



WHITE PAPER

Domestic Violence Stakeholders Summit

MAHARASHTRA

6th July, 2024

Presented By

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Domestic Violence Stakeholders Summit, Maharashtra

The Domestic Violence Stakeholders Summit, Maharashtra was organised by Invisible Scars Foundation and Majlis on 6th July, 2024 at ITM IDM, Andheri West, Mumbai.

Invisible Scars Foundation is an NGO dedicated to raising awareness and to protect and promote the rights of women and children's rights through legal



representation, advocacy and training. Our team of women lawyers and social workers provides legal and social support to victims of sexual and domestic violence (DV).

The full day summit brought together over 75 professionals, experts and key stakeholders from across Maharashtra to share insights and forge a path towards a future free from DV.

There were two thought-provoking Panel Discussions followed by a roundtable:
Panel 1 - *Reimagining shelters for DV victims and their children.*

Panel 2 - *Challenging misinformation (false case / misuse narrative) on DV.*

Roundtable - *A collective brainstorming on what economic empowerment for survivors of DV should look like and what could be the initiatives to improve the coordination between the police, support services and the judiciary.*

This summit was about igniting constructive dialogues to drive real change. The insights gathered will undoubtedly pave the way for more informed policies and effective strategies. The outcomes and key recommendations from the expert consultations are meticulously documented in this comprehensive white paper and will be submitted to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Maharashtra.

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**Imagine a future free from
domestic violence**

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Glossary

1. MDVSS - Maharashtra Domestic Violence Stakeholders Summit
2. DV: Domestic Violence
3. DVA: Domestic Violence and Abuse
4. GBV: Gender Based Violence
5. CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

Context

Domestic violence in India is a pervasive issue that affects millions of individuals across gender, age and socio economic classes with women and children bearing the brunt of this human rights violation. Domestic violence includes physical, emotional, psychological abuse, sexual violence, and economic abuse. Deeply ingrained patriarchal norms contribute to the justification of violence against women.

The worldwide cost of violence against women is estimated at a staggering \$1.5 trillion in 2016, equivalent to approximately 2% of global GDP. In India, the macro-level consequences are equally alarming, with domestic violence estimated to lower the country's economic output by \$479 million to \$880 million per year.

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-2021), about 29% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical or sexual violence. This highlights a significant public health and human rights concern.

The long-term impact of domestic violence on victims is devastating, including low self-esteem, suicidal behaviour, self-destructive actions, and addictions. The reverberating effects extend to children facing risks of developing hostility, anger, anxiety, low self-esteem, addiction and mental health issues

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, aims to provide legal protection and support to victims. However, implementation varies widely across states. Despite existing laws, many women face obstacles in accessing justice, including bias within law enforcement and lengthy legal processes. Many cases remain unreported due to stigma, fear of social ostracisation, and lack of awareness about legal rights. Various organisations offer legal aid, counselling, and shelter services. However, awareness of these services is often limited

Addressing domestic violence in India requires a multi-faceted and there is an urgent need for concerted action at both state and national levels.



Background and Objectives

Background

The Domestic Violence Stakeholder Summit, Maharashtra was held on 6th July, 2024 at ITM IDM, Andheri W, Mumbai. It took place against the backdrop of a set of critical and multifaceted issue faced by domestic violence victims. The DV Act, a landmark law in India aims at providing comprehensive support to victims through legal and other support services including medical assistance, mental health services, and shelter. Despite its progressive intent, the Act's implementation faces challenges due to systemic biases. They are majorly led by the misconception that women often misuse the law, leading to apathy within institutions like the police and judiciary. This results in domestic violence complaints being dismissed or inadequately addressed, with police often failing to record cases promptly, losing crucial evidence. Additionally, shelter for victims facing domestic violence, particularly those with children are inadequate. Shelters impose restrictive rules that disrupt victims' lives and hinder their rehabilitation and re-integration in society. Emergency services provide only short-term relief without sustainable long-term solutions This forces many victims back into abusive environments. To address these gaps, greater co-ordination between the stakeholders is needed to ensure victims receive holistic support required to rebuild their lives.

Objective

The objective of the Summit was to bring different stakeholders to initiate a dialogue about the two emergent issues of mis-information about the DV laws in the country and discuss a strategy to challenge the prevalent narrative about women misusing the law.

Secondly, to discuss the present system of shelter homes available, the challenges that lead women in not opting for them and how can shelters need be reimagined.



Challenges faced by DV Survivors

False Case Narrative

It is essential to have a basic grasp of the criminal procedure to understand the flaw in this narrative, From registering of the FIR to filing of the chargesheet, the entire process is governed by legal protocols that the police officer is supposed to follow. Apart from being a witness the woman has no role to play in the process. It is therefore argued that it is impossible for women to file false cases in criminal matters as the false hood would be revealed during the investigation and police can close the case by filing A, B or C summary. The Supreme Court in various judgements have reprimanded the police about illegal and unnecessary arrests. But unfortunately women are accused of filing false cases. The burden of the false case narrative results in denial by police in registering FIRs to refusal in medical treatment and other support services. The response of the judiciary has also been extremely lax leaving women vulnerable to further abuse from their husbands.

Shelter Homes

The State response to women facing domestic violence is offering her a space in a shelter home. Women have shared that shelter homes feel like living in a jail. Shelters are situated in remote areas which victims are not familiar with. Restrictions on women leaving the shelter to continue their job, education and other day to day activities further complicate rehabilitation. There are rules on food, use of mobile, religious rituals and even dressing. Moving away from the community isolates victims. However the biggest deterrent victims have shared is the separation from their children. Women have shared a need for half way homes that can provide a holistic living experience. Where they can live in their community with their children, be able to cook food and lead a normal life so that they can slowly rebuild their lives. Anything short of this forces women to return to abusive homes,

Victims of domestic violence faced multiple challenges but for this summit we have limited our focus to two issues - the impact of the 'false cases' narrative and lack of accessibility to 'shelter homes'.

Welcome Address

Ekta Viiveck Verma, Invisible Scars

Ekta introduced Invisible Scar's work in the field of DV redressal. She delivered a background on the DV Summit, Telangana and stated that the main outcome was a healthy dialogue between different stakeholders working in the field converging on ideas. She acknowledged the support of Majlis in co-organizing and conceptualizing the Summit and acknowledged the work done by all the partners involved. She emphasized on the importance of convergence and working together to ensure effective solutions .



Introduction

Audrey Dmello, Majlis

Audrey welcomed everyone and mentioned that Maharashtra has always been a pioneer in women's rights initiatives. She thanked all the NGOs that were present, and thanked them for their tireless efforts in providing support to victims of DV. She introduced the work done by Majlis in addressing sexual and DV in the past 30 years. To set the context she traced the legal journey to address DV for the past four decades. From combating wife-burning and dowry deaths to the DV Act.

Even today one in every three women face DV and the DV Act is meant to provide medical, shelter and legal aid to women and their children to ensure their rehabilitation. However, without convergence between stakeholders a dynamic response is not possible. She mentioned that the DV summit will focus on two crucial issues - Housing for single mothers and Addressing the spread of the false case / misuse narrative. She went on to introduce the Chief Guest and invite them over for the talk.



Chief Guest

Smt Shobha Shelar, DWCDO, Mumbai City

Ms. Shelar gave us a comprehensive view into the perspective of survivors. She said that it is time to reimagine what shelter homes should look like for DV victims. She narrated how women come to a Protection Officers to file their Domestic Incident Report (DIR) detailing the abuse meted out at them. **After filing a report, the first thought she usually has is where can she go now, what about her safe shelter?** She stated that most of the women do not find it safe to go back to the matrimonial home after filing the report. **The thought of where she can take her children and herself plagues her.** When there is no shelter for her and her children, the only possible route she sees for a comparatively secure environment is the house of her abusive husband. **This leads to victims taking back the case.** She also highlighted the narrative of the false complaint and how it is not reflective of the plight of what the victims go through. As the DWCDO, she informed that 22 State homes and 2 protective homes are currently functional in the State of Maharashtra. **She highlighted that the bureaucratic red-tape and the loopholes in the law are what lead to ineffective implementation.** She also pointed out that the existing shelters cater to women aged between 18-65 years and there is a requirement for shelter homes catering to older women.



Chief Guest

Shri Satish Hiwale

Mr. Hiwale enriched the audience by explaining the objectives of passing the DV Act. **He clarified that the law provides a subjective definition of 'domestic violence' which may vary in its application and perspectives of those involved.** Mr. Hiwale briefed the audience on how legal-aid works and explained the application process for becoming a Legal Aid lawyer. Becoming a legal-aid lawyer remains to be one of the most effective ways to deliver to the society. He elaborated and spoke extensively on two aspects, **support** and **assistance** to find a safe shelter and courts' power to grant ex-parte interim relief. He dived into the different provisions of law that can be utilized by the victims to get relief. While addressing the audience, Mr. Hiwale provided valuable insights on the **exclusion of liability of the informant.** He ended by stating that **any person can inform about DV to the Protection Officer** and contact the police in case of an emergency.



Guest of Honor

Flavia Agnes, Women's Rights Lawyer

Ms. Agnes, provided a comprehensive overview of the evolution of DV laws in India. She highlighted the significant progress made since the introduction of **S. 498A in IPC to the current DV Act in 2005**. The DV Act provided crucial civil remedies and protections for women facing domestic abuse. Agnes reflected on the historical context, noting how DV was once poorly understood and inadequately addressed, with issues like dowry deaths being dismissed or misrepresented.

She emphasized that the DV Act acknowledged various forms of abuse, physical, emotional, sexual, and economic and offered remedies such as protection orders, maintenance, and custody arrangements. She pointed out that, **prior to 2005 legal provisions were scattered and often inaccessible**. The Act consolidated these remedies into a single framework, making it easier for individuals and organizations to navigate the legal system.

Despite these advances, Agnes acknowledged that challenges remain. She noted that **while there is greater awareness and understanding of the law among judges, NGOs, and society at large, practical challenges persist, particularly regarding the provision of shelter and comprehensive support for victims**. Agnes called for continued efforts to address these gaps and improve the system, emphasizing the need for ongoing awareness, effective implementation, and the involvement of diverse organizations to advance the cause.



Challenging misinformation on DV

The first panel discussion focused on **Challenging misinformation (false case/ misuse narrative) on DV**. The panel discussion began with **Supreet Singh** introducing the topic by citing an alarming statistic about 38% of women being murdered by intimate partners, and one in four women facing DV, according to the NHS. Despite the presence of laws and policies, there is a significant gap in their implementation. Supreet highlighted the **normalization and internalization of DV setting the stage for a detailed examination of the role of misinformation perpetuating this issue.**



Ms. Supreet Singh

Moderator

Adv. Audrey Dmello
(Director Majlis)

Mr. Gautam S. Mengle
(Independent Journalist)

Ms. Sameera Khan
(Journalist, Feminist Researcher)

Mr. Sudharak Olwe
(Documentary photographer)

Sameera Khan, pointed out that **media coverage predominantly focuses on violence in public spaces rather than the domestic sphere**, resulting in insufficient attention to DV. Khan attributed this gap to a **patriarchal mindset** and emphasized that DV is prevalent in every household and should be treated as a significant issue regardless of where it occurs. When the law was introduced there was significant media coverage but currently reporting is skewed towards highlighting false cases. **This shift has led to diminished coverage of the challenges women face** when seeking justice and perpetuates the narrative that laws protecting women are often misused.

Gautam Mengle spoke on the role of the media in fueling misinformation of DV law. He attributed this to society's patriarchal structure, which perpetuates victim-blaming and skepticism towards women seeking help. Gautam also noted **the ease with which unverifiable information is shared on social media, compounding the problem by reinforcing myths and false narratives about DV**. He critiqued the media for focusing disproportionately on sensational stories or high-profile cases, which often skew public perception of DV. He highlighted that the **media's tendency to emphasize the misuse of DV laws, rather than the systemic issues faced by victims, undermines efforts to address the problem effectively**.



Audrey Dmello spoke about how the spread of misinformation impacts the victims. She highlighted **the systemic hurdles victims face, from societal pressures to judicial biases**. Audrey stressed that **misinformation and societal biases also infiltrate police stations and courts, making it even more challenging for victims to access justice**. She criticized the prevailing narrative that **prioritises family unity over the victim's well-being** and pointed out the dangers of misinformation reaching the justice system.

Adv. Audrey Dmello while addressing the **role of the internet** in spreading misinformation and suggested that while freedom of speech is paramount and should not be curtailed, there is a need for a collective effort to challenge false narratives. She emphasised that focusing on the **accuracy of information** and holding **stakeholders accountable** can help combat misinformation.

Sudharak Olwe spoke about his experience of travelling across the country observing that women are reluctant to approach police stations or courts, as **DV is viewed as a private matter**. Sudharak underscored the **critical role of NGOs and civil society organizations** in supporting women and helping them navigate the system, emphasizing that these organizations are essential in addressing the issue where formal institutions fall short.

In response to a question about balancing truth with sensationalism in photojournalism, he explained that his work focuses on **stories often overlooked by mainstream media**. He stressed that staying true to the realities of DV rather than seeking sensationalism, is crucial for maintaining journalistic integrity.



In the closing remarks, **Supreet Singh** emphasised the **importance of education and collective action** in combating misinformation about DV. She encouraged attendees to educate their families and communities about gender equality and respect. The discussion also highlighted the need for **continuous dialogue** and **collaboration** among NGOs, media, and the public to address and correct misconceptions about DV. The session concluded with a call for action to **educate and support victims, counter misinformation, and engage in ongoing discussions** to drive positive change.

Reimagining shelters for DV victims

In the panel discussion moderated by Audrey Dmello various experts delved into the **current state of shelter homes for DV victims and explored ways to improve and reimagine these facilities**. She provided an overview of the shelter system, explaining the **distinction between shelters for children and adults**, and **highlighting the historical challenges faced by shelters**, particularly those for DV victims. She noted the **inadequacy of government shelters** to cater to the needs of women with children and the logistical issues, such as distance from schools and lack of privacy, that women face when placed in shelters.



unmarried women and the lack of psychological support in shelters. She criticized the **restrictive nature of many shelters** and emphasized the importance of a **holistic approach** that supports **women's overall development** and **career aspirations**.

Audrey Dmello

Director, Majlis

Deepali Vandana

(Co- Founder, URJA)

Sangeeta Rege

(Co-ord, Director,
CEHAT)

Pramila Sharma

(Field-coord, Kshamta)

Shobha Shelkar

(DWCD Mumbai City)

Deepali Vandana shared the motivation behind **Urja Trust** and their work in starting safe shelter women space. She emphasized the **critical lack of safe spaces** in metropolitan areas, which exacerbates the cycle of violence. She said that there is a need to focus on **marginalized survivors** who face heightened risks, including potential exploitation and involvement in sex work due to insufficient resources and support.

On the point of what are the challenges she sees in the current shelter homes, she pointed out that the shelter homes should **cater to beyond the immediate accommodation needs**. She stated issues such as the limited options available for

Shobha Shelar stated that the idea of shelter was for women who are unsafe and was inevitably used for the **victims of trafficking**.

She detailed the evolution of shelter homes, including open shelters and the special adoption agencies, and discussed the challenges of supporting victims from various backgrounds, including those under the **ITPA (Immoral Traffic Prevention Act)**.



Sangeeta Rege shared insights from Cehat's work with **gender-based violence** within the **healthcare system**. She highlighted that many women only seek help when their health issues become severe, often due to violence. Sangeeta stressed the need for **improved training for healthcare professionals** to recognize and address signs of DV early. She also illustrated the lack of appropriate shelter options for women with complex needs, recounting a poignant case where a woman with mental health issues struggled to find suitable shelter.

She agreed on the necessity of improving shelter conditions and suggested that NGOs and government bodies need to collaborate more effectively. She advocated for better training for shelter staff and the **establishment of more inclusive and accommodating facilities**.

Pramila Sharma from Kshamata explained their **motivation for establishing shelter homes**. Kshamata's mission is to provide **not just temporary refuge** but also **vocational training** and **counselling** to give survivors a hopeful outlook and a fresh start. She said that the **Kshamata Transformation Centre** represents their commitment to offering practical support and rehabilitation.



Audrey Dmello concluded the discussion by **proposing a shift in perspective**, suggesting that shelters should be **reimagined as community-based solutions** rather than isolated institutions. She argued for **integrating corporate social responsibility into the solution**, recognizing **DV as a broader societal issue** that requires community involvement and support.

The panel discussion provided a **comprehensive look at the current state of shelter homes**, the **challenges faced**, and **potential avenues for improvement**, highlighting the need for both systemic change and community-based solutions to better support survivors of DV.





Rountable Discussion

The session was moderated by Viiveck Verma, Founder, Upsurge Global and Director of Invisible Scars Foundation. The goal was to bring together stakeholders from various backgrounds to brainstorm effective strategies to support survivors of DV. The session sought to encourage collaboration, innovation, and actionable recommendations that could be adopted by the government and different organisations working in this field.

Initiatives for economic empowerment for survivors.

Participants highlighted the need for both economic growth and overall development for survivors. They shared several notable examples of best practices of organisations which not only provide economic opportunity but also help them with gaining skills. This approach equips survivors with valuable skills and fosters economic independence by generating income through the sale of their products. There was a consensus among participants about the need for a more holistic approach to support women.

Following the discussion the recommendations can be summed under a holistic-approach for funding to address the reintegration process for survivors.

A joint proposal for CSR funding can be a solution for targeted projects and initiatives in skill building and vocational training.

Additionally, a dedicated budget for implementation of Domestic Violence Act is needed. A fund like this can help the survivors by supporting essential services and resources for providing a safe environment for them to rebuild their lives.

There is also a need for ensuring vocational training and skill-enablement for them to gain economic independence.

Viiveck Verma

Director, Invisible Scars

Anupama Silas

Vanitashray, Pune

Assunta Pardhe

Chetna Mahila Vikas Kendra

Harish Sadani

Men Against Violence and Abuse

John Sircar Dr

Helping Hand Foundation

Kuhoo Tiwari

One Future Collective

Mallika Verma

Majlis

Meena Gandhi

Sneha

Neerja Bajaj

Aks Foundation

Neha Chaubey

Goonj

Reshma Jagtap

Sneha

Ritik Sarda

SNEH Foundation

Sanjyot Pethe

Parity Lab

Satish Kasbe

Akanksha Foundation

Urmila Salunkhe

Akshara Centre

Vibhuti Patel

Anusandhan Trust

Kavitha Sharma

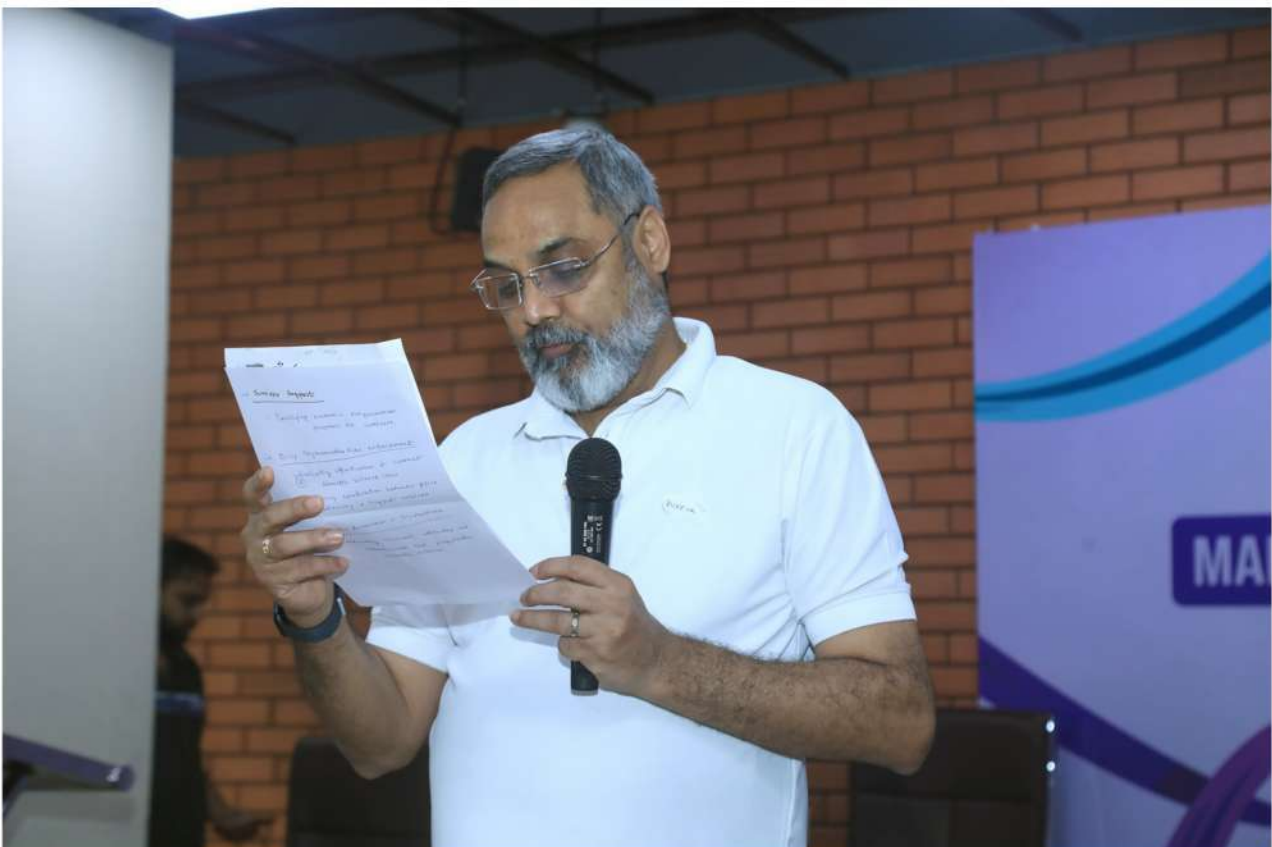
Majlis

Strengthening coordination - police, judiciary and NGOs

To enhance the coordination between police, judiciary, and support systems, participants proposed a range of strategies and shared several practical examples.

- Increasing awareness, **knowledge of the law** and **sensitivity among police officers**.
- **Accountability mechanisms**, such as reporting issues directly to high-ranking officials, can provide a clear picture of ground realities and drive improvements.
- **Importance of educational initiatives**. The National Education Policy's mandate for social work could be enhanced by equipping student volunteers with skills to contribute more effectively to support systems.
- **Establishing forums** that include representatives from stakeholders could facilitate better communication and problem-solving.
- Fair and transparent **judicial** processes.
- **Improving coordination among NGOs** and **fostering collaboration**. WhatsApp groups to ensure synergy and effectiveness across different organisations.

Overall, a **multi-faceted approach** involving increased training, accountability, practical support measures, and improved collaboration was seen as essential for better coordination among police, judiciary, and support systems inclusive of civil society organisations.





Way forward

Addressing the narrative surrounding false cases in domestic violence requires a multifaceted approach that protects victims. Some suggestions for way forward are:

- Launch initiatives to educate the public about the realities of domestic violence, dispel myths regarding 'false cases' through workshops, seminars, and media campaigns.
- Involve community leaders and influencers to promote understanding of domestic violence dynamics, fostering a supportive environment for victims.
- Review the law to bring clarity on the definition of S.85 BNS so that there is no contradiction in registering an FIR.
- Implement measures to protect victims from harassment or repercussions if their case does not result in a conviction.
- Develop SOPs for police on handling domestic violence cases
- Establish mechanisms to review judicial handling of domestic violence cases, with feedback loops to improve processes and address biases.
- Police and Judiciary training on their role and the complexities of domestic violence cases.
- Collect data on domestic violence cases, including statistics on false allegations. This data can provide insights into trends and inform policy decisions.
- Establish anonymous and safe ways for victims to report violence, ensuring their safety and confidentiality.
- Create processes for follow-up with complainants to assess their safety and well-being, reinforcing that their voices matter.



Way forward

Creating safe and supportive homes for single mothers facing domestic violence is crucial for their recovery and empowerment. Some suggestions for way forward:

- **Short-Term Housing:** Establish emergency shelters that provide immediate refuge for mothers and their children. Ensure these shelters are accessible, secure, and equipped with necessary resources. Include on-site counseling, legal assistance, and child care services to help women transition safely from crisis.
- **Short to Medium-Term Housing:** Develop transitional housing options that allow single mothers to stay for several months while they stabilize their lives. This can include access to job training and educational programs. Provide workshops on budgeting, parenting, and job readiness to help mothers gain independence.
- **Subsidized Housing:** Partner with local governments and housing authorities to create subsidized housing specifically for single mothers escaping domestic violence. Implement supportive housing that combines affordable housing with wrap-around services, including mental health support and job placement.
- **Cooperative Housing:** Create cooperative living arrangements where single mothers can live together, share resources, and provide mutual support.
- **Community Centers:** Establish community centers that offer not only housing but also educational and employment resources, creating a supportive environment.
- **Advocacy for Housing Rights:** Advocate for policies that protect the housing rights of domestic violence survivors, ensuring they are not discriminated against or evicted due to their circumstances.
- **Funding and Grants:** Seek funding from government and private sources to support housing initiatives specifically for survivors of domestic violence.
- **Culturally Sensitive Services:** Ensure that housing programs are culturally sensitive and tailored to meet the diverse needs of mothers from various backgrounds.
- **Child-Friendly Spaces:** Design housing facilities with children in mind, including play areas, educational resources, and safe environments for children to thrive.

Glimpses of Our Event



MDVSS Posters



PRESENTS

MAHARASHTRA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STAKEHOLDERS SUMMIT

1ST EDITION



Saturday, 6th July 2024



9:30am to 5:00pm



ITM Institute of Design & Media (ITM IDM), Floor 1, Suvidha Square, Junction of Ceaser Rd, Swami Vivekananda Rd., Andheri West-400058

PRESENTING PARTNER



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MDVSS Posters

MAHARASHTRA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STAKEHOLDERS SUMMIT

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GUEST OF HONOUR

Flavia Agnes

Women's Rights Lawyer,
Feminist Legal Scholar & a Pioneer
of the Women's Movement in India



Saturday, 6th July 2024 9:30am to 5:00pm

ITM Institute of Design & Media (ITM IDM), Floor 1, Suvridha Square, Junction
of Ceaser Rd, Swami Vivekananda Rd., Andheri West-400058

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CHIEF GUESTS



Judge Mr. Anant Deshmukh
Secretary
District Legal Services Authority
Mumbai City



Ms. Shobha Shelar
District Officer
Women and Child Development
Mumbai City



Judge Mr. Satish Hiwale
Secretary
District Legal Services Authority
Mumbai Suburban

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TOPIC:
Challenging Misinformation On
Domestic Violence & Abuse

MODERATOR

Supreet K Singh
Co-Founder
Red Dot Foundation & Beyond Black



PANELIST
Sudharak Olwe
Internationally Acclaimed
Photo Journalist



PANELIST
Sameera Khan
Journalist & Author of
Why Lollar Women &
Walk on Mumbai Streets



PANELIST
Gautam Mengle
Crime Journalist &
Author



PANELIST
Audrey Dmello
Director
Majlis Legal Centre

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TOPIC:
Reimagining Shelters for Domestic
Violence Survivors and Their Children

MODERATOR

Audrey Dmello
Director
Majlis Legal Centre



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Senior Field Coordinator
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Susieben Shah
Chairperson
Maharashtra State Commission for
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Sangeeta Rege
Director
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Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT)



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Deepali D Vandana
Co-founder & Managing Trustee
URJA Trust

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Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals and organizations whose support and contributions were instrumental in making the Maharashtra Domestic Violence Stakeholders Summit, a resounding success.

Our Partners

Hosts - Invisible Scars and Majlis

Government Partners - District Legal Service Authority (Mumbai City and Suburban)
and District Women and Child Development (Mumbai City)

Community Partners - Aks Foundation, SAHE and Red Dot Foundation

Venue Partner - ITM Institute of Design and Media

Presenting Partner - Future works

Gift Bags - Invisible Scars

Planning and organisation support - Majlis

Guest of Honour and Chief Guest

Ms. Flavia Agnes, Women's rights lawyer, Feminist Legal Scholar

Judge Satish Hiwale, District Legal Service Authority, Mumbai Suburban

Ms. Shobha Shelar, District Women and Child Officer, Mumbai City

Moderators and Panelist

Moderators - Ms. Supreet K. Singh, Ms. Audrey Dmello, Mr. Viveck Verma

Panelist - Ms. Shobha Shelar, Ms. Sangeeta Rege, Ms. Deepali D. Vandana, Ms. Pramila Sharma, Mr. Sudharak Olwe, Ms. Sameera Khan, Mr. Gauntam Mengle, Ms. Audrey Dmello

Attending Organizations

Sneha CORO Chetna Mahila Vikas Kendra THOHF Urja Trust Vanitashtray

Men Against Violence and Abuse Aks Foundation Goonj Helping Hands

Sneha One Future Collective Saheli HIV/AIDS Karyakarta Sangh Akanksha

Foundation Muktaa Charitable Foundation Cehat Parity Lab

Red Dot Foundation Citi Core Group Mumbai Smiles Anusandhan Trust Sweekar the

Rainbow Parents Akshara Centre Sakhya Kshamta

SNEH Foundation Vacha Charitable Trust

Writing and Designing the White Paper

Ms. Audrey Dmello and Ms Ekta Verma

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2. **Assunta Pardhe**
Chetna Mahila Vikas
Kendra
3. **Anisha Gore**
DWCD Office Worli
4. **Anupama Silas**
Vanitashray NGO Pune
5. **Aparna Dhule**
CORO
6. **Arlene Kokate**
Majlis
7. **Aruna Desai**
Individual
8. **Audrey Dmello**
Majlis Legal Centre
9. **Brika Fernandes**
Sakhya
10. **Chandni**
Individual
11. **Chandni Chawla**
Individual
12. **Chandni Amit Raut**
Individual
13. **Deepali Vandana**
Urja Trust
14. **Flavia Agnes**
Majlis Law
15. **Gautam S Mengle**
Individual
16. **Harish Sadani**
Men Against Violence and
Abuse (MAVA)
17. **Harpreet Kalra**
Asks Foundation
18. **Hera Shaikh**
CORO India
19. **Himanshu Kulkarni**
Goonj
20. **Ishita Gime**
MCF
21. **Jenifer Billimoria**
Aks Foundation
22. **John Sircar**
Helping Hand Foundation
23. **Jyoti Shailendra Borkar**
Sneha
24. **Kavitta Sharma**
Majlis
25. **Kuhoo Tiwari**
One Future Collective
26. **Lasic**
THOHF
27. **Linda Dhakul**
St. Xavier's college
28. **Liza**
Majlis
29. **Mallika Verma**
Majlis
30. **Minu Gandhi**
Sneha
31. **Mohua Das**
The Times of India
32. **Mou Sengupta**
Individual
33. **Nameera**
Majlis
34. **Namrata**
Vacha Charitable Trust
35. **Neerja Bajaj**
Aks Foundation
36. **Neha Chaubey**
Goonj
37. **Prerna Sanas**
TISS

38. **Noreen**

City Core Group

39.

Prajakta Usha Vinayak

Saheli HIV/ AIDS

Karyakarta Sangh

40.

Pratibha Manojkumar

Sakat

Sneha

41.

Rakesh Ghone

Akanksha Foundation

42.

Reshma Jagtap

Sneha

43.

Ritik Sarda

SNEH Foundation

44.

Rupa Agarwal

Muktaa Charitable

Foundation

45.

Sakshi Palav

Special Cell for Women and District Officer, WCD,
Children

46.

Sameera Khan

Journalist

47.

Sangita Rege

Cehat

48.

Sanjyot Pethe

Parity Lab

49.

Sanjivani Dambhare

Urja Trust

50.

Pramila Sharma

Kshamata

51.

Sanobar Patel

Muktaa Charitable

Foundation

52.

Satish Dashrath Kasbe

Akanksha Foundation

53.

Satish Hiwale Judge

Secretary, DLSA, Mumbai

Suburban

54.

Seema Sachin Dhavle

Sneha

55.

Shaikh Aiman

Majlis

56.

Shakira Kaul

Individual

57.

Sheela Pawar

CORO India

58.

Shobha Shelar

District Officer, WCD,
Mumbai City

59.

Sindhu Nair

Urja Trust

50.

Somalatha Jacob

YWCA of Bombay

61.

Sujata Jadhav

Sneha

62.

Surekha

Majlis

63.

Supreet K Singh

Red Dot Foundation

64.

Sweta Xavier

Red Dot Foundation

65.

Tania Dsouza

Majlis

66.

Ujwala Guntiwar

Sneha

67.

Urmila Salunkhe

Akshara Centre

68.

Vandana Singh

Sneha

69.

Varsha Kamble

Mumbai Smiles

70.

Vikas Kadam

Prayas- TISS

71.

Vivek Verma

Invisible Scars Foundation

72.

Vibhuti Patel

Anusandhan Trust

73.

Kartik Desai

Sweekar The Rainbow

Parents

74.

Disha Chopda

Individual

75.

Aarya Sandip Mundaye

Individual

76.

Sushma Tambe

Urja Trust

77.

Divya Taneja

TISS



About Invisible Scars Foundation (ISF)

Invisible Scars Foundation (ISF), founded by Ekta Viiveck Verma in 2016, is a non-profit organization that aims to empower 50,000 gender-based violence (GBV) survivors to reclaim their dignity and self-worth over the next five years by using technology to cross geographical boundaries. ISF provides comprehensive support, including guidance to resources like police, legal aid, and mental health services, as well as financial assistance for essential needs. With a gender-neutral approach, ISF has directly assisted over 3,700 survivors and sensitized 40,000 individuals about domestic violence across India and globally. Partnering with Urban Company in 2024, as their implementation partner across 14 cities they work in, for the Workplace Domestic Violence Policy. ISF seeks to expand its reach and help 6 lakh GBV survivors through a unified, compassionate, and inclusive platform, advocating for policy-level changes and shifting the narrative on domestic violence from a gendered issue to a behavioral problem.



About Majlis

Majlis is a team of women lawyers, social workers, academicians and activists who work for the protection and promotion of women and children's rights through legal representation, advocacy and training.

Majlis' Rahat offers legal and social support to women and children victims of sexual and domestic violence.

Majlis' Flavia Agnes Centre for Learning is a multi-disciplinary hub for advancing knowledge, promoting research and fostering discourse on the intersection of gender, law and society.