



DURING A PANDEMIC, WOMEN STILL ABORT

SHARING ABORTION STORIES OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC



1. LACK OF ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS

Case 1

Amrита Saudi, age 30, mother of four. She is from Accham Province 7. She is from lower economic family. Her husband used to work in India but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he lost his job and had to return to Nepal. This harassed their economic condition.

“When my husband returned from India, I was not able to get any contraceptive methods due to lock down. Additionally, the health facility was at 4-hour walking distance from my residence.” Due to this, she had an unwanted pregnancy. “Having another child could affect my health so I decided to have an abortion.”

She further added with depressed eyes “I went to the health facility for safe abortion. To my surprise, many women had come to access the abortion the same day as I did.”

Case II

A married woman, age 40 from Morang , Province 1, mother of three children. She was using depo-provera as a regular contraceptive method. Due to the closing down of nearby health facility due to lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic disrupted her access to contraceptive method that resulted in unwanted pregnancy.

She was very confused and nervous of getting abortion at the health facility due to high risk of COVID-19. She later had an abortion at Biratnagar and got the post contraception with proper counselling service.

2. NEGLIGENCE IN CONTRACEPTIVE USE

Case III

A 23 years old young women from Morang , Province 1 has two children. Her husband is a daily wage labor. They had decided not to have more children due to the financial crisis. Her husband lost his job due to COVID-19 pandemic and lock down resulted from pandemic. It was getting very difficult to take care of her family.

This difficult situation led to negligence in taking her regular contraceptive methods and overlooked her health as well. This resulted in an unwanted pregnancy. The COVID-19 pandemic made the situation even more difficult in accessing abortion service. Later, she sought advice from the female community health volunteer and had a medical abortion at the hospital. She used Depo-provera as post abortion contraceptive method.

3. MORE THAN ONE ABORTION

Case IV

Gita Yadav, 43 years from Mahottari, Province 2 is a housewife and a mother of three children. She was using Depo-provera as her contraceptive but soon noticed some side effects. She started oral contraceptive pills as suggested by the health service provider. But due to the lockdown.

Later, during the lockdown, she was not able to access the oral contraceptive pill. After a month from lockdown, Gita noticed that she had missed her period. She found out that she is pregnant which she does not want to continue. Her husband consulted at the medical shop and got the medicine for abortion. Later, she suffered heavy bleeding for a week and sought help from a related doctor at Janakpur.

Three months later, Gita was pregnant again. She visited the private clinic and got medical abortion. Now Gita shared that she is more aware on using the contraceptive and is making sure she does not miss her oral contraceptive pill.

4. CONTINUATION OF UNWANTED PREGNANCY AND VIOLENCE

Case V

An unmarried woman, aged 23 from Kalikot, Karnali Province had unintended pregnancy but she wanted to give birth and get married to her partner but her partner wanted her to have an abortion. As a result, he left her to deal with the pregnancy alone. She was 6 months pregnant and did not want to let her parents know about her pregnancy. So, she travelled to Surket during the COVID 19 pandemic to have an abortion but lockdown was announced, as a result she

was not able to access any services.. She could not visit provincial hospital to access the safe abortion as the hospital was sealed due to high number of COVID-19 cases at the area. She lived at the hotel hoping to have an abortion. Once the lockdown was lifted and hospitals reopened, she went for abortion service but she was not able to attain abortion service as she was passed the timeframe of attaining abortion services permitted by the law. She is at safe house at Surkhet and will deliver the child at the hospital. She wants some good family to adopt the child.

Case VI

Preksha Chhetri, age 28 years from Surkhet, Karnali Province is a mother of 19-month-old girl child who works at a private hospital. She has been facing violence from her partner for giving birth to a girl. Additionally, her husband has been pressuring her to leave the job due to the risk of COVID-19.

She said “I don’t have any support from my husband. I don’t want to leave my job. However, at the same time I am also stressed about my daughter’s health. I had not planned for a second child but during lockdown I got pregnant again. Being pregnant has affected me a lot. I am not even being able to manage for safe abortion due to lockdown. It is very hard to manage my home and office. This has started to affect my mental and physical health”

She added with depressed eyes “I am feeling that to be born as a girl/woman is a disadvantage. Women are expected to leave their dreams and only comply with their household activities.”

5. REGRETTING CHOOSING ABORTION

Case VII

Iwas really happy; I was happy for two reason one was my new job as a teacher and the other was my second pregnancy. My husband and I both were happy and wanted to continue my second pregnancy but under certain circumstances I had to undergo abortion. “Said Ramila Sharma, a 28-year from Surkhet, Karnali Province.

Few months on her pregnancy, she was having health problems. She was not able to get leave from her new job. She either had to choose

to continue her pregnancy or her job. Despite the fear of the society and disapproval from of her in-laws, she decided to have an abortion as her husband was supportive.

Within few days of having an abortion, lock down was announced and schools were closed. She shared- “I regret having an abortion for the sake of my job. I cannot even say that I have had an abortion in the society because even today the society does not accept abortion. I fear and feel unhappy if this one act remains as a curse to my entire life.”

**The above stories have been collected by Beyond Beijing Committee Nepal’s focal Network Members based at different provinces. The name mentioned in the stories has been changed to maintain the privacy of the women.*

For Further Information

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