

UPAKAR (Towards Recovery...)

Background

The devastating 7.6 Richter scale Gorkha earthquake of April 15, 2015 claimed more than 8,000 lives and injured over 22,000 people across 14 hilly districts of western and central Nepal. The district of Sindhupalchowk was hit hardest, in that 3,550 were killed, thousands were injured and 64,565 rendered homeless. Within days following the devastation caused by the earthquake FAIRMED joined hands with the international community and engaged in rescue and relief works in two Village Development Committees (VDCs), Palchowk and Baskharka, Sindhupalchowk.

Over the course of its relief work, FAIRMED identified that the earthquake had badly damaged health facilities, disrupting the people's access to health. During any natural calamities, access to health facilities is of prime need as it helps to prevent potential epidemic outbursts while providing required life saving medicines and treatment.

UPAKAR



FAIRMED designed UPAKAR project in October, 2015 to support the District Health Office (DHO) to resume critically-needed health services following the earthquake and continuing aftershocks in 12 VDCs (now two rural municipalities and one municipality). UPAKAR aims to strengthen mechanism for health service delivery, improve health seeking behavior among women, children and people living with disability by reprioritizing their need for health care. The project enables targeted health facilities to provide basic health care services to communities by strengthening physical and technical capacities of health facilities and staff. It also promotes access to health facilities through awareness and counseling.

FAIRMED follows 'a twin track approach' of Disability Inclusive Development (DID). The twin track approach focuses on *disability inclusive mainstreaming* and *disability specific interventions*. DID helps to avert frequent violations of the rights of the people with disabilities through awareness that promote right based perspectives among communities and service providers. FAIRMED's strategic intervention is strengthening health service

delivery capacity of the DHO, improving health seeking behavior among women, children, and persons living with disability in two Village Municipalities; PanchpokhariThangpal rural municipality, Helambu rural municipality and Melamchi municipality.

The project is implemented in close collaboration with the DHO from its office centered in Melamchi, the junction of FAIRDMED working areas. Since its implementation, UPAKAR has created synergy between its global organizational mandate to work in disability with specific focus on people with disabilities who have been affected by the earthquake. Related activities include disability mapping, screening camp for physical disabilities, support for the follow-up treatments etc.

Our Interventions:

- 1) Enable the 12 identified VDCs of Sindhupalchowk to deliver basic health care services to the communities by strengthening physical and technical capacity of the health facilities/health workers including the Health Management Information System (HMIS) to re-function, strengthening surveillance & replenishment of damaged equipment, based on the need assessment of the health facilities.
- 2) Raise awareness and provide counseling to pregnant and lactating women for healthy pregnancy outcomes and care of new born and children < five years by reverting their needs and priorities through community mobilization.
- 3) Promote inclusive health care services, ensuring accessibility to people with disabilities during the recovery period.
- 4) Support referral systems and strengthen networks for EQ affected communities and families with various supporting organizations (government as well as non-government)

Target Groups

Beneficiaries: 108 mothers' groups (around 2,200 mothers, 12 HFOMCs (132 members), 13 health facilities (including 1PHC), 108 FCHVs, approx. 20,000 women and children, approx. 500 persons with disability.

Targeted Population: 43,716 (10,166 households)

Major achievements

- Provided essential medical equipment to 5 health facilities and furniture to 12 health facilities, as per need.
- *108 FCHVs from 12 health facilities trained on birth preparedness package.*
- *21 earthquake injured people were supported by transportation allowance for follow up treatment*
- *38 people with disability supported with assistive devices and referral for further rehabilitation and treatment as per need*
- *Self-help groups of people with disabilities formed to educate and aware on their rights and government provisions*
- *Rural municipalities have started to allocate fund for people with disability.*
- *12 Health Facility Operation and Management Committees have been strengthened through HFOMC training*
- *2,200 women affected by earthquake benefiting from Emergency Obstetric Care (EOC)*

- *Skills training and financial support for 55 people with disabilities to make bamboo stool (muda), soap making, poultry and goat rearing*
- *5 health facilities supported with rehabilitation of water supply system*
- *Public toilets constructed in 3 health facilities to maintain sanitation and hygiene the district.*

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