

**MAITI NEPAL**  
**A children and women's rights organisation**  
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Maiti Nepal was founded in 1993 as a non-profit making, children and women's rights social organisation, aimed at finding sustainable solutions to issues related to the trafficking of women and children. It is affiliated to ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) and to the Nepal chapter of ATSEC (Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children).

Maiti Nepal has its head office in Kathmandu and three regional offices located in the eastern, central and western regions of the country. It currently runs three prevention homes, ten transit homes, two rehabilitation homes, a hospice, community outreach programmes and community awareness programmes in different parts of the country. It also works closely with organisations based in India. Its activities include translating commitments into actions through awareness campaigns among school and college students, parliamentarians, law enforcement agencies, village development committees and other concerned organisations.

**Main Objectives**

- § To advocate and conduct awareness campaigns, seek public support and create social pressure against the trafficking of women and children by organising various interaction programmes and workshops at different levels
- § To provide counselling, support and life skills to women and girls who are at risk of being trafficked
- § To rescue women and girls who have been trafficked and repatriate them to their home country
- § To provide legal services, health counselling and assistance to destitute women, survivors of trafficking and victims of domestic violence
- § To rehabilitate survivors by providing education, counselling and safe homes.

**Action Programmes**

One of the roots causes of human trafficking is ignorance and Maiti Nepal's action programmes specifically address this by emphasizing advocacy programmes at the point of origin, encouraging communities to build early warning and support systems so that families and girls are less likely to be tricked. Children and women are trained in anti-trafficking measures so that they can avoid the traps set by strangers who come to their villages and try to lure them away.

**Social Awareness and Advocacy**

Experience has also shown that prevention activities in border areas can yield high results. Safety Net is a programme that aims to formulate anti-trafficking community safety net groups in the Nepal-Indo border areas and to establish a surveillance system to build safety measures to protect women and children. This kind of programme encourages and empowers groups to take ownership of community-based safety net programmes. Such programmes have been launched in seven border districts.

**Prevention Homes**

These are set up in areas identified as high-risk. Girls who are at risk are sheltered in the homes for between four to six months. They receive counselling as well as training in income-generating skills such as tailoring, mushroom cultivation and handloom weaving. The programme includes health care, non-formal education and comprehensive information on human trafficking. Girls are also prepared to become social activists so that they can advocate for their own rights.

Each home can house 30 residents at a time. There are at present three such homes, one each in Nuwakot, Makwanpur and Bardaghat districts respectively.

**Transit Homes**

These are located at major Nepal-India border towns where traffickers are most commonly found. They serve as safe havens for survivors rescued from India

and for those who have been intercepted at the border while in the process of being trafficked.

The homes work with police to intercept potential victims and apprehend criminals. They provide counselling, help trace parents and guardians, ensure a safe passage home and assist in re-uniting victims with their families. They also motivate survivors to identify the traffickers. There are currently ten such homes.

### **Rescue and Repatriation**

Maiti Nepal liaises with the Indian government, the Indian police and various organisations based in India to rescue and repatriate victims of trafficking. They provide medical examinations and treatment, instigate steps to help the survivors regain their confidence and encourage them to make a new beginning in life.

### **Counselling, Support and Life Skills**

Every effort is made to find gainful employment for survivors of trafficking and those at high risk. Girls who are trained in the rehabilitation and prevention homes are extended micro-credit loans for self-employment projects that generate incomes and become self-sustainable.

### **Legal Support**

The Legal Aid section helps in the arrest of pimps and others involved in human trafficking and brings them before a court of law. It also deals with cases of missing girls, domestic violence, sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation, rape and polygamy.

### **Rehabilitation Home**

The Rehabilitation and Crisis Home in Kathmandu houses those in immediate need and those who have been physically and psychologically scarred. It provides for their psychological, medical and educational needs. It uses a social re-integration approach with adequate social preparation and outreach support to address the significant social constraints that survivors often face on returning to their communities and to society at large.

### **Primary Health Care Centre and Hospice**

The hospice serves those survivors who have been infected with various diseases. Available medicines give little chance of recovery so the hospice provides holistic care for both the diseased and the terminally ill. It also operates a primary health care centre for people from the local area.

### **Initiative Hope**

The objective of this campaign is to provide modern anti-retroviral therapy to all HIV/AIDS survivors sheltered by Maiti Nepal and to undertake careful medical monitoring of those who take ARV, with regular testing of the viral load, CD4 cells, other routine tests and modifications in the therapy according to the results of blood tests.

### **Teresa Academy**

The Academy was established in 1998 to provide a formal, comprehensive education for orphans, street children, especially girls, underprivileged children and vulnerable ones. It intends to upgrade each class every year until it reaches the level of high school.