

NEPAL POLICE (NP)

ISSUES FACED BY NEPAL POLICE'S (NP) OFFICERS

The major issue identified was the *problem of stress among police staff*. The causes were identified as *insufficient hearing of staff complaints and grievances, lack of refreshment and entertainment, lack of psychological support and distance from family and relatives*. The effects of the aforementioned causes were identified as *bad mood and aggressive behaviour and an inability to constructively problemsolve*. *Frustration with stress may lead to inhumane and degrading treatment of service seekers*.

NP'S RESULTS

NP's project led by SP Kedar Rajaure

Project objective: Stress will be reduced at the Dailekh District Police Office (DPO) and staff will perform in a friendly and professional manner.

Key results: The 105 police personnel received training on the causes of stress and stress reduction techniques. A feedback box and e-mail for the officers to raise work-related concerns and grievances was introduced. As result of the new system, bi-monthly staff meetings are now introduced and the officers receive weekly recreational and refreshment programmes. As an additional activity, personnel from the Women and Children Cell of the District Police Office Dailekh received Training of Trainers (TOT) on intensive psychosocial counselling skills and techniques and have begun to give counselling to the police personnel. This initiative will help to sustain the results of the project beyond the project completion date.

“As a district commander, previously I used to feel like a commander, to command all the police officers of the district. Now with the introduction of the bi-monthly meeting for complaint hearing and listening to the emotional feedbacks and suggestions of my officers, I feel more like I am the guardian of all the police officers in district.” Quote from SP Kedar Rajaure.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NP TO TAKE FORWARD

Initiatives to improve the work environment

- Expand the following activities and mechanisms to other workstations in Nepal: Offer a stress-management/reduction training, install feedback boxes or other mechanisms for concerns and grievances to be heard and host bi-monthly meetings and recreational activities for staff.
- Review and resolve concerns and grievances at least on a bi-monthly basis, whether through an email, application, mailbox or the feedback box.

Training

- Enable the central Training Centres and Regional Training Centres to provide a few days intensive ToT to representatives of all Area Police Offices (APO) to ensure all police officers receive similar training.
- Provide the police personnel from Women and Children Cells an intensive, minimum six-month training on psychosocial counselling with a diploma certificate.

ARMED POLICE FORCE (APF)

ISSUES FACED BY APF'S OFFICERS

The major problem identified was *increasing occupational stress* at APF. *Occupational stress* was identified as one of the root causes of cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. The working environment affects the behaviour of any individual. Thus, stress reduction and improved work environment is essential in order to mitigate the probable misbehaviour.

APF'S RESULTS

APF's project led by SSP Durga Bhattarai

Project objective: The APF STF battalion will design, introduce and evaluate a stress management program and given recommendations for institutionalization of such programs.

Key results: Eighty-five battalion officers were pre- and post-tested for stress, anxiety and depression. Pre-data showed that a majority of the officers had high levels of stress, anxiety and depression. Following a seven-day yoga programme, the post-questionnaire resulted in a 7.67%, 10.61% and 19.28% reduction in the stress, anxiety, and depression scores of the male participants, respectively. Conversely, the scores increased for females. The project trained four officers as yoga instructors. The Human Resource Department at APF received policy recommendations regarding the need to tackle high stress levels of officers.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APF TO TAKE FORWARD

- Encourage APF to initiate a stress management training and yoga programme to help mitigate the high stress environment.
- Replicate the project in other units. It is equally relevant to NP and other security agencies experiencing stressful working conditions.

MINISTRY OF FOREST AND SOIL CONSERVATION (MOFSC)

ISSUES FACED BY MOFSC'S OFFICERS

The major issue identified was poor personnel management resulting in a high level of work stress. The absence of clear incentives and poor management often led to poor service delivery, human rights violations and high stress.

MOFSC'S RESULTS

Department of Forest's (DoF) project led by Section Officer Binod Devkota

Project objective: District Forest Office (DFO) Morang will introduce effective stress coping initiatives that can enable personnel to provide effective and human rights friendly services.

Key results: The project effectively trained 24 officers and workers about human rights, national human rights plans, good governance and stress management techniques. The pre- and post-knowledge test show that, on average, officers increased their knowledge by 13.8 %. Most knowledge was gained about the *qualities and main principles on human rights* and *national plans on human rights* with an average increase of 16.43 % and 22.14 % respectively. Less knowledge was gained regarding *good governance*, which only had an average of 6 % increase. Before the project, staff at the DFO viewed use of torture and high stress level as part of life and their job. After completing a training on the principles and importance of human rights, how to respect them in the workplace, and stress reduction interventions, the project manager found the staff to be more energetic and responsible. Their attitude towards principles and importance of human rights, personnel management and good governance in the forestry sector is now positive.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOFSC TO TAKE FORWARD

- Encourage the DFO to incorporate this training program into its annual planning.
- If able to continue with such programmes, the project manager should conduct Training Needs Assessments and Training Impact Assessments to identify changes in behaviours of staff and evaluate the quality of training.

CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL INSTITUTIONS

During a three-day learning workshop in August 2017, officers working within this theme developed joint learning points, key recommendations and suggestions for next steps for their institutions.

Key learning points:

- Stress and its causes are contextual: lack of incentives, lack of inclusion and work-burden are some of the many challenges.

Key recommendations (in order of priority):

- Implement research and reform of existing policy by concerned ministry immediately and on a regular basis to enhance the work environment.
- Conduct regular trainings by institutions on an annual basis, at a minimum.
- Ensure regular implementation of policy and regulations by organizations.
- Stakeholders of concerned organisations should perform regular monitoring and evaluations.

Next steps:

- Disseminate skills and knowledge regarding the creation of a conducive working environment, stress management and gender inclusion.
- Establish a counselling desk.
- Conduct Research: Data collection, analysis and reporting of results.

LINKS TO INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

The Enhancing Good Governance and Human Rights (EGHR) project has developed a simple database linking the individual projects to the *Fourth National Plan of Actions on Human Rights*, the *Universal Periodic Review (accepted recommendations)* and the *Convention Against Torture* (the list of Issues prior to the III-V State report). Government agencies can use this database for implementation of plans, national and international human rights reporting, impact evaluation of the work and for planning of future work.

The Kathmandu Resolution on Prevention of Torture developed together with Government agencies under the EGHR project in 2015, made pledges to improve the working conditions of the police and law enforcement officers. This is in accordance with the works done by the officers in the EGHR project.

THE KATHMANDU RESOLUTION ON PREVENTION OF TORTURE, 2015

Excerpts from relevant sections of the resolution:

Resolution 4: *“The participants of the Conference affirmed the need to focus on police and law enforcement officers’ working conditions, working hours and working facilities as one of the factors of stress, which may increase risk of torture, cruel inhuman or degrading treatment. The conference participants recommend the Government of Nepal to undertake further initiatives to improve the police and law enforcement officers’ working conditions.”*

Resolution 5, second paragraph: *“The participants of conference also recommend for equipping the justice actors under the ministry with required forensic scientific and technological equipment and necessary continuous human rights training activities.”*

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