

BUILDING TOGETHER
AFTER CRISIS IN NEPAL



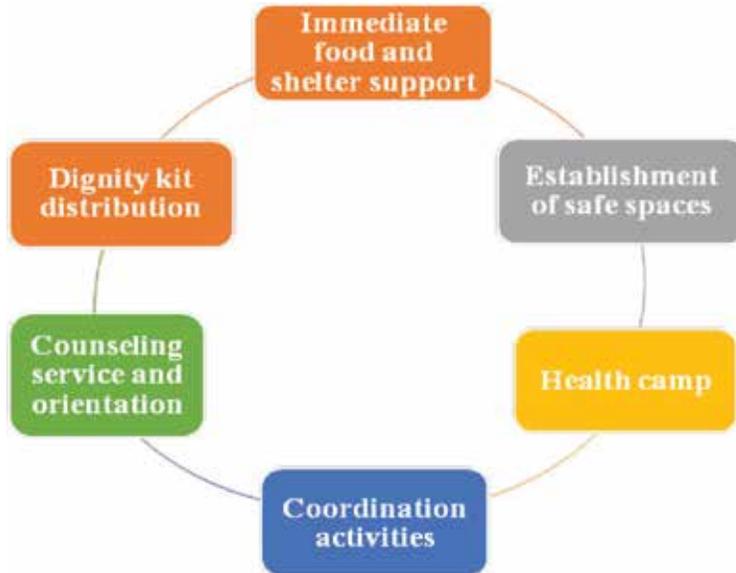
WOREC IN 2015: A Glimpse





April 25, 2015--It was a Saturday morning. People were enjoying down-time with their families. Just few minutes before noon, everything started to shake and the weather became gloomy. Initially, the shaking was slow, but gradually, the magnitude increased. Everything you could see was falling down and screams were heard all around. The continuous jolts forced people to move out in open spaces, and the fear of the unknown prevailed.

Sharmila, a resident of Gorkha district, was pregnant when the earthquake hit and completely destroyed her house. After the earthquake, her mother suggested her to go to the hospital to deliver the baby but she was very weak. The earthquake had destroyed all health posts. Sharmila had to walk for two days to reach Aarughat, nearest primary health care center. After getting there, she needed a place to stay and to be taken care of. She was advised to go to a safe space established by WOREC. With WOREC's help, she went to primary health care center for check-up. In the safe space, she received nutritious food and a place to rest. After her check-up, the doctor told her that the baby was in a critical stage and that she needed to reach another hospital as soon as possible. But, the roads were destroyed and there was hardly any means of transportation. Sharmila was already in labor and her health was deteriorating. So, the ANM at the safe space, with the support of other staffs, took a risk and delivered the baby on their own. Thankfully, the case was successful and health of both the mother and the baby was sound. Sharmila and her baby have already returned to their home at present. They received care, support and a new life!



The earthquake of 7.8 Richter scale hit Nepal, with Barpak Village in Gorkha as an epicenter. Everything including walls, houses and temples, started falling down and the death toll reached nearly 9,000 within a few weeks, leaving thousands of people homeless and injured.

For weeks in rural and remote areas, the only support mechanism available to people was from their community. Although, all of their houses were destroyed, most people stood together with each other. It is heartening to listen to the stories of resilience, support and solidarity shared by the women survivors of the earthquake. In all the communities, women took the lead to support and care for other survivors.

Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC), as an organization working for women's rights, took the lead to reach out to the earthquake-affected communities from the third day of the disaster. The organization itself had also suffered, and several team members themselves were in trauma as they had lost their loved ones and their homes. Nevertheless, they stood together with people in need. The support work started from Kathmandu and extended to 12 earthquake-affected districts in coordination with the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders (NAWHRD). Since the main objective of the relief work was/is to be with women and support them with love and compassion, the organization called its initiative Sneha Campaign ('Sneha' meaning love and compassion).

SAFE SPACES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN:

OKHALDHUNGA

RASUWA

RAMECHHAP

SINDHUPALCHOWK

DOLAKHA

KATHMANDU

BHAKTAPUR

LALITPUR

GORKHA

DHADING

KAVRE

NUWAKOT



The campaign targeted women in most difficult situations, prioritizing the needs of pregnant women, lactating mothers, elderly women, women with disabilities and adolescent girls. Initially, WHRDs, especially those from the unaffected areas like southern belt of Nepal, came up and stood together with their sisters in difficulty. District women human

right defenders network (although the leaders of the network were also under the tent and some of them were even in mourning after losing their family members) hosted them and planned relief-response activities. With time, Sneha Campaign got regulated by specific gender-sensitive guidelines that were prepared jointly by WOREC and NAWHRD. The guidelines were



also forwarded to the Chief Secretary of the country with a request to adopt those within government relief program. These guidelines were shared with the media, non-government organizations (NGOs) and international non-government organizations as well so that they could provide support from a feminist perspective. Women rights activists from all over the world extended support love and compassion to the women survivors of the earthquake. Organizations such

as MADRE, GFW, AEI, MISEREOR, ISIS-WICCE, JAGSN, FJS, Urgent Action Fund and APWLD, among many others, joined hands to reach out to the people in need. This became a real example of solidarity from a global to a national level, where women from different parts of the world stood together with compassion for one another.

Creation of safe spaces and support provided to each other through those spaces

were the main intervention strategies of this campaign. WHRDs reached out to very remote areas, identified needs of women and men who were unreached by the mainstream support mechanisms, and supported them with their emergency needs. WHRDs realized that during difficult periods, women needed someone to be by their side and make them feel that they were not alone. WHRDs were able to do this through the Sneha campaign. In this process, we identified various difficulties,

including gender-based violence (GBV), that women were facing while under the tents.

DIGNITY KITS SUPPORT: 20211

PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING: 14457

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT: 273

NON-FOOD ITEM DISTRIBUTION: 5239

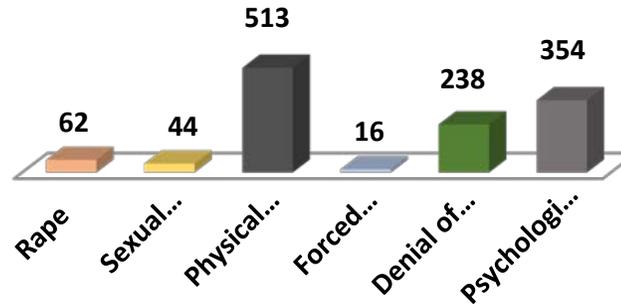
GBV CASE MANAGEMENT: 1227

In this regard, WOREC planned and established Sneha Kendra (female-friendly spaces) in twelve out of fourteen most Earthquake-affected districts declared by Nepal government with the sole motive to ensure safety and security of women and adolescent girls. Inside safe spaces, women and adolescent girls could breastfeed their babies, change their clothes, share their feelings and emotions, get entertained, and find a way forward from trauma of earthquake and other kind of GBV through case management and recreational services. The relief activities

were mostly carried out while keeping four aspects in mind. We provided services to women and adolescent girls through safe spaces, provided psycho-social counseling to the survivors, supported the survivors on need-based approach and provided capacity building to women through orientations, developed feminist leadership and human resources on different issues like GBV, health and

hygiene during menstruation, sexual and reproductive health, among others. Similarly, there were health camps conducted to provide support to pregnant women and lactating mothers, who were the most vulnerable groups during the calamity. Working at the grassroots level, WOREC realized that psycho-social wellbeing is essential for all women to actively participate in their communities.

Out of the total 1227 case management done by WOREC till July 2016, The types of violence identified are as follows:





So post-earthquake, it was important to ensure that women received psycho-social support during relief distribution. It was imperative to make women feel that they were not alone. Standing together with women in need and making her feel

that she and her family are not alone was very important. So, along with relief distribution, the organization concentrated on providing psycho-social first aid and psycho-social counselling to women in need.

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WOREC's relief activities supported by:



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