

Case Study _from Jaffna

Suba (name has been changed to maintain confidentiality) is a 59 years old female from Jaffna. She currently lives with her husband and the 16 years old daughter who is studying for her GCE Advance Level examination. The husband is engaged in work as a laborer.

Since 1995, Suba and her husband together with their daughter were displaced many times due to the conflict. During the heavy fights that took place in 2009 as there were heavy bombings, Suba with her family travelled through the battlefield to take refuge in a bunker with many others from her village. During the time they fled they saw many people who have died, injured and also heard the wailing of the people who were injured. The bunker that they managed to move in was also affected due to the heavy artillery and more people died inside the bunker. Suba was also injured during this incident and she has further been extremely fearful for the safety of her daughter.

After being rescued from the bunker by other village people she and her family has been taken to a camp where they stayed for many months and once again transferred to another camp in the Eastern region. Suba stated that there were no proper facilities and that she saw many people with physical and mental health issues in the camp. Many months later, Suba with her family was relocated to her native village where her siblings helped her to build a small house to live.

FRC's CV met Suba through one of the GRLAC members and with the help of the CV Suba attended a CDE and was registered for counselling. During the initial assessment by the PSW, Suba displayed symptoms such as flash backs of the dead people, injured and the wailing of them. Further, she was having a vivid memory of the bombs falling on the bunker and the smell of the gun powder when bombs exploded. She further experienced sadness, fear, startled reaction to loud sounds, inability to sleep and anger.

The PSW after the basic history taking and the completion of the CIF together with the client developed the treatment plan. A home visit was conducted to ascertain the perception of the family members, understand the home and contextual stressors for Suba that could maintain Suba's difficulties.

With the support of the PSW and guidance from her Suba engaged in continuous counselling. She engaged in basic relaxation techniques and the PSW implemented an activity schedule to help Suba get back to the normal level of her daily activities. Using the basic Cognitive Behaviour Model, the PSW socialized Suba to how her thoughts and memories are maintaining her physical symptoms and negative behaviours such as reacting in anger. She was taught to recognize negative thoughts and methods to change such thoughts. Sleep hygiene activities were introduced to help Suba sleep better.

During one of the CCEs Suba complained of chest pains to the MOMH and she was referred to the district hospital immediately where she was diagnosed with a heart disease to which a bypass surgery was done and recovered.

At the end of the counselling there was a noticeable improvement in Suba's mood and behaviours and this was also apparent from the 23rd assessment of the CIF as well as from the feedback from the client and her family members. At the follow up visits, the recovery she gained during counselling was once again discussed and she stated that she was sleeping better, gets less angry and is feeling far relaxed than she was before. She is also engaged in home gardening which is an activity she was trained by FRC.