

## KOSHISH's response against COVID-19 pandemic

Since the beginning of lockdown due to COVID-19 in Nepal, KOSHISH has been providing mental health and psychosocial support services virtually through its Psychologists, Counselors, Social Workers and Mental Health Experts to the people who are in need.

As KOSHISH has been already implementing community mental health programs in Gorkha, Lamjung and Tanahun districts, it has extended Toll-Free service to reach out more people in Gandaki Province who are in need of mental health and psychosocial support during this pandemic. So far, 1024 persons received mental health and psychosocial support including 8 women with severe mental health issue received specialized mental health care at KOSHISH's Transit Care Centre.



### Psychological First Aid and Psychoeducation

195 persons (84 M, 111 F)

### Counseling

110 sessions (35 M, 75 F)

### Follow up

612 persons (218 M, 394 F)

### Referral

99 persons (47 M, 52 F)

### Mental Health Specialized Care

8 Women

## Post-landslide Psychological First Aid in Tanahun

Torrential rainfall induced landslides at different locations of Tanahun District and swept away several houses causing deaths and tormented many people on 13th July. 11 people died and more than 200 families were displaced due to landslide in Tanahun.

Post the disaster, KOSHISH team of Tanahun went to the affected places with an aim to provide Psychological First Aid to the affected people and assessed the need of psychosocial support. The team visited Manjhanta, Byas-9, Tanahun where three persons of a family died, one went missing



KOSHISH KOSHISH KOSHISH KOSHISH KOSHISH

and one needed intensive hospitalization.

After generally assessing the situation through participatory observation and communication with the related government employees and Female Community Health Volunteer, as per need, Psychological First Aid was provided, whilst above pictured location is the school from Manjhanta where many families are receiving temporary shelter whose living settlements' are at risk.

In partnership with CBM, KOSHISH has been implementing Community Mental Health program in Tanahun from past 6 years, and in Gorkha and Lamjung districts from previous year with the aim of mainstreaming mental health in the government health system.

## Mainstreaming Psychosocial Disability through Self-Advocates

With the aim of addressing the need of immediate response during COVID 19 pandemic in the province-1 inclusive of disability and marginalized groups, and to mainstream psychosocial disability in the disability momentum, KOSHISH has started implementation of a project in Biratnagar, and Morang of Province-1 from June, 2020.

The project, in close collaboration with the National Federation of Disabled Nepal and local authorities of Province-1, will identify disability and marginalized groups requiring support and link them with available mainstream services being provided by the government and non-government actors. Likewise, peer support services will be available for them as well. The project will facilitate in formation of peer support groups in the Province where they will gather in a safe environment, share and support each

Other on a bi-weekly basis. The group members will also be provided capacity building programs in terms of the rights ensured by the Constitution of Nepal 2015, Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2017 and UNCRPD and will be encouraged to become self-advocates.

Advocacy campaigns and sensitization programs will be carried out with the local authorities by self-advocates, NFDN members and representatives from cross disability organizations to encourage them to develop plans and programs for persons with disabilities which are inclusive of psychosocial disability as well. Sensitized local authorities and NFDN representatives through the project will contribute towards mainstreaming of the issues of psychosocial disability in Province-1. This two-year project is supported by Open Society Policy Center, USA.

## KOSHISH represents National Disability Directive Committee



Mr. Matrika Devkota, founding chairperson of KOSHISH has been appointed as a member of the National Disability Directive Committee, which has been formed under the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens on 5th July 2020 to facilitate policy work related with disability. Mr. Devkota was selected among those who have made significant contributions to promote psychosocial disability at the national level.

## Psychosocial Support and First aid as COVID-19 Response in Bagmati and Gandaki Province

KOSHISH has been implementing Psychosocial Support and First aid program as COVID-19 Response in Bagmati and Gandaki Province from June, 2020. Three psychologists/counselors in each province have been regularly providing 24-hours tele-counseling service to the persons having psychological distress and problems. They are providing various types of psychosocial support (including psychosocial counseling, Follow-up, Coordination and referral).

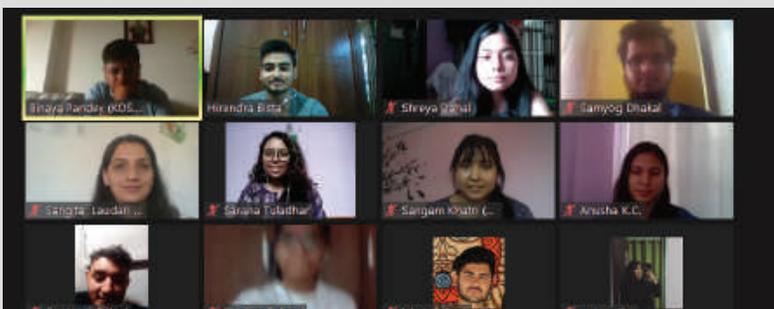


To address the emotional and social needs of the people affected by COVID-19 crisis, toll-free number 1660-61-52007 is established to provide tele-counseling services to residents of Gandaki province for reducing worry, anxiety and stress-related to COVID-19 crisis. Two Psychosocial counsellors and a Psychologist have been responding to the incoming calls on sequential-basis. Likewise, another toll-free number 166001-22322 is already in operation for the similar services to the residents in Bagmati Province, where the persons. Audio and visual public service announcements (PSA) on COVID-19 and its impact to the psychosocial wellbeing of persons have been developed and broadcast

through FM radios and also shared through social media for mass awareness.

The COVID-19 Response projects in Gandaki Province is supported by Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and Bagmati Province is supported by FELM.

## Virtual Orientation on Mental health and Suicide Prevention



With the aim to enhance the understanding of college students regarding mental health, mental wellbeing and suicide prevention and to promote mental wellbeing, KOSHISH conducted an interactive session with youth's of Kathmandu University School of Science. Nature and Social Concern Society (NSCS) from the department of Environmental Science and Engineering

coordinated for the virtual session. The session was conducted for two hours via ZOOM with altogether 38 participants which was facilitated by the psychologists of KOSHISH. A short question answer session was followed by the presentation were participants shared their concerns regarding mental health and suicide. All the participants appreciated the initiation and shared the commitment to keep continuing such initiatives for the promotion of mental health.

## Support system helped in recovery

Being ignored by family after experiencing mental health problems, Sarita (pseudonym) of 27 years old was living with one of her relatives in Khotang. Sarita was abandoned from her own home when she started showing unusual behavior. Her family showed hatred towards her. Despite the fact that she had a family, she spent her life as a homeless orphan. One of her relative was a teacher at the public school nearby her. He was aware about her situation so he provided a home for Sarita and his family also provided love and support for her. Knowing about her condition, he tried to reach different places for her treatment and finally he connected Sarita with KOSHISH for the support.

After initial assessment she was brought to KOSHISH by outreach team for short term residential and psychosocial support. With the continuous psychosocial support, psychiatric consultation, and therapeutic services, there was remarkable change in her mental health after certain time. But it was difficult to reintegrate her even after her recovery as her family showed unwillingness to take her back. The outreach team continuously psycho-educated her family members but they showed no interest to accept her. So her relative again took her responsibility and she has been reintegrated to her relative's home.

For now, she is staying with them but the outreach team is trying to psych-educate her family members and if they are not willing to take her back then KOSHISH will search for an organization for long term support for her. During recent follow-up, Sarita was found to be in sound health and is also involved in household activities.

She shared, "My relatives love and support me when my own family members have abandoned me because of my mental health problem."



## Coordination for strengthening referral mechanism



Social Development Ministry, Gandaki Province was formally informed about KOSHISH and the project under implementation. Likewise, Dr. Ram Bahadur K.C from Health Directorate, Gandaki Province was made aware of KOSHISH's presence in the region and informed about project objective and activities. Brief introduction about the services was provided to the attendees in a provincial-level health directorate meeting of Gandaki Province that comprised all the eleven district Heads of respective Health Units. In this sphere, through a phone conversation, local-government Presidents from Gorkha, Lamjung and Tanahu districts were contacted for coordination and cooperation.

In consideration to NGOs, Team Manager and Coordinator Mr Krishna Lamichhane from CBRS, an organization working in the field of disability assured to cooperate in strengthening referral mechanism. Apart from this, NFDN Gandaki Province president Mr Khum Raj Sharma visited KOSHISH's thereby expressed his opinion on rights and status of persons with disability in the region. Further, Mr Sharma showed keen interest to coordinate and cooperate in the identification and referral of persons with disability to facilitate the ongoing project.



**KOSHISH**  
National Mental Health  
Self- Help Organization

Bagdol-4, Lalitpur, NEPAL  
Tel: +977 1 5190103, Toll Free: 16001-22322  
Email: info@koshishnepal.org  
URL: www.koshishnepal.org

**Support to Help combat the COVID-19 Crisis**

Your donation can provide basic needs and essential drugs to people who are in need during the COVID-19 crisis in Nepal.