

Community centers/safe places to offer protection to women and girls from gender based violence and provide legal, psychosocial and vocational services to affected communities



Background

A powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 7.9 degrees in the Richter scale struck Peru on the 15 August 2007, seriously damaging hospitals, schools, churches and government buildings (at least 85% of housing has been damaged) in the cities of Pisco, Chincha Alta, Ica and Cañete in the departments of Ica and south of Lima. At this time, the death toll stands at over 500 and the number of injured exceeds the thousand (both these numbers are likely to increase since there are still areas that have not been assessed). The Peruvian Government and civil society immediately mobilized available resources, while the coordination of the response has been led by the National Institute of Civil Defense (INDECI).

The Peruvian Government has officially requested support from the international cooperation and has also declared the state of emergency in this region.

Rationality

The Peruvian government has reported around 37,318 affected families by this crisis. The Government and humanitarian community have responded to the immediate relief needs. Some preliminary recovery activities undertaken are: to clear the debris resulting from the earthquake, to improve living and housing conditions, and to reconstruct and to rehabilitate minor public infrastructure. Special considerations have to be taken into account for women. Having said that, it is necessary to prepare hygiene kits that include appropriate products for female hygiene.

Due to the aftershocks, the anguish and post psychosis have not finished. In addition, 75 % of the region has stopped working and do not have income. The situation in relation to women is critical and depressing, because they usually are the ones in charge of the feeding for their children.

Amid the chaos of natural disasters; children, adolescent girls and women are at highest risk of exploitation, abuse, abduction and trafficking, especially where entire communities have been devastated.

At the moment, public spaces are being arranged as camps for homeless families. According to the Ministry of Health, 59 Camps have been established in between the provinces of ICA and Pisco, giving shelter to about 42,000 people. Therefore, efforts need to be done to make sure that the camps and shelters have adequate protection mechanisms, in order to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children and women.

Public information campaigns on sexual violence should be launched (while respecting cultural sensitivities). Topics could include preventive measures, seeking assistance, laws prohibiting sexual violence, and sanctions and penalties for perpetrators. Pamphlets, posters, newsletters, radio and other mass media programme, videos and community entertainment can all be used to transmit information about preventing sexual violence. The affected community, staff community centers and health workers must understand the importance of the problem and have the confidence to report all cases of sexual violence as soon as possible.

Due to the violence and insecurity perceived, women fear to leave the children at home. These women are showing emotional illness such as high pressure, tiredness, exhaustion, loss of appetite, headache and constant crying.

There is also a need to support the reorganization of protection community centers, in order to

grant protection to children adolescent girls and women. Staff of those centers will provide legal, medical and psychosocial information and services.

Beneficiaries:

Affected communities with a focus on women and girls of reproductive age, disabled and elderly. It should be noted that the affected areas in Ica and Huancavelica and south of Lima have a population of approximately 255,000 women in reproductive age (15-49 years), among which there would be 27,500 pregnant women each year and we could expect to have 22,000 deliveries per annum in the affected region.

Areas of Intervention:

Ica Region, Provinces of Castrovirreyna, Huaytara, Chincha and Canete

General Objective:

To ensure protection against violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, trafficking and provide support and care for women and vulnerable children, including orphans and the elderly.

Specific Objectives

- To protect vulnerable groups (women, girls, elderly and disabled) from sexual and gender based violence and to cope with challenges of responding to and recuperating from the disaster by providing legal, medical and psychosocial information and services
- To provide information and services to women and girls on sexual and gender based violence, STIs/HIV/AIDS
- To prepare and distribute women hygiene packages

Partners: MIMDES, Ombudsperson Office, MINSA, NGOs

Activities

There are five main activities:

- 1) Establishing 15 community centers within and nearby 12 camps and approximately 35,000 shelters where staff specially trained will provide legal, medical and psychosocial information and services
 - a. Visit the affected area in order to find available spaces which could be easy recognized by women and to identify women who are leaders and could lead the center organization
 - b. Professional staff: lawyers, psychologists, counselors that can provide orientation to victims of sexual violence and assist in referrals to medical facilities; and DSA
 - c. Preparing counselor guidance
 - d. Printing counselor guidance
 - e. Equipment
- 2) Training programme for community counselors and women leaders to sensitize, inform and bring counseling, particularly to women, young women and adolescent
 - a. Preparing training courses
 - b. Developing courses
 - c. Printing manuals and guidance materials for community counselors
- 3) Public information campaign on the subject of sexual violence
 - a. Elaborating educational and informative materials to prevent and attend gender based violence cases
 - b. Design and printing materials
- 4) Preparing special women's hygiene kits
 - a. Preparing hygiene kits
 - b. Brochures about the kits
- 5) Systematization: It is necessary to systematize this experience and to extract lessons learned in order to improve the cooperation in future crisis situations highlighting the need to protect women and children of any form of gender based violence

Budget (US dollars)**1. Establishing 15 community centers within and nearby 12 camps and approximately 35,000 shelters where staff specially trained will provide legal, medical and psychosocial information and services**

Visit the affected area	2,500
Professional staff: lawyers, psychologists, counselors; and DSA	40,000
Preparing counselor guidance	5,000
Printing counselor guidance	3,500
Equipment	3,500
Total	44,500

2. Training programme for community counselors and women leadership

Human resources, travel and accommodation.	10,000
Developing training courses	3,000
Preparing and printing training materials	3,500
Total	16,500

3. Elaborating educational and informative materials to prevent and attend gender based violence cases

Preparing de educational and informative materials	5,000
Design and printing materials	3,500
Total	8,500

4. Providing special women's hygiene kits

Preparing special women's hygiene kits (80,000)	320,000
Brochures about the kits	3,500
Total	323,500

5. Systematization

Human resources, travel and accommodation.	5,000
Printing of the final report	1,500
Total	6,500

TOTAL BUDGET (1+2+3+4+5)**\$US 400,000****Phasing Out Strategy:**

Once the targeted groups will have been empowered, cured and assisted by professional personnel, the project will come to its natural end as women and other beneficiaries will have restored their capacity to cope with the ongoing situation.

Responsible managing officer to coordinate the project:

Ms. Mima Barnechea
Programme Officer for Gender
UNFPA Peru'