

THE FEDO QUARTERLY POST

The Official newsletter of Feminist Dalit Organization



16 DAY CAMPAIGN ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In order to control, prevent and keep people safe from the pandemic, Nepal Government imposed and extended lockdown several times but we still couldn't be free from the patriarchy community which created an environment where women and girls specifically from marginalized group (Dalit) were vulnerable toward the violence.

So, coinciding the occasion of the 16-day campaign against gender-based violence, FEDO released a study and analysis report on violence and discrimination against Dalit women and girls. The program was organized on the 6th of December 2020 to present the result of seven-month long research study done by FEDO. The research aimed to find the types of problem/ violence faced by Dalit women and girls during this lockdown. The result obtained were discussed in front of the minister, journalists, community people, secretary of national woman commission and other members of FEDO in that event.

OTHER NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

16 day campaign on violence against women conducted by FEDO

Research done during lockdown to track the level of violence in Dalit women and girls

Skill development trainings being given to women in different district chapters of FEDO

Agricultural equipment distributed to the farmers in different districts

Seed money provided to victims of domestic violence

Orientation given to Front line leaders on sexual violence.

S.N	SUBJECT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1.	Physical Assault	74	9.4%
2.	Caste-based discrimination & untouchability	173	22%
3.	Murder	27	3.4%
4.	Murder after rape	7	0.9%
5.	Rape attempt and sexual abuse	497	63.2%
6.	Violence in the name of witchcraft	4	0.5%
	TOTAL	789	100%

The chief guest of the event was Mr. Lilanath Shrestha, the minister of women and children and senior citizens. Other panel members included Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Durga Singh Chand, Shanta Bhattarai, the secretary of National Women Commission, President of FEDO, Kala Swarnakar, Founder President of FEDO, Durga Sob and Renu Sijapati, the general secretariat of FEDO who also moderated the program.

As per the study carried out by FEDO, during this lockdown, from April to October 2020, a total of 789 dalit women and girls have experienced different types of violence.

Among the documented cases, 63.2% i.e. 497 Dalit women and girls experienced rape attempt and sexual abuse, 74 (9.4%) of them had experienced Physical Assault, likewise, 173 (22%) faced caste based discrimination and untouchability, 27 (3.4%) of them were murdered while 7 were murdered after rape. Similarly, 4 Dalit women were accused as 'bokshi' (witch) and faced physical and mental violence.

The research shows that there was a gap among Dalit women and girls in filing formal complaints which leads the occurring cases go unreported and this happens because most of the perpetrators are family members and despite of filing formal complaints, the survivors rather represses such instances even from their family members. So considering this situation some solutions and measures were discussed during the program.

The guests and the panel agreed that Dalit women and children are at risk. Teaching men and educating them on sexual violence was seen as a probable solution. The reason for violence not declining was seen as a response to offenders not being punished. Also, there was consensus on the need for separate laws and policies for women and girls of the Dalit community to ensure justice.

With the increase in gender violence, domestic violence, suicides, and other crime rates rising, SSP Durga Singh said that adolescents under the age of 20 are more likely to be victims of rape. According to her, male perpetrators are involved in more than 95 percent of the 134 incidents of rape in March, 81 Dalit women are raped of which 38 are Dalit girls. Similarly, 14 out of 49 Dalit women have been killed in 152 incidents of rape in April. Out of 36 Dalit women, 21 Dalit girls have been raped in 196 incidents of rape in May. There are 41 Dalit girls out of 51 women in 240 incidents of rape in June. Of the 446 Dalit women involved in 266 rape cases in August 19 are Dalit girls. Out of 31 Dalit women involved in 197 rape cases in August 17 are Dalit girls. As many as 7 out of 13 Dalit women have been raped in 91 incidents till September 30 of this year. According to the statistics obtained from 44 districts under 7 provinces, daily 7 women are raped out of which 3 of them are Dalit women and girls. This overall increase in the cases of gender violence has been very rampant all over Nepal, especially during the lockdown period.

The founder President of FEDO, Durga Sob shared that FEDO has been organizing the 16 days' campaign in different district chapters in order to increase awareness among the people about the gender violence in the society. It was also an attempt to advocate for women most impacted by violence during the lockdown period in Nepal and also to make the government accountable towards its role in advocating as well as working to eradicate the violence on these minorities.

*FEDO data shows that during the lockdown, from April to Oct 2020, there has been a total of **1276 rape attempt, out of which 305 is of Dalits (177 Dalit women & 128 Dalit girls)***

Along with this, she posed questions to the present members of the panel, addressing minister Shrestha on how to end the present violence and how to take responsibility to stop it.



Access to justice is the right of all people, yet Dalit women are at the bottom of the pyramid. They don't get access to basic rights and they are still facing a lot of social struggles and stigma.

Bhakta Biswokarma, a participant, also shared his perspective on how the police have not been credible towards the cases of violence against Dalit women and girls. He also pointed out how much this has been unfair to the victims of these gruesome crimes. He discussed the increased figure of Dalit violence and also talked about the lack of sensitivity when it comes to cases like these. He highlighted the need for police to be actively involved and sensitive towards these issues. All the members showed active participation in the event.

16 DAY CAMPAIGN IN DISTRICTS



During the 16-day campaign against gender-based violence, various district chapters of FEDO organized as well as participated in events related to the uplifting and advocacy of Dalit women. With consideration of the Covid-19 situation, measures were taken while conducting these events.



Also, a lot of our district chapters could not conduct or be a part of the campaign because of the spread of the pandemic as well as local government restrictions. Though, FEDO Dhangadi organized awareness program on gender-based violence and discrimination on Dalit women and girls.

Coinciding the occasion of 16-day campaign against gender-based violence, on 25th November- 10th December 2020 FEDO organized White Ribbon Campaign at Banke district, where white ribbon was distributed among people to show solidarity to fight against any form of violence against women and girls.



Importance and reason for conducting the campaign were discussed during the monthly meeting of women groups created by FEDO. Door to door campaigning was done to increase awareness on the violence faced by women. Also, youths at schools were given orientation while women representatives from FEDO participated in ward level programs to support the campaign. Frontline Dalit leaders were given an orientation on sexual violence and discussions on advocacy of Dalit women were facilitated.



Glimpses of Interaction program organized in different district chapters of FEDO



Representation of 16 days campaign

FEDO Bardiya sent its representatives to different parts of the district to ensure participation. They also participated on a silent rally to support the rights of women. Finally they did campaigning on violence against women.

In Dang, members of FEDO participated in the events organized to support the sixteen-day campaign by the municipality. Similarly, in Banke, representatives participated in other forums during the campaign. Also, seven survivors of violence were provided with help by giving them food and other necessary resources.

On 10th of December, a media program was organized where print, radio as well as television media participated to discuss reports on violence against Dalit women.

FEDO Dadeldhura started the campaign with local bodies and the municipality. Programs were organized for the campaign and members of FEDO Dadeldhura participated in these events. They also organized a dialogue with the media on the research report. On the occasion of the campaign, jingles were played on the radio for raising awareness among people.



Radio program to increase awareness

ORIENTATION GIVEN TO FRONT LINE DALIT WOMEN LEADERS



Front line women Dalit leaders were given orientation on sexual violence. Figures of violence on Dalit women and girls were shared with the leaders. This orientation campaign was very effective in making these women leaders aware on the issues faced by Dalit women and girls in the community. Other problems were discussed and plans were made on how to tackle as well as advocate for these issues.

Awareness programs and orientations like these are very important in making leaders aware of the crisis faced by the community. This helps leaders know more about the problems of the people and puts them in the direction of solving them. Dalit women leaders are the representatives of the Dalit women community and their involvement in orientation of sexual violence is important as it leads to a better understanding of the issue as well as to an improved advocacy. The orientation was thus organized for the very purpose of ensuring representation and increasing advocacy for Dalit women and their issues.



Likewise, the journalists were given an orientation on the gender violence faced by Dalit women. This involvement ensured participation from not just women, but also men of the society. In order to ensure a just and equity-based society, all of its members have to be involved in the process of advocacy and change. This involvement with journalists ensured that.



There were many activities done in different FEDO chapters all over Nepal to ensure participation and information dissemination. These activities made people aware on gender violence and how it impacts Dalit women in our society.



FEDO has been working to reduce poverty and violence and create a society that is fair and safe for Dalit women. It has been conducting different programs to advocate for the current situation of Dalit women. It aims to make the government of Nepal take responsibility for the Dalit community so they can work towards building a equitable society for everyone, including Dalit women. FEDO wants to ensure access to resources and justice and representation of Dalit women. It has been working for the rights of Dalit women and it will further work to ensure the same.

CONTACT US

Feminist Dalit Organization(FEDO)
Kupandole, Lalitpur
GPO Box: 4366, Kathmandu
Tel: 5543986, 5520982
Fax: 5520982

Email: dms.fedo@gmail.com
Website: www.fedonepal.org
Like us:
www.facebook.com/FEDOnepal