

**Rachel Petit**

**The Advocacy Project Peace Fellowship/ Care Women Nepal**

**Dhankuta & Kathmandu, Nepal**

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I am happy to report that all of the goals set out within the Memorandum of Understanding between The Advocacy Project and Care Women Nepal are nearing completion. My time in Nepal has exposed me to the challenges and rewards that come with working with grassroots community based organizations. While at times I have been frustrated by my inability to act without a translator, I have also learned that communication extends far beyond words. My time in Nepal has also reinforced the notion that there is more than one way of accomplishing something, and that it's important to remain calm and flexible while working in different cultural milieus. The opportunity to operate and learn in a hands-on way in a foreign environment has engendered immeasurable personal and professional growth. I am thankful for the support of both The Advocacy Project and the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation, without whom this opportunity would have not been possible for me.

This month, I had the opportunity to engage in fieldwork in Dhankuta, Nepal, where CWN carries-out its operations. While it was decided that a health camp will not take place while I am in Nepal, I was able to assist in choosing the date, location and building for the next CWN health camp that will take place during 2 days between the 7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> of October, and will screen at least 1000 women for uterine prolapse. I also had the opportunity to meet the beneficiaries of the next CWN health camp. You can read more about this experience [here](#). You can also access the photos I have taken throughout my fellowship thus far [here](#). Meeting the women who will benefit from the next CWN health camp was undoubtedly the highlight of my fellowship. Women such as [Sobha Magar](#) and [Pancha Maya Tamang](#) reinforce the need for health camps to screen and treat uterine prolapse in Dhankuta, and for long-term programming to provide accessible reproductive health services to women living in rural Nepal. On a more personal note, knowing the life changing impact that organizations such as CWN can have in improving the health, economic and social well-being of women in Nepal has reinforced my desire to work in the field of health and human rights. Health is a prerequisite to one's capability to live out the life of their choosing. Health isn't the only factor in the empowerment of women, but it is undoubtedly foundational to the enjoyment of other human rights. Working with CWN has highlighted this truth in ways that academic journals and textbooks never could.

**Goals accomplished in the month of July (fieldwork in Dhankuta):**

1. Mounted a Global Giving Campaign page for CWN, which I am in the process of advertising and encouraging people to donate to on July 12<sup>th</sup>. On July 12<sup>th</sup> Global Giving will match all donations by 50%.
2. Interviewed candidates for the position of Care Women Nepal Program Manager and Associate. We interviewed a total of 15 candidates. While ultimately the decision of who to hire was that of Care Women Nepal's founder, Indira Thapa, I was able to facilitate the process by designing and asking interview questions, testing candidate's English proficiency and providing my opinion on who to hire. You can read more about the candidates selected [here](#).

3. Visited various venues in Pakhribas, Dhankuta to determine an appropriate site for a health camp to be held between October 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 (Iain Guest, Executive Director of The Advocacy Project will come to Nepal at this time to assist). This process involved speaking with the community of Pakhribas and the women whom the next CWN health camp will benefit. I also met with [Dhan Bahador Moktan](#), who has been charged with a managerial role in the planning and execution of CWN health camps in the past, and will be heavily involved in the execution of the next CWN health camp.
4. Developed a surgeries plan for September 2017- March 2018 with the district hospital in Biratnagar. Care Women Nepal has identified 60 women in previous health camps who suffer from severe uterine prolapse. These women have been put on a waitlist for surgery in Biratnagar, Nepal. Care Women Nepal will also hold a health camp for two days at some point between October 7th – October 13th. It is estimated that at this health camp, an additional 20 women will be identified as in need of surgery to treat severe uterine prolapse. The schedule created accounts for the 60 women previously identified at CWN health camps, as well as the estimated 20 women who will be identified at the camp to be held in October. Care Women Nepal can transport 4 women (as well as 1 loved per woman) each time a trip is made to Biratnagar for surgery. Women will leave Dhankuta on Saturday, arriving in Biratnager on Saturday morning. From there, women will go through hospital intake procedures, and receive counselling about the specific surgical intervention that they will undergo on the following day. Counselling is crucial as many women have been led to believe that surgery to treat uterine prolapse may result in other serious afflictions such as cancer (a reality I discovered while interviewing the women of Pakhribas). 4 surgeries will take place on Monday. Women will spend time recovering in both the hospital and a hotel that CWN will pay for in the next 4 days that follow surgery. On Friday, all women will be transported back to Dhankuta. Officials at Biratnager hospital have confirmed the viability of this plan and assured CWN of its feasibility.
5. Wrote a total of 9 blogs, took 85 photos and spoke with/ documented the experiences of women experiencing uterine prolapse in Pakhribas.
6. Updated the CWN website and provided shoulder to shoulder training to CWN's program manager who will take over control of the site. You can see the website in its current state [here](#).

