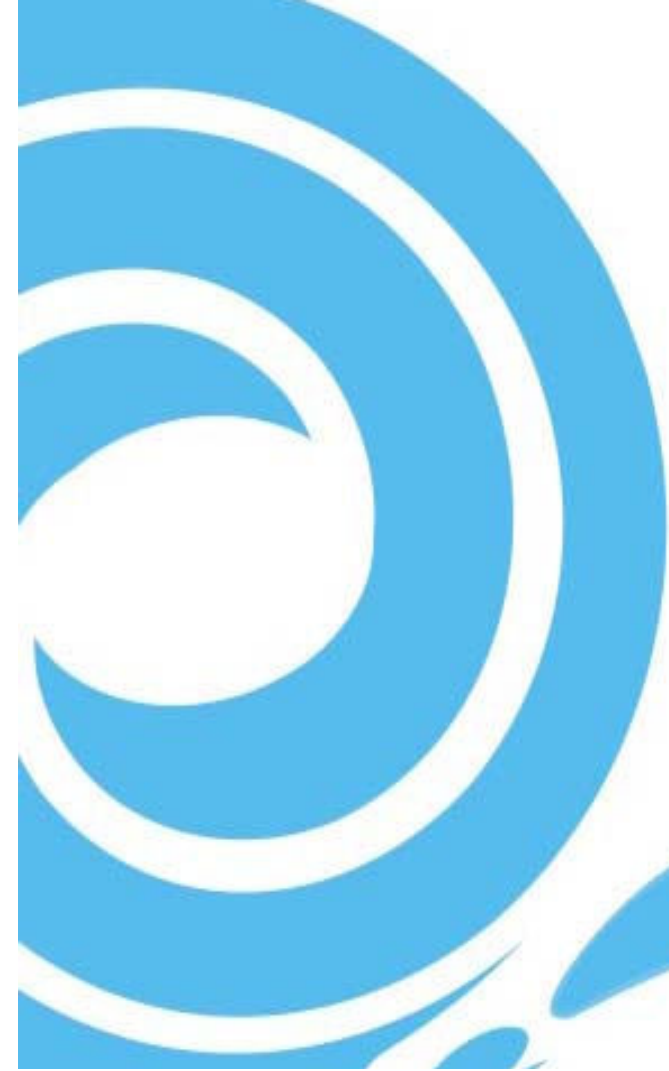


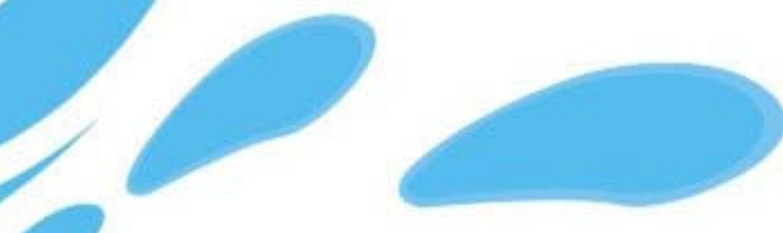
we believe

we can

we do



 *swiftwash*

The logo for Swiftwash. It features a small icon on the left, which is a blue spiral similar to the larger graphic on the page, but smaller and with a white center. To the right of the icon, the word "swiftwash" is written in a lowercase, italicized, sans-serif font. The "swift" part is in red, and the "wash" part is in blue.

we have turned
and we want to share with

2
U

 **swiftwash**

A mechanized laundry unit

(A Center for Research, Training and Economic Rehabilitation)

INITIATIVE OF

Arz (anyay rahit zindagi)

(SOCIAL WORK ORGANIZATION)

Supported By:



IOM International Organization for Migration

There are cases of rule breakers becoming future leaders and trend setters. We have also broken the rules of this industry.

Swift Wash is not a private limited or a sole entrepreneurship or a family concern or a partnership firm started by businessmen, industrialists or people with a background / experience in the cleaning industry or for that matter in any other economic activity.

So, WHO ARE 'WE'?



'WE' are...

Swift Wash is a group enterprise owned and managed by us, women who have no prior business experience; it is a manifestation of our collective effort. The name refers not only to the expeditious service that we provide but also denotes our 'Women's Association for Self-Help'.

We also have male colleagues (currently inducted into the work force) who work along with us in conducting Swift Wash's operations. As on date, we are still deliberating on the possibilities of their inclusion and position in our enterprise set-up as personnel, members or member-owners.

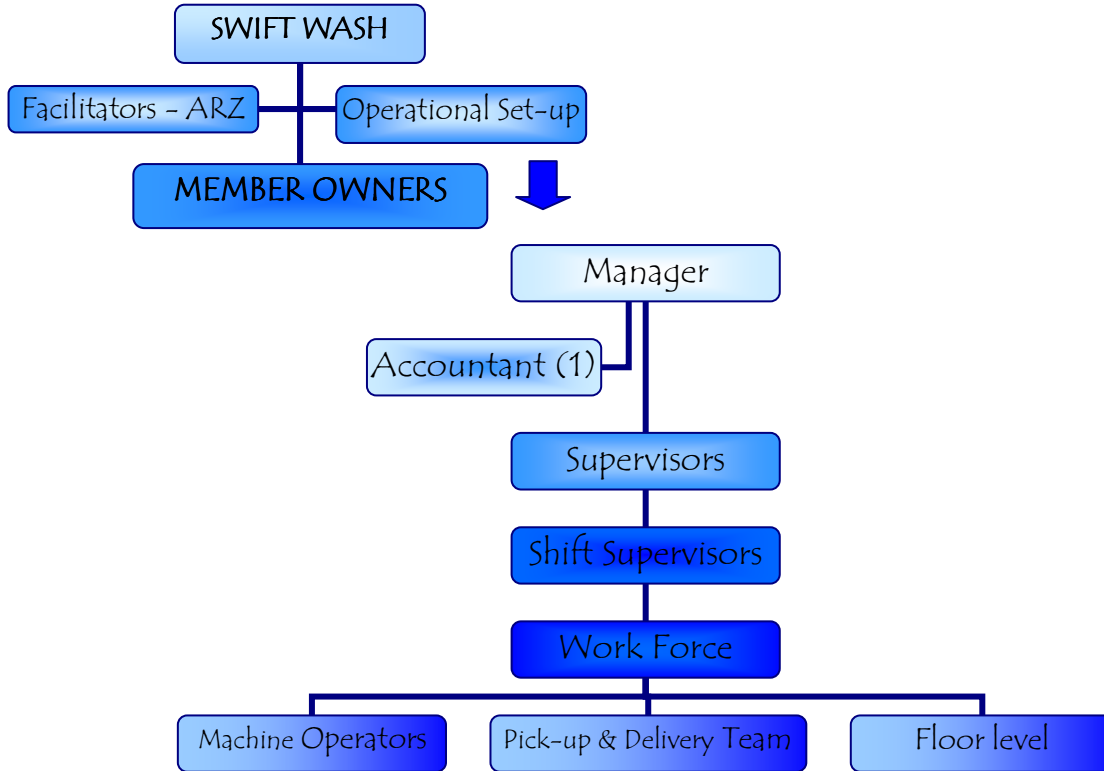
our business process advisors:-

Management support: Arz	Operations:	
Overall Co-ordination: Mr.Arunendra Kumar Pandey	In charge: Mr.Basangouda	Auditors: V.S. Somani & Co.
Marketing support: Ms.Juliana Lohar	Accountant: Ms.Vijaya	Bankers: AXIS Bank. Ltd, Central Bank of India
Psycho-social support: Ms.Bincy Wilson	Supervisors: M.Rekha Thapa	

our registered business address

Plot No.71, Next to ESI Dispensary,
Sancoale Industrial Estate, Zuarinagar,
South Goa, Goa
Tel. No.: 0832-2555619
E-mail: swiftwash2006@gmail.com

our organogram – SWIFT WASH as on August 31st 2008





our business line

Swift Wash is a professionally run garment care, cleaning and finishing service.

The unit was formally inaugurated on 1st September 2006 by the Governor of Goa, His Excellency S.C.Jamir, along with Chief Secretary Mr. J.P.Singh, IAS, Director General of Police Mr.Neeraj Kumar, IPS, and Vice President of Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industries Mr.Cesar Menezes. Commercial activity commenced in the month of October 2006.

Over the last two years, we have matured into a professional business entity and have been able to set standards of quality and service capability in our work sphere. The service industry has opened many avenues for growth and expansion of business and we are striving to grow exponentially in the near future.

our mission and philosophy

“To economically empower the most marginalized, stigmatized and exploited members of our society whilst upholding the virtues of consistency, quality, excellence, integrity and service in the conduct of our business.”

equipment and infrastructure

We have a fully mechanized laundry unit located at the industrial estate in Sancoale, Goa. Currently, the unit is in a rented premise and the location is ideally suited to cater to both north & south Goa.

Most of the unit's equipment has been acquired from Ramsons, the renowned laundry equipment manufacturers. The equipment incorporates advanced technology, safety features and dependable design. We acquired additional equipment during the last year in order to cater to the increased demand and to create a line of back-up utilities in case of a failure in primary supply. Our asset base includes vertical washing machines, hydro extractors, tumble driers, flat work ironer, steam generators, generator, vacuum and electronic ironing tables and trolleys.

The unit boasts of processing 1800 kgs of load per day and we are currently operating at 60 per cent of this installed capacity. We are making efforts to upscale our productivity without any major changes in infrastructure. The critical maintenance is taken care of by our own personnel with the support of the service team from Ramsons.

The main work area has a built in separate cabin which is used for administrative purposes. For our convenience, we have also set up a kitchenette which takes care of our tea breaks and the adjoining passage way has been modeled into our dining space.

Statutory requirements - Swift Wash has complied with all mandatory requirements as follows:

- The business is registered as a Small Scale Industry as per prevailing laws.
- 'No objection' certificate from the Fire Department.
- All the equipments, vehicles and persons working in the business have been adequately insured.

Professional Association - Swift Wash is a member of Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

operations and services

At Swift Wash, we offer service with quality second to none. The organized collection, laundering and timely delivery of textiled service ware is of prime importance to our business.

We collect the linen from the customers' base and transport it to our laundry facility. We sort the retrieved linen of various textile materials, on their merits and on their different washing formula requirements. They are then processed through washing machines, boilers and driers. After the cleaned clothes are pressed and folded, we prepare, pack and finally deliver the serviced clothes. In this course, we also extend corrective action (sewing, mending and other repair work) and stain blasting (removing traces of stains) to ensure a complete laundry experience to our clientele. We strive to ensure a superior level of pressing to deliver crisp, wrinkle free output. We use approved chemicals and solvents to avoid any harm to the clothes as well as the environment.

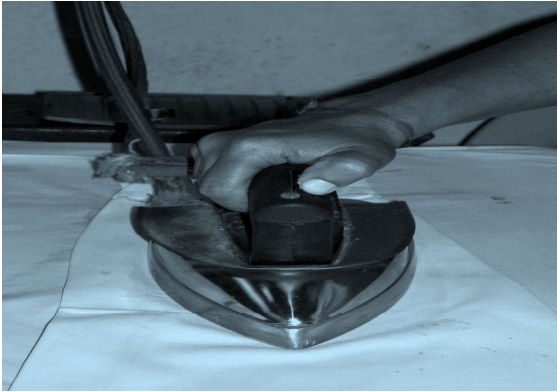
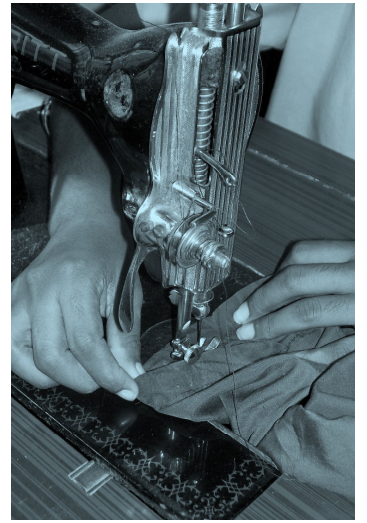
We have our own vans (two) for extending free pick – up and delivery services at the door-step of our customers. As per the requirements of our clients, we also provide delivery within 6 hours. We operate 24 hrs (in three shifts – 7 AM – 2 PM, 2 PM – 9 PM, 9 PM – 7 AM), 7 days a week, all year round ably resourced for even the most challenging circumstances.

If our clients are not 100 per cent satisfied with the effort we have put into the cleaning or finishing of their clothes, we take on the onus of doing it over at no extra cost.

esteemed clients

Initially, we dabbled in domestic laundry. But over a period of time, we changed our profile and decided to exclusively operate as a commercial laundry. Currently, we cater to institutional customers mainly from the hospitality industry, health care and personal care sectors. Our esteemed clientele include the best in the industry.

Hospitality	TAJ (The Indian Hotels Company Ltd.) - Fort Aguada Beach Resort and Vanguinim Valley Beach Resort International Centre Goa, Youth Hostel, Caritas Holiday Home, International Centre Restaurant and Taj Sats,
Health care	Salgaocar Medical Research Centre and VIVUS
Pharmaceuticals	Sanofi Aventis Pharma, Blue Cross Laboratories, Indoco Remedies Ltd, Wallace Pharmaceuticals, Indipharma, Goodwin Biotechnologies Ltd
Personal care	SNIP Beauty Parlours (3 branches)
Educational institutions	Institute of Marine Engineering, BITS Pilani
Others	Corlim Marine Exports Pvt.Ltd., Subrai Motors, Blue Star, Tube Star,Transocean,



work force

We are the owners and we are also a part of the work force. We conduct our work with the support of a manager, three supervisors and an accountant. We firmly believe that our work-force is our strength. So, we have collectively devised and implemented strategies to ensure the progress and development of our members and work-force.

Uniform - All members of Swift Wash are provided two sets of uniforms by the enterprise and it is mandatory for all of us to be dressed in our uniforms whilst at work.

Work force strength – Currently, we are 30 women members supported by 17 male colleagues at Swift Wash. Our period of association with Swift Wash can be understood as follows:

	Under probation (less than 3 months)	less than 1 year	more than 1 year	more than 2 years	TOTAL
Women	11	08	07	04	30
Men	04	09	04	0	17
TOTAL	15	17	11	4	47

Remuneration –

The members of Swift Wash receive remuneration based on:

Morning Shift / Afternoon Shift (7 hours)			
During probation (3 months)	After probation	After completion of 1 year	After completion of 2 years
1800	2205	2415	2625

Our male colleagues' compensation is calculated based on:

Day shift (10hours)			Night shift (10 hours)		
During probation (3 months)	After probation	After completion of 1 year	During probation (3 months)	After probation	After completion of 1 year
2250	2700	3150	2250	2700	3150

Additionally, those working in the night shift are paid Night Shift Allowance of Rs.300/- Individuals who are entrusted with specific responsibilities (for instance machine operators, shift supervisors, delivery and collection in-charges) are paid Specialised Work Allowance of Rs.300/-. Rs.30,000 is spent totally towards the salaries of all other staff members (manager, supervisors and accountant) who support us in managing the unit. All payments are directly credited to the individual bank accounts of the members and the staff.

In-house crèche facilities - We have an in-house crèche for our children who are below six years of age. The crèche caters to their nutrition, health care, recreation and basic educational requirements. In the last two years, Swift Wash spent close to **one lakh rupees** for running the crèche – towards rent, food, toys and study material of **44** children. We are no longer worried about our children being left behind at home, alone and uncared for.

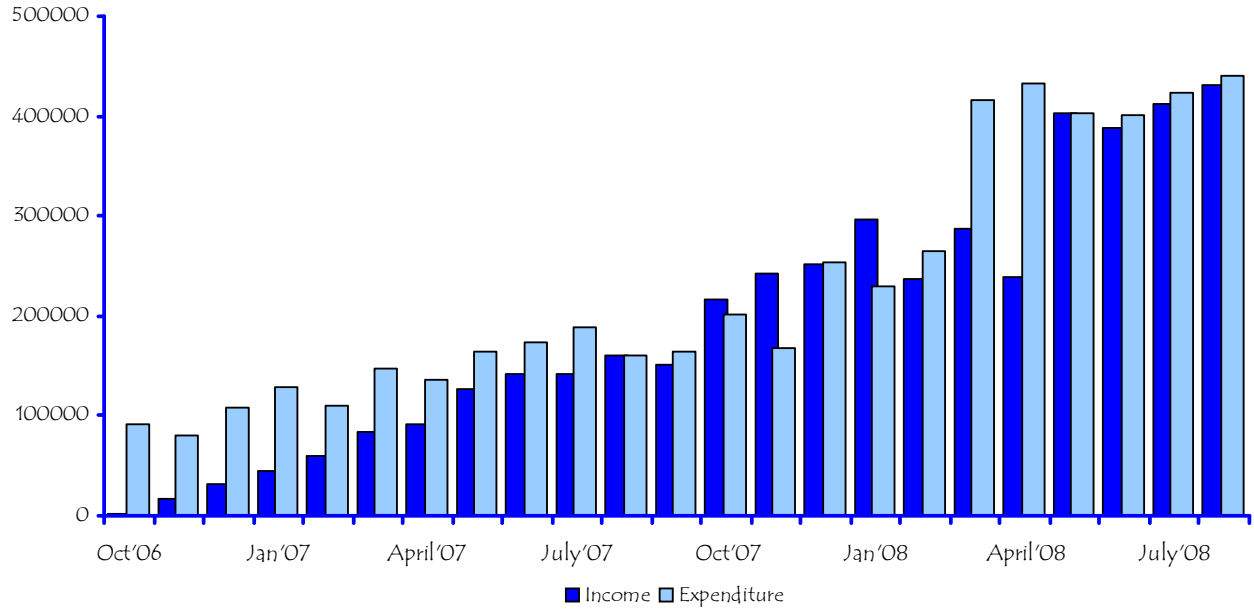
Transport facilities – Swift Wash has hired a vehicle and spends **Rs.575/-** per head every month to help us in commuting to the unit and back. This provision offers us a comfortable ride, is safe and helps us in being punctual to work. The interaction amongst us in the bus particularly during the onward journey helps us to get over our domestic tensions even before we enter the unit premises. It also helps us foster better team relationships. Moreover, it strengthens and consolidates our identity as Swift Wash members (in our neighbourhoods and communities).

Sexual harassment committee - has been constituted for our benefit in our enterprise. All of us have been made aware about this issue and informed about the procedure to be adopted in case we face any uncomfortable situations at our work place. Some of us are also the members of this committee.

Recreation and entertainment - In the last two years, we have celebrated all national festivals. We held special programs to mark Swift Wash's first anniversary – the unit was open for all our family members, relatives and friends. We showed them our unit and explained to them what we did at Swift Wash. Also during the last year, Swift Wash organized a day long picnic for all members to Old Goa.



Comparitive Income and Expenditure Graph

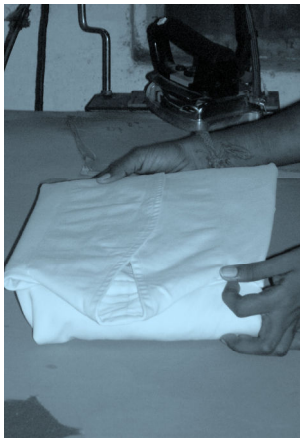


aah! at Swift Wash, we just luv...

our identity as Swift Wash members and owners – Swift Wash is ours				
space within our work sphere to share and discuss domestic turbulence	our uniforms designed by the fashion designer, Savio Jon	being entrusted with responsibility, being appreciated for work well done	working in a respectable vocation, in an industrial area where we are all by ourselves	<i>working, talking and humouring with each other in the course of every day's operations</i>
the competitive spirit amongst us that propels us to deliver our best	Swift Wash's name plate at the entrance of our unit	cross sharing and learning amongst us	our ability to work just like men; no discounts and no compromises	sharing food and gossips during break time
the flowering plants in the passage way	delivering orders on time	<i>operating the big machines – displaying our physical strength</i>	customers who understand our concerns, who give us adequate time to complete orders	the policy of non-discrimination (sex / caste / faith / region / position) at our work place
<i>people peeping into our bus, looking at us dressed in our uniforms, wondering about the work we do and holding us in good esteem</i>				

ooh! at Swift Wash we would love not to have

linen which is very dirty, with too many stains and too much of stink	physical strain due to the laborious work; constant exposure to heat, steam, water	<i>uninformed absence by some resulting in increased workload for the regular poor souls</i>	deliveries delayed due to miscommunication and lack of co-ordination	occasional instances of abusive language usage, inferences to our backgrounds during petty squabbles at the workplace
chat and gossip sessions whilst at work	<i>supervisors who are working and not supervising</i>	deliveries delayed due to factors beyond us	complacency that is slowly setting in	some of us chewing tobacco – it smells awful and creates stains
<i>deliveries sent back for re-wash and better finish</i>	customers' negative feedback	payments deducted due to damage	lack of stern action against the free-riders	lack of initiative and ownership in some cases



how is Swift Wash different from other commercial laundries?

- The majority of the work-force at Swift Wash are women, hitherto unheard of in the laundry industry which is considered to be a male bastion.
- Swift Wash has member-owners; the people who operate on the work floor are also at its helm. Commercial laundries have set criteria for recruitment – prior experience, physical strength, technical knowledge etc. Swift Wash does not consider these aspects at all.
- In commercial laundries, any individual who is low on productivity or not progressing is immediately terminated. At Swift Wash, termination is a last resort which happens only when it is felt that a member's indiscipline is adversely affecting the business and its work culture.
- In other laundries, the time spent at the work place is devoted only to working; at Swift Wash as an added benefit, we are also given the space, time and resources to discuss our behavioural problems, work place conflicts and personal turbulence.
- In other commercial laundries, the pay packet is considered the only motivating factor for the employees. In Swift Wash, along with the remuneration, many other facilities (crèche, transportation services, ration, medical & legal aid, children's education etc.) are extended to support us to continue working.
- SwiftWash is characterized by very high levels of member participation in decision making, accountability and transparency across all aspects of the enterprise.
- We acknowledge and appreciate each other's contribution to our business. The enterprise is ours, all of us make efforts to give the business our very best; we are equal in terms of our input and so we make no distinction amongst ourselves based on our individual output.

It is not just about making money; it is about re-building lives...



By now you must be wondering, why are we so happy with ourselves, why we have so much of optimism and hope to share, why we feel we are on a positive trajectory, why we cannot hide our pride....though we haven't made profits, though we have started arriving at a stage of break-even only after two years of operations. To know the reason why, you need to know about our past.

So, WHO WERE 'WE'?

'WE' were...

- we were victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation
- we were victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence
- we are children of trafficked victims
- we were dedicated as devadasis to be forced into prostitution
- most of us were from Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and some of us from Goa (which is vulnerable as a source as well as destination for trafficking)
- after getting trafficked into Goa from other states, we lost our identity and rights
- we rationalised our exploitation as an option: 'It is my body and so I have the right to sell it'
- our families' existence was directly linked to our exploitation
- we were controlled by a number of perpetrators – brothel madams, room owners, pimps, traffickers and customers; like parasites, they lived off on our lives and earnings
- we blamed ourselves for our oppression; we empathized with our aggressors, we thought they had the right to hurt and control us
- we were unwanted elements, stigmatised and not respected in our communities
- there was no stability in our lives, no commitment from our partners
- our children were shunned, they lacked access to basic development facilities
- we used to earn Rs.1000/- in a single night, the amount was spent in even lesser time
- we always had huge debts to pay off
- we only enjoyed immediate and short term benefits; the long term reality never dawned on us
- even for no fault of ours, we would be rounded up by the police
- to submerge our anguish and grief, we indulged in tobacco and liquor consumption
- we were physically tormented, sexually abused, emotionally deprived and financially broke

why are we at Swift Wash?

Most of us were involved in sex trade in Goa's Baina red light area. In 2004, major portions of this area were razed to the ground; the red light area was demolished without making any provisions for people like us, this led to further exploitation and turmoil; we were rendered homeless and option less. We were forced to disperse across the state for "business" and go to other states on "dates" for 10 to 20 days leaving our children behind with paid care takers. Our children felt neglected and the money we were earning in this manner never seemed to be enough after the closure of Baina's red light area. We realised that no government was willing to take our responsibility and extend rehabilitation services for us.

We were tired of being commodified, WE WANTED A WAY OUT...

In search of options to earn a decent livelihood, we approached Arz, a social work organization who were extending services to us and our children, when we were at Baina. Through internal deliberations, exposure visits, guidance and fund support received from International Organization for Migration (IOM), networking with other organizations, market surveys and discussions with experts and socially conscious individuals, the idea to start a laundry business - 'Swift Wash' as a group enterprise, as an economic rehabilitation (not as an institution based but as a community based) initiative germinated and over a period of time was well nurtured.

In the course of time, based on emerging needs, our family members – parents, children, siblings, partners and perpetrators – brothel madams, room owners and pimps were also employed at Swift Wash. Within a year of starting operations, we also opened our work floors for men who were involved in anti-social activities and for those with delinquent behavior.

our composition

The composition of members who have been associated with Swift Wash in the last two years is as follows:

WOMEN	(in numbers)	(in %)	MEN	(in numbers)	(in %)
Total	64	100	Total	36	100
Victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation	43	67 %	Partners of victims	03	8 %
Family members of victims (exploiters / vulnerable individuals)	17	27 %	Family members of victims (exploiters / vulnerable individuals)	16	44 %
Perpetrators	04	6 %	Perpetrators	02	6 %
			Men with delinquent behaviour	15	42 %

about Arz (Anyay Rahit Zindagi)

The force behind Swift Wash is Arz, a non-government development organization formed and managed by professional social workers from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). Since 1997, the organization has been working to combat trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation in Goa. Over the years, the organization has been working on:

- Prevention of trafficking and entry into commercial sexual exploitation
- Rescue of victims
- Rehabilitation services at the State Protective Home
- Restoration and repatriation to their families and home states
- Reintegration within their communities; after care and follow-up services
- Legal recourse – prosecution of perpetrators

Arz believes that most trafficked victims are forced to live in exploitative and abusive conditions due to lack of adequate livelihood options and that trafficking cannot be combated till this issue is addressed. Involvement of victims in economic initiatives would reduce their dependence on their perpetrators and would support them to chart a positive course of life. Arz also felt that these mechanisms would help in securing their (and their children's) future and would prevent their re-trafficking.

And so, to achieve this vision, Arz conceptualized Swift Wash as our enterprise (member owned and managed business), from day one.

doubts and questions raised.....about us!!!

- can women in prostitution work the hard way?
- can they give up their easy money making ways and extravagant lifestyles?
- can they adjust with the little amount that they would earn from such a vocation?
- toiling and sweating it out are not their ideas of enjoying and living life
- nobody believed us when we told them that we have given up 'dandha'
- they will not be regular; they have no understanding of work culture
- the first given opportunity or the first little difficulty, one should not be surprised to find them back on the streets soliciting customers; there will be too many drop-outs
- they have been competing with each other in the sex trade; can they now work together?
- will they leave behind their penchant for abusive language and behaviour, petty squabbles and addictions and adapt to professional work environments?
- will their family members, partners and perpetrators allow them to leave prostitution?
- will they be able to withstand the pressures at the family and the community level?
- will they be able to overcome the barriers imposed onto them?
- will they be able to continue work despite being identified as women from Baina?
- it would be waste of time, resources and efforts investing in them, no output will be delivered

a holistic rehabilitation package

Arz offered us all kinds of support to ensure that we do not give up, to motivate us to stay focused on our work and to cope with pressures at both the professional and personal fronts. So far, we have been able to take care of emerging needs and impending problems only due to the rehabilitation services offered by these social workers.

Psycho-social support - We are offered counselling support to deal with personal and professional issues. We have been given the space to voice our pent up emotions about the violence/injustice/abuse meted out to us and see through our relationships. Psychiatric assistance has been provided in cases of addiction, depression and mental retardation. The entire team of Arz is always there to hear us out. In the last year Arz has shifted its office and is currently located next doors to our unit. This has further ensured easy access, immediate intervention and redressal of grievances. To ensure that the mental health interventions do not affect the productivity of the business, a supervisor with social work background has been engaged at Swift Wash. In case of any eventuality, help is just round the corner...

Health services - These services include accompanying us to hospitals, consultations with doctors and paying for medicines and medical treatment for us as well as for our family members. An ailing member is never left alone, representatives from Arz and Swift Wash are always there to pitch in as and when required. The best part is that now, each one of us has an extended family comprising of Swift Wash' members who are concerned about our health.

As victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, we were vulnerable to STDs and HIV/AIDS. However at Arz or at Swift Wash, our personal status is never discussed. We are unaware if any one amongst us is HIV positive. This leaves no scope whatsoever either for identification or for any discrimination based on an individual's positive status. However, we understand that we can always depend on this organisation in the case of any eventuality.

Family and community level interventions –

We have constantly faced pressure from our family members, partners and exploiters to quit work as these people have survived for long on our earnings. They were unwilling to support our decision to join Swift Wash and were not adapting themselves to the changed scenario. Also they were scared that we would get empowered and no longer be dependent on them or suffer exploitation in silence. Under these circumstances, Arz started interacting and counselling our family members, particularly our respective partners. The objective was to motivate them to send us to work, to support us in our endeavours, to stand by us and help us continue working, to share household responsibilities and to understand changes taking place in us.

There were also some cases wherein our partners suspected us as we ventured out to work or were delayed due to work. In extreme scenarios, Arz offered jobs to such men and engaged them in the business so as to instill in them an understanding of the working of the laundry. Similarly, with the support of Arz, the enterprise also started engaging the services of some of our family members (who were either exploiting us or were in vulnerable conditions) and our perpetrators. Arz also helps us in shifting our homes out of Baina in order to distance us from behaviour patterns which are common place in the Baina community – alcoholism, anti-social activities, gossiping, multiple relationships etc.

Child care and education support - Whilst at Swift Wash, **15 of us enrolled our children (both boys and girls) into school**. This was possible due to the constant support we received from Arz in the following ways:

Form of assistance by ARZ	No. of children
■ Preparation of affidavit	1
■ Admission to day / local school	4
■ Admission to boarding school (for this purpose, 4 boarding schools were identified by Arz)	6
■ Purchase of uniforms, books and other scholastic material	3
■ Payment of school fees	1
■ Provide transportation facility to make fortnight visits to the boarding schools	5

Access - Arz also supports us in acquiring legal documents, voter identity cards, ration cards and accessing other civic benefits.

Legal Assistance - We have been assisted in filing complaints against our exploiters in police stations. We have also been educated about women's rights and the provisions of the Domestic Violence Act.

Debt management services - When we joined Swift Wash, most of us were suffering at the hands of our perpetrators. Our exploiters insisted that we owed money to them; they dissuaded us from joining Swift Wash and harassed us to get back into prostitution. In such situations, Arz intervened and ensured that we are no longer tormented by such people for money. Also in certain cases, Arz extended monetary support to some of us in paying back our loans.

Professional development –

Since the time the idea of setting up Swift Wash germinated, Arz has been making many efforts to build our professional caliber.

- During the period before commercial production began at the unit, we interacted with Mr.L.Martins, Dy.Collector, Mormugao; Mr.U.V.Borkar, the Superintendent of Police – Crime; Ms.Sheru, Joint Mamlatdar; Mr.Christopher, a renowned trade union leader, Ms.Nandita Hakshar, a Supreme court lawyer and Mr.Viraj, a management faculty; all of them appreciated us for our initiative to get involved at Swift Wash. They offered us their support in every possible way and shared information on issues pertaining to us – legal recourse, self-defense mechanisms, protection from perpetrators, work culture, protocols of work, women’s rights etc... This positive reinforcement was of great help in those initial stages – we felt we were on the right track.

- Also during the initial period, we were involved in many deliberations and discussions which were facilitated by Arz – the objective was to understand work, business, collective enterprise, money, productivity, quality, work culture and ethos. On similar lines, we still hold our monthly meetings where we discuss similar professional issues.
- Simultaneously, we attended demonstrations by Ramsons on machine operation, washing procedures, presentation on usage of fire equipment and presentation by Johnson Diversy on chemical usage in the laundry; also mock sessions on facing the media by Ms.Preetu Nair (from the print media).
- Literacy classes were organized for us – we learnt the basics like putting our signatures, reading the name of Swift Wash, counting, simple addition and subtraction etc.
- Some of us went on an exposure cum training visit to Surekleen, one of the laundry businesses in Goa; later in the large group back at our own unit, we shared our learnings and observations from the visit with our colleagues.
- The Taj Group of Hotels (also our client) organized training sessions for us on team work, communication, time management and customer relationship.

All of these efforts have resulted not only in one of the finest outputs in the cleaning industry at Swift Wash, but also have led to our overall development.



our SHG - instilling ownership

Whilst working at Swift Wash, Arz also encouraged us to form a Self-Help Group. The basic objective was to create a financial support system and a back-up provision to cater to our monetary requirements when we are in need. But the most important intention was to create a platform for us to understand money and group dynamics, how to take decisions in a group where each one of us have an equal stake and say, how to intervene when there is difference of opinion, how to identify and elect our representatives, how to exercise our rights and execute our responsibilities, how to bring forth effective communication, how to ensure that no member feels alienated or uncared for and how to guarantee the best interest of all the group members.

Our SHG has been our learning ground – this is a necessary first step towards empowering ourselves to own and manage Swift Wash independently in the days to come. Our SHG has been in existence since April 2007 and currently has 25 members (each paying Rs.100/- every month). We have elected our office bearers and are conducting our internal proceedings. As a force to reckon with, the group is consulted in the course of making decisions related to Swift Wash.

As on 30th June'08:

Total savings collected	Rs.19,770/-	Outstanding loans	Rs.20,750/-
Total loans disbursed	Rs. 51,800/-	Bad debts, if any	Rs.380/-
Repayments collected so far (Amount + Interest)	Rs. 30,670/- + Rs. 2,658/-	Repayment rate	98.76%

Swift Wash has changed our lives...

- we were dissuaded from coming to work, but we have **learnt to fight our way back**
- initially, no one supported us; now we are **treated with respect** in our communities
- we have **developed the courage and resilience** to make choices of life on our own
- we are **self-reliant and financially independent**
- we have started **persisting our partners** (who till date, have been dependant on our earnings) to engage in productive work and contribute towards the family upkeep
- we are no longer willing to be exploited, we have started **raising our voice and complaining against violence and abuse** meted out to us. In extreme cases, some of us have even filed complaints in the police station against our parents, relatives, mards and perpetrators
- we are increasingly **emphasising on marriage** which has legal sanctity, social acceptance and which helps us to join the mainstream
- we have now started **adopting birth control measures** despite resistance from our partners
- our image has changed amongst our children; now they respect us, consider our advice seriously and some of them even help us in our household chores
- we have **stopped fighting over petty issues and concentrate better on our work** – all efforts in the best interest of Swift Wash and of our own lives
- we have **imbibed professional work culture**: from being punctual to speaking in clean language

- **defying social customs and sanctions:** Earlier every Friday, one of the unit's members would request for leave to go for begging as prescribed by the social customs that define her dedication as a devadasi. After a year of association with Swift Wash, she has stopped begging. Similarly, some of us used to take off for 15 days once in every quarter to attend the Yellamma jatra. Those of us have now decided to go only once in two years.
- **spending patterns:** instead of unwarranted expenditure and extravagant lifestyles, currently our earnings are utilised to meet our basic needs, health care and our children's education requirements. Some of us have also been able to invest in furniture, jewellery, and mobile phones. One of us has also bought a motorbike for her husband. We have also started saving money; some of us have even made fixed deposits and recurring accounts.
- through our enterprise, we have **challenged gender stereotypes** about women's capacities to handle and operate machines. We have challenged misconceptions about our abilities to cope with the pressures of working and running a commercial laundry.
- **building the human chain:** we have also started getting actively involved in the rehabilitation processes of other victims and are intervening in issues (of violence/abuse/exploitation of other women) at our community level. Some of us have referred victims to the enterprise and have also offered shelter and other support to new members.

In the two years of existence of Swift Wash,

- 64 women and 36 men have been associated with Swift Wash
- 29 women and 17 men are working at Swift Wash; 2 women are currently on maternity leave
- Family members (parents, siblings, children) of 13 members and partners of 14 members of Swift Wash have been involved in the business
- 13 members decided to move out of Goa and return to their native places
- 3 of us who had been living with our respective partners have got married.
- 9 members shifted out of BAINA beach red light area and moved into safer locations
- 15 members moved out of exploitative relationships with their respective parents / partners
- 2 women have completely given up addiction of alcohol, cigarettes and gutkha; 12 women and 7 men are in the process of giving up their addictions
- 35 women and 20 men moved out of Swift Wash due to various reasons
- 19 women who moved out of Swift Wash are currently engaged in – domestic help (7), housekeeping – hotels (4), other industries (3), tailoring (2) and rag-picking (3)
- On an average, each one of us has managed to save Rs.3, 000/- (at a personal level)
- One of us has actually been able to save Rs.20, 000/- till date
- 7 women have been referred to Swift Wash by the magistrate for rehabilitation

In the spotlight - Over the last two years, the vernacular (Vasco watch, Gomantak Times, Navhind Times) and national (The Times of India, The Hindustan Times, The Herald, The Hindu) press has extensively covered Swift Wash's progress. Additionally, Swift Wash's members were interviewed for a telecast hosted by NDTV. The business was also highlighted in the Compendium on Best Practices on Anti Human Trafficking by NGOs prepared by UNODC.

Public patrons - We hosted many domestic and international visitors (representatives from various NGOs, colleges of social work, members of the media, corporate sector and civil society) and shared our experiences of operating Swift Wash with them.

Participation in public forum

- The government has acknowledged and acclaimed our progress by inviting us to participate in various forums and by giving us representation in different panels constituted to work on the issue of trafficking.
- We organized a seminar on Rehabilitation of Trafficked Victims: Public Private Partnership on the occasion of our first anniversary (on 7th September'07) in association with Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Felicitation - Arz was felicitated on the occasion of International Women's Day for initiating SwiftWash, a full-fledged and comprehensive rehabilitation program for us by the Goa State Commission for Women and the Department of Women and Child Development.



Participation in extra curricular activities - We participated at the Women's Sports festival organized by Mormugao taluka last year. There were many reasons for us to cheer. We were the only team who were dressed in uniforms and so were given the honour of leading the march past during the inaugural ceremony. We won the 2nd place in the Kabaddi event. We achieved this distinction without any prior preparation. This reinforced our team spirit and solidarity; our bonding transcended our work place and professional boundaries.

Training ground for police personnel - Swift Wash is being introduced as a model initiative to police personnel in the course of their trainings. The unit site is being used for the purpose conducting of police trainings and providing them exposure. The primary objectives are to break their pre-conceived notions that 'prostitutes will never change' and therefore to motivate them to enhance their rescue efforts. Also to enable them to empathise with us (i.e. victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation) and to understand our problems. We hope that this would help them to explore the manner in which the criminal justice system can appropriately pitch in under the given circumstances.

**some doubts and questions raised about us, we have answered,
some myths, we have shattered;
and the rest – we shall in the days to come.**

we did falter,

at the enterprise level

There were instances when we were not successful in convincing potential customers of our professional capacities and lost out on orders because we took on loads beyond our processing abilities; received feedback from customers which instead of focussing on areas of improvement was very humiliating and de-motivating; made calculation errors whilst raising monthly bills for our customers and equated higher usage of detergent and chemical to better quality and output.

at the group level

There were many occasions when we fought with each other, failed to understand our peers' point of view and were reluctant to adapt and adjust to the work situation and demands of a collective enterprise.

at the individual level

- 3 members left the business and got back into prostitution.
- 6 members discontinued working at Swift Wash as they were unable to withstand the pressures of their family members / partners.
- 6 members went back to their native places.
- Some of our male colleagues left as they felt uncomfortable working under the supervision of women, also some left as they felt that they earned less in comparison to us.

but we are not willing to give up...

our learnings

- As the concept of ownership was introduced to us from day 1, we have gradually learnt to take on the onus of managing the enterprise. If this concept is introduced appropriately and mechanisms are put in place to integrate it into all the processes, then it has the potential of being the driving force behind the growth of the members and the business.
- Income generation programs (limited to monetary support and technical inputs) do not adequately address our needs and circumstances. Any program to ensure our re-integration should be holistically designed encompassing all the elements of psycho-social-economic-legal interventions and should involve us, our families and our perpetrators as well.
- Because of the play of peer influence and counsel, we have been able to stay motivated and respond to this rehabilitation initiative. The format and working mechanisms of a collective enterprise has helped us to stay put in the process.
- Rehabilitation is a long drawn process, with no short-cuts involved. Capacities have to be built, resources have to be pooled, support systems have to be created, mind-sets have to be changed and mental-blocks have to be removed. Therefore institutions supporting such rehabilitation initiatives should plan programs which are well spread over longer durations.
- In any rehabilitation program which focuses on economic activities, it is essential to create fall-back mechanisms. Provisions should be made to cater to the subsistence needs of the members till the time the business starts making profits. As a security and insurance measure, it always helps to invest in contingency plans.

our supporters

The journey so far has not been traversed on our own. There have been many other footsteps alongside ours. We wish to place on record our deep sense of gratitude to all those organizations and individuals who have added the zing to our business and to our lives.

Government, Law enforcement agencies and the Judiciary - On the basis of Swift Wash, Arz has initiated a workable model with the support of the government (Dept. of Women and Child Development), the Police and the Judiciary to protect, rehabilitate and prevent re-trafficking of victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation; also to prosecute the perpetrators.

In the model that has evolved, the magistrates conduct an inquiry under Sec 17 of the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956, and recommend (with the support of a panel comprising of advocates, social workers, government personnel and Arz) appropriate rehabilitation measures for the victims.

- After a victim is referred to the Government State Protective Home, Arz provides counselling support and shares about Swift Wash with her. At times, we accompany Arz and speak about the changes that have taken place in our lives after our involvement.
- She is asked to speak about the support that she seeks whilst taking her statement.
- If the individual wants to work at Swift Wash, Arz is required to take on the onus of her rehabilitation. An undertaking is taken from her relatives that they will ensure her continuous participation in the program. Directions are given to the police to ensure that family members or perpetrators do not discourage the victim and cause her re-trafficking.
- Arz is required to submit quarterly reports of the individuals referred to Swift Wash by the Magistrates. The Magistrates also visit Swift Wash to personally track their process.

International and Donor organizations - Arz has received assistance from multiple donors for setting up Swift Wash as well as to provide for operational expenses and rehabilitation processes in the course of the last two years.

Organisation	Period	Support received for -	Amount (in Rs./-)
International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	2005-07	Capital Investment	15,15,334
		Installation and Facilitation	4,83,666
	2007-08	Capital Investment	16,30,112
		Installation and Facilitation	65,838
Child Rights and You (CRY)	2006-07	Rent – rehabilitation centre	60,000
Groupe Developpement (GD)	2006-07	Stipend – members	1,20,000
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	2007-08	Rent, salaries, exposure and training	5,20,000
Terres des Hommes – Germany (Tdh – G)	2007-08	Travel, maintenance, health, Unit expenses.	1,00,000
TOTAL			44,94,950



Corporate sector – The corporates have supported our initiative from the word go. During the preparatory and market survey phase, their inputs helped us to understand the potential of the cleaning business. Surekleen, one of the laundries in Goa shared with us the nuts and bolts of starting and managing a laundry. Each of our suppliers let us into their store house of knowledge and experience. Ramsons provided equipment at the most competitive rates, they also helped us with the layout and the technical details. Taj trained us and gave us inputs on quality standards to be adhered in a professional laundry. Most of them understood the purpose of our business and significantly contributed to our growth – they conducted audits, supported us with constructive feedback, they gave us orders and more importantly our business.

Media - Alongside extensively covering Swift Wash's exploits, the media has also published advertisements free of cost to facilitate order mobilization for our business.

Socially conscious individuals - The suave fashion designer, Savio Jon designed our uniforms; Cmdr(Retd) Narayan and Janani Narayan gave their creative inputs to us and helped us in creating our space; Mr.Viraj (M.E.S College, Goa) helped us to understand the business perspective; Sister Jeanette (of VIVUS) never fails to offer us a warm cup of coffee when we meet her in the course of pick-up and delivery; there have been many others as well who have helped us gain confidence to face the world and feel accepted as an integral part of the 'normal' society.

all we can say is that we have been very lucky to connect to the right people in the right places. God bless them all!!!

Our way forward – milestones to be achieved...

- To engage 150 members in Swift Wash by 2010
- To start earning profits by November 2008
- To acquire own space/land to set up a bigger unit (to increase employment potential and to provide better services to members)
- To comply with the standard operating procedures of commercial laundries (which translates into a pucca roof in the place of an asbestos roof, separate and closed spaces for each distinct activity in the laundry process and tiled flooring instead of a cement floor)
- To achieve a green future, in which there will be an insistence on water, steam and heat recovery and low energy use (to start this process by setting up a water treatment plant)
- To create catalysts and enhance our individual and unit productivity
- To introduce and integrate professional systems into the working of Swift Wash
- To be renowned for delivering value for money and reliability
- To develop flexibility to react to changing customer needs or new market development
- To start catering to victims, even whilst they are at the Goa State Protective Homes
- To minimize internal conflicts and enhance group bonding
- To create better avenues for our recreation, rejuvenation and overall development
- To shape Swift Wash as a co-operative society involving women member – owners engaged with the enterprise; also to involve representatives from the government, corporate sector and the civil society in the board of the proposed co-operative.

our wish list

Our journey cannot march forward to achieve these milestones without your continued support in all our endeavours. 'thoda hain, thode ki zaroorat hain'. We hope not to be disappointed.

- The Government could support us with *infrastructural facilities* for expansion and provide electricity and water at subsidised rates, at least for a minimum period.
- The Government and the Judiciary could *refer trafficked victims for rehabilitation* to Swift Wash. Even when they are detained in the State Protective Home, the Government could give the required permissions and make necessary arrangements to engage them at Swift Wash.
- Alongside *increasing the quantum of their laundry orders*, corporate houses could support us with *training* (in professional grooming, laundry operations, machine maintenance and exposure). They could extend infrastructural facilities (space for the unit), provide machinery and supplies or lease out their own facilities at nominal rates. On the premise of creating an assured backward linkage, they could also provide monetary assistance to our business.
- Technical training institutes (government / private) could help us in *setting up systems to ensure optimum utilisation of supplies* (ways to minimise usage of energy and mechanisms to recover and recycle water, steam and heat). They could also provide *refresher trainings* on advanced technology, statutory requirements, new chemicals and procedures and keep us updated about the industry. Business training institutes could help us in understanding the economics of business, in undertaking strategy planning exercises and in creating and integrating professional work systems at Swift Wash.

reaching out

If this wish list is taken care of, we know our lives would be made. But we also are aware of many other women who are in great distress and are living in option less situations. If Swift Wash could change our lives for the better, then the momentum of this movement (the idea/ the business/the process) called Swift Wash should be replicated to further their cause as well.

The need of the hour is a collective and collaborative effort; each one of us should use the capacities of our position and contribute towards the achievement of the ultimate goal of socio-economic reintegration of victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

we are already on our way to -

- prevent the re-invention of the wheel, to ensure that mistakes are not repeated, to suggest the roles that can be played by various stakeholders in such a process, Swift Wash;
- reach out to persons like us and help in their economic empowerment and
- assist government and non-government organizations who are interested in replicating this initiative or/and want to learn from Swift Wash.

Arz with the support of Groupe Developpement are creating an operational manual for public dissemination. We would also be interested in hosting and facilitating training programs on the premise of this manual. We request interested individuals / organizations to contact us (Tel. No.: 0832-2555619; E-mail: swiftwash2006@gmail.com) for a copy of the manual.

What about you? What are you going to do???



**Join us in our mission to economically empower the
marginalized, stigmatized and exploited persons of society!!!**

We shall reach out to the stars
And not rest even if we get the moon!