

## **Success Story \_from Jaffna**

60 year old Rani is a widow and mother of three. She lives with her youngest son who is unmarried. She was amongst the audience when FRC conducted an orientation programme in her village and identified that FRC's services might help. After contacting FRC's Community Volunteer, she attended the Client Detection Event held by FRC where if her needs can be met by FRC, she would be then registered for services. Her initial problems were exhaustion, lethargy, fatigue, headaches, continuous worry, guilt and leg aches and these problems had surfaced after the war. Through an evaluation, she was registered for counselling, medical and physiotherapy sessions at FRC.

During the initial sessions, it was observed that a recent harsh argument with her brother has emotionally impacted her. Apparently, the argument was stirred when Rani refused to make an alliance between his daughter and her son. Her brother became furious and had started throwing accusations that she is a murderer and that it was her fault that their father is dead. Rani then shared that she feels guilty over her father's disappearance and that her brother's recent words had just brought out all the buried feelings.

It was gathered that Rani's father had lived with her prior to the displacement during the last period of the war. There was a shelling attack going on and people were forced to displace. Rani was displaced along with her neighbors but she had to leave her father at home as he was not physically fit to neither walk nor run. She assumed that her father will be safe as the attacks normally ceased in a while. Unfortunately, the attacks didn't cease for a long time and she had to reside in a camp. When she returned home a few months later, their house was damaged and her father was not to be seen. Her brother argued that she should have taken him along with her.

Before drawing out an intervention plan together, the Client Intake Form was filled to assess her wellbeing and her house was visited to assess her family dynamics and environment. It was observed that her brother lives close by and she has been experiencing guilt, uncertainty of her father's fate, recalling memories of her father, anger towards her brother, restless, sleep difficulties, lack of concentration and lack of interest in engaging with the community.

As guilt over her father's disappearance was something that was troubling Rani a lot, it was acknowledged and normalized that what she was feeling was normal and many people have found themselves in the same situation during the conflict. She was encouraged to do a guilt pie chart activity in order for her to identify and distribute the responsibility of the incident, in order to not blame herself entirely for the father's disappearance. The responsibility was distributed among the Army, the Paramilitary Group, her brother and herself. She explained that her brother who lives close by should have lent a hand to help her take her father with them. She acknowledged that she made a rational decision at that time.

Upon further discussions, she claims that he is still alive somewhere and will be reunited. She insists that as there was no body found in the house upon her return and since cannot walk, he must have been captured. She has also done the necessary documentations to register her father as a missing person.

Furthermore, in terms of feeling angry, she identified that situations such as seeing her brother and thinking about his accusations make her angry. She was given a psychoeducation on anger including the impact of it on her body and the consequences such as possibilities of more arguments which

may lead to being physically hurt. Ways to cope with anger were also explored, where she identified that she can keep quiet, walk away and engage in another task. Also, as she finds it difficult to keep her focused, she was taught a simple breathing technique, for her to feel relaxed. She claimed it was helping her get through daily routines.

This breathing exercise was also encouraged to be done before she sleeps as she finds it difficult to remain asleep and would stay up worrying and thinking of all that had happened. A psychoeducation on sleep, the impact of it and sleep hygiene techniques such as skipping afternoon naps, eating and drinking on time, refraining from using electronic devices and keeping the room only to sleep.

During the last few sessions, she claimed that she felt better as if a burden has been lifted, sleeping better, able to remember her father and not get distressed as much and been able to engage in her daily routines.

After termination, a follow up visit to Rani's house was conducted, where it was observed that her house was well kept, her self-care has improved and observed to be relaxed. Although, her brother lives close by, she has decided to not interact with him as she feels better when she doesn't have to. She also has been engaging with the community members in community activities.