



## PROJECT VENUE



The project is situated in Simikot, Humla. This district headquarter lies at 3000m above sea level in the total northwest of the Nepalese Himalayan mountains. Due to the steep and sparse environment and long winters, inhabitants sometimes suffer up to six months from hunger. Furthermore, extreme poverty perpetuates dangerous customs, exploitation and gender-based violence.

## THE DAILY LIFE OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women and girls face a variety of forms of discrimination on a daily basis, such as; almost no access to education, forced marriages, exploitation in the household, physical and sexual violence, no decision-making power, and total dependence on the family patriarch. For many young women and girls between 14 to 49 years of age seems suicide the only escape from this hopeless situation.



Moreover, in the west of Nepal, women and girls, including their small children and babies are banned from the house when she is menstruating or for 30 days when a woman has given birth to a newborn. They sleep outside in makeshifts, in danger to fall victim of sexual harassment, attacks from wild animals, and kidnapping. Frozen temperatures up to minus 20 degrees can cause tissue damage and infectious diseases. It is not a rare occasion that women suffer from severe physical and mental issues due to this custom.





## WE HELP HELPING



In our women centre, we offer women, girls and their children refuge during banning and protection from physical as well as sexual violence.

In order to provide further assistance and facilitate sustainable change, female visitors can participate in programs, which enable women and girls to end violence and oppression in the long term.

Empowerment does not only mean to change someone's life, it means to create the liberty for people to change their lives on their own. Only then societies will develop. We consider this approach our code of practice.



## EXPERTS OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Women, girls and the community know their needs better than anyone else, hence we actively engaged everyone in the planning process of the project. All our programs were designed and are continuously developed further by the beneficiaries themselves. This concept has won the acceptance and ownership of the society, what guarantees positive sustainable development.





## GAINING KNOWLEDGE - DEMANDING RIGHTS

In our social groups, the participants learn about their rights and how to advocate for them; the right to a life without violence, the right to sexual self-determination, and the right to education, health, and decision-making.

Our group sessions convey information, which strengthens self-confidence and train women to spokespersons in public meetings. This way women are able to voice their struggles in front of the community.

The focus in our health sessions lies mainly on the menstruation cycle. For instance, women learned how to sew sanitary pads as a first step to be able to sleep at home and go to school during their period as their menstrual hygiene improved.

And the men? Men began to visit our men's-groups, where they are sensitized to women's- rights, and get aware about non-violent conflict resolutions in the family. Therefore, violence against women and girls can be halted.



## CONSOLIDATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE



Our participants create their own radio program in order to remember, discuss and disperse the gained knowledge from our group sessions with the population of Humla. This achievement does not only intensify the cohesion among the women and deepens their understanding, but the information gets broadcasted beyond Simikot's borders to the entire region with its 50'000 inhabitants!



## DEVELOPING LIVELIHOODS - REDUCING DEPENDENCY

An important part of our work is the creation of new sources of income. The aim is to reduce financial dependency on male family members. Through our vocational trainings in the agricultural sector, beneficiaries gain skills to cultivate the barren ground and to build greenhouses. Each group is responsible for organizing the cultivation of a parcel and a greenhouse by themselves. The women plant rare sorts of vegetables, which are sold for a good price in the market. Furthermore, Mahila Avaz runs two chicken farms and has trained several beekeepers. Honey and eggs as essential produce for self-dependence!



## WHY TO SUPPORT US?

We turn those affected into active players instead of passive aid recipients. We are the only active NGO in Simikot. De facto no administration and marketing costs accumulate, hence all donations run into the project.

We rely on private donations - Please assist us so we can continuously accompany women and girls on their path to a self-determined life, free of violence.



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