

Geographies of domestic violence in rural spaces: Case of rural Nepali communities in the Tarai region

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ABSTRACT: *Recognition that past research on domestic violence largely concentrated on urban areas has helped to generate a body of work focusing specifically on the rural. This work has begun to identify important characteristics of the experience of intimate partner violence in rural communities and, in particular, to draw attention to the problems of resourcing and delivering services in support of families and individuals living with and escaping violence. A key direction of research has been the interrogation of rates of domestic violence in the comparison of urban, suburban and rural areas. Some studies have extended this comparative approach in highlighting the prevalence of different forms of violence across types of community. This focus on the rural has been a welcomed response to academic criticisms of the lack of work on the rationality of space and violence and to associated calls by geographers to foreground the centrality of space in work on both the experience and conceptualization of violence. Three remote villages of Bank district of western Nepal has been selected for the household survey at 90 households. In addition to that, KII and FGD as well as interactive interview with the local stake holders have also been conducted. Main finding of this research is women in the rural and remote areas are more likely than women in urban areas to experience domestic and family violence. Similarly, women living in the rural and remote areas who experience domestic and family violence face specific issues related to their geographical location and the cultural and social characteristics of living in small communities.*

KEY WORDS: *Domestic violence, rural spaces, Tarai region, feminist approach, sexual misuse, abusive behavior, family manhandle, allegations of witchcraft (Boxi), reinforced work (Kamalari).*

I. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is increasingly recognized as a significant social problem in contemporary Nepali society. Worldwide, Gender Based Violence (GBV) is the leading cause of death of women between the ages of 19 and 44 – more than war, cancer, or car accidents (DeKeseredy et al. 2007, Mc Carry & Williamson, 2009, Sandberg, 2013). This is the social evil which is being given increasing attention worldwide in order to increase awareness among planners and policy makers (WHO, 2001). In addition to that, the Beijing Platform of Action at the United Nations World Conference on Women also recommended the promotion of research on generality of violence against women and its nature, causes and consequences (The Asia Foundation, 2010). This is a very serious matter especially in South Asia, where more than 60 percent of women and girls report experiencing some form of violence (i.e. physical, sexual, or emotional abuse), and even half of all women face violence in the home. Therefore, GBV is a global challenge that violates basic human rights and human security. Apart from the individual suffering, it carries high a cost for society and is a major obstacle to development of the country. However, in some cultural settings living in a rural area vs. living in urbanized places has been found to be a risk factor for violence against women (Wendt, 2009). As I mentioned "in some cultures because this risk factor has not been always adequately investigated. So, there are relatively few studies that actually have controlled for this variable whilst conducting statistical analyses, rather than making assumptions that living "in the countryside" is a risk factor for violence against women without empirical evidence.

Gender based violence is a common problem across the world i.e. crossing cultural, geographic, religious, social and economic boundaries (Naved, 2003). It is a significant social problem, but in many rural societies goes unrecognized and unreported, and is still accepted as part of normal behavior (Gunasekera, 2003). The prevalence of physical violence was 21 percent women who reported/experienced physical violence, were more likely to be hospitalized ante-Nataly for maternal complications. A history of abuse puts women at increased risk of long-term negative health consequences including depression, suicide, chronic pain syndromes, psychometric disorders and sexually transmitted diseases (Krug et al. 2002). WHO record evidences that violence alone kills more than 1.6 million people every year around the world. It is among the leading causes of death for people aged between 15–44 years worldwide, accounting for about 14 percent of deaths among men and 7 percent deaths among women (WHO, 2002).

The purpose of the study detailed on to examine some of these more conceptual issues surrounding understanding domestic violence within the rural settings of Nepal. In so doing, it will foreground the role of space specifically, within remote environments and communities. The intention is to include discussion not only of the physical relationship between space and violence but also the role and importance of cultures of rurality to the extent and nature of domestic violence. In addition to that this paper also address some of the current gaps in the evidence base in Nepal by undertaking a comprehensive review of the responses (institutional, social, political) to high profile cases of GBV in selected rural communities on Nepal.

Gender and Domestic Violence: Theoretical Explanation: The affirmation of sexual orientation in accomplice brutality can't be underestimated and it is the most contested topic in the research literature on partner violence. Since feminist scholars placed wife-beating on the agenda as a "case against the patriarchy" in the 1970s and 1980s (Dobash & Dobash, 1979), increasingly influential conservative empiricists have challenged feminist claims about the violence's relation to gender (Felson, 2002; Straus, 2008). Similarly, the feminist scholars of violence have critiqued both the methodological foundations of the sex parity findings and the claim that such sex parity would prove the violence non-gendered (Anderson, 2009; Bumiller 2010). Therefore, sex-symmetry surveys ignore theories of gender. Anderson points out, however, that in assuming that VAW equals GBV without analyzing its relation to specific theories of gender, one also fails to analyze the gender-violence nexus in light of theory (Anderson, 2009, p. 1453).

Investigating what is gendered about domestic violence requires a theoretically informed understanding of gender (Anderson, 2005; Dragiewicz, 2009; Ferree, Lorber, & Hess, 1999). Feminist researchers have repeatedly identified domestic violence as a field where theoretical analyses have lagged other fields, while risk factor analyses and prevalence studies have accumulated (Dutton, 2004; Hearn, 2013; Hunnicutt, 2009). A feminist reconceptualization of violence requires qualitative studies of "the meaning and purpose of these acts or how they are related to the performance of gender" (Bumiller, 2010, p. 183) that encompass the Global South (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000).

Extent and nature of domestic violence in Nepal; Domestic violence research based on official statistics consistently shows significantly higher incidence rates of reported domestic violence occurring among the most relatively disadvantaged social groups in rural Nepal. The definition of domestic violence used in this research is threatened and/or actual physical assault between adults of different sexes in present and/or previous intimate co-habiting relationships. Such a definition corresponds with that used by previous researchers (Bridges, & Weis 1989, p. 126; Gardner 1995, p. 102; Browne & Herbert 1996, p. 3).

In rural Nepal, women and girls are exposed to a variety of forms of violence. Many of which are suffered by women/girls globally, and others which are more commonly seen in Nepal than elsewhere. Empirical studies in Nepal have documented the prevalence of sexual violence suffered by 12% to 50% of women (WOREC, 2003; Deuba & Rana, 2005; Puri & Cleland, 2007; Puri, Tamang & Shah, 2010; Puri, Tamang & Shah, 2011; Puri, Forst, Tamang, Lamichhnae, & Shah, 2012). Violence against girls and adolescents is also prevalent: a recent study, Sexual Violence Assessment in Seven Districts of Nepal, revealed a high prevalence of sexual violence against adolescent girls in Nepal. The study found almost one in ten girls (9.8%) reported experiencing sexual violence. This figure is substantially higher than the rate reported in the same age group in the Nepal Demographic Health Survey 2011- 4.6% of girls aged 15-19 years reported experiencing sexual violence (MoHP, New Era and International Inc, 2012), but both figures highlight the common nature of the problem.

Physical violence is also widespread in the country. As indicated by the 2011 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey found that more than one out of five (22%) ladies age 15-49 years revealed encountering physical viciousness eventually since the age of 15 years; among whom 9% were physically ambushed in the most recent year, either routinely (2%) or rarely (7%). More seasoned, wedded, country and Tarai ladies will probably report physical viciousness than different gatherings of ladies. Additionally, 12% of ladies in the DHS detailed consistently encountering sexual savagery (NDHS, 2011). 'An investigation on Gender Based Violence directed in chosen rustic regions of Nepal' led by OPMCM/TAF/CREHPA uncovered that half of ladies (48%) had encountered brutality sooner or later in their lives, and 28% had encountered savagery in the previous a year; where passionate viciousness (40.4%) was most usually announced kind of savagery took after by physical savagery (26.8%), sexual savagery (15.3%) and monetary manhandle/viciousness (8%) (OPMCM, 2012). The Nepal DHS 2006 additionally addressed men in the populace, and found that 21% of male respondents feel that a



spouse might be legitimized for beating his significant other (NDHS, 2006). Past examinations in Nepal have perceived a grouping of parts, including legitimate subordination, money related dependence, social duty and social position of women, that manufacture and sustain male transcendence and female subservience so through and through that neither the brutality nor the powerlessness to protest about it are sporadic. Moreover, ladies' absence of independence, high financial reliance on their spouses, men's apparent qualification to sex, absence of training and information of sexuality, marriage hones (especially early marriage), absence of family and lawful help to ladies, and husband's utilization of liquor, are altogether noted to add to danger of viciousness (Deuba & Rana, 2005; Puri & Cleland, 2007; Puri, Tamang & Shah, 2010; Puri, Tamang & Shah, 2011; Puri, Forst, Tamang, Lamichhnae, & Shah, 2012).

Because of determinants working the level of people, families, groups and the more extensive society, ladies and young ladies in Nepal experience the ill effects of an assortment of sorts of savagery including: sexual misuse (trafficking, constrained sex, sexual provocation), abusive behavior at home (i.e. spousal mishandle), family manhandle (polygamy, kid marriage, dowager mishandle, settlement related viciousness, passionate and mental mishandle), allegations of witchcraft (Boxi) and reinforced work (Kamalari).

The Deuki convention includes families offering young ladies to sanctuaries for formal purposes; anyway, young ladies frequently encounter sexual abuse and may enter sex work to gain a living (ESCAP, 2009). Likewise, the Jhuma are Sherpa who customarily send second-conceived little girls to religious communities as an offering to guarantee the prosperity of the young ladies' family. Dalit (customarily arranged as "untouchable") ladies confront numerous separations, including a higher danger of being blamed for witchcraft than the rate seen among non-Dalit ladies. Menstrual detachment (Chaupadi) is a social custom for the Hindu ladies in the mid and far western piece of Nepal that forbids them from undertaking the standard exercises of day by day life amid the season of feminine cycle since they are viewed as tainted. The ladies are kept out of the house – typically living in open air sheds/outbuildings. This endures ten to eleven days when a youthful young lady has her first period, and four to seven days for each tailing one.

The setting of GBV, driven by social, social, religious and sex standards, is intensified by years of political clash which expanded danger of viciousness (Dhakai, 2008). The time of outfitted clash in Nepal added to GBV, especially through assault, trafficking, sexual subjection, dislodging and monetary hardship, anyway the confirmation base on the degree of this issue isn't strong (OPMM, 2012). The mishandle of ladies in equipped clash is established in a culture of segregation that denies ladies break even with status with men. Social, political and religious standards distinguish ladies as the property of men, conflate ladies' virtue with family respect and legitimize savagery against ladies. Ladies' money related reliance, subordinate economic wellbeing and an absence of legitimate help renders them defenseless against proceeded with manhandle.

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Both, the qualitative and quantitative methods were used for the field study. Primary data collection tools include survey questionnaires, checklist for FGD and KII. After review of the secondary data and literature the author prepared survey tools. It is more like a Knowledge/Skills, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey of the local beneficiaries and stakeholders. The survey checklist primarily includes the close-ended questions with multiple choices on the pertinent areas with some open-ended questions (to elicit some subjective responses from the respondents) so as to scale up the responses from the respondents and easily bring that into the scope of quantitative statistical analysis where relevant.

Moreover, the study also employed some of the participatory tools to focus on the qualitative aspects of the changes resulted by the domestic violence related three village development committees in Banke district to substantiate the quantitative data in order to come to a plausible conclusion with regard to key aspects of evaluation such as relevancy of the approaches/strategies, effectiveness of the intervention as well as its impact in people and the community (direct and indirect beneficiaries) and the likelihood of the results being sustainable. The participatory tools employed in the study include H-forms of Evaluation and Interactive Interview.



Data collection procedure: Primary data constitutes major part of this study. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the survey respondents. Though 40% sample size was aimed the study team determined to trade-off between the representation of the sample and the urgency of accomplishing the task amidst growing security threats in the study area. Based on the available information and discussion with the locals, the author initially planned to include 75 households be included. This sample frame represents all major ethnic groups, minorities, Dalit, religious leaders and women headed households. During field work, the author slightly changed the sample framework and started field work for two reasons: minimizing the errors, and to address the saturation of knowledge in this evaluation process.

Selected VDCs	Number of selected respondents for HH Survey	FGD Type and number	Interactive Interview at Nepalgunj
Titihariya	29	Female group- 1	Male
Shamsarganja	29	Male group - 1	Female
Rajhena	32	Mixed group- 1	
Total	90		



Figure: EGD with the local people (UP), Interactive interview with key stakeholders at Nepalgunj (DOWN)



Similarly, an interactive interview (though it was not in the initial plan) with other stakeholders was also conducted in Nepalginj and was attended by 16 participants representing different district level stakeholders.

Those engaged in the process included Nepal Police, Nepal Bar Association, Government Officials (Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare), Social activists, Journalists, Women activists, among others. It was almost four-hour

interaction meeting on which the study team provided four major questions (semi-structured) as follows:

1. What do you mean by domestic violence?
2. What are the types of domestic violence prevalent in the area?
3. What have been the noticeable achievement with regard to the domestic violence?
4. How can such project be made further effective in the future?

The collected data was entered into Excel sheet. Before entering the data, Questionnaire Identity (QID) was provided to each questionnaire so that missing information, errors, inconsistency of the questionnaire and questions could be checked and corrected later if need be. Final edited data table was used to generate tables and graphs related to the key concerns of the study.

During the data entry, processing and analysis, the lead consultant was responsible for: responsibility for:

- Development of a data entry template in the Excel according to the themes/categories of questions used in the questionnaire.
- Training researchers on data entry, data quality checks, and guidelines for using the data
- Data base cleaning of the entire questionnaires once the researchers' complete data entry process.

With regard to the qualitative information, thematizing was done with the use of Mind mapping software (Mindjet Mind Mnager) and the key issues and concerns were used to substantiate the statistical analysis while interpreting the data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of survey respondents: Altogether there were 90 respondents included in the survey alone. Of them there were 65 females (i.e. 72%) and 25 males (i.e. 28%). The study team selected 32 (35.6%) respondent from Rajhena VDC while 29 (32. 2%) respondents were selected from Titihariya and Shamsorganja VDC each. The age of the respondents in the survey varies from 15 to 50+ with majority 50% belonging to age group 15 – 29. From 25 – 29 group alone there were 23 respondents. A vast majority of respondents are literate though their level of education varied. Of 90 respondents only 3 are found to be illiterate while 60 are educated 'lower secondary' level or higher. Similarly, 40 are found to have education level 'secondary or higher'. Most of the survey respondents are found to be married. Of 90 respondents 73 (81.1%) are married and 14 (15.6%) are unmarried while 3 of them (3.3%) are divorced. As far as the occupation of the survey respondents and the family members is concerned, majority of them are found to dependent on agriculture as their prime livelihood source. 47 (52.22%) said that agriculture is major occupation of their family. Second largest occupation to the respondents' family is found to be foreign employment. 31 (34.5%) of the respondents chose 'other' category and elaborated that it means 'foreign employment' while only 10 (11.11%) respondents are found to have 'service' as primary occupation.

Majority of the survey respondents are found to have been associated with Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign Group. Of 90 respondents 53 (58.9%) are member of 'Domestic Violence Awareness Group' and 37 (41.1%) are non-members of the group. While almost two third respondents from Rajhena VDC are found to be a member of such group a slight majority of respondents from other two VDCs are member of the group.

Relevancy

While reviewing the secondary information as well as interacting with the key stakeholders in the study areas, including the intended beneficiaries of the project the author concluded that this type of activities was relevant in addressing one of the burning issues of gender-based violence in Bank district. Moreover, it is found to have

supplemented and, in some instances, complemented the Government of Nepal policies and program in dealing with the domestic violence against women and girls.

The widespread and deep-rooted nature of domestic violence against women itself justifies the need of such intervention that aims to make wider stakeholders aware of legal provisions against DV and also make the duty bearers accountable towards the fulfillment their duty. It is found that although domestic violence has been reduced to some extent it is still widespread in Tarai, especially in Madhesi community. There are some immediate and well-known causes for the DV to remain widespread that include:

- Dowry
- Child marriage
- Foreign employment

Though foreign employment is a growing recent phenomenon, it seems to have been a key factor responsible for domestic violence against women, especially for those whose husband is working abroad. Compounded with patriarchal social structure and norms with restrict mobility for women suspicion as made by relatives and neighbors has been a key reason for women to suffer violence from in-laws, husbands and even neighbors those with varied interest. A case of Deepa Chapagai illustrates how serious the issue is being in the society that organizations working on DV issues have to address immediately.

Foreign employment is even growing, and the consequences is not yet fully understood in the absence of sociological study. Family disintegration has largely made women, especially married women with kids, suffer most. Such cases where women, in most of the cases, are unable to access their basic rights and face domestic violence who need legal awareness, legal aid and other support is abundant in the study area. Hence, the broad scope of safer migration is to be defined and brought domestic violence cases to the attention of those organizations working on safer migration as well.

There are several instances where women see domestic violence simply because their parents, mostly from husband side, are against their inter-caste marriage. It is mostly the women who suffers

irrespective of which caste she belongs to (even if she is from so called high-caste family) her in-laws would discriminate her and misbehave. On the other hand, widespread caste-based discrimination also becomes a reason for women from so-called lower caste (occupational caste in general) to see violence in the society as a whole and they see multiple discrimination/ violence. As significant number of the cases are unreported, there is still a great need to empower women through legal awareness and help them access legal services as and when they need. On the other hand, wider social awareness is also equally important to address the issue.

Interaction with beneficiaries (focus group discussion with women group, men group and mixed group), district stakeholders (Interactive Interview and discussions) reinforced the need of the project aiming at addressing the DV that is prevalent in the area. All of the beneficiaries were of the opinion that though they were not consulted while designing the project intervention, the project has addressed a serious issue in the area. During the discussion with the project implementing partners (during the preparatory phase of the evaluation as well as after field work accomplishment) it is claimed that choice of both the project intervention and selection of beneficiaries and location have rested on the experience of these organizations where some of the partners have been working on DV issue since long. As claimed by the partners, the rationale for such intervention came from

Case study:

Deepa Chapagai – 26 from Surkhet, married with Sunil Khadka of Rajena-3, Bikashnagar. But her conjugal life did not last long. She is now divorcee. The cause of their divorce was her decision to go for foreign employment without her family consent. Deepa decided to go to the gulf as a housemaid to earn livelihood for their kids. Ultimately, it turned out to be a cause for family conflict. After two years' job in the gulf she returned back to Nepal but she could not join her family as her husband was already married to another woman. After a while, she met a guy, Sunil, from Rajena and she decided to tie a knot with him. Few months later Sunil also went to Qatar for employment. The relation between husband and wife was quite well for few months even after Sunil's departure and he was sending money to her on regular basis. But, now there is no contact between each other and he even does not send a penny to her. She does not know the reason but guesses that her neighbors have informed him something bad against her, which he must have believed. Now, she is living alone in her family but struggling a lot to meet her basic needs. As she has no one to turn to (she cannot live together with her husband's family as well as she cannot go her maternal home). She does not know how to go for legal process. So, she is seeking some help from such organization to rebuild

evaluation of earlier interventions and the project is made more sensible to the pertinent need in these three VDCs. The evaluation team, after field visit concluded that the intervention, despite some areas for improvement, was relevant.

The project is found to have adopted unique approach – that aim at addressing both the supply and demand side of governance, i.e. making people aware of their rights and encouraging them to claim for it; while at the same time making the government stakeholders aware of their duties in ensuring justice is availed to those in need. Similarly, the combination of methods and tools in creating awareness such as video van, legal awareness, ToT to the local people, legal aid, and use of various media outlets has all attempted to reach out to the marginalized community. A consortium model of mobilizing complementary competence of various well placed local partners has also helped the project to create a synergistic result. (Making people aware on their rights and encouraging them to claim such rights is demand and the reverse i.e. making the govt. responsive to it is supply side of the thing)

The project has supplemented and, in some instances, complemented the government plan and policies. The government policies have clearly spelled out the need of mobilizing civil society organizations in creating awareness on domestic violence and in providing legal support to the victims in coordination with the line agencies.

The assumptions that the project has made at various stages of project result-chain, have largely came true and hence, contributed positively for the project to make it possible to deliver its stipulated results. Key assumptions made while designing the project that hold true included:

- Better networks among partners can improve community strategies to reduce DV
- Stronger community networks and involvement of key stakeholders can help women access the law
- Local advocacy can promote social policy and legislative change
- Engagement of government bodies, CBOs and NGOs can create enabling environment to reduce DV
- Government bodies, CBOs and NGOs apply improved strategies in communities to reduce DV
- Increased and sustained community dialogue on DV leads to enabling environment to reduce VAW

Effectiveness

This section aims to assess the extent to which the project has achieved its stipulated results (outputs and outcomes) and the factors responsible for such achievement/ underachievement. About the prevalence of domestic violence in the community, there are more people who believe that it is on decreasing pace than those who believe that it is on rise in the society. It is interesting to see the 10.1% increment from the baseline data on the number of people who believe that DV in the society is in decreasing pace while 1.9% increment from the baseline study is seen among those who believe that it is increasing. It could be due to the rise of awareness among people who know the types of domestic violence, which was not even considered a violence prior to the project intervention and an increased confidence among violence survivors who dare to bring the case to the legal action, which people in general account to the rise in number as such. On the other hand, there is a decrease in percentage of people who believe that they have solution for domestic violence. Those people claiming that domestic violence is locally addressed is reduced by 12% from the baseline status. However, it is not necessarily worrying situation. The rise in awareness among the people that domestic violence, as a crime, is subject to legal action has encouraged people to be open and take the case to judicial and quasi-judicial mechanism, which unlike the earlier situation where people used to keep the issue locally without involving judicial and quasi-judicial institutions is a positive change that has contributed to reduction in the number of people who claim that they have addressed DV issue locally.

However, women group members in the Rajena VDC claim that despite prevalence of a sort of DVs in each HHs, people usually don't prefer to take the case for judicial remedy unless the violence is too serious. Interestingly, it is reported that as women are educated and are empowered than earlier days, women themselves can tackle within their family, if attempt to DV is not threatening. However, in case of inability to tackle the issue alone they take up the issue to the women's group, which off course is a kind of breaking the silence though there is still a reluctance to take such issue to judicial and quasi-judicial institutions such as police and court. Formation of Women Group in general and Dalit Women Group in particular is found to have played a significant role to reduce domestic violence in the area. Women talk about DV as a social problem in their regular meeting and talk to violators and teach them with legal provisions and possible consequences. So far Dalit Women Group in Rajena has handled 50 cases of domestic violence. Consequently, women leaders of the group and their family members are targeted by the close relatives and neighbors of those culprits.

Some respondents in the FGD are found to have a logical interpretation on the claim that there is a rise in domestic violence. They think that there are two reasons for such things to appear:

- Violence has remained there for long but due to low media coverage it was not evident to many people and the rise of such events in the media these days has made it easy for people to claim the rise in number of DV, which is not the case. The number of victims willing to break their silence is also on rise, which seems to have contributed to the number of reported cases of DV, not necessarily the increase in DV as such.
- With the growing awareness of types of domestic violence, people have started identifying number of cases, which was not even considered as violence at all in earlier days and as a result the rise in number seems apparent.

It seems that visibility of NGOs and CBOs working on domestic violence issue has been slightly increased compared to the baseline status. There is a 3.5% increment in the number of community people who consider that there are some NGOs and CBOs in their community that work against DV issue. It is not only due to the mere presence of such organizations rather due to their active role in combating DV issues. However, it is not a matter of utter satisfaction as there are still one third of community unaware of the presence of such organizations in their area whose perceived presence alone could be of vital importance for those victim survivors to feel a sense of security as well as those potential perpetrators feeling some sort of threats.

There is some increment in the percentage of people who respond to the incidence of domestic violence in their neighborhood. After the project intervention the percentage of people acting has risen by 6%. As the project is of short period its contribution to make such change a reality is worth appreciating though attributing the changes only to the project is somewhat difficult in the absence of control group experimentation.

In contrast to the baseline situation where community and political leaders used to take initiate responding to the DV cases in the community it is now encouraging to note that women groups are found to be ahead of other groups in responding to the DV case. In the end line survey it is reported that it is the women who take action on DV case, if any takes place in their community. Whereas the initiative taken by men has not increased that much, women taking action against DV has increased by 33% from the baseline status while the community/political leaders taking action has reduced by 34% from the baseline. Women leadership against the DV seems to have been significantly increased, which should be considered as a fundamental departure towards sustainability of project results. Though there is an increasing trend of various stakeholders including women groups, men taking actions as soon as they heard of DV in their community there are several excuses for the community people to remain indifferent in such a situation. The graph below indicates the rise in extreme logic for those not to get engaged in such situation. All of the four key reasons used during the baseline study as well have seen remarkable increase in the response for them not to get engaged. Of four reasons 'it is a personal matter' has seen biggest increment in the number of respondent while 'don't want to get into legal matter' is the second largest response group not to get engagement.

During the interactive interview and other FGDs people said that women group members taking initiatives to convince perpetrators but they themselves and their family members are threatened by others. Group pressure has made it possible to bring culprits into legal actions while individual victims, even though they dare to speak against DV, do not see enough response from the concerned authorities. It means that group approach is always beneficial and powerful. However, they reiterated that group members need legal education so as to become more effective and there is a need to educate the government stakeholders in fulfilling their duties more responsibly taking the existing legal framework into consideration. Similarly, they shared their understanding on why community people don't want to take any actions while they confront the cases. Some of the reasons as stated by them include:

- Potential threats of retaliation
- DV in the family is perceived largely as family matters not to be intervened by outsiders
- Take the issue lightly

People surveillance the services provided by "agencies, organizations and CBOs working against DV in their community": A critical mass seems to have developed in the project area on the role of NGOs and CBOs in case of domestic violence. Contrast to a slight increase (by 2.2%) who consider their role as 'very good' there is 13% rise in the number of people with a feeling that those agencies only fuel the pain of DV survivors. It shows that the perception of people towards the role of NGOs/CBOs in addressing DV cases has seen marked difference at the both end, but more people are negative than positive. Interestingly, the number of people who consider the role of such agencies 'good' is also slightly reduced than in the baseline status. Hence, CSOs largely seem to have failed to make community people feel that their role has been instrumental in ensuring and promoting justice to the victims, which is a critical situation for the CSOs to reflect on and improve their

strategy. During the FGD it was found that people are aware of existence of a Toll-Free number to call in case of DV. However, none of them could recall the number.

People find media coverage on the issue of DV satisfactory: Media role towards DV cases seems to have found quite satisfactory by the respondent. 91.9% of the respondents feel that the sensitivity of media towards DV issues/cases are either 'good' or 'sensitive' compared to the 84% from the same category in the baseline. In addition to that those people who believe that 'insensitivity' of media over the DV issue has reduced almost half by the baseline status. While 16% were found to have such feeling in the baseline study the number has reduced now to 8.9%. It may be due to the sensitization of the media houses, journalists and constant engagement of the media personnel by the project team and other agencies working on the DV issues.

Increased level of knowledge on DV and the relevant laws among community people: Community people seem to have increased awareness of the national policies and legal provisions about domestic violence in the recent years. While the people who claim to be aware of such legal frameworks, including national policies, has increased by about 20% the number of people claiming to be unaware of such legal provisions and policy frameworks are found to have reduced by about 22%. This is a significant achievement in such a brief period. However, the need of legal awareness is still a priority area for intervention as a large segment of society is not confident to claim that they are aware of such legal frameworks, which is a fundamental condition, for people to break their silence and seek legal remedy, if required.

People seem to have perceived a several benefits of having DV Act. The perceived benefit includes:

- Protection order
- Residence Order
- Monetary Relief Order
- Custody order
- Interim/Ex-preorder
- Compensation Order

In comparison with the previous research, all of these benefits have seen significant change in the study area. Of these, three of the mostly perceived benefit included (in descending order):

- Custody order (52.2% compared to 45% in the previous research),
- Protection order (50% compared to 12% in previous research)
- Compensation order (41.1% compared to 19% in previous research)

Community people seem to have changed their perception on what women could do in case they suffer any forms of domestic violence. It indicates that there is a rise in acceptance among the community that women should not remain silent rather should speak out and seek justice through formal and informal mechanism rather than suffering the silence. Compared to the baseline study all of the potential actions that women could do have seen remarkable improvement. Changes in their opinion regarding all the potential actions to be taken, collectively indicates that people have made their mind towards 'breaking the silence' by women who suffer the violence. Now 66.6% people feel that women should protest while the number of people who felt the same was just 5% during the baseline period. Similarly, people who think that women should take the case out to public has also been significantly increased. The people who think that women survivors should seek help from their friends is now 52.2% while this figure was 13% during the baseline period. In addition, the people who think women should seek help from CSOs is 44.4% in the baseline period whereas the number was just 18% during baseline period.

Number of people who feel that women should use the judicial and quasi-judicial mechanism to seek justice in such cases has also been significantly increased in this period. Those who feel that women should lodge and FIR/ inform police is now 48.9% compared to 10% in the baseline data. Similarly, those who feel that women should go to the court/lawyer is not 20% while this number was 3% in the baseline data.

Increased access of the community people to various means to know about domestic violence: The project is found to have reached to the intended beneficiaries well. The study shows that all of the respondents from three project VDCs listen public service announcement from the radio that aims to address the domestic violence. About 79% of the respondents were found to listen the radio message one to three times a week while 11% of them listen it more than six times a week. While comparing the respondents, it is found that those from Rajhena listen public service announcement more than respondents from other two VDCs.

Project seems to have reached to the people with messages through various means and these means are found to have played significant role in disseminating information. It is found that people access such information from a

range of media outlets and they have acknowledged the media that the project has supported being important one. Radio seems to have been a popular media that many people (71.1%) receive the messages from followed by Video Van (65.6%) and the street dram being third media (53.3%).

Sources of information related with gender based violence

Sources of information	Tititheriya	Shamserganja	Rajhena	Total	%
Television	21	8	14	43	47.8
Radio	25	18	21	64	71.1
Newspaper	19	11	13	43	47.8
Street drama	14	21	13	48	53.3
Rally	9	11	13	33	36.7
Video Van	17	19	23	59	65.6
School going kids	14	11	15	40	44.4
Other (mention)	1	1	1	3	3.3
Total	120	100	113	333	
Percentage	36.0	30.0	33.9	100.0	

Increased understanding of 'domestic violence'; The study with the stakeholders including women and men groups, clearly depict that understanding of domestic violence as such and its types has seen positive change among the people in the project VDCs. Compared to the baseline data, number of respondents having broad understanding, of what a domestic violence is, has drastically changed. While 61.6 % of respondents consider all six types of behavior from family members as domestic violence this number was just 16% during the baseline study. Though the number of perception varies among the respondents on what to be considered a domestic violence, it is clearly evident from the baseline survey that number of people who consider following behavior as domestic violence is noticeably increased:

Case Study:

Dependency is one of the causes for women to suffer DV

RekhaSunar, 28 from Rajena VDC is a best example of how financial independency reduce a chance of women suffering DV. Her husband used to misbehave her before she joined a Dalit Women Cooperative. As she started earning from her small enterprise she realized that her husband has started treating her good and taking her suggestions positively. She has found that her friends also have the same story.

- Verbal abuse by family members
- Physical abuse by family members
- Sexual abuse by family members
- Emotional abuse by family members
- Threats by family members
- Domination by family members

As revealed in the FGD (with women group) 'Domestic Violence' is a word that is a part of day-to-day communication in the community, especially in the women's group meeting. It clearly indicates that awareness among women has increased as well as they are now talking about the issue in public. When inquired what they mean by DV, women group members responded that it is a male domination in the family, physical and mental attack to women in the family, insult by family and abuses. It demonstrates that they have a comprehensive understanding of the DV concept.

Rise in the number of people understanding the reason for DV in the society

Reasons for DV	Titihariya	Shamserganja	Rajhena	Total	%
Backbiting in the society	13	16	19	48	53.3
Foreign employment	14	12	17	43	47.8
Illiteracy and poor economic condition	19	17	21	57	63.3
Family Ego	11	9	13	33	36.7
Lack of understanding	17	13	18	48	53.3
Patriarchy	14	16	21	51	56.7
Alcoholism	21	19	22	62	68.9
Lack of control	14	18	18	50	55.6
Total	123	120	149	392	
Percentage	31.4	30.6	38.0	100.0	

There seems to be multiple reasons behind the domestic violence that people are aware of Alcoholism being the major cause as indicated by most of the respondents (68.9%) followed by illiteracy and poor economic condition (63.3%), both of which are mutually reinforcing as well. Apart from some conventional causes like this an emerging cause is skyrocketing the problem. Women group members claim that social attitude and unnecessary concerns about personal life and tendency in making false accusation, especially against the mobility of women in the absence of their husband working abroad, makes male members of the family upset and they become violent without triangulating if the accusation against women (their wife, sister and in-laws) is true. With the rise in number of migrant workers going out of the country in recent days this is likely to have bigger impact on the DV issue in the days to come.

Increased knowledge on Nepali policy provision against DV: As a result of the project intervention, vast majority of people in the project area are made aware of the Nepali policy provisions against DV, a fundamental requirement for people to trust the system and seek legal remedy, if required. It is found that about 87% of the people aware of the legal frameworks including policy provisions against domestic violence, which is a great achievement, especially in such a remote area characterized with low level of literacy and poor human development index.

Understanding about National policy	Titihariya	Shamserganja	Rajhena	Total	Percentage
Yes	2	9	1	12	13.3
No	27	20	31	78	86.7
Total	29	29	32	90	100.0

Moreover, people have positive feeling towards the Act. They feel that the Act grants a woman, in case she becomes a victim of domestic violence, some benefits in her favor including protection order, compensation order, residence order, monetary relief order among others. These orders are crucial for women in Nepal as in most of the cases, women don't own livelihood assets such as land, house, and other physical properties consequently being dependent to men.

Successful strategies or initiatives that made it possible to deliver results: It is reaffirmed from the interaction with the stakeholders in Nepalgunj what the project partners have claimed so far with regard to the project strategy that helped deliver project results the ways envisaged. The consultant team has come to a conclusion that some of the approaches adapted by the project are worth replicating. These include:

- A combination of various means of awareness that supplemented and complemented the content as well as the medium of people's choice and time. As the project has mobilized varieties of media (video van, street theaters and media mobilization) to reach out to the public with the message, it helped in two different ways: firstly, people had various options, based on their access to it, to get the message on DV issue, Secondly, multiple media reinforced the message constantly and consistently.
- Mobilization of religious leaders and other local CBOs has also been found effective in community mobilization towards addressing DV issues.
- Project worked both on the supply and demand side of the governance where people were made aware of the existing legal frameworks and were empowered to claim for their rights whereas the constant engagement with supply side helped make the supply side ready to provide quality service.
- Legal awareness of the people was complemented with the linkages with legal aid services available in the district that increased the chances for people to have increased access to justice.

Impact

Changed perception of people towards filing the case: A marked change in the perception of people has been noticed in the project area. In a traditional society characterized with patriarchal norms and values where filing case against men members of household and society used to be a taboo, people are now found to perceive that filing a case should be a matter of personal choice of DV survivors. More than 50% of the respondents are of the opinion that those people who want to file the case can file. This change has a long-term consequence in the battle against DV as it indicates a supportive mass to those willing to file the case are present in the area and it acts as a conducive environment where usually the DV cases used to be kept confined within the family and society.

Growing positive response of police while filing the case: Apart from increasing readiness among the people at large, another change with long-term consequences is the growing positive response of police while filing the case. A vast majority of the respondents are of the opinion that police response is changing positively. About more than 80% of the respondents feel it is either 'getting positive' or 'positive'. Though not at par fully as expected it to be (19% still feel it is frustrating) the responses tend to be changing.

The response of police	Titihariya	Shamserganja	Rajhena	Total	Percentage
Frustrating	7	3	7	17	18.89
Getting positive	20	22	19	61	67.78
Positive	2	4	6	12	13.33
Total	29	29	32	90	100.00

Media becoming sensitive while disseminating the information regarding DV: Media, a fourth organ of the state, is increasingly sensitive and this is what respondents feel. Choosing the word, giving the voice to the DV survivors and making space for such issues in the media are some of the noticeable changes people have observed in the recent years. As indicated in the survey and triangulated by the people during the stakeholder meeting a clear majority of people are happy with the media coverage on the DV issue. About 81% of the respondents feel that the media is either sensitive or good enough while reporting/disseminating the information regarding DV.

Altogether, three key pillars of a sustainable changes in the society is evident. While on the people's level there is a readiness to file the case and go for legal action against DV perpetrators, the media is getting more sensitive towards the DV survivors and presenting the issues/information accordingly the FIR registration at the police station is also getting easier. It will have a long-term impact to the society. Empowered women groups and the networks at the district level have started advocating for the change in the situation of DV in the districts and as a result there is a growing awareness and increasing trend of sending girls also to the school as boys do.

Sustainability

- There is a very good example of one of the modality, that the project introduced, been scaled up and replicated by other development partners as well. Video Van Awareness campaign, an innovative concept has been replicated by Institute of Human Rights Communication, Nepal (IHRICON) in one of its ongoing project in eastern Tarai, funded by the Finland Embassy in Nepal, with a great success. In addition to that IHRICON has been recognized as an institution promoting awareness through Video Van Campaign and as a result, it has been successful to incorporate this concept in one of its three years long project recently funded by the Governance Facility, a funding mechanism created by the Danish Embassy, Swiss Embassy and DFID in Nepal.
- Partnership of some of the project partners are still continue in other project. IHRICON and Sancharika Samuha have again initiated a joint project that aims to address DV issues in Nepal including those hard hit by the earthquake where Sancharika will be leading a media campaign against DV and IHRICON will be working on outreach program including Video Van Campaign in both Tarai and Mountain districts.
- As the project has worked on both the supply and demand side of the governance with particular focus on making the duty bearers accountable to their duty the changes in their behavior, as noticed by a large segment of the stakeholders and beneficiaries in the project areas, has increased a likelihood of people demanding for justice and the government line agencies serving the needy one.
- Women network and their engagement with government line agencies is another sustainable foundation for the project results continue to serve the society.
- Increasing positive response and sensitivity of the media towards the domestic violence issues is another condition that is more likely to continue putting pressure to the government line agencies to make the quality service available and at the same time, making people aware of their rights.
- It is reported by the beneficiaries themselves that there are some successful cases where women group members took the DV cases to the judicial actions and extended its support to the victims and helped them

access justice. Such example will have lasting impact to the other potential victims in boosting their confidence

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Rates of domestic and family violence are higher in the rural and remote areas. Geographical and social structures in these communities, as well as unique social values and norms, result in specific experiences of domestic violence. These issues also affect responses to domestic and family violence in non-urban communities, and women's ability to seek help and access services. Poor understanding of domestic and family violence by health, social and legal services in the rural and remote communities has been identified as a significant issue for survivors of domestic and family violence. Geographically the diversity of the nature of domestic violence in Nepal is very common. However, women in the rural and remote areas are more likely than women in urban areas to experience domestic and family violence. Similarly, women living in the rural and remote areas who experience domestic and family violence face specific issues related to their geographical location and the cultural and social characteristics of living in small communities. There is a common view in rural communities that "family problems" such as domestic and family violence are not talked about, which serves to silence women's experience of domestic violence and deter them from disclosing violence and abuse. In addition to that, fear of stigma, shame, community gossip, and a lack of perpetrator accountability deter women from seeking help are another reason of domestic violence in rural Nepal. A lack of privacy due to the high likelihood that police, health professionals and domestic and family violence workers know both the victim and perpetrator can inhibit women's willingness to use local services. Therefore, women who do seek help find difficulty in accessing services due to geographical isolation, lack of transportation options and not having access to their own income.

Despite some minor issues with regard to the 'control' and 'accountability' of the results (some indicators set out for outputs, outcomes and impact are somewhat overlapping and even cross-posting in some instances) that project wish to deliver during the project period the project has been a relevant and appropriate intervention in the areas with widespread domestic violence. It has further supplemented and complemented the government policies and programs. Despite some areas for improvement, the project has delivered most of its stipulated outputs, which is within its direct management control. Most of the planned activities are found to have been carried out almost within the scheduled timeframe and the planned results are fairly delivered. The research found that there is a critical mass aware of their rights and entitlements including available legal services in the districts and the service delivery end is sensitized and have started dealing with the DV survivors sensitively hereby having some demonstration effect to increase access of those marginalized victims to the justice.

- Despite gradual decrease of the DV cases in the community people have changed their mind and are demanding for legal remedy and the community engagement in case of DV has increased.
- Role of government and CSOs in such cases have been noticeably increased but the people are having critical observation to their performance, a positive indicator that demonstrates growing awareness and ownership among the people.
- Women incensement in the action against DV in the community is on rise, that indicates breaking silence and barrier to their horizontal mobility, with several success example.
- Majority of people are aware of the available legal frameworks, policies, and acts and are convinced that presence of the Act has several benefits to women who survive a violence at home. Some of the activities have made some long term impact in the society through combination of varieties of means to make both the supply and demand side aware of their rights and duties. It has successfully mobilized various segments of the society including religious leaders, local opinion makers.
- Wider mass including women in general and DV survivors in particular have changed attitude towards filing the case, in case of DV occurrence. It has further been reported that police response while filing the case is also growing positive and media support has also contributed towards this end.
- Use of the legal services and engagement of social actors in case of DV in the community has been increased

Integrated model of mobilizing various actors with complimentary and supplementary skills has been replicated in other projects as well by the partners and Video Van Campaign has been acknowledged by various stakeholders including international development institutions working in Nepal.

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