

CONCEPT NOTE

Title of the Project: PSYCHOLOGICAL REHABILITATION & RESEARCH CENTRE FOR BURN VICTIMS

Implementing organisation: Acid Survivors Foundation India

Background: Acid violence involves deliberate use of acid to attack another human being and is generally aimed at disfiguring and causing grievous life-long injury rather than death. A severe burn can be one of the most painful injuries that a human body can suffer, both physically and emotionally. People who suffer burn injuries often have a challenging time getting back to living a human life. For many families, the difficulty in finding access to long-term support services adds to their burden as they work to heal the physical and emotional scars.

Based on conservative estimates, 100 - 500 people suffer acid attack every year in India. Further, statistics reveal that majority of the victims are women and children (80%). While the majority of attacks appear to be in retaliation to refusal of proposals for marriage or sexual favours, many women were also victims of domestic violence.

In addition, there are large numbers of thermal burn cases who also go through similar ordeal.

Acid Survivor Foundation India (ASFI) headquartered in Kolkata is one of the leading NGO's in India for prevention of acid burn violence as well as for providing support services to acid survivors through a network of chapters and partners. ASFI has a mission to assist burn survivors and people with facial disfigurement in their physical, psychological and social rehabilitation; and to uphold their human rights and dignity.

Survivors of acid attack or thermal burn experience a series of traumatic assaults to their body and mind, and face several challenges on way to physical recovery and psychological rehabilitation. Burn care includes physical rehabilitation and psychosocial care. Through the recovery process, it helps the survivor adapt to the challenges of the severe injuries, disfigurement and emotional breakdown

However, in India, due to the large number of victims requiring urgent medical attention, hospitals prioritize saving lives. The unacceptable quality of treatment can be attributed in part to the lack of facilities for proper care. Most government hospitals in India do not have plastic surgeons or medical facilities necessary to conduct necessary procedures for acid attack / thermal burn survivors. There is also a shortage of plastic surgeons in the country. Even if there were trained professionals, hospitals do not have the facilities and equipment to support them. In addition to the lack of adequate facilities, government hospitals in India have routinely denied admission and treatment to acid attack / thermal burn victims. In other cases, despite admitting victims to government facilities, health professionals may refuse to treat them.

Many survivors do not receive physical and psychosocial rehabilitation services required for restoration of their normal physical appearance / abilities, which results in physical complications like scar contracture, deformity and eventually loss of functions, as well as unaddressed emotional issues such as trauma, difficulty in coping with disfigurement, and progressive exclusion from active participation in society. As survival rates climb, there is a greater need for long-term recovery services to meet the physical and emotional needs of burn survivors and their families.

ASFI's proposal

Objective: It is in the above context that ASFI plans to set up its own rehabilitation services for survivors of acid attack after hospital discharge, a national level Psychological Rehabilitation & Research Centre for Burn Survivors of international standard, as a joint venture project with the Government of West Bengal. This will be the first of its kind in the country and should help in projecting the state's image as women friendly and caring for the weaker section of the society. This centre is expected to benefit an average of 100 clients every year by offering physical rehabilitation,

psychological counseling and social rehabilitation services. If successful, such initiatives can be replicated in different regions of the country.

Details of the proposal: Keeping in mind the requirements of the survivor, we plan to set up different institutional facilities for attending to such requirements as detailed below.

A) *Shelter home for the victims:* This will be a residential facility for providing shelter to the victims in a safe and secure environment considered essential for the psychological healing process, during the immediate aftermath of the attack. This will be housing 20 victims at a time to start with.

The aforesaid residential facility will also be supplemented by facility for temporary accommodation for 10 relatives of the victims who may come to meet them or assist them in matters relating to legal action against the perpetrators or claiming of compensation from government agencies and also when the need will be felt for engaging with the family to smoothen the process of re-integration of the victims into the family and the society.

In addition, there will be temporary residence facilities for another 20 victims who will be attending the various vocational courses, follow-up psycho therapeutic treatments, training courses, seminars, etc.

The Shelter home will also include a recreation centre for the residents

B) *Counseling centre:* This centre will assist the victim in getting compensation from the government authorities and also in getting justice through appropriate legal action against the perpetrators. The victims will also be advised on facilities available for follow up surgeries and vocational training to make them self dependent.

This centre will also be responsible for providing ongoing support and education during various phases of the recovery process – both to the survivors and their family members

C) *Centre for Trauma Care* : This centre will be meant for emotional support - empowerment and healing through therapy, support groups, etc. It will have several rooms (5 to begin with) and will address to the psychosocial problems faced. Recovery for burn survivors and their families requires years after the initial injury. Group participants are able to assist one another when coping with struggles, challenges, and triumphs associated with community reentry. Through a supportive therapeutic environment, they will be able to address adjustment issues and regain control over their lives. It will provide for and facilitate the recovery process with physical rehabilitation and psychosocial care. This will also include engaging with the family to smoothen the process of re-integration into the family and the society.

The groups proposed to be formed with survivors will be open ended and are expected to provide individuals with the opportunity to:

- Gain emotional support and share feelings about the hospital experience and recovery process
- Discuss how life has changed since the injury and learn from others who are coping with similar situations
- Discuss concerns regarding returning to work, school, and community
- Discuss issues related to body image and image enhancement

D) *Comprehensive burn care to the survivors & Medical Centre* – Facilities will be set up for burn care and small surgeries to facilitate self care; multiple surgeries for restoring sight, facial parts, movement of limbs and home care. There will be 2-3 consultation rooms for victims meeting the doctors for pre and post operation consultation as also for general guidance. There will also be facilities for therapeutic treatment and healing.

In order for availing the services of renowned experts for providing surgical and other medical treatment as may be required and also for providing expert level psychosocial care and counseling, facilities will be set up for staying of such experts coming from outstation centres. This residential

block will have facility for accommodating 8 experts at a time. This facility may also be utilized for any guest relating to the overall activities of the foundation.

E) Vocational Centre: This will be a very important and integral facility in the process of rehabilitation and re-integration into the family and the society. There will be facilities for training the survivors in vocational skills of their choice. There will be 3 - 4 class rooms and 4 laboratory / workshop for hands-on training.

In addition, we have plans for setting up elaborate workshops / manufacturing facility for the survivors who may chose to work from the safe environs of the Rehabilitation Hub. For this purpose a working women's hostel may also be set up at a later date, depending on the response.

F) Administrative Centre: This will house the national headquarters of Acid Survivor Foundation India (ASFI) which will include:

- 1) A 24-Hour crisis helpline service
- 2) Unit for providing marketing and other required support in respect of manufacturing and selling of produces by the survivors
- 3) Unit for organizing various advocacy and awareness programmes some of which will also involve the survivors, for raising public awareness and change attitudes towards facial disfigurement, by working with communities, health care providers and other stakeholders in supporting, developing and implementing strategies that would stop acid attacks on women in the country. This unit will also take steps for educating the community, building support structures amongst the key stakeholders, developing programs to strengthen social networks, organizing community groups to challenge social norms that contribute to such attacks on women.
- 4) Training facility for the survivors for taking part in advocacy and awareness campaigns
- 5) An auditorium for 100 persons for conducting awareness programmes, training programmes for other stake holders and NGO-s,

Expected outcome :

Recovery for burn survivors and their families requires years after the initial injury. The proposed Centre will be the first one in India providing comprehensive long-term support services to burn victims of all types. The centre will not only take over the healing process once the survivor is out of life threat, it will guide the victim through the difficult path to gradual recovery and rehabilitation ending in re-integration into the society and help them to live a life of dignity and self-respect. It will ensure that the victim becomes a self supporting independent and confident person and regain control over their own lives. They will be able to achieve a satisfying quality of life and become well adjusted individuals despite severe social and psychological difficulties. Group participants are able to assist one another when coping with struggles, challenges, and triumphs associated with community reentry. Through a supportive therapeutic environment, they are able to address adjustment issues and regain control over their lives.

The proposed Rehabilitation Centre will provide comprehensive burn care to women survivors helping them to lead quality lives as well adjusted individuals free from violence.

The awareness program / activities are expected to transform the social norms that are the root causes of these heinous activities.

Fund required:

The total estimated cost is Rs 156 lakh spread over three years (excluding cost of land). Details of estimate given below:

The estimated project outlay is:

	Rs in lakh
1. <u>Capital expenses</u>	
Construction cost of the Shelter Home (approx 4000 Sq Ft x INR 2200 per SqFt) - (Cost of land not included)	88.00
Other capital expenses (Electrical fittings, furniture, canteen, physiotherapy & vocational equipment)	- 5.00
2. Running expenses (per month)	
a) Electricity Bill	- 0.25
b) Consultation fees for	
1) Physiotherapist – @INR 1,000 per visit (10 visits/month - 2 hours/day)	- 0.10
2) Psychotherapist – @ INR 1,000 per visit (10 visits/month - 2 hours/day)	- 0.10
3) Vocational / Skills trainers - 3 persons part-time	- 0.25
c) Salary for	
1) In charge – (will be resident)	- 0.35
2) Cook	- 0.10
3) Assistant	- 0.10
d) Canteen expenses –	- 0.30
e) Office expenses (telecom, stationery, conveyance, contingencies)	- 0.20

TOTAL	- 1.75

	OR Rs 12 x 1.75 = Rs 21.00 Lakh p.a.

Support requested for 3 years = Rs 21 lakh per annum x 3 years = Rs 63 lakh + 93.00 lakh capital expenses (excluding cost of land)

Thus the total fund outlay will be Rs 156 lakh spread over three years (excluding cost of land)