, বেশ কিছু ক্ষেত্রে সমীক্ষককে সঠিক উত্তরটা নিজের দক্ষতা ও সঠিক অনুমানের ভিত্তিতে বুঝে নিয়ে নথীভুক্ত করতে হবে।

INTERVIEW GUIDE (ANNEXURE-1)

BASELINE SURVEY ON THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND IMPACT OF CEDAW ON RURAL WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL
SUPPORTED BY: NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN, NEW DELHI

Name: _____; Age: _____ Years; Village: _____; GP: _____;

Block: _____; Sub Division: _____; District: _____

Caste: SC-1/ST-2/OBC-3/General-4;

Religion: Hindu-1/ Muslim-2/ Christian-3/ Other-4;

Education: Illiterate -1 / Literate -2 / Primary-3 / Upper Primary -4/ Madhyamik – 5/ HS – 6/ Graduate – 7/ Post Graduate – 8 / Post Graduate & Above – 9

Occupation: Daily Labour-1 / Cultivator-2 / Self Employed-3/ Business-4/Govt. Teacher-5/Govt. Service-6/Private Service-7/Student – 8/ NGO Worker-9/Other (Pls Specify)-10 _____

a. **Have you heard of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)?** : Yes - 1/ No - 2

b. **Have you heard of the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women?** : Yes - 1/ No - 2

c. **If yes than do you think that National Policy for the Empowerment Women is properly implementing by the State Government in following segments?**

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (i) Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (ii) Enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (iii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (iv) Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (v) Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (vi) Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (viii) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (ix) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

CEDAW calls for nations to overcome barriers of discrimination against women in areas of legal rights, social rights, education, employment, healthcare, politics and finance. Please list the above in order of severity in your geographical area.

d. **In your opinion, what are the five (5) most rampant types of problems that rural women face?** (Tick appropriately).

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Lack of adequate laws to protect women against domestic violence and sexual abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Prejudices through customary practices, e.g. female infanticide and early marriages. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Denial of educational opportunities in various levels. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Sexual exploitation, women and girl-child prostitution, pornography and negative portrayal of women in the media. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Inadequate participation of women with disabilities in social, cultural, economic and political life. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Inadequate information and care for women affected and infected with HIV/AIDS. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 7. Lack of adequate statistical data on the status of women in the various sectors e.g. political, economic, and social sectors. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. No equal representation in decision-making organs e.g. ministerial, high-level commissioners, civil service etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Inequality in the field of employment, e.g. promotions, equal remuneration and equal treatment in respect to work of equal value. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Citizenship laws that do not protect rural women from being rendered stateless by being married to other caste or religion. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Inadequate access to healthcare facilities and services (including those related to family planning and maternity services) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Inadequate access to opportunities for economic development e.g. access to bank loans and credit. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Inadequate representation of rural women in national and other development processes as all those mentioned above. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Mishandling and assault by law-enforcement officers, e.g. the Police. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Unpaid women workers in domestic setups e.g. housewives, domestic house-helps, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

e. Which of the above listed problems most affect women in your immediate working environment/ family/ society and how?

Put the 'Problem' Number mentioned above	Can you please share your experience on how this / these problem(s) affect you?
e.g. 14	e.g. When we went for lodging a complaint on eve teasing, police denied to accept & act

State parties (countries) to CEDAW are under obligation to take effective steps to end violence against women. According to the CEDAW obligations set up, States are required under international human rights laws to "respect, protect, and fulfil human rights."

- f. **In your opinion, as the state government ensured that there is adequate respect of rights of rural women?**
– Yes-1/ No - 2
- g. **In your opinion, what percentage can represent the level of law enforcement by the state government regarding respect of human rights of the women?** : More than 80% - 1 / 50% -2 / 20%-3 / Less than 5%-4 / Not at all-5 / Don't know -6
- h. **In your opinion, what needs to be done?**
- Strengthen law & administration where voice of women is seriously heard & act – 1
 - Deployed more female police in all police station -2
 - Legal system and court trial should be fast and offenders must be punished immediately by setting example – 3
 - Gender sensitisation drive in the entire society to change the mindset – 4
 - Self defence training – 5
 - Awareness among women on legal instruments in simplified manner with booklets – 6
 - If any other, Please specify _____

It is a CEDAW obligation that "States must protect women's rights.....the state and its agents must take effective measures to prevent other individuals/groups (including private enterprises and corporations) from violating the integrity, freedom of action, or other human

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rights of the individual. This duty is upheld when the State institutes laws, policies and practices that protect victims of violence, provide them with appropriate remedies, and bring the perpetrators to justice.” (Amnesty International, 2004).

i. **Do you think that the State Government should act on protection of women’s legal rights followed by CEDAW norms?** Yes – 1 / No – 2

j. **If, yes then what are the key issues you like to see in the legal framework?**

- Development of an appropriate human rights language for women
- Incorporation of women’s rights into every institution
- Update, eliminate or overcome barriers of discrimination against women in the areas of legal rights, education, employment, healthcare, politics and finance.
- Access to free legal aid at maximum extent

k. **Do you ever heard or information on the following acts?**

Women specific legislations:

- A. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- B. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) (Amended in 1986)
- C. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- D. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

Some important women related legislations:

1. The Married Women’s Property Act, 1874 (3 of 1874)
2. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (19 of 1929)
3. The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937
4. The Minimum Wages Act, 1950
5. The Special Marriage Act, 1954
6. Right to Information Act, 2005
7. The Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955
8. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (28 of 1955)
9. The Hindu Adoptions & Maintenance Act, 1956
10. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (53 of 1961)
11. The Indian Divorce Act, 1969 (4 of 1969)
12. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 (34 of 1971)
13. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
14. The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979
15. The Family Courts Act, 1984
16. The Muslim women Protection of Rights on Dowry Act 1986
17. Mental Health Act, 1987
18. National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (20 of 1990)
19. The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 [Juvenile Justice Act, 2000]
20. The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act
21. The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of misuse) Act 1994

l. **Do you ever used or got support from any above mentioned acts?** : Yes – 1/ No – 2

m. **If yes, then please mentioned the name / number specified in that acts?**

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n. **If no, then why?** : No awareness – 1 / Never feel essential, to know these acts – 2 / Government or Media never spread information on these acts – 3 / In spite of several acts, it can’t be applied by rural women - 4

o. **Do you know about the Government Schemes for rural women?**

1. Entrepreneurship Development Institutions (EDIs) Scheme
2. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)
3. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
4. National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation
5. National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation
6. Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojna
7. Jute Manufactures Development Council Schemes
8. Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme
9. Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)
10. National Rural Drinking Water Programme

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11. Mid Day Meal
12. Kishori Shakti Yogana
13. Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)
14. Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY)
15. National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP)
16. Nutrition Education and Extension
17. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana(RSBY)
18. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) - A Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme
19. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)- **SABLA**
20. Swayam Siddha
21. Scheme for Working Women Hostel
22. Short Stay Home For Women and Girls (SSH)
23. STEP (Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women)
24. Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)
25. National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)
26. Janani Suraksha Yojana
27. SWADHAR - A scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances
28. UJJAWALA- A Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration
29. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)
30. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOPAS)
31. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)
32. Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)
33. Provident Fund For Landless Agricultural Labourers (PROFLAL)

p. **Do you ever got support from any above mentioned schemes?** : Yes – 1/ No – 2

q. **If yes, then please mentioned the name / number specified in that acts?**

r. **If no, then why?** : No awareness – 1 / Never tried to access benefit from above schemes – 2 / Government or Media never spread information on these schemes – 3 / If any other, please specify _____ - 4

s. **Which department of the State Government is responsible to see the women issues under CEDAW?**

Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare – 1 / Department of Law – 2 / Department of Health & Family Welfare – 3 / Department of Home Affairs – 4 / Department of Panchayat & Rural Development – 5 / State Commission for Women - 6 / State Human Rights Commission – 7 / All of them – 8 / None of them – 9 / Don't know - 10

t. **Please rate your rights and experience on discrimination you have faced in different segments?**

	Rights	<5%	5%	15%	25%	35%	45%	55%& >	Reason of rating
1	Healthcare								
2	Educational Rights								
3	Legal Rights								
4	Financial Rights								
5	Employment Rights								
6	Political Rights								
7	Social Rights								
8	Property Rights								

u. **In which sector the State Government should work and invest for the rural women?**

	Sector(s)	Out of 10 Marks	Expectation
1	Health		
2	Education		
3	Legal Protection		
4	Financial Power		
5	Employment		
6	Political Representation		
7	Ending Violence		
8	Property Rights		
9	Social Security measures		

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10	Gender specific budget		
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