

# **Common Charter of Demands by Women's Groups in Nepal for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in the Post-Disaster Humanitarian Response**

We, women's groups/organisations from Nepal offer our sincerest condolences over the tragedy that has unfolded as a result of the two earthquakes on 25 April and 12 May 2015. We are deeply saddened by the loss of life and the extensive damage suffered and remain concerned for the welfare of those injured and displaced. We stand ready to extend our support to the people of Nepal.

Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC Nepal), SAATHI, Feminist Dalit Organisation, JAGRAN Nepal, Forum for Women Law & Development (FWLD), Women for Human Rights, Single Women Group (WHR), Beyond Beijing Committee, Media Advocacy Group (MAG), Sancharika Samuha and Home Net South Asia

Humanitarian assistance should be gender sensitive and address women's specific practical and strategic needs. Understanding gender differences, inequalities and capacities will improve the effectiveness of our humanitarian response and we must work together to promote and achieve gender equality — this is a shared responsibility of all humanitarian actors.

## **Women's representation and leadership**

Humanitarian coordination should enable a formal, meaningful consultative forum with women's groups/networks to ensure a gender lens in the assessment, planning, prioritization, coordination, development and implementation of policies and programs.

Recovery, relief and re-habilitation efforts must reflect the voices of women and the vital leadership role women can play in shaping priorities for relief and reconstruction.

Deploy women into technical and decision making roles and ensure all humanitarian responders consult with and involve women's civil society groups and women of all ages, including those hard to reach (female headed households) or at risk such as women with disabilities/elderly women.

## **Food security, shelter and sustainable livelihoods**

Needs assessments must consult with women and men of all ages, disaggregate data by sex and age and explicitly address the capacities and needs of women and girls, as well as men and boys in protection and service delivery.

Ensure equal access to food security and shelter for women by involving women in the design and distribution of food and water and sanitation programmes, including women and their families in the rural areas and in camp situations.

Ensure women are represented in any decision making and consultation forum and women are provided with livelihoods and income generation opportunities, based on direct consultation with them to ensure activities are tailored to their needs, circumstances, and capacities.

Provide immediate financial support to local women's groups including women's civil society groups who are already working with local affected people and have the local knowledge and resources necessary to rapidly identify and meet the priority needs of all members of the community.

### **Prevention of violence against women and girls**

Take immediate action to prevent all forms of gender based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, which rapidly increase in the aftermath of a disaster. Take special actions to protect adolescent girls who are at the highest risk of GBV.

Review institutional, regulatory/policy and legal frameworks to ensure their responsiveness to women's issues.

Provide refresher and new courses at village and neighborhood level to train women in health services, including health-education, child-delivery and mother-child health-care.

### **Special programmes for women**

Establish a women's fund for women-specific programmes (prioritizing issues for women with disabilities including access) and ensuring a formal role for women's organizations in the management and disbursement of such a fund.

Address women and adolescence girls' specific needs related with sexual and reproductive health (for instance hygiene and sanitary items required during menstruation, and postpartum period including items such as toilet chair, wheel chair, urine bag etc.) to address the specific needs of women with disability and elderly women.

Systematic and institutional coordination with women's groups is critical at all stages of the relief and reconstruction efforts including in deliberations on resource mobilization with development partners.

Develop and issue gender sensitive guidelines for the relief and recovery phase.

The Government needs to carry out a gender needs assessment based and drawn on the gender-disaggregated data of internally displaced people to guide its decision making process and strategy of redistribution.

Women need to be considered equitably under the welfare and social protection programmes and share in goods and services being distributed by Government, Development Partners and CSOs. Ensure a proactive role for women's organizations in monitoring the impact of relief and recovery programmes.

Ensure women have access to relevant, consistent and timely information to make informed decisions.

\*The Common Charter of Demands has been prepared in kind facilitation of UN Women Nepal.