

Monitoring Mechanisms

While evolving monitoring mechanisms to prevent sexual assault as also addressing post assault accessibility issues, as far as women with disabilities are concerned, it has to be borne in mind that disabled women are not a homogenous group.

Approaches will have to vary from impairment to impairment. The concerns of women with visual impairments will differ from those who have hearing/speech impairment. Even a group largely bracketed as mental disabilities have two different categories namely intellectually disabled (termed as Mentally Retarded) and those with psycho-social disabilities (termed as Mentally Ill), have different requirements. These women also come from different socio-economic backgrounds, even while the bulk come from the economically and socially backward sections, with a majority even denied access to formal education.

Abuse/sexual assaults on disabled women occur in all kinds of set-ups. They take place within their own homes, neighbourhoods, government and non-government institutions, on roads, public transport, schools, colleges, offices etc.

1. Monitoring and regulatory authorities need to be established beginning from the panchayat level onwards. Such authorities/committees, apart from officials from the concerned departments, should also include activists working among persons with disabilities and specialists from the area. Elected representatives of the area may also be included.
2. Members of this body should have visiting rights and access to these places for regular check ups. Periodic inspection of these institutions by the authority so established should be made mandatory. Such visits can be at periods of three months each, if need be even more.
3. All state Governments should form cells which would have amongst its members a representative each from Disability Commissioner's office, Women's Commission and Non Government organizations to specifically look into cases of Violence on women with disabilities at the district level.
4. The authorities established (as suggested in point 1) can make recommendations based on their visits, to the cells constituted in their respective districts.
5. Any person who has reason to believe that an act of violence, injury, abuse, or neglect of adolescent girls and women with disabilities has been, or is being, or is likely to be committed, may give information about it to this cell.
6. Whenever a person/organisation reports that a guardian appointed under the National Trust Act 1999 is sexually abusing the ward, the

relevant authority shall report the matter to the above mentioned Cell and Local Level Committee, which shall initiate proceedings to remove such guardian.

7. The monitoring authorities should be responsible for the maintenance of a list of adolescent girls and women with disabilities at the panchayat, block and in a municipality at the ward level.
8. They will also be responsible for collection of information about violence, injury, abuse, or neglect of adolescent girls and women with disabilities periodically – with the minimum being twice a year -- from each of these tiers mentioned above in clause (a).