

Assam's Gramin Mahila Kendras as an alternative community space for conflict resolution

North East Network (NEN), Assam has set up three GMKs - Rural Women's Centres in select districts of Assam. Women facing domestic violence are provided socio-legal counselling through trained barefoot counselors in these Kendras, enabling them to navigate through the criminal/civil justice system at different stages, thereby providing a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to share their experiences of violence in both private and public spaces and negotiate for their rights.

Impact: GMKs have become popular meeting places for women and girls to talk about gender based discriminatory practices in their communities and build collective responses for prevention and elimination of GBV. Women Helpline (181), Mahila Samitis (Women's Committees) and local police stations have been referring cases of VAW to them. They are now registered as service providers under PWDVA, 2005 and work together with the District Social Welfare Department and other stakeholders.

Source: *National consultation on Gender and SDGs, February 2020, UN House, New Delhi*