

**act:onaid**

# REFLECTIONS & LEARNING

2014



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#### DESIGN & PRINT PROCESS

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Printed in Nepal.



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## MISSION

“To work with people living in poverty and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice.”

## VISION

“A Nepal without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys his or her right to a life of dignity.”



### WE WORK WITH

Women, Dalits, Highly Excluded Indigenous People and People Living in Poverty.

### WE BELIEVE

Poverty is a denial and violation of human rights stemming from a historical process of exclusion and injustice. It is a complex, dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon associated with social constructs such as gender, caste, ethnicity, location, physical ability and class.

### OUR APPROACH

We adopt a human rights-based approach as our overarching framework to fight poverty, injustice and inequality and believe the State is the primary duty bearer for the dignity and well-being of its citizens.



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# ACRONYMS

<b>AA</b>	ActionAid	<b>LRP</b>	Local Rights Programme
<b>AAN</b>	ActionAid Nepal	<b>MAM</b>	Mahila Adhikar Manch
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization	<b>MoCPA</b>	Ministry of Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation
<b>CCL</b>	Child Centered Learning	<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>CCCC</b>	Community Child Care Center	<b>NLRF</b>	National Land Rights Forum
<b>CER</b>	Citizens Education Report	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>CFUG</b>	Community Forest Users' Groups	<b>Nrs.</b>	Nepali Rupees
<b>CRSA</b>	Climate Responsive Sustainable Agriculture	<b>PLiP</b>	People Living in Poverty
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>PMA</b>	Participatory Monitoring and Accountability
<b>DADO</b>	District Agriculture Development Office	<b>PNGO</b>	Partner Non Government Organization
<b>DDRC</b>	District Disaster Relief Committee	<b>PPP</b>	Participatory Planning Process
<b>DM</b>	Disaster Management	<b>PRRP</b>	Participatory Review and Reflection Process
<b>DMC</b>	Disaster Management Committee	<b>PRS</b>	Promoting Rights in School
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education	<b>PVA</b>	Participatory Vulnerability Assessment
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>REFLECT</b>	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
<b>ECDC</b>	Early Childhood Development Center	<b>RTI</b>	Right to Information
<b>ERC</b>	Eastern Resource Centre	<b>SIP</b>	School Improvement Plan
<b>FYM</b>	Farm-Yard Manure	<b>SLC</b>	School Leaving Certificate
<b>GBP</b>	Great Britain Pound	<b>SMC</b>	School Management Committee
<b>GBV</b>	gender-based Violence	<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
<b>GoN</b>	Government of Nepal	<b>UCW</b>	Unpaid Care Work
<b>IGA</b>	Income Generation Activities	<b>VAW</b>	Violence against Women
<b>LAPA</b>	Local Adaptation Plan of Action	<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>LDRMP</b>	Local Disaster Risk Management Plan	<b>WRC</b>	Western Resource Centre
<b>LGCDP</b>	Local Governance and Community Development Programme	<b>WRF</b>	Women Rights Forum
<b>LRF</b>	Land Rights Forum		

# GLOSSARY

## CHHAUPADI

A conservative social practice for women in certain districts of Western Nepal, which prohibits a woman from participating in normal family and community activities during menstruation, as she is considered impure.

## DALIT

A person or community considered belonging to so the called "lowest caste" in the Hindu caste hierarchy. The Dalits are also often referred to as untouchables.

## DHUR

Unit of land measurement in the Terai.  
One dhur is equal to 16.93 m<sup>2</sup>

## HRBA

Our human rights-based approach centres support People Living in Poverty to become conscious of their rights, to organise themselves to claim their rights, and to hold duty bearers to account. AAN builds on international human rights law, but goes beyond a legal or technical approach, supporting people to analyse and confront power imbalances and take sides with the PLiP.

## LRP

Our long-term programmes in particular districts and communities AAN refers to all of its programmes as rights programmes, which may be implemented at local, national and international levels. From 2012, AAN has been referring to all its DA/DI as LRP to ensure consistency.

## KAMAIIYA

Agricultural bonded labourer, particularly those that existed in Western Nepal. Abolished after the promulgation of Kamaiya Labour (Prohibition) Act, 2002.

## KAMLARI

Female bonded labour Kamaiya.

## KATTHA

Unit of measurement of land in the Terai.  
One kattha is equal to 338.63 m<sup>2</sup>

## PLiP

We avoid talking about "poor people" which has an element of condescension. "PLiP" emphasises a common humanity and poverty being a state that people are living in, which ActionAid is trying to end.

## REFLECT

Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques – an innovative approach to adult learning and social change, which focuses on the theory of Paulo Freire and uses participatory rural appraisal methodologies.

## VDC

A committee of members elected to govern a certain village development area (in accordance with the VDC Act, 1992). Candidates for election to a VDC represent the wards into which the VDC area is divided.



## Country Director's Message

Dear All,  
Namaste and Warm Greetings!

Building on the shining legacy of 32 years of committed actions towards fighting poverty and social injustices, the year 2014 was also devoted for empowering the people living in poverty through long-term grassroots programmes, short-term HRBA projects, meaningful engagements with social justice movements, and also a number of knowledge, policy and governance initiatives aimed at promoting participatory democratic governance. Over the year 2014 AAN's work directly benefited 431696 people of which 47% were female, whereas indirect beneficiaries remained 1104550 individuals.



*ActionAid Nepal is engaged in social transformation, and is transforming itself.*

ActionAid Nepal is transforming itself – the organization got registered as a national entity in October 2014. Having been an associate member of ActionAid International Federation for over three years, AAN is now making final preparation towards becoming an affiliate member of the Federation. AAN's vision is being 'locally rooted' and 'globally connected', which has been the key motivating factor behind all our nationalization and internationalization processes. And, it has been a huge organizational transformation process.

Partnership is very crucial for AAN – in fact, the foundation of all our operations. Mutual respect is a key principle and the collaborative efforts are the practical aspect of our partnership. Besides, working in partnership with committed local NGOs, AAN has been collaborating with various community organizations, child clubs, REFLECT learning circles, women's organizations, membership-based people's organizations, youth networks and various civic alliances on pertinent issues. In 2014 AAN reinforced to consolidate membership-based people's organizations. Drawing on positive learning from BhumiAdhikarManch (land right forum), attempts have been made to further strengthen MahilaAdhikarManch (women's right forum) and Activista Nepal (platform for the youth coming from the marginalized sections of society) in the mode of people's

organization. A critical learning has been that the mass-based democratic people's organizations can represent rights holders' group rather than any other. In order to strengthen social justice movements and promote nonviolent transformative actions, peoples' organizations are imperative. Therefore, AAN has decided to put concerted efforts towards building and strengthening people's organizations and other mass-based citizens' groups in the second phase of CSP IV [2015-2017].

The year 2014 remained remarkable in terms of AAN's approach to 'critical but constructive engagement with government and State agencies'. With a great recognition of our over three decades' anti-poverty campaign and organizational expertise, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoCPA) of Government of Nepal approached AAN to take the lead in providing technical expertise for developing 'National Policy on Poverty eradication'. AAN together with our long-term partner Home-Net Nepal signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on June 17, 2014 for the same. Following participatory exercises and consultations from local to sub-regional to national level, AAN led joint technical team produced the final draft document and submitted to the MoCPA, yet to be processed through various governmental departments and ultimately endorsed by the cabinet.

Additionally, as a knowledge hub for Participatory Democracy (PD), AAN hosted the third annual international conference on PD, attended by over 140 participants, out of which over 25 international delegates coming from 12 countries of Asia, Africa and Europe. The conference deliberated on critical issues of 'democracy' and 'democratization' from the perspective of HRBA, social justice and 'participatory democracy' in the emerging world.

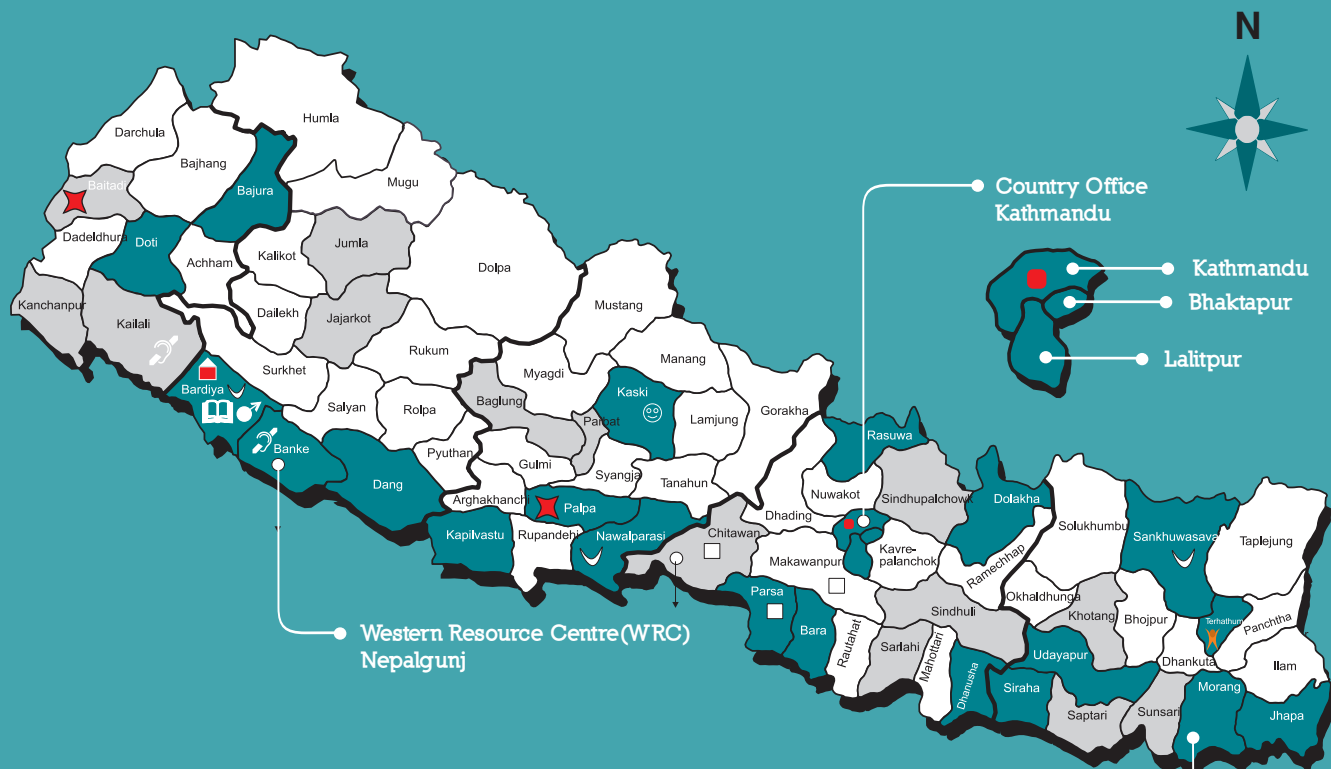
Further, I am also pleased to share that, following a standard international financial audit led by the AAI international auditor, AAN has been categorized under the 'green zone' which is an indicator for our effective financial management and accountability towards the utilization of resources.

Finally, I would like to appreciate the strategic guidance provided by AAN's national board, self-motivated hard efforts put by all staff colleagues, dedicated works of partners, crucial supports from AAI international secretariat and solidarity from all our alliances including the SWC and other governmental departments, which made all those achievements possible.



Best wishes,  
BIMAL KUMAR PHNUYAL  
**Country Director**

# Working areas of ActionAid Nepal



## Project

- Aid Match Project
- Sakcham
- Strengthening Women's Collectives
- Early Childhood Development Centre
- Empowerment & Democracy
- Kamaiya Housing
- Making it work for Women
- Global Platform
- Pilot Research & Capacity Building on Climate Change
- Promoting Inclusive Education for Hearing Impaired Children

## Key



## Local Rights Programme (LRP)

- Ongoing - LPRs
- Post - LRP HRBS Initiatives

ActionAid Nepal's (AAN's) long-term partnership programmes and projects at the field level are currently being implemented in 27 districts. Additionally, AAN has short-term engagements with several other non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, alliances, networks and forums across the country.

LOCAL RIGHT PROGRAMME AND PROJECTS					
MANAGED BY	LOCAL RIGHT PROGRAMME				PROJECT PARTNERS
	DISTRICTS	TOTAL LRPs	LRP PARTNERS	VDCS/MUNCIPALITIES	
Eastern Resource Centre	10	8	13	70	18
Kathmandu Office	8	4	8	29	
Western Resources Centre	9	8	15	66	
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>18</b>

**Programme Districts  
Managed by  
Western Resource Centre**

Bardiya, Nawalparasi,  
Kapilvastu, Dang, Bajura,  
Banke, Doti, Palpa,  
Baitadi, Kailali

**Programme Districts  
Managed by  
Kathmandu Office**

Rasuwa, Dolakha, Makwanpur,  
Kaski, Chitwan, Kathmandu,  
Lalitpur, Bhaktapur

**Programme Districts  
Managed by  
Eastern Resource Centre**

Siraha, Dhanusha, Morang,  
Jhapa, Bara, Parsa,  
Udayapur, Terhathum,  
Sankhuwasava



## Executive Summary

*As a continuous support to Freed Kamiaya on Securing Shelter for more than a decade for their rehabilitation and socio-political empowerment, through local partners in Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke and Bardiya districts, AAN has been successful to construct total of 1214 houses.*

ActionAid Nepal (AAN) is a member of ActionAid International federation. With an aim to become more “locally rooted and globally connected organization”, the year 2014 became a milestone with successful registration of its entity in the concerned Nepal Government’s authority. However, human rights based is central to fight against poverty and injustice, and the empowerment of people to claim and exercise their rights remains continue.

In this year, our ten years’ long engagement with the communities of

Rasuwa, Dolakha, Parsa, Kapilvastu, Dang, Siraha and Dhanusha districts has been phased out. While phasing out these programmes, AAN and its local partners followed all necessary processes and compliances. However, we have continued another initiative in Siraha district focusing on new working areas.

ActionAid Nepal in its fourth Country Strategy Paper “Equitable Actions to End Poverty” has identified four strategic objectives to work on.

ActionAid believes that land is a great source of equalizing the power relations. While majority of population in Nepal is reliant on agriculture for food to income, the livelihoods of people are hugely dependent on agriculture. Sustainable agriculture through robust food security was the primary intervention of AAN in the year 2014. In the present context, when the issue of climate change has been highly dominating the national and global debates, adoption of sustainable agriculture principles and practices contributes to a large extent to the economic empowerment of the marginalized people. This will ultimately help in improving the food security situation of these communities.

Besides the policy level advocacy and campaign for land rights and promoting the issue of sustainable development, local curriculum on sustainable agriculture is being developed for the students of grade one to eight for 53 schools to develop as a model, comprising the basics of sustainable agriculture, considering the deteriorating motivation of the youths in agricultural occupation.

The communities have started using locally prepared botanical pesticides and animal urine as plant protection measures against diseases and pests. Community seed banks are effectively regulated to preserve the local seeds and genetic resources. Farmers are producing seasonal and off seasonal vegetables and selling them in the local market, not only contributing to the producers but also promoting the local

production and the market for sustainable agriculture. As a result 2,027 people have been able to improve their food security situation.

Policy enforcement at the local-level has been improved through the capacity building of the groups and cooperatives. The farmers have been increasingly getting technical support from the agriculture service centres. After the government provisioned 40% subsidy in the land registration fee for women living in remote areas, the landholdings of women has been increased.

The legal provisions have ensured women's ownership over land, including the joint ownership and women's right to property. Sensitization on importance of women's rights to resources at the community level has enhanced the support of male counterparts of women farmers. The policies, such as, exemption of tax for land registration in the name of women, different subsidies and other few facilities by the government have stimulated men's support for land registration in the name of women or joint land ownership. Propagation of such activities has resulted in increased access to joint or single land ownership certificate for women.

The trends of receiving land ownership certificates by landless and women farmers have increased, providing their access to the means of production. A total of 9,450 women have increased control over land or other natural resources in the working

areas of AAN. Landless farmers have been able to access public land for farming and making it a source of family income.

A study carried out in two commercial vegetable production districts viz Makwanpur and Parsa, with a focus on women farmers, has clearly shown that the farmers are at a very high risk of chemical pesticides. Various factors, such as the poor extension services from the government, easy availability of the chemical pesticides and poor monitoring and lack of regulations on the sales and use of these agro-chemicals, ignorance and carelessness on the parts of farmers and the agro vets regarding the use and sales of chemicals respectively expose the producers to chemicals that result in many cases, irreparable negative impacts on the farmers and on the environment.

AAN's engagement in 'water common' initiative through local partners focusing on the rights of people affected from Koshi, Gandaki and Mahakali Rivers. This campaign has been grounded at the local and the national level. 'Pani Sambad' (water dialogue) and National River Summit were conducted in Kathmandu, in order to link the issue at the national level. However, national coordination mechanism is not functioning effectively for linking the agendas of water within the country and south Asian region.

As a continuous support to Freed Kamiaya on securing shelter for more than a decade for their rehabilitation and socio-political

empowerment, through local partners in Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke and Bardiya districts, AAN has been successful to construct total of 1214 houses. This year, AAN supported 64 low cost housing in Jantanagar of Kalika VDC, Bardiya district and the foundation of these houses have been constructed. Besides supporting low cost housing, AAN along with its partner organization is supporting Freed Kamaiya in income generating activities such as on/off seasonal vegetable farming, poultry farming and also enhanced vocational skills training to promote alternative employment opportunities.

Disaster is no more confined to the human loss and damage of the natural resources. It also hampers the emotional and social aspects. Building resilience to disasters at the community level through promotion of local resources, skills and knowledge is essential for a country like Nepal. The aspects, such as livelihood, capacity building, skilled human resources, and impact of disaster on the environment and human life demand us to address the causes and consequences. Risk reduction also includes working at the policy level to collaborate with VDCs, local bodies and municipality for mainstreaming the issues of disaster.

This year a total of 1,095 service providers and stakeholders were capacitated in disaster risk reduction, resulting in a positive role to internalize and to build common understanding of local service providers on disaster management, Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA),

formation of Disaster Management Committee (DMC) and designing a Disaster Management Plan (DMP). It has helped the duty bearers and the stakeholders to formulate resilience plans. Mapping of hazards has been installed in the communities to minimize the serious damage and loss.

A two-year project titled Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City was implemented to increase the resilience of poor and vulnerable people so that they would be able to mitigate, prepare for, effectively respond and overcome the impact of the multiple hazards. As an impact, DRR is mainstreamed in Pokhara municipality and DDC planning processes. The project has invested a huge efforts and resources to implement National Building Code in Pokhara which has been properly mainstreamed now.

AAN and its partners are actively involved to respond for humanitarian support for natural disaster survivors. As the flood hit western part of Nepal, AAN was one of the major actors to support and respond and contributed NRs. 3 lakhs in the DDRC basket fund, for disaster victims of Dang, Banke and Bardiya districts. The AAN partner organizations - Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj and BEE Group were directly involved in the major works throughout the process, including in identifying the affected people and distributing the relief items, in close coordination with DDRC.

Improving governance and promoting democracy is one of the central themes of AAN intervention at local level. AAN has persistently worked to aware the community about their rights and entitlements capacitating them to claim and question the service providing organizations. This is a continuous movement for creating opportunities where every people will contribute to decision making.

Forum for Participatory Democracy, a common platform formed in collaboration with Institute for Governance and Development organized an "International Conference on Participatory Democracy". The objective was to generate discourses and build knowledge around the theme of participatory democracy for local governance and for participatory development. Various national and international papers were presented and contributed through discussions. This forum published a book on "Participatory Democracy-Issues and Challenges", an anthology of Participatory Democracy Conference held on 2012. The book was disseminated to the public during the PD conference.

The introduction to participatory tools to ensure duty bearer accountable, such as community scorecard, public audit, public hearing, lobby and advocacy for quality public services have increased the quality of public services in the community. AAN advocated the people centered approaches at public institutions aiming to improve service qualities and to ensure gender responsiveness. The PLiP received

information and increased their access to public services after lobbying the concerned authorities to place the updated Citizen Charter in most of the VDCs, municipalities and health posts of LRPs' working areas. Various trainings were provided on leadership, PPP, monitoring, law and development and proposal writing for enabling the community people to claim their rights. AAN support increased the capacity for fair participation and representation, particularly of the women in the decision-making level.

Initiatives like Participatory Planning Process (PPP), campaign against corruption, use of Right to Information (RTI), open defecations free campaign, school enrolment campaign, campaign against dowry system etc. were organized during the year. The involvement of community people on tracking the planned budget and expenses has made local government agencies accountable towards the program. The Social Audit and Public Audit that take place with the participation of the right holders and the stakeholders according to the guidelines ensure transparency and accountability. Inclusion Audit and Service Mapping have been the major instrument for the evidence-based advocacy to increase representation of PLiP in local committees and to improve quality public services. The reports of inclusion audit and service mapping made the local committees and institutions more responsible to improve the representation and quality services. Mobilization of Youth Club for RTI Campaign has significantly brought changes in claiming their rights to

be informed. RTI tools have helped to ensure quality services and the accountability of the service providers.

To meet the vital needs, Ministry of Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation (MoCPA), AAN and HomeNet Nepal agreed to formulate a policy on Urban and Rural Poverty Alleviation. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on June 17, 2014. The national policy development initiative, therefore, is to implement the MoU spirit with MoCPA into reality and produce a comprehensive policy document. The first draft of the proposed policy was prepared that would ensure food security and environment-friendly initiatives throughout the nation.

The women's rights issues are primarily concerned with making the social, political, cultural and economical status of all level of women unbiased to that of men. Women are considered as one of the major rights holders within AAN and our programme has focused women under each objective as cross-cutting issues along with women's rights as one of the primary themes.

Women empowerment is a key component for their access to justice so that they can file cases at the court and quasi-judicial institutions. The women can also draw attention of the police, army and other institution for their support to the community. Various community level women's groups have been formed to address the detrimental traditions and the culture and to challenge the patriarchal perspective and institutions that are playing

vital role to promote gender-based violence. Training, orientations and campaigns are organized to eliminate the harmful traditions like dowry system, child marriage, and *Chhaupadi* in various LRP areas. Violence Against Women (VAW) cases, such as witchcraft and domestic violence have started being filed for legal solution, which was earlier managed and mediated by the community.

A series of capacity-building initiatives have taken place at the partner level to facilitate in developing women leader and supporting them to access to and control over decision-making bodies at the local and national level. As a result, 696 women have been capacitated and mobilized as women right leaders, who are now actively engaged in ensuring women rights.

The safe city campaign was initiated to raise public awareness on the issue of women's safety in the cities and the public spaces after identifying VAW, particularly in the public spaces, as one of the major challenges for women's empowerment, their right to freedom, mobility and security. Despite the challenges to carry out safety audit to identify different forms of VAW in public places, some of our partners found it as a very useful tool for understanding the views of alliances, networks and groups working towards ensuring a safe public space.

Sexual Autonomy and Bodily Integrity (SABI) Centre effectively addressed the issues of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRHR) for the adolescent girls, including

the issues of child marriage and social media crimes. Youth clubs conducted street dramas to sensitize people about the link between alcohol consumption and VAW, which became effective in drawing attention of the local people. Likewise, after the orientation on the different cases of VAW, most of VAW cases, such as witchcraft and domestic violence came into the jurisdiction of community mediation and legal procedures. The strong campaigns against *Chhaupadi* are making the community realize the consequences of the ill-practice so that they can abolish the *Chhaupadi* tradition.

AAN supported various community models related to water mills, irrigation facilities, and Community Child Care Center (CCCC) in order to redistribute women's unequal workload. The facilities, such as establishment of the CCCC, availability of water pipes and mills near the households have improved the women's access to services and helped reduce their workload, and mental stress, leading to improved health of women/girls and saving their times



*Women, now have access to services and are able to utilize them for their benefits by holding the duty bearer accountable. The women are much aware of the fact that with pressure budget allocated for their development can be tapped in.*

to get involved in Income Generation Activities (IGA). Besides promoting women's health and saving their times, those models have encouraged women to be more participatory in social networks, groups and other platforms. Women, now have access to services and are able to utilize them for their benefits by holding the duty bearer accountable. The women are much aware of the fact that with the pressure the budget allocated for their development can be tapped in.

Women were provided skill development trainings to support for on-farm and off-farm income generating activities. PNGOs have extensively regulated the beautician, commercial farming, small-scale entrepreneurship trainings etc., for income generating skills development. Under the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme initiatives, trainings on house wiring, cycles repairing and driving are offered to a small group of women. They have now started their business to earn income. The alternative production models for women are identified and disseminated to them through trainings on house wiring, cycle repairing, driving, etc.

Education is a fundamental human right, and a powerful medium for securing social justice and achieving wider social change. Free, compulsory and quality education at basic level is an effective approach of impelling an effective education system and most importantly to ensure wider social

change. AAN believes there should be an effective intervention of general people in the public education system to make it efficient and accountable.

AAN stresses on the production of Citizens' Education Report (CER) based on Promoting Rights in Schools (PRS) framework in order to assess the implementation of rights to education at the local level and link them with policy discourses at local, national and international levels. This year, a national-level PRS training was organized in Kathmandu, which covered 97 schools and 750 more SMC/PTA. This training had positive impact on the school management, VDC, and the parents.

The integration of School Improvement Plan (SIP) reporting with the PRS and PVA component reports helped to enhance the quality of the school management and education. Assessing possible risk by the schools in coordination with Red Cross, and arrangement of safety measures, including the first aid boxes are inevitable. Similarly, it is important to formulate a disaster management plan at schools comprising the first aid and safety information.

Partner NGOs of AAN have capacitated the teachers and SMC members to formulate a SIP as a key tool to reform the schools. Use of governance and accountability tools, such as, community scorecard, public hearing, social audit in school to assess the



school governance, community participation to promote free and quality education through regularization of teachers and students and community monitoring to teachers and their children are very important.

An initiative for model building has taken place in 10 community schools in Udayapur and Siraha districts, through the action research to achieve quality education. This process supported the school management committee members and teachers to reflect on the existing situation of the schools. The reflection was drawn from the effort of collaborative learning on live realities between the teachers, head teachers and the expert team. The activity “Jhyap Jhyap” was implemented in 10 schools for restructuring the classroom sitting arrangements, such as round, face to face, E-shape, and U-shape, depending on the available space. The new sitting arrangement helped make teaching and learning participatory. The teachers and students collaboratively started developing teaching-learning materials and displayed them in the classroom.

The massive school enrollment campaign was launched in all the working areas of AAN, in coordination with District education Office (DEO), Village Education Committee (VEC), Mahila Adhikar Manch (MAM), REFLECT, teachers, students, SMC and PTA and the child clubs, resulting in a very positive outcome in the students' enrollment in primary education. This year, 2843 out of school children were identified and enrolled, and 151 drop out children in Bara, Parsa,

Morang, Banke, Nawalparasi, Bajura, Dang, Bardiya, Kaski, Dolakha, Rasuwa and Kathmandu valley came back to the schools.

AAN implemented 'Promote Inclusive Education for Deaf Children' project in Banke and Kailali districts, with an aim to ensure the rights of the children with disability to education after developing their skills on the sign language. Altogether, 51 teachers from the community schools of the target areas were provided 45 days sign language training. A separate training was conducted for 77 parents. Similarly, 74 students with hearing disability were provided 10-month sign language training. A total of 224 sign language books were distributed to deaf children in Banke and Kailali districts.

The youths used their networks and groups, such as the REFLECT Circle to hold discussions, contribute their share in community development, and implement their plan of actions to improve their community situation. Similarly, leadership trainings have capacitated the youths to lead the mass. Thus, many of the AAN campaigns are led by the youths contributing against early child marriage, harmful traditional practices against women, VAW, and campaigns against caste-based discrimination to provide access to justice.

With the orientation provided to 1957 students and teachers on DRR in the eastern districts, in 2014, the schools started plantation, managed first-aid box,

and changed the classroom sitting arrangements. Furthermore, 55 schools conducted Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) under the facilitation of PNGOs and an action plan was developed for disaster preparedness and response. The SMCs were also mobilized for acquiring the resources from DDCs. Altogether, 53 schools were able to formulate a Disaster Management (DM) Plan, in 2014.

Since 2004, AAN has adopted social audit as a participatory process to ensure transparency and accountability. This year too AAN organized Social audit in the presence of various stakeholders from partners to community representatives along with government officials and other like-minded organizations. AAN has been promoting social audit at all levels and the partner organizations of AAN have also adopted social audit to evaluate their activities and promoting transparency.

AAN believes in transformative alternatives. It has supported publishing some important documents such as 'Women in Transformation', 'Millennium Development Goals and Children', 'Education of Children with Disability', 'Use of Pesticide', 'Participatory Democracy – Practices and Reflections' etc. These documents were published in collaboration with different strategic partners which will help readers and policy makers to reflect upon the various issues as well as provide alternative to see thematic perspectives from different angles.

# The Context



The human rights-based approach is central to AAN's fight against poverty and injustice, and the empowerment of people to claim and exercise their rights. In order to enjoy their rights, people need to understand and be empowered to claim them, with the solidarity and support of others.

## 1. THE NEPALESE CONTEXT

After the second election of the Constituent Assembly was held in November, 2013, the major political parties held discourse on three key issues: federal structure, system of government and judiciary. When the political parties of Nepal missed the deadlines set by the Constituent Assembly (CA) concerning the constitution drafting process in 2014, the uncertainty of promulgation of new constitution within the extended deadlines may also lead the country towards further conflict, affecting poor peoples' livelihood, education and mobility.

Natural disasters such as fire, floods, and landslides were rampant in rural areas of Nepal that invited several humanitarian agencies and civil-society organizations for rehabilitation and recovery supports to the affected areas. The geographical attributes, variable climate and complex geology jeopardize Nepal to different types of natural disasters, which are further propelled by haphazard urbanization, weak economic condition and illiteracy. The livelihood of majority people is hugely dependent on agriculture. Hence, building resilience to disasters at the community level through promotion of local resources, skills and knowledge is essential for Nepal.



Moreover, the high rate of youth unemployment compelling a huge chunk of youth population for foreign employment pushed a large number of agriculture labour to a non-agriculture sector for their survival. As per the Ministry of Labour and Employment record, a total of 527,814 Nepali men and women (number of women is insignificant, though) left the country in the fiscal year 2013-2014 alone, ending mid-July. This is 16.4 percent upward graph than that of previous fiscal year. The workload of women has been significantly increased because of youth migration to foreign countries.

## **2. WORKING MODALITY OF ACTIONAID**

ActionAid believes that land is a great source of equalizing the power relations. The year 2014 became a milestone for ActionAid Nepal with successful registration as a national NGO and being affiliated to ActionAid International. Through the

rigorous efforts of national board, staff members and SMT, AAN has established itself as a legal national entity which operates as a “locally rooted globally connected organization”. Regardless of change in entity, the working modality of AAN still remains the same; the HRBA approach like in past years operates as a key tool for overall program intervention.

The human rights-based approach is central to AAN's fight against poverty and injustice, and the empowerment of people to claim and exercise their rights. In order to enjoy their rights, people need to understand and be empowered to claim them, with the solidarity and support of others. AAN always ensures PLiP at the center of its programme interventions.

### **2.1 AAN CSP IV has identified the following four strategic objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Ensure improved livelihoods

and build disaster resilient communities by enabling people living in poverty and marginalised people to claim productive resources.

**Objective 2:** Facilitate political advancement of people living in poverty and marginalized people to hold duty bearers to account, develop propositions for national development strategies and deepen democracy

**Objective 3:** Engage with women and girls to build their active agency to challenge and take action against all forms of discrimination and injustice against their body, sexuality and unequal burden of work

**Objective 4:** Support all children to attain quality education in a safe and equitable environment.



# 3 Programme Overview

AAN CSP IV has identified four strategic objectives, and the major focus for each objective. The key action and result areas were also mapped along with that CSP IV.

This objective will centre on building an integrated response to enable people living in poverty and marginalised people to ensure food security and resilient livelihood systems, covering both "on and off farm" opportunities. We will facilitate this by empowering people living in poverty and marginalised people to claim and enjoy economic rights and advance policy propositions to ensure: i) suitable agriculture for public investment; ii) pro-poor economic policies, institutions and infrastructures; iii) an end to gender discrimination around ownership of resources and wages; iv) rights to natural resources and their sustainable use for ensuring food security; v) accountability of service providers; and viii) the sustainable use of natural resources.

This objective aims to build an integrated response for overall democratization of policy spaces and governance mechanisms, and for transforming the attitudes and behavior of duty bearers and social elites. We will do this by enabling and empowering people living in poverty and marginalised people to claim and enjoy their rights and advance policy propositions to: i) advance political representation and participation in decision-making bodies; ii) facilitate public accountability seeking mechanisms; iii) build capacity to influence the state's annual planning process; iv) monitor and advocate for quality and equity in basic services; v) facilitate alternative policy forums and critical discourses for national development strategies; and vi) link politics of mobilization with alternative knowledge-building.

### OBJECTIVE 1

Ensure improved livelihoods and build disaster resilient communities by enabling people living in poverty and marginalised people to claim productive resources.

## HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH (HRBA)

The HRBA is central to AAN's fight against poverty and injustice, and the empowerment of people to claim and exercise their rights. In order to enjoy their rights, people need to understand and be empowered to claim them, with the solidarity and support of others. It always ensures PLiP at the center of its programme interventions.

### OBJECTIVE 2

Facilitate political advancement of people living in poverty and marginalized people to hold duty bearers to account, develop propositions for national development strategies and deepen democracy.

### OBJECTIVE 3

Engage with women and girls to build their active agency to challenge and take action against all forms of discrimination and injustice against their body, sexuality and unequal burden of work

### OBJECTIVE 4

Support all children to attain quality education in a safe and equitable environment.

This objective focuses on building an integrated response to changing women's conditions and positions and to identifying, analyzing, challenging and taking action against patriarchy in all its forms. We will do this by building the active agency of marginalised women to claim and enjoy their rights and advance policy propositions to: i) have their productive contribution to the family, community and state recognized; ii) challenge patriarchal values and harmful traditional practices; iii) address gender-based discrimination and violence in public and private realms; iv) facilitate national development strategies from a feminist perspective; v) ensure female participation in decision-making bodies at all levels; and vi) facilitate leadership-building of marginalised women.

This objective aims to build an integrated response to advance free and quality basic education and reinvigorate popular education. It strives to enable children and young people from poor and marginalised communities to develop into drivers of change and harness the potential of adult literacy towards broader democratization of society. We will do this by enabling and empowering citizens' groups, people's organizations and social justice movements to advance education rights and policy propositions to: i) advance accountability in public schools; ii) promote child-centered learning; iii) mainstream the Promoting rights in schools framework in selected public schools; iv) promote a culture of safety in public schools; and v) reinvigorate popular education.



## Natural Resources and Livelihood

The meaning of land and its use is changed with the renewed socio-economic values. It has been associated with the assets for an individual, economic prestige, monetary value, livelihood with dignity, equality, and power and authority. With regards to women and their access to land and natural resources, the meaning of land and its ownership take a switch from just a form of earning a livelihood to power, equality and dignity. Women's access to, use of and control over land and other productive resources are essential to ensuring their right to equality and to an adequate standard of living.

### 4.1 ACCESS TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The trends of receiving land ownership certificates by landless and women farmers have been increased. Women's entitlement to land singly or jointly with their husbands has been recorded. This has not only increased their access to the means of production but also built their confidence. Women, now, have a better say in the family and the community decision-making processes. With the ownership of the land, the livelihood of the poor and marginalized people has been increased. Moreover, access to land has provided safe shelter for many

squatters, contributing to the improvement in their lives.

That data shows that a total of 9,450 women have increased control over land or other natural resources among the working areas of AAN. Similarly, 2,831 women are aware of their rights to the access to the natural resources and their entitlements. Increasing representation of women at decision-making levels at user groups and committees has ensured equitable distribution of benefits, particularly the forest yields (fodder, firewood, timber) across the areas. Thus, access to and control over natural



*Woman showing her land ownership certificate*

resources such as, firewood, fodder and other non-timber forest products in various areas has made the livelihood of women easier and their future secured. These women are associated with different groups and networks and are engaged in an individual and collective way of income-generating activities (IGAs). Accordingly, in 2014, it has been reported that such group members have been able to generate income from Rs. 3,500 to Rs. 30,000 per month.

Access to land covers beyond the issue of food and shelter. For those Freed Haliya and Kamaiya who served their masters for years as a bonded labour, have now a sense of freedom after they acquired ownership of land. It has also changed their identity in the society. This year, 37 freed-haliya households received the rehabilitation package from the government. This became possible after series of public hearings, discussions, stakeholders' meetings, lobby and advocacy. As a result, the government



*Nursery Training*

local authority organized mobile camps to provide services to the freed-haliyas. Similarly, 239 freed kamaiya have received rehabilitation packages in Bardiya.

Moreover, the landless farmers and farmers' groups have been able to access public land for farming and making it a source of family income. One such example is from Nawalparasi, where about 3.3 hectares of public barren land have been utilized by the marginalized (Majhi, Bote and Mushar community) people for producing crops, such as turmeric and sweet potatoes and fish farming. The groups have also started cultivating public land collectively. Moreover, women from marginalized and underprivileged communities have accessed the community forests to utilize fodder and firewood.

#### **4.2 PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

Altogether 2,027 people have improved their food security situation. Land can be taken as a source of income generation and livelihood for many people in an agricultural

country like Nepal. Sustainable agriculture and its principles promote environment friendly methods to earn a livelihood. This covers the objective of making marginalized people economically strong and promoting sustainable agriculture. In this track of agriculture approach, most of the trainings we organized were mainly focused to enhance knowledge and skills of women collectives on sustainable agriculture practices and systems.

Sustainable agriculture promotes environment friendly methods of producing food and contributes to sustainable livelihood of the marginalized people who are basically dependent on small-scale production. In the present context, when the issue of climate change has been highly dominating the national and global debates, adoption of sustainable agriculture principle and practices contributes to a large extent to the economic empowerment of the marginalized people. This will ultimately help in improving the food security situation in these communities. In 2014, the food security situation of 2027 people has been improved in the programme area.

### 4.3 ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRACTICES

Various initiatives have taken place in LRPs and in the projects in the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices, following the CRSA approach. Although 2,920 farmers are practicing sustainable agriculture, only 1,930 farmers received the relevant training. The communities are aware of the importance of the use of locally prepared botanical pesticides and animal urine as plant protection measures against diseases and pests. Such practices not only contribute management of disease and pests but also supply nutrients to the crops.

Preparation and use of compost and improved management of farm-yard manure (FYM-gothemal in Nepali) are observable practices in the communities. The farmers have started preparing compost and improved the management of FYM, thereby minimizing the loss of nutrients from the manure during storage and application. With this initiative, farmers are minimizing, and in some cases they have stopped the use of chemical fertilizers in their farms. In some communities, the groups have taken forward the preparation and use of compost as a campaign.

Agro-biodiversity conservation has been another important practice in the farming community. Farmers have given continuity to some of the good traditional practices. Such mixed cropping diversifies the farm and contributes to the conservation of agro-biodiversity and also nutritional diversity of the farm family supporting to food and nutritional security at the household and community level. Moreover, establishment of community seed banks for conservation of the local crop varieties has become

### CASE STUDY

#### COLLECTIVE FARMING BECOMES A COMMUNAL GOAL

Collective farming has become much popular among local farmers of Kapilvastu over the past few years with a huge surge in vegetable farming. Consequently, the socio-economic status of farmers is improving. The farmers, working in groups have adopted commercial vegetable farming. Particularly, the women have guided positive changes at the local level. Earlier, the situation was different, "We were doing subsistence farming in the group in traditional approach, through REFLECT sessions that the locals got acquainted with the agriculture commercialization" says Pabitra Chudali, the farmer leader and chairperson of a woman group.

To address the increasing interest of women farmers towards commercial agriculture, Siddhartha Social Development Center, a partner of AAN formed various farmers' groups in different areas of Kapilvastu District. Members of these groups, supported by District Agriculture Development Office along with Agriculture Service Centre at Kopawa and Gajahada VDC are involved in collective commercial vegetable farming. "Collective farming requires less investment and gives more output. So, the government fully supports it. The farmers have also become well aware of their rights and responsibilities, and most importantly they have learnt to seek answers from us", says Chief of the Agriculture Service Centre, Dhaniram Acharya.

A woman farmer group, Hami Sakchau of Gajehada has been actively operating commercial vegetable farming in their 10

Kattha (36450 Sq.ft) leased land. Lila Acharya, a technical support person of the group says, "Our group is making a good profit from vegetable farming. The women, now, earn money and even save some for future. Collective farming has helped us create stronger bond; it has developed the sense of collectivism among the people." Besides farming, the 20-member group has been working for various issues at the community level. They organize campaigns on sanitation, women health, education and VAW with the support of Siddhartha Social Development Center. "Women have become able to produce both seasonal and off seasonal vegetables. Moreover, their contribution towards development of our community is commendable", says Tanka Acharya, a local farmer of Thati. Women of Thati village are being economically independent, and they are well supported by men. Making compost manure by collecting organic wastages from community is the recent initiative of Hami Sakchau women group. Inspired by quality output of the group, two other groups have initiated collective farming and have requested SSDC for support; they are also willing to join REFLECT Circle.

Currently, 15 farmer leaders in Kapilvastu are prepared to adopt sustainable agriculture practices with persistent involvement of farmer groups, whereas, 340 members from 13 groups have come together and farmed in an area of 5 Bigha, 10 kattha and 10 dhoor land. In this year, they have become successful to make their annual income Rs 627,716. With its wide scale of profit, people of Matariya Ward number 5, have started collective farming on their own private lands.



Prangarik Krishi Utpadak Sahakari in Chitwan had already established a seed bank, prepared guidelines for its management and also improved storage of seeds. Currently, the Cooperative is conserving 68 varieties of rice and some vegetables. This year, eight Cooperative members are cultivating these varieties of rice for conservation. AAN supported the Cooperative with quality storage bins and technical guidance for the management of a community seed bank. Community seed banks have also been strengthened in different LRP areas. Some of the community seed banks are the community seed bank in Bajura, Kapilvastu, Bara and is just initiated in Morang. These community seed banks have become successful in accessing technical and financial support from local government bodies, VDCs and DADO for its promotion. The community seed banks have started conservation of the varieties of seeds in the initial stage of their establishment.

encouraging. Climate change has had a harsh impact on native crops causing the genetic erosion. The community seed banks are effectively regulated to preserve the local seeds and genetic resources. Farmers have realized the importance of protecting the local varieties for seed security and more broadly for food sovereignty.

A large number of women group members have started cash crop farming with the reduced use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, replacing them with livestock manure, organic fertilizers and herbicides promoting the CRSA. Botanical pesticides are gaining popularity among the farmers, and the communities have initiated the use of bio-pesticides, especially in the areas like Okhre, Sudap of Terhathum is focused on organic farming and also working to improve the animal manure as fertilizer. The campaign "One house, one compost pit" has been effectively regulated in Udayapur district. It has helped farmers utilize the local resources to prepare manure and save the cost of chemical fertilizers. People at the household level are also getting aware of impacts of external chemical inputs on their health, and many of them have started the kitchen gardening.

## CASE STUDY

### QUALITY SEED, QUALITY AGRICULTURE

Five farmers' groups have been registered at DADO this year. HRC has provided Leadership Farmers' Training to 20 farmers, comprising of 10 women and 10 men. The training was focused on quality of agricultural products, seed rights, markets, storage and access to services, etc. After receiving the training, they have started seed bank in Wai VDC, which is the centre point for other four VDCs. The main aim of the community seed bank is to protect local seeds and to ensure the agriculture rights of farmers through sustainable agriculture development. Human Resource Center (HRC), AAN local partner of Bajura supported NRs 45,000 for different seeds collection where community supported NRs 70,000, and the other CBOs supported NRs 120,000 to establish a seed bank. Hariyali farmers' group has completed two storeyed community seed bank building consisting of 5 rooms. Bishan Shahi, Chairperson of Hariyali Farmers' Group says,

"We decided to submit a proposal to DADO Office to claim the welfare fund; we were successful in receiving NRs. 60,000 under community based small farmer irrigation plan. Thanks to HRC"

The farmers were also capacitated on 14 steps participatory planning process, proposal writing and proposal submission. They have decided to initiate collective farming to protect local seeds. So far, they have collected 9 quintal grain seeds of 10 different varieties, through which 120 farmers have been benefited. HRC again supported NRs. 42,000 for seed storage materials and for collection of some locally available seeds. Hariyali Farmer Group is planning to lease a large farm to produce local seeds in collaboration with the local government agriculture service centre. Following the steps of Hariyali Farmer Group, Chhudari Farmers' Group has also initiated potato production in order to change the food culture targeting those areas, where grain production rate is low.

AAN had successfully conducted various capacity building trainings, awareness programmes, orientations and other relevant activities on CRSA through PNGOs, in collaboration with the government agencies as well as the other institutions influenced by the farmers' groups. Promotion of collective farming, organic farming, seed bank and frequent discussions on climate change are a few efforts initiated in the working areas. The farmers' groups have initiated off-season vegetable farming as one of the sustainable sources of their livelihood as many of them have been able to raise their income.

#### **4.4 CHEMICAL BASED FARMING IS HAZARDOUS: RESEARCH FINDING**

A study carried out in two commercial vegetable production districts viz Makwanpur and Parsa, with a focus on women farmers, has clearly shown that the farmers are at a very high risk of chemical pesticides. Various factors, such as the poor extension services from the government, easy availability of the chemical pesticides and poor monitoring and lack of regulations on the sales and use of these agro-chemicals, ignorance and carelessness on the parts of farmers and the agrovets regarding the use and sales of chemicals respectively expose the producers to chemicals that result in many cases, irreparable negative impacts on the farmers and on the environment. Consumption of vegetables produced in this manner poses

equal threat to the consumers as well. So, minimizing the use of chemicals in agriculture and adopting sustainable agriculture practices is the only option to provide a safe and nutritious food.

#### **4.5 IMPROVED LIVELIHOOD: OFF FARM LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS**

Both on-farm and off-farm enterprises have been the source of family income for poor and marginalized people. These people have been able to make livestock such as pig rearing and vegetable farming as a source of income. Farmers are producing seasonal and off seasonal vegetables and selling them in the local market. This has not only contributed to the producers but also promoted the local production and the market, which is crucial for the sustainability of agriculture. The farmers have been able to make farming a source of their income after they received different trainings and accessed to the resources from the government initiatives. Similarly, medicinal and herbal plants have also been source of income in Rasuwa and Dolkha districts.

Besides farming, community people are earning their living from off-farm enterprises through skill based and entrepreneurship development trainings. Skill development in various sectors such as handicrafts, and weaving have created self-employment opportunities and contributed to the livelihood of the poor and marginalized people.

There are 37 sustainable agriculture-piloting plots in Western Resource Center (WRC) area for promotion of CRSA, in which a large number of lead farmers are engaged in organic farming. A large area of barren land has been utilized by poor community in Nawalparasi for turmeric, sweet potato and fish farming which provided an alternative source of income for the marginalized community. The community level seed banks have been established in various working areas in collaboration with the government bodies, the farmers group and the PNGOs.

Promotion of Stinging Nettle powder, a flagship event for livelihood promotion was held in Udayapur to endorse Stinging Nettle (sisnoo), a perennial herbal plant as business making source. Nettle powder, the organic product rich with nutrition and medicinal value needs the market promotion at national and international level. There is an on-going national level coordination for market promotion. With the support of AAN, the community members are capable of reaching the ministry to claim their rights and fulfill the demands. Lead farmers engaged in organic vegetable farming supported by AAN are further associated with USAID-KISAN-project and they are trained for advancement in vegetable farming for better income.

#### 4.6 STRENGTHENING FARMER'S ORGANIZATIONS

Farmers groups and cooperatives have been formed at the community level in recognition with the DADO. The groups and Cooperatives have been strengthened to access resources and services from the government offices, such as the DADO and District Livestock Service Office.

Consequently, the programmes, such as small irrigation, minikits, and trainings have reached the farmer, which became possible through policy education during trainings and discussions in REFLECT Circles. Some of the groups and Cooperatives are also managing community seed banks, contributing to the conservation of agro-biodiversity. The Cooperatives have also been promoting local markets, such as *haat bazaar* and sales of local and organic products. Moreover, Cooperative in Chitwan is also carrying out action research on some of the organic agriculture practices, such as effectiveness of different types of organic manures and mixed cropping.

#### 4.7 POLICY ADVOCACY AND AGRICULTURE GOVERNANCE

Policy enforcement at local level has been improved through the capacity building of the groups and Cooperatives. Reaching the programmes and services to the farmers is an example of policy work at the local level. Access to the relevant information and education for the farmers' groups and Cooperatives regarding the government policy and programmes through different forums have built their capacity in advocating for effective implementation of the programmes and policies. The farmers

have been increasingly getting technical support from the agriculture service centres. For example, in Bajura, the farmer groups received NRs. 57,80,000 from DADO and in Nawalparasi National Park, the affected people have received NRs. 100,000 from the buffer zone for irrigation.

In addition to the community level policy

work, contribution to the policy formulations continued at national level as well. The major work was in making recommendations for the improvement of Agriculture Development Strategy. Similarly, recommendation for sustainable development goal was another contribution to the international policy formulation.

#### CASE STUDY

##### TUKUMAYA'S PROFITABLE BUSINESS

"There were days when I could not even afford to send my children to a community school and I had to take a loan for every small occasion at home", recalls Tukumaya Karki, who, today, lives happily in Bagbana VDC of Chatibantadi with her husband, four daughters and a son. Karki family recently had a great financial transformation. Tukumaya claims that she earns a net profit of NRs. 10000-15000, every month from her business.

Tukumaya and her husband migrated to Chatibantadi from Sindhupalchok almost two decades ago. The only source of their income was a small-scale farming and livestock. This income was insufficient to meet the needs for household, education and health of the family. So they were compelled to take loans from the landlords at high interest rates. "We had no option to sustain our lives except to borrow loans in whatever available interest rate. It was a difficult time for my family but I never lost hope", says Karki who had been a part of adult literacy class while she was in Sindhupalchowk.

Most of the families living near community forest at Chatibantadi make their livings by

collecting leaves from the forest and making Tapari (plates prepared with leaves and is used for traditional/cultural works) and selling them in the markets in Birgunj and Jitpur. In order to promote the local business, Arunodaya Youth Club (AYC), a partner of AAN provided a Tapari making machine to the community. A committee was formed to safeguard the machine. However, in a course of time, the committee became inactive and got dissolved; the machine was later handed over to Tukumaya with the consent of the community. It was five years since Tukumaya had started a business of making Tapari and today she is an independent woman entrepreneur. "The machine I received through AYC has boosted my Tapari production with its sustainability. I am able to give time to household works", says Tukumaya. The Karki family today lives a loan-free life; they send their children to a good school and they have a good rapport in the society. She further adds, "I have been earning more money from home than what my husband used to earn as a migrant worker abroad; I deposit my saving at women saving and credit groups to secure my family's future." She believes that a financially independent woman can live a free and peaceful life.

Various trainings on sustainable agriculture have capacitated the local farmers to grow off-season vegetables that helped improve the food security situation of people and the livelihood of farmers to some extent. Crop insurance practice has benefited the farmers against the risk of loss and damage from natural disaster.

Apart from partnership with various district level organizations, AAN is also supporting the land rights movement, in collaboration with Community Self Reliance Center (CSRC). National LRF has launched a

number of events and campaigns at national and local level for tenancy rights. The LRF has approximately 96,800 members who support the land movement. The pertinent advocacies of AAN and its local partners have successfully helped to raise the voice of land poor and women farmers in the domain of ensuring the equal land rights. Women's groups today actively participate in various movements for their rights. They are specifically united to claim their entitlements at household as well as the community level. Various campaigns, interaction programmes and capacity

building trainings were conducted under our partnership programme to empower women on their rights. Joint land ownership campaign is one of them, which empowered women on their rights to property and land.

The LRFs in Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Banke, Rautahat, and Sarlahi organized various protest programmes, such as sit-in, interaction on tenancy rights and lobbying the government to include provisions for ensuring their rights in new constitution. Discussion Program on Leasing Land, community led land reform practice and

## CASE STUDY

### GYANU TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Gyanu Baraili, the dweller of Panchakanya-5 is now a trained Dhaka weaver. She initially received a three-month Dhaka weaving training through the office of the Small-scale Cottage Industries, in coordination with DAS and started making Nepali traditional hats. However, she was never confident in using her income generation skills. She says, "I made Nepali hats to utilize my leisure time but had never thought of making it my profession". Gyanu is a member of Janachetana Women Collective, Panchakanya but had remained passive in the group activities until Women's Collective Project reformed the groups.

"I remained secluded most of the times but I have now realized the importance of being in a group and its benefits. I, therefore, attend meetings regularly and participate in all the activities", shared Gyanu. She took part in micro enterprises training organized by DAS

and chose Dhaka as her income generating work. DAS further provided the Dhaka weaving refresher training to the group of women through which Gyanu enhanced her technical skills and learned to weave varieties of Dhaka products. Gyanu says, "After I received the refresher training, I can weave the Dhaka clothes in different designs with full confidence." Gyanu travelled to Biratnagar to promote her products. Currently, she makes her living by working for an entrepreneur, but she has a plan to start up her own factory at Sukrabare, in partnership with two other collective members. "We have already acquired the production tools, and are now searching for an appropriate place to start our business", shared Gyanu. Gyanu has become economically independent and increased her self-esteem as well. She is now confident in facilitating trainings to other women. Hence, DAS has approached her for providing the next phase of Dhaka weaving training to the members of the collectives.

*Women's groups today actively participate in various movements for their rights. They are specifically united to claim their entitlements at household as well as the community level. Various campaigns, interaction programmes and capacity building training were conducted under our partnership programme to empower women on their rights. Joint land ownership campaign is one of them, which empowered women on their rights to property and land.*

## CASE STUDY

### MENDO'S JOURNEY FROM HAKUBESI TO MINISTRY

A 42 years-old Mendo Tamang lives in Hakubesi VDC Ward number 3, Rasuwa district with her four daughters and two sons. The means of their family subsistence is agriculture. Mendo is a Chairperson of Land Rights Forum (LRF) of Hakubesi and she has been consistently fighting in favour of people's land rights, particularly to receive the land ownership certificate. Mendo says, "I have been farming 6 ropanis of land for last 30 years that legally belongs to Shwambhu Gyan Guthi (SGG), Kathmandu. Though generations of my family have devoted lives to cultivate this land, we don't legally own this land. I am only a representative character, but there are many other people who have become the victim of injustice. This has two main consequences. First, the villages are deprived of electricity without land ownership certificate. Second, the villagers can neither earn adequate money for their subsistence nor can they feel secured."

There are a total of 336 households in six Wards of Hakubesi VDC without having land ownership certificates similar to Mendo. Most of the people at Haku are wage earners, completely depending on the others without a sense of future security.

Despite political transformation from autocracy to democratic republicanism in Nepal, community people like Haku are still victims of injustice. Mendo recalls, "My grandfather told me that the land we have been cultivating was our property but when the Land Revenue Office carried out land measurement in Haku VDC in 2034/35 B.S., the then Chairperson of the VDC, Mr. Gobar Lama for his personal gain, transferred our land ownership to the SGG." After AAN established the land rights forums in Haku VDC a decade ago, it is always determined to create an atmosphere to provide the oppressed an access to justice. "When I was seeking for an opportunity to raise my voice against injustice, I learnt about LRF and

immediately joined it and started volunteering for land rights movement. Consequently, with continuous support and facilitation from Nepal Agroforestry Foundation (NAF) I am leading the LRF as a Chairperson."

Mendo Tamang has been sensitizing the communities about their land rights and a need to be united for equity. She, then, led the other rights activists from Hakubesi and submitted an application to Ministry of Land Reform, demanding actions against the Guthi land issues. Her leadership has resulted in a strong land rights movements in Rasuwa district. Mendo says, "It's my dream to obtain a land ownership certificate that will dignify our lives and support the livelihoods. Many people in the local communities are looking at me and I have a huge responsibility. I believe we will get the justice soon. I thank NAF and AAN for helping me to develop my confidence and capacitate me to work for making my dream come true."

Women and Land Rights (Joint Land Ownership) campaign were organized. The valuable comments and suggestions on women inclusive land policy drafts have been received from district and community level discussions. At the community level, the programs focused on finding out the issues of farmers and landless squatters. With an aim to strengthen land right movement and secured land right, regular discussions in REFLECT Circles also played a vital role to raise awareness.

### 4.8 AGRICULTURE IN FORMAL EDUCATION

Besides the policy level advocacy and campaign for land rights and promoting the issue of sustainable development, local curriculum on sustainable agriculture has also been initiated at the school level. Considering the deteriorating motivation of the youths in agricultural occupation, there has been a felt need to educate the people about the importance of agriculture from their childhood, so that the future

generations will adopt agriculture as an important occupation. Therefore, local curriculum, comprising the basics of sustainable agriculture is being developed for the students of grade one to eight for 53 schools to develop as a model. A joint initiative with a local organization has been supported in accordance with the national provision of local curriculum in the community school, in Kavre. Similarly, with the technical backstopping and guidance, Prangarik Krishi Utpadak Sahakari Sanstha

The Government of Nepal directed the implementation of the joint ownership certificate of land in accordance with the budget speech of 2011/12. Each district has already developed a campaign plan for joint land ownership. The government provisioned 40% subsidy in the land registration fee for women living in remote areas, which has increased the landholdings of women. However, enactment of the National Land Policy is underway.

has developed some reference materials for teachers, containing the basics of sustainable agriculture for high school students in Fulbari VDC.

#### **4.9 HOUSING SUPPORT FOR FREED KAMAIYAS**

AAN has been supporting the freed Kamaiyas for last more than a decade for their rehabilitation and socio-political empowerment, through local partners in Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, and Bardiya districts. The organization has been supporting the freed Kamaiyas' organizations for their capacity development to advocate, lobby and

campaign for rights to safe and dignified resettlement. However, the rehabilitation has not been systematic and effective in many settlements, so that the freed-Kamaiyas have been living in small huts made up of the branches of the trees, which are not hygienic, safe and secured.

Therefore, there is an acute need to support for construction of the houses.

After consultation with Bardiya District Land Reform Office (DLRO), Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj (KMJS), Settlement Level, Freed Kamaiya Community leader and other district line agencies, Janatanagar

Freed Kamaiya Settlement of Bardiya has been selected for low-cost housing construction. The construction work has been implemented through local partners, KMJS and Radha Krishna Tharu Janasewa Kendra (RKJS). RKJS had constructed 338 lost-cost houses for freed-Kamaiyas in different settlements in Bardiya district from 2004 to 2010, with the support of ActionAid. In 2014, the foundations of all 64 houses have been completed. Since 2004, AAN has been successful to construct total of 1214 houses in Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Banke and Bardiya districts out of which 64 houses are at the foundation stage this year.



*House construction for Freed Kamaiya*



# Disaster Risk Reductions and Emergency Preparedness Response

Disaster is a serious interruption of well-managed community with social and economic activities, and environmental cycles. Disaster is no more confined only to the human loss and damage of the natural resources. The approach to look at disaster and its risk, and reduction process has changed with time. The aspects, such as livelihood, capacity building, skilled human resources, and impact of disaster on the environment and human life can be considered a part of disaster and its risk reduction. On the one hand, humanitarian approach is to deal with the risk reduction and on the other hand, it is to intervene in the vulnerable areas, build capacity of the community and identify its socio-economic aspects. Moreover, there is a scope of participatory approach to develop coping strategies for making the community more adaptable to disaster and its vulnerability. Risk reduction also includes working at the policy level to collaborate with VDCs, local bodies and municipality for mainstreaming the issues of disaster.

## 5.1 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The AAN activities have directly or indirectly influenced the policies and enhanced the resilience of vulnerable communities. The emergency preparedness funds have been set up at most of the working areas against disaster through AAN's advocacy and lobby with the local stakeholders and the State. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plan has been formulated to reduce the potential

risks at vulnerable communities and the local people are advocating for mainstreaming such plan at VDC and Municipality level. Disaster management training and orientation are provided to the community people to develop their capacity.

A total of 1,095 duty bearers (VDC secretary, local political leaders and civil-society leaders) are capacitated in disaster risk reduction, resulting in a positive role to

internalize and to build common understanding of local service providers on disaster management, PVA analysis, formation of DMC and designing a DM plan. It has further helped to integrate and mainstream DRR in local planning and budgeting system. LDRMPs have been incorporated in the local-level planning and budgeting system and allocated budget for disaster risk management in various working VDCs. For example, Sappata VDC,

## CASE STUDY

## SERGUNJ DMC LEADS WAY WITH COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Fire break out is a major problem in the plains of Nepal during early summer. The property worth Rs.500,000 was destroyed leaving three houses totally collapsed after a fire broke out in Agyauli-5 Sergunj of Nawalparasi, on 26th March 2014. The locals of Sergunj, Disaster Management Committee (DMC) and the armed

forces from Amalitari put their effort in controlling the fire.

After the fire came under control, the Sergunj DMC, which was formed recently with the support of ActionAid Aid Match project, mobilized community people to collect and distribute food and relief materials to the affected people. Furthermore, the members of DMC visited different agencies to gather extra support for rehabilitation and with such effort

the fire-affected families received NRs 5,000 from District Disaster Relief Committee.

Moreover, the District Forest Office provided twenty cubic feet of logs to each affected family for rehabilitation. The local Madyawarti Forest Users Committee also provided roofing materials to the affected people. The effort to collect more support is still in progress. The DMC of Sergunj, in collaboration with the locals, has set an example for community based disaster management.

Bajura provided NRs. 80,000 for DM plan, Jukot VDC of Bajura provided NRs. 200,000 for embankment, Pandusen VDC of Bajura provided NRs. 12,000 for emergency fund and Goltakuri VDC of Dang district provided NRs. 12,000 for embankment work to mitigate disaster.

Altogether, 161 disaster management plans were prepared at the community level through facilitation of PNGOs in the working areas. The DM plan helped sensitize the people to respond to the disaster. It has also capacitated the community people to identify potential risk and implement the plan for reducing vulnerability. They have initiated a fistful campaign to collect food grain as a relief in emergency and disaster. Goltakuri and Fulbari VDCs in Dang have completed the Rapti River's embankment. The community has also prepared a local nursery for plantation in the surrounding of Rapti River, mobilizing NRs. 12,000 provided by VDCs and NRs. 100,000 budget of department and ministry.

The capacity-building initiatives enabled the communities to identify the risk and hazards, and to prepare a plan of action for risks reduction. The PVA finding indicates that DMC & community people are mobilized, in coordination with the local authorities, for mitigation works, including safer way, culvert and fencing to control landslide. Consequently, the communities are able to assess the vulnerability and make preparedness plan, accumulate local and external resources to cope with the emergency and disaster.

The DM plans have been prepared in close coordination with the representatives of the VDCs. The design of local development plan training has been allocated to Ward Citizen Forum and CDMC with a view to incorporate community-level DM plan in the VDC plan, and a copy is provided to the VDCs.

Considering the needs of trained human resources to make a community safer from

emergency and disaster, 705 people have been trained across the working areas to respond and rescue, who have built disaster resilient or safer communities. One of the indicators for building a safer community is setting up a local emergency fund. Therefore, after the communities received an orientation, they have set up emergency funds so that they could respond immediately for rehabilitation. The communities have prepared the emergency fund mobilization guidelines for smooth operation, and fund-raising is underway through different activities (daily saving, Mutthi bachat, cultural program). The DM plans have been prepared in close coordination with the representatives of the VDCs. The design of local development plan training has been allocated to Ward Citizen Forum and CDMC with view to incorporate community level DM plan in the VDC plan, and a copy is provided to the VDCs.



Forty-five households of Okhre VDC, Ward No. 5 in Terhathum district initiated and prepared CAPA. They have assessed the potential hazard and its sensitivity, along with the capacity to respond against disaster and adopt plans using participatory tools, such as hazard mapping, social mapping, pair ranking, etc. The communities have been able to identify the potential risk and take necessary measures to reduce it. They have been lobbying the VDC to support the CAPA plan. The CAPA plan, which is instrumental for working on DRR at the local level, came into force now through our PNGO's advocacy, lobby and

capacity building. Each household in the community in Kharang VDC, Sankhuwasabha has started keeping a bucket of water all the times to control a possible fire break out. Similarly, 17 communities across the LRP have set up emergency fund to cope with the emergency.

The community Disaster Management Plan (DMP) has helped to mobilize both the external and internal resources. The VDC has allocated certain funds to the basket set up by the community for responding to emergency and disaster. The communities

of Sunaulo Basti of Bengadaber VDC, Dhanusha have fixed a barbed wire and stones using Rs 150,000 from the basket fund to control the river flow in the local settlement, which has helped keep 125 households safe from Ratu River. Likewise, 95 households of Dhanusha Gobindpur are now safe from the risk of sweeping away by Baluwa River. The community has controlled the overflow of the river by putting gabion, using the municipality grant. Uchidiha and Golagunj VDCs have accumulated 200 kg rice through a fistful campaign for emergency. After PVA and having DM plan for the community of Kolti-4 and Bandhu-9 of Bajura, embankment work with the VDC budget of Rs 200,000 of Pancha Laxmi Lower Secondary School of Bajura has been accomplished during this reporting period.

The Tharu community of Gadawa has been traditionally managing early-warning system to check the water level of Rapti River, which has become useful in saving lives and property. The 10 VDCs of Gadawa area of Dang are vulnerable to flood when the water of Rapti River rises above the alarming level. Trees are planted to protect soil erosion by mobilizing the school children in a landslide-prone zone VDC of Sappattta, Bajura after conducting PVA and DRR orientation at the community and the school.

## CASE STUDY

### PREPARING AGAINST DISASTERS

Every Saturday morning, the locals of Hasifera Ward No 4 of Badikhel and Ghyampe Dada Ward no 8 of Chapagaun gather at their respective places to operate the REFLECT Circles. Forty-six community members participate in each circle, and they discuss, interact and address various issues of public concerns, such as social services, vital registrations, agriculture, women empowerment, education, etc.

REFLECT Circles at both the VDCs highlighted the necessity of a committee to manage disaster as their common concerns and they formed a DMC with the initiative of HomeNet Nepal, a partner of AAN. "Houses at

Hasifera and Ghyampedada are located at high altitudes on hills while many of the brick kilns are located at the base of hills that would cause the unmanaged water canals trigger the risk of landslides and other disasters", says Chini Nagarkoti, a DMC member in Chapagaun. He further adds, "Since our community is jeopardized specially by the landslide, many families are living at a high risk zone. Therefore, the committee has been actively working to mitigate the risk". The DMC made the residents of both the VDCs aware of the possible disasters, and an emergency disaster fund of NRs.10,400 has been allocated to both the VDCs. " The emergency fund has helped people feel less vulnerable."

## 5.2 POLICY ENGAGEMENT

LDRMP has been prepared across the LRP, which have helped mainstream DRR in plan and program of the VDCs and municipalities. Dhanusa district, for instance, has recently allocated emergency fund for disaster. It is instrumental for working on DRR at the local level, which is now implemented through our PNGO's advocacy, lobby and capacity building. The duty bearers and the stakeholders are capacitated to formulate resilience plans that meet the needs of their areas. With the increasing number of LDRMPs and DM plans, the budget utilization by public for DRR work has also increased this year. The households at Okhre VDC prepared CAPA. They have assessed the potential hazard and its sensitivity, capacity to respond and fight against disaster and prepared a plan through the use of different participatory tools. The communities have been able to identify the potential risk and measures to reduce it. As per findings from PVA and DMC, the community people are united for mitigation works, like safer way, culvert and fencing for controlling landslide by coordinating with the local authorities. Mapping of hazards has been installed to the communities to minimize the serious damage and loss.

The State has to play an essential role to enhance the resilience of the vulnerable communities. AAN has been promoting roles of government to ensure a safer life of people. AAN, considering the discrepancies between the policies and practices in Nepal, has been pertinently operating to bridge that

## CASE STUDY

### DEFEATING A DISASTER

"Every year during monsoon, the floods in Narayani River destroy our villages, causing loss of lives, property, animals and crops. However, fortunately, there has been no loss of lives in 2014", says Naambali Chowdhary, a community leader of Dolautpur. The residents of Dolautpurpremnagar, Khaireni and Bhardakali, Rajapur Municipality of Bardiya District live a fearful life, as the areas are highly vulnerable to disaster. The inhabitants in these villages are dominantly marginalized groups of people such as kamaiya, Sonaha, landless and squatters, and they have the least resources to avoid the potential calamities.

Naambali adds, "We are already a secluded community. Besides, when the flood triggered cholera epidemic two years ago, we were devastated. Fortunately, Aidmatch project from Kamaiya Jagaran Samaj (KMJS) Nepal, a partner of AAN came up as our savior." The main objective of Aidmatch project is disaster management. Hence, Aidmatch provided Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) training for an individual from each

community and Naambali Chowdhary was one of the trainees. Naambali recalls, "I was fortunate to receive an opportunity to learn about PVA representing Dolautpur. KMJS also provided orientation on early warning system and training on first aid to the locals. I visited door-to-door in my village to raise awareness among the people about disaster."

Considering the scarce of resources to combat potential calamities, KMJS supported Dolautpur Disaster Management Committee (DMC) to set up an emergency fund and allocated a certain budget for this. Naambali Chowdhary shares, "In July 2014, when Dolautpur was hit by flood, Nepal Police and Nepal Army were standby to rescue the villagers through the use of emergency warning system. A total of 18 households were destroyed while they were immediately provided relief through the recently set up emergency fund by DMC. There was no single incidence of any epidemic because DMC restricted the locals from consuming any kind of meat for a month. I thank KMJS, Aidmatch Project and AAN for capacitating us to relieve from the fear of such disasters."

gap with advocacy and other initiatives. A baseline survey was carried out under the Aidmatch project, for effective implementation of pro-poor National Disaster Management Policy. The report of this survey helped to advocate the Policy and Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA).

Considering the needs of skilled human resources to combat disaster and safeguard the people from emergencies in the communities, a large number of human resources has been developed to respond and rescue in times of disasters and emergencies, making the community

Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) have been formed at Rajapur and Nawalparasi. The implementation of National Disaster Management Strategy for Local Disaster Risk Management Programme (LDRM) is emphasized with the approval of Municipality and VDC Councils. The DMCs of Bardiya have operated the relief distribution campaigns in accordance with the relief standards, which have led to equitable distribution of wood to the flood affected households. Rajapur Municipality of Bardiya district has committed to allocate budget to develop LDRM for reducing risks at highly flood-prone areas after the local stakeholders lobbied the municipality. Moreover, with the advocacy from AAN partners and REFLECT Circle, the periodic plans at VDCs of Bajura have incorporated DRR plan and disaster management fund.

disaster resilient and safer. The skills and knowledge both are promoted by AAN to increase the capacity of communities against the disasters, and a task force has been formed to cope with emergencies whereas locals were provided trainings on first aid, preventive measures and other basic knowledge about disaster. Besides this, the right holders have been capacitated on disaster management. Hence, many communities have prepared a disaster management plan to help access the local and external resources to cope with the consequences of disaster. A number of clusters are formed under the Community Disaster Management Committee and the local people are trained to respond and rescue. The clusters were also provided support for first aid, shelter, food and protection.

### 5.3 ENGAGEMENT THROUGH PROJECT

A two-year project titled Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City was designed to implement from April 2012, to increase the resilience of poor and vulnerable people so that they would be able to mitigate, prepare for, effectively respond and overcome the

impact of the multiple hazards.

Implemented by the consortium of AAN and Practical Action Nepal, through local NGO partners - Community Support Group and Siddhartha Club in collaboration with a range of local government, civil-society stakeholders and the private sectors, the project was funded by the Department for International Development of UKAid.

The project's investments in National Building Code implementation, the establishment of early warning system and small-scale mitigation and capacity building

*The State has to play an essential role to enhance the resilience of the vulnerable communities. AAN has been promoting roles of government to ensure a safe life of people. AAN, considering the discrepancies between the policies and practices in Nepal, has been pertinently operating to bridge that gap with advocacy and other initiatives.*



*Community level participatory vulnerability analysis*

Bio-dyke has been constructed at Dhodna and Daulatpur VDCs to prevent the communities from the river floods. After the PNGOs, community and Churiya conservation program conducted the PVA and DRR orientation in Dang district, extraction of sand from Rapti River is halted, which will reduce the disaster risks. The DMCs have analyzed the vulnerabilities of their communities through PVA and figured out wildlife threat, flash flood, fire, landslide, lightening as threats and further prepared an action plan for disaster preparedness and mitigation activities. Similarly, the Government of Nepal has increased the budget to support Bardiya and Banke for enforcing uniformity of relief standards. Feasibility study on climate resilient agriculture system was conducted in few working areas that eased the integration with national climate resilient agriculture system.

has collectively reduced the risk of multiple hazards. DRR is mainstreamed in the municipality and DDC planning processes. People have developed a "we-can-do-it" feeling through training, drills and drama. They started storing important documents safely and moving their houses to safer places by identifying vulnerable and high-risk areas. Harmony between rights-holders

## CASE STUDY

### BIO DYKE

Most of the settlements at Bhaurapatta, Rajapur area of Bardiya District are affected by flood. The increasing phenomenon of climate change tends to trigger the risks of flood. Most of the people in the rural communities in Bhaurapatta are poor and uneducated, who don't have appropriate knowledge of climate change. Communities of Doulatpur, Premnagar, Kaireni and Bhadrailipur of Bardiya frequently become the victims of flood; the area gets inundated during the rainy seasons with the water flow of Karnali and Bhadraili rivers around the communities. Consequently, land intersections are observed the whole year round.

The Aid Match project has adopted strategies to mitigate the risks of floods in these areas. Recently, a natural wall has been constructed to regulate the water levels. The Aid Match project has utilized the local resources such as grass, shrubs, soil, plants, etc and the skills of local people with experiences in flood and deforestation, to build a natural wall to obstruct the overflow of rivers, which is called Bio Dyke. Besides the locally available natural materials, few other materials such as iron, cement and stones were used to support the Dyke. Soil is used to form a base in this dyke. Since the plants

take time to grow, bamboos and sacks are placed initially to avoid soil erosion and after a certain time, appropriate plantation took place to keep the soil intact. The local plants such as, bamboo, karmi, babur, kadam are potentially useful for the natural dykes. Bio dyke has prevented the overflow of Karnali River, minimizing risks for 170 households. Every year, many houses of poor people get destroyed by the flood and they have to spend hefty money for repair and rebuilding, resulting them in the cycle of poverty. However, the Bio dyke has helped minimize the floods ensuring the economic stability.

Nambali Chowdhary, Chairperson of Dolautpur DMC says, "earlier the local people were not familiar with the idea of Bio Dyke so that they were hesitant to adopt such construction modality. Therefore, we had to face few difficulties but with the support of KMJS, Hariyo Ban Care Nepal, and Water Generating Unit Banke, we successfully built it." He further adds, "The Bio Dyke has safeguarded the communities from recent flood in July 2014; 20 Bighas of cultivable land has been prevented from destruction while 25 households have completely avoided any kind of damage. So, the people, who had earlier opposed the concept of Bio Dyke have now started appreciating our work."



and duty-bearers was cultivated through joint social actions. The DM fund, small-scale mitigation, and saving and credit endeavors have been replicated across the project communities.

#### **5.4 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

Altogether, 550 people have received relief support. With our regular efforts, people are aware of the relief standard and policy and there have been increased claims of relief support in VDC and DDC. AAN participated in series of emergency meetings called by DDRC, Banke, during and just after the flood in the western Nepal. DDRC, in collaboration with the other stakeholders, formulated a plan of action to distribute food items, as an immediate relief. AAN was one of the major actors in the process, and it also contributed NRs. 3 lakhs in the DDRC basket fund, for disaster victims of Dang,

Banke and Bardiya districts. The money from the basket fund was used for distributing food items, such as beaten rice, noodles, biscuits, sugar, water and water purifier solutions to 6,000 people in Bardiya and 6,334 people in Banke through DDRC. The AAN partner organizations - Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj and BEE Group were directly involved in the major works throughout the process, including in identifying the affected people and distributing the relief items, in close coordination with DDRC.

Apart from advocacy, AAN supports for rehabilitation of the disaster victims, helps them for quality livelihood and to bring stability in the community. The flood victims in Udayapur district were provided relief in cash and kinds, and the local communities were hit by a landslide in Bajura, AAN had

supported with emergency humanitarian assistance in cash to the victim families, and with the emergency food items to the certain settlements affected by the fire hazard in Kapilvastu. Similarly, the flood victims in other working areas were provided with a certain amount of money and basic relief items, in coordination with DDRC and PNGOs. The VDCs of Bardiya and Nawalparasi districts were provided relief as per the relief standard from DDRC due to acclamation of DMC. The flood-affected families in Bardiya were supported with food/non-food items through emergency fund of AidMatch project whereas DDRC Bardiya provided wood to district forest office for maintenance of the affected houses. During this year, AAN provided humanitarian assistance to 550 disaster victims to address their immediate needs.



# Participatory Democratic Governance

Improving governance at local level and promoting democracy is one of the central themes of AAN intervention at local level. AAN focuses to generate discourses of participatory democracy for local and national governance.

## 6.1 SECURED REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF PLIP AND ROLE IN DECISION MAKING

People are the power and all the changes we expect are to be brought from within the community we work. The people are the change agents. Participatory democracy is a continuous movement for creating opportunities where every agent will contribute to decision-making. This will not only help empower the community, but also raise awareness of the rights they are entitled to. Rather than advocating or prescribing for a particular model of democracy, participatory democracy is a process of emphasizing the broad form of citizen participation and representation, keeping inclusion at the centre. AAN has been continuously organising the

conference on participatory democracy for past few years.

AAN works with the partner organizations, not only to educate the PLIP but also to increase the capacity of the people in making sustainable change. Trainings are provided on leadership, PPP, monitoring, law and development and proposal writing for enabling the community people to claim their rights. The AAN support increased the capacity for fair participation and representation, particularly of the women in the decision-making level.

The communities have started claiming their rights to information in the local bodies. In other words, a democratic

phenomenon has been established between the duty bearers and the right holders. Consequently, representation of women and marginalized communities is increased at the local level. Women are now leading some key positions that enabled them to raise their issues of critical concerns at the relevant forums and the authorities. The increased number of women in the local committee has helped them take decisions in their favour. Their involvement has brought about considerable changes in budget allocation and its utilization, access to drinking water, and scholarship for their children. The security allowances and its misuse have been notified which was corrected timely and to be distributed properly.

## CASE STUDY

## A JOURNEY FROM A HOUSEWIFE TO BE A POLITICIAN

Lila Sardar, 29 was a housewife and a Chairperson of Nepali Congress party in Baijanathpur VDC. Mother of two, Lila was born and raised in a marginalized Dalit family of Jhorahat VDC. But, today she is a dignified politician, a highly respected person in the village.

Lila, unlike other Dalit girls, had an opportunity to receive education, which helped her live a different life. "I consider myself lucky to have been able to complete School Leaving Certificate (SLC). My life would have been confined to the house had I not gone to school", says Lila who was married to Mahesh Sardar of Baijanathpur VDC as soon as she completed her SLC. When she got married at a young age of 16, Lila was compelled to follow Madhesi Dalit customs, such as covering her face with sari, staying inside home, refraining from socializing, etc. "I never liked the conservative practices of my community, I wanted to change

the perspective of people towards women", says Lila.

It was five years since Lila, in coordination with women from all 9 wards of Baijanathpur VDC, initiated to form women's network with the support of Nari Bikash Sangh (NBS), a partner of AAN. "I was looking for ways to bring changes in my community when NBS came to my door asking me to join the Women's Network. It was like an answer to my prayer", recalls Lila who was unanimously elected for the post of Secretary of the same network. "I got enormous opportunities through NBS to attend trainings and other relevant programs. Meanwhile, I learnt about quotas for SLC passed Dalit women and applied for a teacher's post at Bengalal school in Lakhantari and got my first job", Says Lila.

Lila, not only took up a teaching vocation, but also involved at the REFLECT Circle as an active member. She emphasized on women development. She says, "Thankfully, NBS established REFLECT Circle in my village

because of which we have become able to make significant changes in our community". Lila and the other women in the community united against domestic violence, alcohol consumption and gambling. Though it was not easy for women like Lila to change the orthodox behavior of society towards women, she never gave up. "There were people who called me over smart; they tried to pull me down, but with the support of my husband and guidance from NBS, I was determined to achieve my goals", shared Lila. Today, most of the women at Baijanathpur have ceased alcohol production at home and started making hay mats.

"In course of time I became interested in politics and I started to attend meetings of political parties. Today, I am leading as a woman Chairperson of Baijanathpur Nepali Congress party", she says. She, with her team, is obtaining 10% of VDC allocated budget for women and organizing various programs for women development. She plans to attain higher qualifications and work for the deprived Dalit women; she has become a role model.

The training on 'governance' in Dhanusa district, Ward Citizen's Forum played a supportive role in planning at local-level and prioritizing at VDC Council. The training on incorporating the rights of the communities and demand in settlement level planning has supported the communities to prepare and submit their basic demands and to lobby the local stakeholders to allocate their plans from the Councils. Such kinds of improvement can be observed in other working areas too. The community score-card process has supported in the improvement of quality public services, especially in health, agriculture and schools of LRP working areas.

## CASE STUDY

## REFLECT AIDING DEVELOPMENT IN SUNDARBASTI

A one storied community building consisting two rooms is under construction at Sundarbasti Ward number 3 in Sarangkot. This area is one of the backward sections of Kaski District with minimum infrastructural development. Recently, as a result of the initiation of Sundaarbasti REFLECT Circle and facilitation of AAN's partner Siddhartha Club (SC), the locals have received NRs. 40,000 from the VDC for construction of the building. "Prior to the establishment of the REFLECT Circle, we worked as a laborer, but we had no idea about our rights. Since the VDC office is located in a distance from our village, we were unaware of the budget allocated for us", says one of the REFLECT Circle members.

SC has been working at Sundarbasti for last five years for addressing the issues of women's rights, education, sanitation, health, etc. Particularly, women at Sundarbasti are

determined to bring positive changes in the community; they started participating in the regular discussion sessions at the REFLECT Circle. "Initially, the REFLECT Circle was operated at the health post in our village, but because it was not feasible, we managed to operate the Circle in the open fields, which was inconvenient during the rainy season. Thus, a need for a community building was raised in the REFLECT Circle and with the support from SC we collected NRs. 1000 from each household and even received allocated budget from the VDC", recalls a member of Sundarbasti REFLECT Circle. Besides this, with the support from SC and the REFLECT Circle, the local people of Sundarbasti have initiated vegetable farming; the school enrolment rate of children has increased, and women have become self-reliant. Lately, in the initiation of the REFLECT Circle, a plastic water pond has been constructed in Sundarbasti to address the water shortage issues in the village. The construction of a pond was financially supported by VDC, SC and Hemawanti Nepal.

## 6.2 ENSURING QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

The introduction to participatory tools, such as community score-card, public audit, public hearing, lobby and advocacy for quality public services have increased the quality of public services in the community. AAN advocated the people centred approaches at public institutions aiming to improve service qualities and to ensure

gender responsiveness. The local community mostly does not consider that the government health facilities at the community level are reliable. However, with the service mapping practice within the community, mostly PLiP and marginalized groups are receiving quality services in the health posts, and the services related to agriculture development. The rate of people approaching for a health check up has

increased this year. The allowance has particularly motivated the pregnant women to undergo for periodic health check up. This could also help to meet the MDG goals to reduce the maternal mortality rate.

The PLiP received information and increased their access to public services after lobbying the concerned authorities to place the updated Citizen Charter in most of the VDCs, municipality and health post of LRPs' working areas. The use of accountability tools and mobilization of REFLECT Circles in the process of improving quality public services in many working areas of LRP have resulted in quality services in the health posts, such as 24-hours delivery services, and regular maternity health check up for pregnant women. Moreover, the government has initiated actions to provide better access to the services in the public institutions by operating offices from 6 o'clock in the morning. The institutions that have regulated the decisions are District Administration Office, Land and Revenue Office, and Office of Transportation.

The participatory tools have also increased the capacity of the PLiP to learn about the resource distribution and its proper utilization, pursuant to the government norms of accountability and the entitled resources of the PLiP. AAN has persistently worked to sensitize the communities about their rights and entitlements and capacitated them to claim the rights and question the public institutions. The local people, being aware of the services and



A total of Rs. 4.74 billion has been allocated for the development of infrastructures of the education institutions, while under the merger provisions, 200 schools with few numbers of students and less than prescribed distance are planned to be merged in order to make the school level education effective. A total budget of Rs. 33.52 billion is allocated for overall development of health sector of Nepal for effective service delivery to general public through public hospitals, health posts and sub-health posts. The GON has announced to upgrade all the sub-health posts to the level of health posts and establishment of ICU wards in five zonal hospitals. Immunization programs for certain diseases have also been developed by GON to increase the level of citizen's health, particularly focusing to reduce the infant, child and maternal mortality rate where the funds for immunization has been allocated.

resources of the government program, have helped claim the social security allowances, such as allowances for elderly people, disable, single women, etc.

The orientations on Right to Information (RTI) were conducted in various working areas. The youth groups were capacitated to claim their rights to information from the

## CASE STUDY

### MAKING DUTY BEARERS ACCOUNTABLE

Mani Lama, 40 of Samakhusi, had her residence telephone line halted for more than a year without any prior notice. She filed series of complaints at Nepal Telecom, but those were not addressed. She then used her rights to information to get her phone line repaired. She shares, "My telephone remained useless for a year. Every time I called the Telecom office, they assured me to fix it, but it all was in vain as they never acted." She further added, "I also visited the authorized person and pledged him address my issue. Although they sent the technicians, they didn't have the necessary tools. It was such an irresponsible behavior of duty bearer."

Mani became helpless, when Nepal Telecom, the public service provider, couldn't provide effective services to the public. It was a few months back that Mani had attended an orientation class on Right to Information (RTI), organized by Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES), a partner of AAN. "Though I had become hopeless, at the same time, I recalled what I had learnt from the RTI classes that any organization or service provider agency registered the Government of Nepal must have public accountability. The public can use RTI to get access to information", says Mani.

Mani used her RTI for holding the duty

bearers accountable. She says, "I consulted the RTI class trainer and sent a letter to Nepal Telecom seeking reasons why my telephone service was halted, and the services were ineffective. As soon as my complaint was received, the Telecom Office repaired my telephone without further delay". Mani fully utilized the knowledge for her benefit. She believes that the people must understand and claim their rights when necessary. She states, "RTI is a very useful tool that everyone should be aware of it in order to make the duty bearers responsible and receive the allocated services."

Today, Mani Lama is District committee Chairperson of NMES, Kathmandu. She has been constantly working for women's rights and rights to shelter. Simultaneously, she also educates people about RTI. "I am fortunate to have an opportunity to lead the same organization that transformed my life. I have successfully reached to 23 settlements out of 44 in Kathmandu", Says Mani. She anticipates to see a just and accountable society.



local institutions. Consequently, the youths demanded information mainly from the drinking water and sanitation office, health posts and schools. The increased capacity of the right holders made the government to be more accountable towards the people. Mostly, the community in general and the committee in particular are closely monitoring the scholarship funds for the target groups.

The PNGOs organized community PRRP in the VDC level and organizations level. The community level PRRP is helping to bring changes in the lives of the people. The use of different types of participatory and pictorial tools was helpful to make the VDC level intervention effective. The stakeholders appreciated this process and the intervention both.

### 6.3 STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROCESS

The community had active participation in various campaigns and advocacy activities initiated by AAN, in 2014. The campaigns were mostly related to claiming of their rights to the services. The major campaigns held during the year included participatory planning process (PPP) campaign, campaign against corruption, use of RTI, open defecations free campaign, school enrolment campaign, campaign against dowry system and so forth. These campaigns became supportive to influence the authorized bodies and to enhance the confidence of the communities for further activism. The capacitated PLiP with the facilitation of partner organization have prepared 936 community plans and

## CASE STUDY

### FIRST COMMUNITY BUILDING AT BELTAKURA

AAN has supported Beltakura, Urhari VDC Ward number 6, in Dang District to operate the REFLECT Circle. Approximately between 15 and 25 women participate in the regular discussions held at the REFLECT Circle at Beltakura. A discussion on the issues of domestic violence, child labor, castebased discrimination, sanitation and health and even infrastructure development took place within the REFLECT Circle to help the community to figure out its needs.

The women members in the REFLECT Circle raised the issue of prerequisites for a community building. Then, a planning and a proposal were prepared in order to construct a well-fenced building in an area of 6 katha of land (4320 sqft). After completion of planning in the first phase, the proposal was presented in the Ward meeting in the presence of 25 members. "It was our well prepared proposal and strong presence of the members that compelled the Ward committee to permit us to carry out our project exactly on the second day of its submission", says Sarita Chowdhary, the

REFLECT educator. She further shares, "The construction work got initiated in the guidance of SEED and with labor contribution from local community in which 50 people were aided to dig the base of the building. Same group of women presented their project during the 15th Village Council meeting of Urahari VDC and received a grant of NRs. 50,000 from the Village Council. All the required construction materials were provided by SEED".

"I had never imagined that women would be handling such a huge project successfully. Today, only one community building at Beltakura stands as an initiative of women", shares Jugram Chowdhary, a local of Beltakura. Currently, the building is used to operate various trainings, seminars and workshops with minimum charge, which goes to women's group fund. "The women's group fund usually goes for the social welfare programs in the community or is provided as a loan to someone in need", shares Sarita Chowdhary. "REFLECT Circle has not only empowered the women but it has also supported for the overall development of our community", says Jugram.

*A glimpse of ward level participatory planning process*



## CASE STUDY

## MANOHARA COMMUNITY PLAN SUBMITTED AT WARD LEVEL MEETING

The Manohara Slum community, situated at Ward no 16 of Bhaktapur, comprises 800 households migrated from various parts of Nepal. Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES), a partner of AAN has been working for the deprived population for five years. The REFLECT Circle established by AAN has 30 female members, who actively participate in the regular discussions. NMES has been operating various leadership development programs for locals of Manohara and the orientation programs for the REFLECT members on the topics such as women's rights, UCW, land rights and rights to safe shelter. Thus, the female members of Manohara have enhanced their leadership skills and they have been actively coordinating to address issues like school management, violence against women, infrastructure development, etc. Manju Pokharel, District Chairperson of NMES says,

“Women at Manohara were provided training on participatory planning process; they have been capacitated to develop plans and proposals and were made aware of their rights. The same group of women has successfully submitted a community plan in a Ward level meeting”.

The NMES district committee members in Bhaktapur shared that they have been contributing for the development of the community, particularly for women empowerment. The locals of Manohara were unaware of the importance of their participation at the Ward level meetings; the time and date of meetings were not made available to them, but with the use of RTI, the locals have been participating in such meetings and programs. The women members of the REFLECT Circle in Manohara were determined to bring

positive changes in their communities. Hence, they lobbied NEMS district committee; Tole Improvement Committee prepared a proper plan, prioritizing the necessity of infrastructures such as electricity, public toilets, waste management and disaster risk management for their community. The plan also included the demand for skill development trainings for women and establishment of CCCC and a children library. Thus, women of Manohara have set an example of making use of knowledge for improvement of community.



submitted to the concerned local government and accessed to a huge amount of grant for their development.

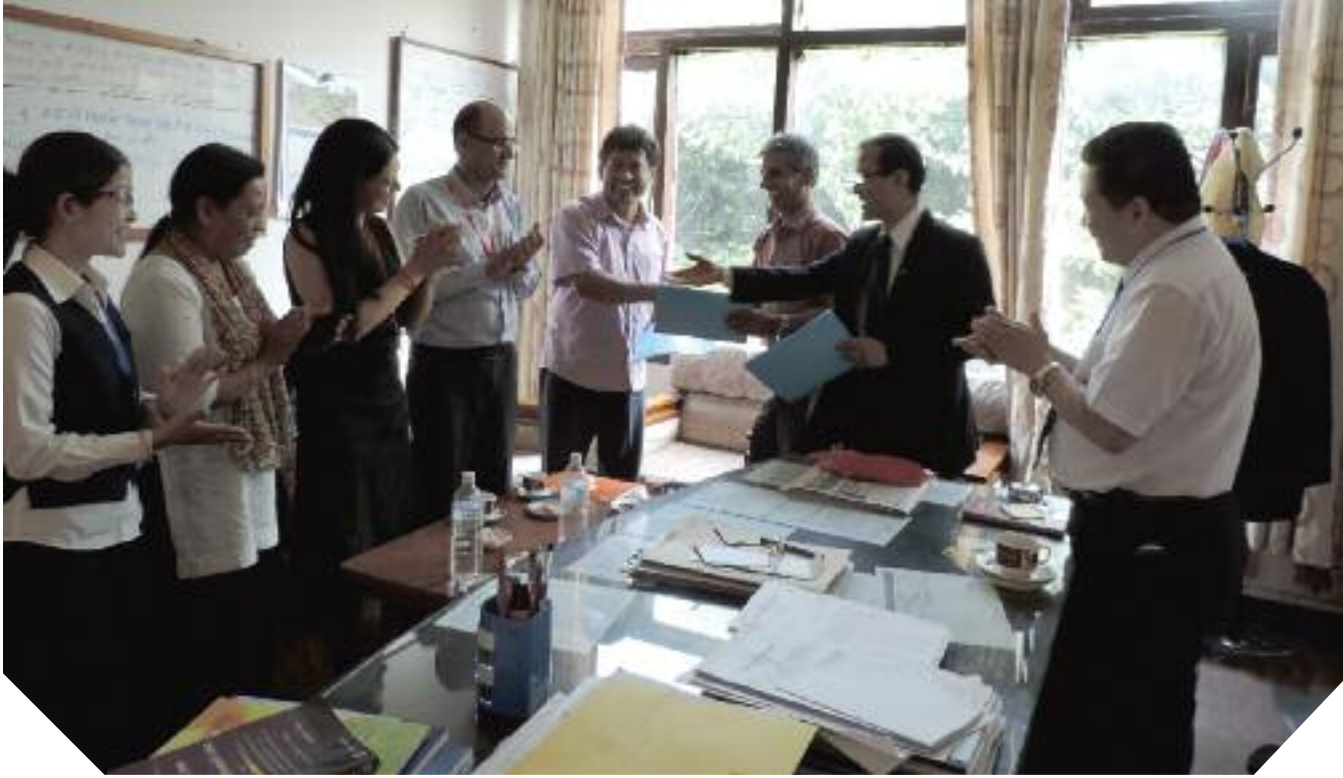
The International Anti-corruption Day was celebrated on the 9th December 2014 in the AAN working areas through campaigns. At the same time, a mass discussion was held on the use of RTI against corruption. The youth focused on the orientation programs and the discussions were held for

raising awareness among the youths about their roles and responsibilities to build democracy at the local level with the use of tools like RTI, public audit and citizen charter. Moreover, the capacity building of Ward Citizen's Forum Community Awareness Centre regarding its role and responsibility has enhanced the performance at the local level. The understanding of policy and provisions has also supported the User Groups to comply

with minimum conditions and support to pass in Minimum Conditions Performance Measure.

### 6.4 ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND POLICY ADVOCACY

The Government of Nepal has been exploring ways to implement a progressive taxation system in Nepal, and the State has committed to form a high-level tax system



*AAN signed MoU with Ministry of Urban Development to develop National Poverty Strategy*

review Commission to regulate the effective taxation. With the advancement of information technologies, Nepal is expected to improve the tax administration by enhancing the control and access to records of the taxpayers, which can further help in equitable revenue generation from the wealthy ones. The budget speech of 2014/15 has stated to regulate a mandatory provision which obtains a permanent account number of all public entities, individuals and professionals who draw salary, remuneration and benefits from a public exchequer, in order to ensure greater

transparency before the people. Nepal has also made international commitments against the money laundering, which shall be implemented in the forthcoming years.

In the current fiscal year, the State has focused the programs such as modernization, diversification, commercialization and marketing of the agriculture products for overall development for an agriculture sector. Besides increasing budget for supply of agriculture inputs, the State has emphasized on extension services, trainings, research and

development in the budget.

The Ministry of Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation (MoCPA) was created in May, 2012 but without a proper policy in place, the Ministry is yet to find a clear direction to develop the strategies for poverty alleviation. To meet this vital need, MoCPA, AAN and HomeNet Nepal (partner organization) came together and agreed to formulate a policy on Urban and Rural Poverty Alleviation. The MoU was signed on June 17, 2014. The national policy development initiative, therefore, is to

Nepal is trying to address the social protection agenda with a multi-sectoral approach as a part of its poverty reduction and inclusive development strategies. Numbers of functional civic engagement forums are created in the working areas of AAN to advocate in favour of the transformative social protection, such as Janasarokar Manch, SMC, and MAM, etc.

implement the MoU spirit with MoCPA into reality and produce a comprehensive policy document. A steering committee and task force were formed comprising the representatives from AAN and HNN, in consultation with ministries, agencies, economists, policy makers and experts. The first draft of the proposed policy was prepared that would ensure food security and environment-friendly initiatives throughout the nation. The government should ensure privatization of elderly homes with 25% quota for senior citizens of the poor family, tax exemption for the poor business, maternal health of ultra poor, proportionate percentage for Dalit women as the key recommendations made from the critical mass.

Nepal is trying to address the social protection agenda with a multi-sectoral approach as a part of its poverty reduction and inclusive development strategies. Numbers of functional civic engagement forums are created in the working areas of AAN to advocate in favour of the transformative social protection, such as Janasarokar Manch, SMC, and MAM, etc. Janasarokar Manch is formed in all the LRP districts, which is basically functioning to address and advocate for the transformative social protection and quality public services in their respective districts and to raise collective voices in forming, reforming and amending the policies in favor of PLiP. Furthermore, the service and policy mapping and the REFLECT Circles have played essential roles to raise

awareness among the PLiP about social security allowances. The impact in working VDCs is perceived as the number and awareness of social security allowances among the general people. The PLiP and other people who are eligible for the social security allowance are given orientation about their rights, further empowering them to claim those, rights. The joint initiation of LRP partners and local bodies successfully conduct LGCDP District Meet of Social Mobilizers for Transformative Social Mobilization which help the social protection system at the community level.



# Women's Rights

AAN strongly believed that the fulfillment of women's rights must be recognized as a priority within human rights. Its intervention in women's rights theme primarily focused on elimination of all kinds of discriminatory laws and social practices that perpetuate and reinforce discrimination against women, combating all forms of violence against women.

Women are recognized as one of the major rights holders.

## 7.1 STOP VIOLENCE

### AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

The concept of women rights is understood as any other human rights in the organization and that are what the organization promoted in the community we work with. The women are equally contributing to the men for the development of the country at various levels. As an organization, we promote women and their rights for making visible changes by empowering and facilitating them in different ways so that they could claim and attain their rights.

The notions of women rights and justice are related to their ability to claim their rights regarding violence against women across the world. The issues of women and gender inequality and their fights have always been about eliminating violence even after working over many years in this sector. Today, the quest of justice for women is not only a physical issue but also the psychological one. The issue of gender inequality and VAW go beyond the households because the State and law should play an essential role to combat these issues.

## CASE STUDY

## THAMI COMMUNITY TOWARDS A BETTER CHANGE

"I have recently completed my School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams and I am happily married", says 20 years old Hiramaya Thami who is married to Bijule Thami, both locals of Kalinchowk VDC, Dolakha. She adds, "When I was only 16 years old and studying in grade 8, my marriage was fixed. One day, when I had just returned from my school, my father told me that I had to get married soon. I was not happy with my father's decision because I wanted to study."

Thami is an indigenous community in Dolakha, and one of the marginalized groups of Nepal. This community values early marriage as their tradition. Ecology Agriculture and Rural Development Society (ECARDS), a partner of AAN has been working in Dolakha since 2005

to improve the livelihoods of Thami people. Three years ago when the news of Hiramaya's marriage was known to the REFLECT Circle, Kalika Thami, the Chairperson of MAM and REFLECT facilitator convinced both the families of children about the laws and consequences of child marriage. Thus, Hiramaya's wedding was postponed until she would finish her SLC exam. She then got married lately with the same man at the age of 20. "Had Kalika sister and ECARDS not been there for me, I would have got married at an early age and could not have passed SLC. Child marriages at any cost must be stopped. I cannot thank enough to ActionAid for helping girls like me in our village", says Hiramaya.

The REFLECT Circle at Kalinchowk and MAM, in facilitation with ECARDS and support from AAN has been continuously advocating to end child marriages among the Thami community. Kalika Thami says, "We are organizing various

campaigns and programs to address the issues of child marriages, violence against women, women empowerment and even against the extravagant expenses taking place within the Thami community in the name of culture. It was a difficult task to make people realize the negative impacts of the orthodox tradition but lately people have been responding positively to our works." She continues, "Women of Kalinchowk discuss every kind of injustice taking place against them and adopt possible measures to address the injustice in the REFLECT Circle. The women are also capable of reporting any acts against women to the authorized agencies." Dhanabir Thami, past Chairman of Kalinchowk VDC says, "Early child marriage in Thami community has been followed for years; even I was married at an early age of 12 years old. Ever since ECARDS has intervened in our village, the incidence of child marriages and VAW are gradually declining."

In the budget speech of 2014/15 fiscal year, Government of Nepal announced to enforce a summary procedure in all types of courts, in order to discourage VAW and provide justice to the victims. Furthermore, a national-level Mangala-Sahana Rehabilitation Centre was announced to be established to rehabilitate the violence affected women and girls. AA has been pertinently lobbying the local government bodies to ensure protection of women from violence, and launch advocacy initiatives to address the issues of women. In Bardiya, our partner and District Women and Children Office along with another local stakeholder had developed District strategy on 'Ending gender-based violence and women empowerment' to address the crucial issues of rape, missing, suicide and murder cases of women. Repeal Court of Biratnagar had organized an interaction program with I/NGOs working for women's rights for effective working procedure of court and has decided to organize such interaction on a quarterly basis. Moreover, the District and Repeal court have initiated a close court to promptly address women's cases.

## 2.

Bamu and Yuna tole in Bichinya VDC, Khoya, Dainya, Latubasti and Kalshil of Kotila VDC and Rudi-3 in Sappata of Bajura are in the process of declaring Chaupadi-free tole.

## 1.

Three communities of Bajura (Bahuni 2 of Sappata VDC, Guideli-6 of Gotri VDC and Manikada-9 of Jagannath VDC) and 1 VDC of Doti (Mudegaun) have declared as Chaupadi Pratha and Chau Goth freed community and VDC.

## 3.

Chaupadi abolishment and struggle committee were formed in six VDCs in Bajura as directed by the Guidelines for abolishing the Chaupadi system.

“Dahej Nirmulan Abhiyan” in Siraha is going on to abolish dowry system for which a survey on dowry has been conducted. Based on this survey’s findings, a 8 point delegation has been submitted, and 57 toles, VDCs and wards declared their commitments to abolish dowry system, child marriage and witchcraft accusation.

Various community level women’s groups have been formed to address the detrimental traditions and the culture and to challenge the patriarchal perspective and institutions that are playing vital role to promote gender-based violence. The traditional practices such as witchcraft accusations, chhaupadi, early child marriage, and dowry have had a huge negative impact in development of women status and ultimately the development of society. Training, orientations and campaigns are organized to eliminate the harmful traditions like dowry system, child marriage, and *Chhaupadi* in various LRP areas. Discussions on women issues at



*Street drama against witchcraft practices*



clubs, groups and REFLECT have helped for meaningful participation of female at the local level. Hoarding boards on the legal provision of VAW have displayed at the public places in many working areas, in order to alert people and refrain them from VAW activities. VAW cases such as witchcraft and domestic violence have started being filed for legal solution, which was earlier managed and mediated by the community. The process of community mediation showed the lack of awareness on the depth of violence. It also proved the acute need of education with regards to the sensitive cases of women, which are not to be addressed behind closed doors but through the proper justice mechanisms. The community initiation for an emergency

fund has been visible in the working areas. The fund is utilized to support the victims for transportation, lodging and application process while applying for the case.

The cases of dowry and the dowry-related violence have extreme negative consequences in the community, causing abuses of human rights and resulting in crimes against humanity. The interventions against such practice are also taking place enourmously. The campaigns and awareness have been increased to respond to the incidents in the working areas. As a result of the efforts to abolish the detrimental social practices, marriage has started taking place in the appropriate age and with the mutual consent of the boy and girl. Child

clubs and youth intervention have increased their interventions and some evidences of marriage withdrawal are prevalent because of high demand of dowry.

The campaigns, advocacy and awareness related to VAW, women empowerment and their sustainability have been prevalent in many working areas helping women learn technical skills, which would help them be financially strong and independent. The skills such as driving, off-farm agricultural skills - pig farming, Dhaka weaving and other entrepreneurship skills and knowledge have been provided to the women. These skills and their benefits have led the women in our community earn their living and dignity.

## MAHILA ADHIKAR MANCH (MAM)

MAM has developed itself as a people's organization and worked extensively to promote women's rights and address the issues of VAW. It also facilitated in registration of the VAW, and deal with domestic violence and other issues of women. In Banke, District Meet of the women rights activist was organized in Banke district, where participants from various VDCs of Banke shared their experiences of working for the rights of women. In that program, the district-level MAM of Banke was reformed and a one-year action plan was developed with special attention to end any kind of harmful practices in the community.

Similarly, the cases of domestic violence are repeatedly reported in the Community Watch Group and MAM. Many of those cases are referred to the community police and are settled pursuant to the Mediation Act 2068. Cases such as the accusation of witchcraft, divorce, property right, rape are registered at the district court. The district, VDC and Ward level MAM have built a strong network for women to address the cases of women. Furthermore, capacity-building trainings for members of MAM are frequently provided to enhance the quality of service. In Terathum district, the trend of reporting cases on VAW in media and various community mechanisms has drastically increased this year. Two safe houses are established to address the immediate support for victim women in Bajura and Dang. In Chitwan, DDC and other government stakeholders have decided to establish the VAW counseling centre at DDC Office. The women groups have claimed and mobilized budget that was allocated for women from VDCs for the welfare of women. Emergency fund for victim women has been allocated in many areas to support the victims to cover their costs for transportation, lodging, food and to prepare application.

## 7.2 RAISING WOMEN'S RIGHTS LEADER

One of the key interventions clearly mentioned in CSP IV is enabling women to fight against GVAW. The approach to achieve this goal is to facilitate in developing women leader and supporting them to access to and control over decision-making bodies at the local and national level. A series of capacity-building initiatives have taken place at the partner level to meet the goals. Consequently, 696 women have been capacitated and mobilized as women right leaders. The women rights leaders are now actively engaged in ensuring women rights. They have access to various services provisioned by the State. Women are equally involved in different income-generating activities for their economic empowerment. Women who are associated with groups/networks are gradually rising as a leader, which is a sign of progressive development.

One of the focused areas of objective three is increasing women's agency at different level. In order to address this target, different women groups/networks, MAM, reflect groups and circles, saving and credit groups, and watch groups are capacitated and mobilized through leadership training, interaction and campaign. Women are empowered to be a leader and provided their access and control over decision-making bodies like CFUG, SMC PTA, VDC council, WCF and other local-level users groups. Altogether, 158 women in the working districts have been able to take leadership and reach to decision making so that they could confront unequal power relationships and influence the decision

making process. For example, they lobby the relevant agencies and allocate budget in favor of women from VDC. They have also started raising their voices against the tendency of favouritism and corruption.

## 7.3 SAFE PUBLIC SPACES

The incidences such as rape, domestic violence, murder, polygamy, child marriage, etc, have propelled been by gender-based discrimination with the strong base of patriarchy and feudalism in Nepal. Several women rights networks such as MAM, WHRD, paralegal committees, and government bodies have improved coordination between Women Development Department and Women Cell. They have contributed to address the issues of gender-based violence at the local level. In addition, awareness among local people on the GBV and VAW has significantly encouraged women to build trust and pursue legal actions. The violence against women is not just confined to the domestic periphery but also beyond, with all the unheard voices, including in the public spaces. Having identified VAW in public spaces as

confinement for women from enjoying their right to freedom, mobility and security have led to continuation of the momentum of safe cities campaign initiated to raise public awareness on the issue of women's safety in the cities and the public spaces.

Safety issues at public spaces have essentially become a challenge in women empowerment. Therefore, AA has supported different events, and advocacy initiatives to promote the safety of women, particularly through its Safe Cities Campaign. In 2014, orientation programs were conducted in the working areas between the political parties, police officers, women welfare agencies and general public. The Muslim Samaj and PNGO of AAN organized an interaction for local stakeholders, local government authorities and REFLECT Circles to create safe public spheres and women protection based on the findings of the action research. Women have specifically become aware of their rights and laws that protect them from harassment and violence at public spaces.

*Safe public space materials at display during one billion raising campaign*



Safe cities campaigns were launched at the working areas; pamphlets and IEC materials were distributed in Itahari, Damak, Chitwan, Makwanpur and Parsa to sensitize the people about safe cities, and the signature campaigns ensured commitments from various stakeholders. The community police paid door-to-door visits at certain areas. The safety boots installed by PNGOs at different areas counselled the locals about the safe city. This was followed by a mass hand-print campaign where people demonstrated their solidarity to ensure safe public spaces for all. Training to the drivers and the conductors was conducted to ensure women's safety at public vehicles. Self-defence training to the adolescent girls was conducted in Kathmandu to combat the street harassments, whereas 17 coalitions to combat and advocate against sexual harassment at public spheres have been formed in the eastern part of Nepal. An anti-street harassment week was celebrated by conducting torch light rally, flash mob, street drama, interaction, on-line discussion, and dance with flash mask in coordination with ACTIVISTA and MAM. Media advocacy, and public hearing on the importance of safe public space were broadcast on the TV whereas a Public Service Announcement on safe cities is being aired through the radio every Sunday since June 2014.

The safe city campaign was initiated to raise public awareness on the issue of women's safety in the cities and the public spaces after identifying VAW, particularly in the public spaces, as one of the major challenges for women's empowerment, their right to freedom, mobility and security, MAM-Prerana has created a PSA on safe city which was being aired through Community Information Network (CIN) /ACORAB at 7:30 pm every Sunday since June 2014. The PSA was aired daily at 7:30 pm during the period of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. In addition to this, VOX POP has been prepared by collecting the perception of the people about safe city, which will be uploaded in the YouTube soon for public safety and awareness.

#### 7.4 STRENGTHENING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The cases of uterine prolapsed, sexual harassment in public spaces, and caste-based discrimination got the legal justice this year. Mostly the women's group/network such as village level watch group, REFLECT Circles, and youth group were strongly organized and engaged to combat gender-based violence and discrimination at grassroots. Cases such as domestic violence, verbal abuse, and polygamy were repeatedly reported in the community watch group and MAM. Many of those cases were referred to the community police and had been settled pursuant to the Mediation Act 2068. The accusations of witchcraft, divorce, property right, and rape

case were registered at the district court.

The communities are the major stakeholders, and it is impossible to protect the women and girls from the detrimental social practices without meaningful participation of the communities. Therefore, AAN has been working for spreading awareness and education on the issues of SRHR. An orientation program conducted on SRHR in the working areas has sensitized stakeholders on quality of services and protection from the sexually transmitted diseases.

These orientations on SRHR were not only provided to the community people but also to the government officers (123). The orientation conducted with the support of PNGOs also included the role of health workers in promoting reproductive health rights of women. Moreover, awareness program was also initiated to the health workers in the health post. These trainings and orientations have tremendously improved the services from the respective health posts this year.

Various women focused health camps were operated in Chitwan and Parsa, in coordination with MAM, to promote women's health. In these camps, uterus prolapsed check up, family planning counseling and other basic medical services were disseminated to the public. AA has also supported the local health centres with basic medical supplies and contraceptives. The effective intervention of

Sexual Autonomy and Bodily Integrity (SABI) centre effectively addressed the issues of SRHR for the adolescent girls, including their sensitization about the consequences of child marriage and social media crimes. Youth clubs had conducted street dramas to sensitize people about the link between alcohol consumption and its VAW, which became effective in drawing attention of the local people. Likewise, after the orientation on the different cases of VAW, most of the VAW cases such as witchcraft and domestic violence came into the jurisdiction of community mediation and legal procedures. A massive campaign was launched to advocate the issues of *Chhaupadi*, dowry system and child marriage that received support from the local people. As a result, many VDCs are declared *Chhaupadi* liberated and child marriage liberated zone. Most of the communities have accepted menstruation as a natural process rather than a taboo and discarded the tradition of keeping girls in a cowshed during the menstruation period.

Sakcham project has contributed in settling stigma attached to family planning/abortion, concerns over privacy and cost of safe service to the great extent. Thus, this year there has been consumption of 90% of contraceptives in Pakha Manipur VDC unlike previous years, when the supply used to be excessive to the demand. The access of women to temporary and permanent birth control services from local health post and Female Community Health Volunteer has increased. PNGOs of AA have actively advocated for bodily rights of women through campaigns, interactions and orientations with duty bearers. The Muslim Samaj organized sensitization program on sexual and reproductive health rights for health workers of local health posts and Female Community Health Worker in Khajura Khurd and Paraspur of Banke. It has helped to improve the roles of health workers in promoting reproductive health rights of women.

SABI Center has provided effective services to adolescent girls, counselled on SRHR, guided about life skills to combat the changes they undergo during the period

and raised awareness of the Sexually Transmitted Infections. The Sakcham project made available sanitary napkins in a few schools in Chitwan to ensure the girls' attendance in the schools during their menstruation period. Besides this, most of the victims of VAW have better access to psycho-social counselling services supported by the stakeholders such as Women and Child Service Center, PNGOs, DAO and others. A survey was conducted to assess the safe public space for girls, in which the girl students from the schools and colleges, and women on the job had participated. The women were also provided trainings on self-defence to capacitate them to take their safety measures. Hence, women and girls have started adopting measures like carrying an umbrella as a self-defence tool to protect them from any kind of abuse while they are outside their homes.

Regular operation of Sexual Autonomy and Bodily Integrity (SABI) Center has provided the adolescent girls an opportunity to get guidance, and they are involved in SABI center. The open discussions on sexual

and reproductive health in REFLECT Circle and groups have supported the girls to be much aware of their body. A total of 4,043 people were sensitized through orientation on the basic concept of women's control over their bodies and their rights to reproductive health, as a result of which increasing number of women are accessing services from the health posts.

### 7.5 UNPAID CARE WORK (UCW) AND ITS CONSCIENTIZATION

Men and family members have started realizing the concept of UCW after women continued raising their voices for gender justice, and work division with recognition to their contribution. Series of campaigns and capacity building programs were organized to sensitize the community, including the women and girls about the concept of UCW that resulted in the improved the understanding among the people about the work division, women's rights and UCW. The practice of keeping a time diary within the community and REFLECT Circle has helped verify the wide disparity between workloads of women and men and unrecognized value of women's work,

## CASE STUDY

**CHANGE BROUGHT ABOUT BY TIME DIARY**

"I have recently come to know that I work for 16 hours a day, which is more than what my husband does. I always considered work as an effort that pays money back but now the definition of work has been changed for me", says Jannatuna Behena, from a Muslim community in Banke, who lives with her husband and three sons. Her husband earns as a rickshaw puller. The poverty-stricken family has neither a piece of land nor has any kind of income generating skills.

"My husband, who gets off for his work early in the morning, is a rickshaw puller. So, I have to get his food prepared before he leaves for his work. So, I usually get up at four o'clock in the morning and work until I go to bed at night", says Jannatuna. She always keeps herself busy in taking care of her three children, doing the household chores and rearing two goats. She sometimes goes to the others' fields to earn wages. Despite working hard for her family, Jannatuna never valued for her work. She took it as her mandatory role rather than a contribution.

Nepal Muslim Samaj, a partner of AAN, has been intervening the communities in Banke on various issues of women. Jannatuna became a member of women's group formed by Nepal Muslim Samaj. She actively participates in the group. This group delivered classes on women's rights, health and sanitation, VAW etc. She has been saving 100 rupees a month in the group. "I learnt about various social issues from Nepal Muslim Samaj, and this Samaj also made us fill the time diary that included every detail of my daily activities. It helped me understand the value of my work; I now learnt, it is called UCW", says Jannatuna. It was a time diary that made Behena realize her workload. Like Behena, many women in her community filled the diary to track their workload and understand the concept of UCW. "The Time Diary is a very effective tool; it assisted me to convince my husband about my work load; he now assists me to the household chores that has relieved my work load to some extent", says Behena. Today, Behana and her husband share their works at home with a respect to each other and try to make other people understand the concept of UCW. Most importantly, they no longer judge the work merely on the basis of monetary value.

focusing on the need of a more gender justice roles. The time diaries filled by couples have become a major evidence for advocacy initiatives to maintain a balanced workload for both gender and support women to voice out their unrecognized works. The sensitization events, comprising the concepts of 4R (Recognise, Reduce, Redistribute and Representation) and UCW along with its linkages with GDP, also conducted for representatives of political leaders, local leaders and civil-society members. A drama on UCW and unequal burden of workload among women was performed in three places of Nawalparasi in which more than 1000 people participated.

The workshops organized to build common understanding on demanding government to develop appropriate policy to recognize

The campaigns on UCW such as "Kaam Ferau Abhiyan" (change our work) have helped community understand the need of sharing the work burden and regulate the concept of UCW in the households. AAN supported various community models related to water mills, irrigation facilities, and CCCC in order to redistribute women's unequal workload. National workshop on UCW was conducted in the presence of Minister for Women and Child and Social Welfare. The minister expressed her commitment to address the issues. The right holders promoted advocacy in favour of fair and equal wages for both genders at the local-level. The constructive dialogue with the landlord in REFLECT Circle helped to implement appropriate wages in the working areas of the eastern region. As a result, altogether 1664 people living in poverty are being paid equal and fair wages. In Bardiya, two meetings were held among the farmer groups and the stakeholders for their representation of agro-based labour in wages fixation committee. This committee fixed the wage rates for women equal to men. The stakeholders from the government line agencies, political parties, and media were provided with orientation on UCW issue and dissemination of information generated from the time diary in the district level. The local radio and print media have been amplifying the issue of UCW through their broadcast and the print. The local and national level campaigns on 'One Billion Rising Campaign', '104th International Women's Day', 'International Rural Women's Day' and 16 days of activism against gender-based violence have contributed to advocate about the concept of UCW.

UCW helped to develop a roadmap for policy advocacy in the future through drafting a rural women's policy. A number of communities in Dang and Bajura started to adopt community models to redistribute an unequal workload. In Makwanpur district, women presented a plan to install water tanks in their community, which has been recently approved by VDC to address issue related to the workload of women. In Terhathum, the REFLECT Circle identified a need of grinding mill to reduce UCW in the community. The community lobbied the Electricity Authority Office to provide them with three-phase electricity power for installation.

The redistribution of UCW cannot be possible without the conscientization of community and most importantly of men. A large population of male and youth is in the foreign employment. However, some positive changes are observed regarding redistribution of UCW with male members, who are currently at home. The people are made aware of UCW through discussions in REFLECT Circles, child club, various committees through campaigns, workshop, orientations and street dramas resulting in the increased awareness about the importance of the shared work and gender roles. Besides, the stakeholders such as the political representatives, teachers, ward citizen forum and other duty bearers have also been informed about UCW, and advocated for redistribution and recognition of UCW of women/girls. Women have started to raise their voices to duly recognize their work. Consequently, the men in the family started taking care of laundry, fetching water, taking care of children, etc.

## 7.6 PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO REDUCE WOMEN'S WORKLOAD

It is essential to financially empower women, to enhance their access to justice. AAN has been creating favourable circumstances for women to grow them economically independent. The facilities such as establishment of the Community Child Care Center (CCCC), availability of water pipes and mills near the households have improved the women's access to services and helped reduce their workload, and mental stress, leading to improved

health of women/girls and saving their times to get involved in IGA. AAN and PNGOs promoted such community models. Besides promoting women's health and saving their times, those models have encouraged women to be more participatory in social networks, groups and other platforms. Majority of women have been benefitted with community models; women leave their children at CCCC and participate in IGA, and with the water mills, the household chores became easier for women in saving their times for other activities.

### CASE STUDY

#### MODELLING OF SERVICES TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT

Sanu Deshar-19 is a home-based worker, who earns her living by knitting clothes. She resides in Chapagaun VDC, Ward no. 3 with her spouse and two kids. Being a mother of two children in her teens is not easy for Sanu. Her husband, who is a security guard in the community forestry, makes only Rs. 5,000 a month. So she has no option but to work as a wage earner for the family subsistence. "I got married in a quite young age and now I have a challenge to take care of two small kids and to make a living simultaneously", shared Deshar. She couldn't continue her study after completing her primary education. Instead, she had to engage in the agriculture labour. In the recent years, she became a member of Informal Economy Workers Rights Forum facilitated by HomeNet Nepal – AAN, which actively works to ensure the rights of home

based workers. Sanu participated in various orientation programs in the community level and learnt about the facilities she could get from the organizations, including CCCC. She also actively participated in the interactions, and discussions to implement the goals of CCCC in her community, "As soon as I learnt about CCCC, I worked for its establishment. Today, I am more than happy to see my daughter at CCCC", shared Deshar. Her daughter goes to CCCC and she works with a full concentration, which has ultimately increased working efficiency. She plans to increase her income for better future of her children. "My daughter is learning a lot at CCCC; she has made a few friends. When I see such an improvement in my child, it gives a mother an immense pleasure. I, now, fully trust CCCC and perform my work without any worries", said Sanu. Today, she actively participates in local advocacy for the provision of CCCC as one of the social security measures of government support and budget.

An interaction program was organized in Doti to discuss the findings of the time diary, which depicted huge disparity about the workload between men and women. Then, the men in Doti become aware of the work division and injustice towards women. Similarly, the couples were sensitized on UCW in many working areas through analysis of a time diary used for the period of three months. Following the time diaries, rigorous discussions were held in groups and REFLECT to address the unjust and inequitable gender norms. The members of the women collectives have shared that fathers are taking their kids to CCCC, and there is an increasing trend among the male members for helping with the household chores. The males are providing helping hands in household chores. Many male members have also been encouraging women to take part in social events, REFLECT Circles and other programs.

## CASE STUDY

### CHILD CARE CENTRE INFLUENCING LIVES OF MANY

The women of Pakaha, Mainpur VDC in Parsa frequently raised an issue how difficult it was for the working mothers in the REFLECT Circle, operated by ActionAid Sakcham Project. With a view to address such issue, Child Care Centre was established at PakahaMainpur, in December 2013, with the initiative of Dibya Yuwa Club (DYC) and supported by Sakcham Project, the partner and the project of AAN. The Centre has been efficiently serving the people in Pakaha, Mainpur.

Kiran Devi Paswan-30 of Ward number 7, Pakaha, Mainpur VDC says, "I have a three-year old son who goes to the school while my one-year old daughter goes to the Child Care Centre. Therefore, my family has been able to commit its maximum time to farming and animal husbandry". She further adds, "Although farming is only a source of our income, we couldn't even cultivate 1 bigha of our land in the past while raising two small children. I heartily thank DYC for making our lives easy."

Prior to establishment of Child Care Centre, most of the women would accompany their children to their work places such as in the farms or at the construction sites. Sunaina Devi Paswan, a daily wage earner says, "Before letting my children to CCC, I used to accompany them with me at the work places where they would expose to the adverse conditions of dirt, dust, sun, wind and rain, causing negative impacts on their health". The children get a good care and learn for daily lives at the centre. Paswan shares, "Besides improvement in their health, I have seen my children developing their habits such as brushing teeth, maintaining hygiene and respecting elders. We are learning things from them too."

The CCC facilitated 18 women in the initial year. A total 36 women are receiving services in 2014. Among them, 23 are Dalits and the rest 13 women belong to the other communities. All these 36 women are engaged

in different types of income generating activities. For instance, 18 women are engaged in animal husbandry, 10 in wage labour and 8 in home-based works. Moreover, a great number of women are engaged in the community meetings, REFLECT Circle and other programs.

Apart from facilitating the working mothers, the Child Care Centre has been making the lives of other family members easy. Bhawani Paswan, a 10-year old student, who comes from a farmer family recalls, "My parents have to endlessly work on farms leaving my two years old brother in my responsibility, and I had to skip my school to take care of my brother." She proudly adds, "My brother now goes to the CCC and I go to my school regularly; I have enough time to do my homework. So, I stood out in my grade 5 exams." The CCC has thus influenced not just lives of women, but it has been contributing to economic and social well-being of the vulnerable families. .



Eight CCCC have been operated in Terathum district with overall management of women collectives, giving them opportunities to reallocate their times from the child-care to the economic and other productive activities. This initiative received a due acknowledgement from the communities, the stakeholders, media and the government bodies. Moreover, women friendly *haat bazaar* committees are formed to ensure women friendly markets to encourage women's engagement in businesses. On the one hand, the trainings enhanced women for their income generating skills, and on the other hand, the community models helped women for their daily chores creating economically constructive environment for them. As a result, women have understood the importance of being financially independent. Hence, they are now able to claim their rights and demand for equitable services. There is a continuous surge of women engaged in the income generating activities.

## CASE STUDY

### CHILD CARE CENTRE, AN AID TO WORKING MOTHERS

With the establishment of a CCCC in the community building of Jyotidabya Association situated at Bakha Dabali, Ward number 3 of Chapagaun VDC, the CCCC was formed with the efforts of the locals and the support of HomeNet Nepal, a partner of AAN, to serve women working in an informal sector such as tailors, wage laborer, and street vendors. The children aged between one to two years are enrolled in the centre. Currently, there are 21 children (11 girls and 10 boys). "I weave clothes to earn few rupees. When my child was at home I had to give maximum time for taking care of her, but now, I can focus on weaving clothes and the household chores as my child is safe at CCC" says Ruku Deshar, a parent receiving the service.

Chapagaun VDC has seen a great transformation in the lives of women through the establishment of CCCC. Their participation in meetings, skill development trainings, community-level programs and functions has been increased. Ruku Deshar says, "Children at Child Care Centre are fit; they get to eat right food on right time. So, they have a good health. I find no difference in service provided at Montessori and CCCC." Similarly, the centre has been aiding working mothers from the

community, to take time for themselves with its secured environment and the trained personnel women are relieved. "Apart from all the benefits, mothers like me have been able to take a rest from all chores with no worries" added Ruku. The CCCC has improved the working women's confidence on work, health conditions and efficiency whereas children are provided with excellent care and are exposed to a learning environment at an early age.





## CASE STUDY

### WE SHARE AND CARE

"With the support of CCCC, I managed to spare a lot of time to work in the fields, fetch firewood, water and grass, and even weave Dhaka without being worried about my boy", says Krishna Kumari Tamang of Shreejung VDC, Terhathum District. "Now, I can weave 8 inches more dhaka than before while my son happily plays in the CCCC"- says Shanti Limbu. "Our children stay safe, clean and happy at CCCC,

so we can freely engage in different other activities", says Sarswata Tamang. This is the collective voice of members of Singhadevi Women Collectives from Shreejung-1, who are currently operating a CCCC with the support of Deurali Society. They further added that when Deurali Society initiated a discussion on CCCC one year ago, they were totally unsure about bringing their children there. Nevertheless, now, lives have become so easy with CCCC. Their

children enjoy going there. Mausham, Diwas and other kids enjoy staying at CCCC. They always ask their parents to take them to "Sishu" which to them means CCCC. The villagers appreciate the work, and this initiative has also drawn the attention of the media. "This became possible only with our collective actions. We will best utilize CCCC in a sustainable way in the future", added Shanti Limbu.

### 7.7 DEVELOP WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women were provided skill development trainings to support for on-farm and off-farm Income Generating Activities (IGA). PNGOs have extensively regulated the trainings such as tailoring, beautician, commercial farming, small-scale entrepreneurship, etc, for income generating skills development. Under the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), trainings on house wiring, cycles repairing and driving are offered to a small group of women. They have now started their business to earn income. The surge of migrant workers, particularly of the male members of family to overseas and to the city areas, in search of better economic opportunity and education has increased the responsibilities on women. As women are increasingly engaged in IGAs, they

have control over their income. In the absence of male members in the family, women are also responsible for the household management and decision-making. They have become much aware of their rights and entitlements even in the presence of the male members in the families, increasing their confidence at the household level too. Apart from this, the gender responsive services, and female centered privileges such as tax exemption in registration of the land and the business in women's name have empowered women to the great extent. The women's right to property has ensured significant control of women at the household. The advocacy on women's rights, trainings and other initiatives have enhanced the women's knowledge about the gender responsive roles and their confidence at the decision

making levels both at home and beyond. In order to enhance the access of women groups and communities to the economic resources, the Government of Nepal, in its fiscal year 2014/15, has announced to launch a campaign for economic empowerment of the target women across the country. GoN has also expressed its commitment to provide employment for girls and women of liberated kamalari, kamaiya and the other oppressed communities. The alternative production models for women are identified and disseminated to them through trainings on house wiring, cycle repairing, driving, etc. The local government bodies have supported for collective farming and business and cooperatives to strengthen the women's alternative production. An interaction meeting of women was arranged with the



*Community child care centre*

representatives of Morang Municipality and the stakeholders of transportation entrepreneurs to discuss women's participation on driving skills. This meeting has created a favourable environment for women drivers. The municipality provided

driving training to 15 women, and an understanding has been made that the stakeholders will provide a job of a driver to these women. With the assistance of MAM, the women groups and networks received VDC-allocated budget for women IGAs, and

particularly the women farmers received collective farming and cooperatives at many working areas. The two CCCCs established under ERC and managed by Kathmandu LRPs have helped women to generate extra money.

The women in Banke were provided training on making dalmot (kind of fast-food), and candles and mushroom farming followed by distribution of basic instruments. In Makwanpur, women received skill development training on "Muda (chair) making" sponsored by District Forest Office. The trained women now collectively make muda for their income. Collective farming and collective business are being popular among the rural women. The concept of alternative production models has been effective in many working areas where women explore the alternatives beyond the stereotypical roles of women. In Terhathum district, women collectives have received support for initiating and scaling up their income generating works on Dhaka (cotton cloth) production, chili farming and ginger farming from the VDC offices.

## 7.8 WOMEN'S RIGHT TO LAND

With the support of many networks and alliances, the farmers obtained land ownership certificates. In this year, a total of 2,688 women received single or joint land ownership certificate in our working areas. This has ensured tenants' rights to the land. Women have built their confidence, and they have a better say in their family.



*Couples displaying their joint land ownership certificate*

## CASE STUDY

### WOMEN'S INCREASING ACCESS TO PROPERTY

Samraji Devi Karmi resides in Ward no.9 of Pakaha, Mainpur VDC of Parsa district with her husband Rameshwor Karmi, and two sons and two daughters. Samraji Devi, like other women of Mainpur was confined to her household chores and was unaware of women's rights until she joined the REFLECT Circle, operated by Dibya Youth Club (DYC), a partner of AAN. Samraji says, "DYC came door-to-door in our village and persuaded us to join REFLECT Circle. It was through the support of same club that women's rights forum has been established and I got opportunities to learn about women's rights".

The members of women's rights forum of Mainpur had initially established a woman's saving group, which has now become a Cooperative. It provides loan to those women willing to start their own business. Samraji says, "I was fortunate to receive training on entrepreneurship and business skill development through Sakcham project, after which I made a business plan and received loan of NRs. 20,000 from women's Cooperative." Karmi invested the money in a retail clothes business that is giving her a profit of a few thousands rupees each month.

In a course of time, women of Pakaha were educated about women property rights. The representatives from DYC and Sakcham project visited people from door-to-door to implement

equal property rights. Samraji shares, "I learnt whether it is a small or a big property, women should have equal ownership, and they should be consented while selling, transferring or even making changes in property". She further adds, "Initially my husband was not willing to discuss the issues of property sharing and women's right. With the persistent attempt of DYC, he agreed to the notion of the property rights". Today, Rameshwor and Samraji have joint ownership of their 72900 Sq.ft land. Like Karmi, many women of Pakaha are financially independent. They are successful in claiming their property rights and getting a joint property ownership. "I was confined within my kitchen in the past, but now I take decisions for my family. I feel more empowered and secured", states Samraji.



# Quality Education in a Safe and Equitable Environment

Education is the basic human right and all children have right to have free and quality education and AAN is committed to securing free, compulsory, quality public education for all. The constitution of Nepal along with International and National conventions and commitments including Millennium Development Goal has focused on the right of children to have access on the quality education. Despite of these, in Nepal, many children are not that fortune to get as such education.


## 8.1 PROMOTING RIGHTS IN SCHOOLS

AAN believes that active participation and engagement of citizens in matters pertaining to public education at all levels (i.e., education policy formulation, implementation and governance) can contribute significantly to overcome the present dreary performance of public schools. AAN, therefore, stresses on the production of Citizens' Education Report (CER) based on Promoting Rights

in Schools (PRS) framework in order to assess the implementation of rights to education at the local level and link them with policy discourses at local, national and international levels. The 10 rights defined in 'Promoting Rights in Schools' (PRS) framework describe what an 'ideal' school that offers quality education would look like. This framework aims to secure free, compulsory, and quality public education for all.

The key aim is to build the capacity of students, communities and local civil society organizations to advocate for quality education as well as articulate their needs through a longer-term process of promoting critical consciousness. This year, a four-day national-level PRS training was organized in Kathmandu to capacitate the facilitators for the public schools become accountable and organize CER at the local and district level. The PRS covered 97 schools and 750 more SMC/PTA were benefitted from the capacity building initiatives.

PRS has been considerably encouraged in the public schools to strengthen the system and improve the quality of education. A committee conducted an assessment regarding implementation status of PRS in different schools in which the community people, SMC members, PTA members, child club members and other stakeholders gave their voices. The assessment tools, such as literacy map (social map), mobility map, problem tree analysis, focus group discussion, individual interview, and observation were utilized. The assessment produced a CER, based on 10 rights indicators, which was shared among the participants as a draft report to validate the content and information. Furthermore, a final CER was shared with the public. PRS/CER effectively contributed to improve the governance of the school internalized by the concerned individual and institution. The CER can be used further as an evidence for advocacy about PRS and 10 education rights.



*‘Parents also started monitoring school's activities in 5 schools of Terbathum district which has helped to build ownership of parents towards community schools’*

The PRS brought about significant changes in the schools. For instance, two schools in Bara started serving a mid-day meal to the children. Dharmanagar school received a support of Rs. 150,000 from VDC in Bara district. Sishaniya Primary School received support from VDC for drinking water facility to the students. Likewise, the school management committee (SMC) in two schools and three mother's groups in those schools in Morang were formed in order to support for regular monitoring to improve the quality of education. After participatory monitoring of schools under PRS exercise, parents also started monitoring school's activities in five schools in Terhathum district that resulted in parents' ownership towards community schools. Moreover, some of the remarkable outcomes of the use of PRS framework to improve the governance and accountability of public schools are the publication of education bulletin containing rights to education framework in Udayapur, local curriculum development (Grade 1-5) in Tharu language in Bardiya and formation of SMC network in Bajura.

## 8.2 IMPROVING EDUCATION/SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Although the education policies have allocated significant rights and responsibilities to SMC for overall management of the community schools, the implementation is not much inspiring because of the poor institutional capacity and political party influence on the school management. Hence, the role of SMC should be strengthened. Establishment and strengthening of education rights coalition and networks from the local to national level will be important. SIP is a key tool to bring reform within the schools. PNGOs of AAN have capacitated school teachers and SMC members to formulate a SIP in the school. The schools in Bara district have arranged a mid-day lunch and drinking water facilities to the students, and the school compounds have been improved according to the SIP guidelines. Child-friendly school buildings are constructed in few locations. This year, 94 public schools updated SIP after AA provided orientation on school governance to the SMC/PTA members and the teachers. This has resulted in reformation of SMCs in 45 schools in the districts of the eastern region. The effective implementation of SIP has improved the teachers' and students' punctuality, contributing to the quality of teaching. With the active role of village education committee in Kaski, the schools started developing an annual academic calendar and switched their medium of instruction into English that supported students' retention in the public schools.

The SMC/PTA members have been capacitated on 10 education rights for efficient implementation of PRS. Besides the SMC and PTA, the other people in the community, mother groups and local leaders are also monitoring the performance of the schools. Likewise, social audit committees were formed in 54 schools in the western region. A separate Action Plan has been developed in two schools in Bajura to improve the governance of the schools. The Society Touch in Sankhuwasabha district facilitated for developing the SMC networks in the district that represents 53 schools. District level SMC Network has already been set up in Bara, Parsa, Dhanusha, Udayapur, Morang, Terhathum, Siraha, Banke, Bardiya, Kapilvastu, Dang, Kailali districts.

### 8.3 COMPLEMENTING QUALITY EDUCATION

An initiative for model building has been taken place in 10 community schools in Udayapur and Siraha districts, through the action research to achieve quality education. This process supported the school management committee members and teachers to reflect on the existing situation of the schools. The reflection was drawn from the effort of collaborative learning on live realities between the teachers, head teachers and the expert team. The activity “Jhyap Jhyap” was implemented in ten schools restructuring the classroom sitting arrangements such as round, face to face, E-shape, and U-shape depending on the available space. The changed sitting arrangement helped the

*“Schools started developing the yearly calendar and initiated teaching in English medium that became an effective approach to retain students in public schools.”*

#### CASE STUDY

### CCL APPROACH IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPPORTED TO COMPETE WITH PRIVATE SCHOOL

Few years ago, parents would hesitate to enroll their children in Bhairavnath Secondary School, a public school at Wai VDC of Bajura. The school did not have the adequate number of teachers and facilities to incorporate CCL. In the meantime, the parents preferred private schools over public ones. As a result, the enrollment in primary level decreased. The LRP program operated at Kotila and Wai VDCs intervened at Bhairavnath School; orientation and interaction on promoting rights to school, formation of SMC and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and trainings to teachers were facilitated by HRC, LRP partner. Such activities and support obliged the school to start the CCL approach.

With the CCL approach, the quality of

education in Bhairavnath School improved and the parents became motivated to send their children there. The school also prepared an action plan to ensure quality of education and students’ safety in the school in accordance with the norms of the child rights. Besides Bhairavnath School, Pashupati Primary School of Kotila VDC initiated the CCL approach that increased the students’ enrolment in the public schools. Consequently, Himal Academy Boarding School, which was operating the kindergarten and grade one for last four years had no option but to close from this year because only very few students continued. The public schools in Kotila and Wai VDC have been successfully implementing the CCL approach providing the education quality at par with the private schools. HRC, in coordination with District Education Office and other local NGOs, is working for promotion of CCL approach in other public schools in Bajura.

teaching and learning become more participatory. The teachers and students collaboratively started developing teaching-learning materials and displayed them in the classroom.

### 8.4 INTRODUCING CHILD CENTERED LEARNING

Child Centered Learning (CCL) is another innovative approach that AA Nepal and its partners are promoting to enhance the



*A child message collection programme*

## CASE STUDY

### KALASI IS REJOINING SCHOOL

A 12 years-old girl, Kalasi is coming back to the school after she had dropped it one year ago when she was in grade three. It was her younger brother, a sponsored child, who inspired her to come back to the school. "I have seen my brother sketching drawings and receiving letters from his supporter, which made me miss my school" says Kalasi.

Kalasi, like many other girls of Doti, was forced to leave the school to support her household chores. In her five-member family, her father and elder brother are migrant workers in India to earn for the family living and pay back loan. Her mother has no option but to work as a daily labour, so it was Kalasi to take the responsibility of the household

chores and her younger brother. Such practice is common to most of the girls above the age of 10 in Doti, ultimately leading to high dropout rates of the girls.

EDC intervened in the village, and worked with the community and parents for the welfare of children, followed by school enrollment campaigns, awareness raising programs and discussions on child rights. Kalasi's mother learned about the importance of education for a girl child from the sensitization program conducted by EDC every weekend. She was counseled and persuaded after EDC members counseled her and she took a right decision to send Kalasi back to the school. "I am happy to go back to the school with my brother. I will study with my all efforts and make my mother proud", says Kalasi.

quality of learning in child-friendly environment. With a view to cater quality education, teachers are trained with CCL approaches to boost the child centre education system. This year, additional 60

teachers from Udayapur, Kapilvastu, Bajura, Kaski were provided an opportunity of CCL training. Altogether, 150 schools in the working areas are applying CCL approach. Likewise, a national discourse

was convened in partnership with Educational Pages on 'Child Centered Learning Approach: Policy and Practices' in Kathmandu in 2014. A range of stakeholders from government and non-government sectors, including Teacher's Unions, Parent's Association participated in the program. The AA Nepal's learning from CCL practices was shared and discussed. A learning material on 'CCL: Concepts, Policy and its Implementation' has been developed as a knowledge product for wider awareness.

### 8.5 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT CAMPAIGN

The children's access to education increased, coupled with the quality education and different activities and campaigns. The massive school enrollment campaign was launched in all the working areas of AAN, in coordination with DEO, VEC, MAM, REFLECT, teachers, students, SMC and PTA and the child clubs, resulting in a very positive outcome in the students' enrollment in primary education. The implementation of PRS in the schools helped enhance the quality of education. Consequently, a great number of students upgraded to secondary level. Moreover, some door-to-door visits were also paid for raising awareness among the communities about the importance of education for both girls and boys. Moreover, the parents of dropped out children were counseled to bring back their children to the schools. This year, 2843 out of school children were identified and enrolled, and 151 drop out children in Bara, Parsa, Morang, Banke, Nawalparasi, Bajura, Dang, Bardiya, Kaski,

Dolakha, Rasuwa and Kathmandu valley came back to the schools with the AA Nepal's intervention in the districts.

The campaigns, advocacy, orientation and discussions were initiated to raise awareness among the students, teachers, parents, community and other stakeholders about the PRS concept and 10 core education rights. The school enrolment campaigns largely educated the parents and students about the importance of 10 education rights.



*School enrollment campaign in action*

### 8.6 ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGN ON FREE EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FINANCING

The provisions of free and compulsory education have resulted in increment of enrollment and retention of girl students in schools. Altogether, 202 schools declared free education this year with the initiative of AA Nepal and its partner organizations. In Bajura district, one of the least developed areas of Nepal, 92 schools declared free education. In addition to it, a draft District Strategy on Implementation of Compulsory and Free Education has been developed, in coordination with District Education Office. Similarly, 5808 children are receiving

scholarship and educational support from schools through series of advocacy from partner organizations in the eastern districts. Furthermore, education materials were provided to children mobilizing the VDC budget in Terhathum and Bardiya districts. At the national level, AA Nepal, in partnership with the National Campaign for Education (NCE- Nepal), conducted education financing mapping exercise where national budget was tracked. On the basis of this finding, series of advocacy and lobby meetings were organized with Ministry of Education and National Planning Commission.

### 8.7 PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION

AA Nepal has been engaged with Girl's Education Network for last couple of years to promote girl's education. This year, AAN contributed to host a National Conference of Girls Education and Gender Equity Network. The conference was held in close coordination with GE Network under the leadership of Department of Education



*“Education materials were provided to children through the mobilization of VDC's budget in the districts, Terhathum and Bardiya”*

(DoE) on 13-14 March in Kathmandu, on the occasion of International Women's Day. The event contributed to strengthening government system to promote girls' education in Nepal and reinforcing the government's commitment and effective

implementation of policy provisions to end all kinds of discriminations and violations against girls in schools. The event brought several organizations together for a common cause as well as represented by Gender Focal Person from more than 31 districts (Banke, Kapilvastu, Salyan, Dolakha, Kavre, Bardiya, Saptari, Dhanusha, Mahottari, Rautahat, Parsa, Doti, Acham, Baitadi, Humla, Jumla, Mugu, Dolpa, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sunsari, Dang, Kailali, Baglung, Dhading, Siraha, Sarlahaim Nuwakot, Rukum and Rolpa). At the local level, many schools have been sensitized about girl-friendly user toilet and 16 schools have initiated separate toilet facility for girls in Bardiya, which has minimized the absenteeism of the girl's students. In the same district, 10 schools also provisioned a complaint box with an aim to facilitate the hearing process of the problems faced by the girl students in schools.

### 8.8 PUSHING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A project titled 'Promote Inclusive Education for Deaf Children' was implemented in Banke and Kailali districts, considering the miserable plight of the deaf children. The aim of this project is to ensure the rights of the children with disability to education after developing their skills on the sign language. It is believed that they will later enroll in the community school that promotes inclusive education.

Altogether, 51 teachers from the community schools of the target areas were provided 45 days sign language training. A separate training was conducted for 77 parents.



## CASE STUDY

**ECD SUPPORTING EDUCATION AND LIVELIHOOD OF PEOPLE**

Two years old Sudha Pariyar lives in Dhikurpokhari, Kaski. She is happy to sing and dance and makes a fun with other children at the ECD centre. She is interested in reading and writing. Her 23 years old mother Sumitra shared that during her childhood, poverty in her family forced her parents to go for daily wages to feed them. The poor economic condition did not give her an opportunity to go to the school. She got married in an early age with Raju Pariyar, who would also belong to a very poor family. When the construction of ECDC started at Dhikurpokhari with the support of AAN,



Sudha's family got an opportunity to work as a laborer, which helped improve her livelihood.

She further said, "We are happy to get the ECD centre in our community. We have an ownership of this centre that has also given us a work during construction. Now, I can work outside home as my little daughter is going to the centre." Now, Sumitra considers her daughter's regularity to ECD Centre.

After Sudha started going to the school, Sumitra's workload has reduced at home. The couples, therefore, are free to engage in other economic activities. She further says, "I sometimes participate in confidence building programs. I'm so happy that this initiative has given my children an opportunity to study in ECD." Now, the children regularly attend the ECDC classes and also get nutritious food.



Similarly, 74 students with hearing disability were provided a 10- month sign language training. This training developed confidence to the community with a belief that even deaf children can be taught easily through sign language. As a result, a large number

of parents of deaf children have been sending their children to schools. The parents have forged a network and expressed their commitment for promoting inclusive education, awareness and advocacy. The project also distributed 224

*"74 students benefitted through 45 day- Sign Language Training to 51 Teachers and 74 parents- under 'Promote Inclusive Education for Deaf Children'- a project implemented in Banke and Kailali (March 2013- June 2014)"*

sign language books to deaf children in Banke and Kailali districts. Series of the district and regional workshops were organized for promoting inclusive education in coordination with the Deaf Association and District Education Office, during the project period. The discussions were focused on the government policies, concept of inclusive education and challenges for implementing the inclusive education.

**8.9 ESTABLISHING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES (ECDC)**

AA Nepal has supported Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDC) for holistic development of children with a view to include health, nutrition, and early stimulation services for physical as well as psycho-social development of children to ensure increase in enrollment at the schools. In Doti, LRP supported ECDs with educational and sport materials, directly benefitting 180 children that helped for their retention. In Nawalparasi district, more than

## CASE STUDY

## SIX ADULT GIRLS FROM SAME NEIGHBORHOOD ENROLLED IN SCHOOL

The daily lives of most of the girls at Goltakuri VDC, Dang is occupied by the household chores. However, six teenage girls from Saruwadada Ward number 7 of Goltakuri are busy in their study as they have recently been admitted to the school. The six girls, Janamati Chowdhary- 21, Mina Chowdhary-22, Sita Chowdhary-21, Krishni Chowdhary-19, Belmati Chowdhary-23 and Suntali Chowdhary-21 are over aged for school but they have recently joined the school with a strong desire to study. All of the girls belong to the pheasant families and have poor economic status. Janamati Chowdhary says, "Farming is the subsistence of our lives, but because of the lack of irrigation facility, we fully depend on rain so that our fields yield low production. Therefore, our parents have no options but to work at farms of landlords that requires walking for two hours. When our parents are away for the whole day work, we are left behind to look after the house and do the household chores."

When the REFLECT Circle was formed by Society for Environment and Education Development (SEED), a partner of AAN, these girls became active members. Their regular participation in discussions, programs and activities at the center developed confidence in them. They also had an opportunity to participate in the adult education classes run at REFLECT. "All of us have the similar story;

despite our interest in the study, we were bound to our domestic responsibilities. It was through the REFLECT Circle that we got a chance to attend the adult education classes that developed our basic reading and writing skills. It further stimulated our interest in studies and when we confronted our desire with our parents to acquire formal education, we were completely denied because our parents believed girls should only stay inside home", says Mina. She further adds, "When I see the boys of our age complete their school and attend the college, I feel completely helpless. The discrimination merely based on gender is unfair. I am now determined to get education and fight against such disparity." SEED launched a door-to-door programme to each family of six girls and convinced them to allow their girls to access to education. With the support of AAN, a meeting was held between the parents and teachers, which had a positive outcome and the girls were finally enrolled in grade 5.

Sita chowdhary says, "Age can never be a barrier to gain knowledge. Our parents and teachers did not have a confidence if we could perform well at the school, but AAN, SEED and the REFLECT members convinced our parents to send us to the school. Initially, we were shy



to sit with the small children but now we are confident and even teachers behave with us as a friendly manner at classes."

Suntali, one of the six girls was a former Kamlari; she worked as a bonded housemaid for a landlord in her village, "I worked for the landlord since my childhood; when I was freed from bonded labor with the support of various organizations, I felt as if I got a new life. Education was never my concern until I joined the REFLECT Circle. I am now very happy that I go to the school and learn new things. I want to at least pass SLC", shares Suntali.

"We were shy in the beginning, and the other children would laugh at us. But, with our determination to study, we are now comfortable with the teachers and classmates, everyone at the school and home. Therefore, even the locals admire our willingness and they motivate us." Despite the busy schedule at the school, these girls are still actively participating at the REFLECT Circle and these girls are role model in the eyes of other women in this area.



Mothers with their childrens outside the ECDC building

70 children from the marginalized communities belonging to Majhi, Mushar and Bote were benefitted from these ECDs.

After the ECD centre is set up at Dhikurpokhari and Dansing in Kaski district, the community women got an opportunity to engage in the economic activities to improve their livelihood. For example, Sumitra Pariyar (mother of Sudha Pariyar) has started a tailoring shop and now earns Rs 200 per day; Durga Subedi (mother of Puja Subedi) has joined six-month tailoring classes; Dilmaya Pariyar has started organic farming in her land, otherwise she used to produce vegetables only for her family.

Altogether, 15 people from both the centres were benefitted after they received the CSEB blocks-producing skills. The skills supported them to get a job opportunity in similar kinds of construction works (e.g. in Bhalam). Similarly, 39 grade teachers (17) and ECD facilitators (22) were benefitted by

the trainings on ECD management and CCL. Now, 45 children regularly attend the classes. They learnt to interact between each other. The parents are more conscious of health and there are visible changes in food habits among children. The ECDs at the community and school level have helped improve the physical and psycho-social development of children.

### 8.10 HARNESSING YOUTH POWER

The youths used the youth networks and groups such as the REFLECT Circle as a platform to hold discussions, contribute their share in community development, implement their plan of actions to improve their community situation. They were further capacitated through orientation, trainings and workshops. The learnings from the orientation on RTI particularly targeted to the youths were used in many institutions. Leadership skills among the youth network members have been developed through local-level leadership development trainings that helped increase the participation of

youth in local activities and programs. The youth networks in Morang district used the RTI for the culvert construction and distribution of social security allowances in their villages. Similarly, the youths have contributed to promote democracy at the local level through the use of RTI and other accountability tools such as public audit and citizen charter. The youth groups supported the initiative to address the issues of drug use in Kaski; they assisted in eliminating the culture of playing cards and carom-board at the public places with an aim to encourage people to engage in more productive works.

The platforms like youth networks, the REFLECT Circle, groups and clubs inspire solidarity among the youths to unite for common issues in the society. Similarly, leadership trainings have capacitated the youths to lead the mass. Thus, many of the AAN campaigns are led by the youths contributing against early child marriage, harmful traditional practices against women, VAW, and campaigns against caste-based discrimination to provide access to justice.

Youth networks and child clubs in Doti have advocated for child-friendly local governance through interactions with the local stakeholders. The girls adolescence groups put every effort to make *Chhaupadi* free VDCs in their areas. In Siraha and Bara, the youth unitedly raised awareness

## CASE STUDY

**VOLUNTEERISM IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MONEY**

"It is not always money that's important but volunteering for social cause is something more precious than money. We are youth, and we are responsible for social change, a positive social change."

Ashish Bishwokarma, a 17-year youth comes from Dharan, the eastern part of Nepal. He's been living with his parents in the slum community in Thapathali for last seven years. His mother looks after his family in financial and non-financial terms. His father doesn't have any source of income. Ashish is doing his high school.

Ashish has become one of the active volunteers of ACTIVISTA Nepal for more than six

months. He used to actively participate in ACTIVISTA's program. He also participated in the Youth Leadership Training Seminar, jointly organized by Global Platform Nepal and ACTIVISTA Nepal, in July 2014. Along with his personal development, he has grown enthusiasm and interest in social issues and importance of youth in bringing positive social changes.

He works as a Child Coordinator in Paurakhi Watch Group, a community youth group. He believes that small things can bring changes. Once he involved in ACTIVISTA Nepal, his belief has become even stronger and he considers that small movements or campaigns can bring social changes. He reiterates that his life was idle and he did nothing before he started volunteering with ACTIVISTA.

Apart from YLTS, he participated in a two and half month campaign course in Global Change Course, in Global Platform, with a recommendation of ACTIVISTA Nepal. The trainers appreciated his performance during the training. The training strengthened his capacity and confidence both. Now, he is involved in the campaign on Climate Change along with other participants of Global Change. He believes that he can share his knowledge and skills among other people, including the youths like him.



against caste-based discrimination and untouchability. They also lobbied the duty bearers for effective implementation of the law against such discrimination. The active participation of ACTIVISTA members successfully completed safe city campaign. Similarly, the Global Platform trainees launched Hamro Cheli campaign to stress on the needs of safe public places for women. The youths were mobilized to launch the international campaigns such as OBR, International Women's Day and International Youth Day.

Like in the previous years, the REFLECT Circle in the AAN working areas, prepared the youth activists, who contribute for transformation at the community level. The community female educators and social mobilizers have played a crucial role to sensitize communities on the right-based issues. The youth community educators have sensitized the people about the importance of monitoring school governance, elimination of culturally unsocial practices, such as child marriage, and gender/caste-based discrimination. The youths have effectively participated in LRPs

through campaigns, solidarity actions, and awareness raising programs.

**8.11 UPHOLDING CHILD RIGHTS IN EDUCATION INITIATIVES**

A four-day training on 'Children's Participation on their Own Protection' was conducted in Biratnagar, from 3 to 5 November 2014, for 20 LRP partners/staff, based on the toolkit developed by 'Keeping Children Safe Coalition', an international coalition, in coordination with Sponsorship unit, AA Nepal Eastern Resource Centre and LRPs. The training prepared a group of

*More than 7000 children from the child clubs developed their capacity to get engaged on the street drama, preventing child marriage, monitoring schools, promoting wall newspaper, capacity building initiatives on gender and the persons with disabilities.*

practitioners and facilitators, who could capacitate the children to contribute to better child protection practice within children's groups and organizations. The participant staffs and LRP both enhanced their capacity with the ground knowledge on child protection and child participation. The other areas were covered children taking their safety measures, ways for working with children, developing skills to encourage children's effective participation and overcoming barriers, and relevant tools and ways the adult could support children in their protection.

As a replication of this training, 26 children were benefited from the orientation program conducted by LRP partner in Udayapur. Similarly, more than 7000 children from the child clubs developed their capacity to get engaged on the street drama, preventing child marriage, monitoring schools, promoting wall newspaper, capacity building initiatives on gender and the persons with disabilities. Besides, as a part of implementing government policy on child

## CASE STUDY

### SUCCESS OF CHILD CLUB IN RECEIVING VDC BUDGET

"Jos Jagaran Child Club was established by AAN. With the support of AAN and hard work of our club members, we have been able to receive 10% of VDC budget (NRs, 270,000) allocated for children, this year. We spent this amount to procure sports gears for nine child clubs. Inter-child club volleyball and sports competitions and children cultural program were organized benefitting overall 3655 children of Bhumirajmandu VDC of Doti district", shares Prakash Joshi (M 19), President of Jos Jagaran Child Club.

He continues, "Our community had no idea about the VDC budget. Therefore, in the pervious years, the budget was spent for health camps rather than children's welfare, child focused programs and children related activities never became the priority of the authorized body."

Prior to the establishment of the child club, my friends and I used to spend all our leisure times just playing but now we exchange our ideas and discuss the importance of a child club. We play games and help each other with studies. We had never heard about children's day, but this year, all the children celebrated it. AAN gave us orientation about child rights, accountability and governance.

We were also provided training on proposal writing with the support of ActionAid. We developed a proposal and submitted it to VDC.

I felt so proud when I was informed that we would get the budget. Everyone appreciated our work. We became popular in our village after receiving the money. Today, ActionAid has been mobilizing our club for various programs on issues like untouchability, child education, discrimination, early marriages etc.

Jos Jagaran Child Club is performing admirably at the community level. It conducts a monthly meetings, and discussion sessions with community and volunteers. Recently, the club organized a two-day primary health care training, in coordination with VDC. Altogether, 35 members of child club were trained on sanitation, personal hygiene and first aid. The members also handed over 40 pieces of soft clothes (nappies) to the community health post birthing center.

"Receiving the fund from VDC was like a 'dream comes true' for all the child club members. We are now extremely encouraged to do better things in future. We make a better action plan and present a proposal to the local government institutions to acquire fund", says Prakash Joshi.

friendly local governance, 192 child clubs were formed (in the districts of western region) with representation (15) in Ward Citizen Forum. The child clubs were also

able to prevent 15 cases of child marriages in 2014, as a result of the mobilization of Child Clubs/Networks (e.g. Freed Kamaiya Child Network- in Bardiya).



*Students playing at their school in unsafe environment*

### **8.12 DEEPENING POPULAR EDUCATION AND REFLECT**

In 2014, 7809 people living in poverty (PLiPs) benefitted from 345 LRP supported the REFLECT Circles. Out of them, 3,958 PLiP developed their reading and writing skills through literacy classes run under REFLECT Circles. They have acquired knowledge and skills to draw a cheque, maintain a bookkeeping of their business, manage records of community saving groups and cooperatives, operate mobile phones, etc. The REFLECT participants contributed to ODF campaign; they took a lead role in declaring Chaupadi Free Zone in Bajura (3 wards) and Doti (3VDCs); they stopped early child marriage; raised voices for the representation of Dalit and Women in SMCs, and mobilized trained people for monitoring schools. In order to deepen popular education, in 2014, more than 75

popular education and REFLECT practitioners developed as a trainer across the country and enhanced their knowledge and skills on 'empowering and participatory literacy.' It was achieved through REFLECT and Popular Education'. TOT was organized in three different regions in Nepal. Likewise, two regional networks (WRC and ERC based) of Education Network Nepal have been established and strengthened as a forum for popular education.

### **8.13 PROMOTING SAFETY AND DRR IN SCHOOLS**

With the orientation provided to 1957 students and teachers on DRR in the eastern districts, in 2014, the schools started plantation, managed first-aid box, and changed the classroom sitting arrangements. Furthermore, 55 schools

conducted Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) under the facilitation of PNGOs and an action plan was developed for disaster preparedness and response. Consequently, construction of roads, school buildings and toilets took place. The SMCs were also mobilized for acquiring the resources from DDCs. Altogether, 53 schools were able to formulate a Disaster Management (DM) Plan, in 2014, whereas in Bajura of the far western region, a nine-member Disaster Management Coordination Committee (DMCC) was constituted under the leadership of DEO, setting up an emergency fund of Rs. 133,000, in coordination with various agencies. In the same district, two schools incorporated DRR in SIP. Likewise, PNGOs also facilitated to claim budget from District Education Office to construct two new earthquake resilient buildings in Dang.



# Other Organizational Initiatives

## 9.1 DISCOURSE ON DALIT RIGHTS AND ITS DIMENSION

With the support of AAN, the National Discourse programme was formulated with view to consolidate a new concept and ideas in a unified manner. This forum envisioned clear roles and responsibilities of all organizations working in similar issues of Dalit. Such forum would help in

Dalit rights movement in Nepal. All the relevant documents should be compiled as a resource book to be used by other organizations, state authorities and the stakeholders in favour of the Dalit rights. His Excellency, the President of Nepal, Dr. Ram Baran Yadav addressed the issues and spoke for the transformation of the Dalits.





#### 9.4 STRENGTHENING FORUM FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

AA Nepal, in partnership with NCE Nepal, convened a 'Public Education Conference 2014' in a theme, 'The Role of Local Governments for Strengthening Public Education in Nepal.' The eminent scholars presented eight papers in two concurrent sessions. More than 100 participants from all over the country contributed to generate discourse on the importance of local government for strengthening public schools in Nepal. It was a milestone for creating a critical mass in strengthening public education in Nepal, by bringing the grassroots practitioners, policy makers, development practitioners and academics together. The discourse contributed to the great extent to the knowledge generation process and facilitated the dialogues among the wider stakeholders in the critical issues of public education.

#### 9.5 YOUTH MOBILIZATION

Youth Advocacy Nepal and ACTIVISTA, in partnership with AA Nepal and Ministry of Youth and Sports, organised a national consultative workshop on "National Youth Policy Review and Issues of Marginalized Youth Living in Poverty" with a view to augment the issues of LRP youth. The program successfully explored the issues of the marginalized and vulnerable youth to be incorporated in the review process of National Youth Policy 2066 B.S. The issues came from the youth consultations in Dhanusha, Siraha, Udayapur, Morang and Banke districts. The events further provided 170 marginalized youth, a common

platform, chiefly for two things. First, they could share their issues to be addressed in the review process of National Youth Policy, 2066. Second, they could enhance their knowledge and skills so that they should be able to actively involve in the social justice issues. Likewise, 150 youth rights activists were sensitized and capacitated on five different issues, to increase their positive roles towards creating democratic society through five youth dialogue series organized in Kathmandu. The youth right activists from diverse sectors had taken part in this program.

The youth networks, REFLECT, groups and clubs are formed and regulated by AAN to unite the youths for transformations at the local level. The youths are capacitated to raise awareness in their communities, and launch campaigns through right-based approaches to address the injustice and poverty. GP trains the youths from inside and outside the country with various backgrounds. The Global Campaign Course and the Global Citizen Course are some of the popular courses of GP. Moreover, various fellowship trainings are organized to support the local campaigns. ACTIVISTA provides technical support to different initiatives of AAN; the youths from ACTIVISTA contribute to the massive campaigns such as Safe City and One Billion Rising. GP, with the input of ACTIVISTA, conducted a recent mapping exercise of local CBOs, NGOs and CSOs, with an aim to ensure the participation of youth from PLiP in Global Platform Nepal trainings, which was shared with AAN

country office. The mapping exercise was targeted on the youth-focused local organizations working primarily with marginalized and excluded groups.

#### 9.6 DEEPENING PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

A two-day third edition of "International Conference on Participatory Democracy" organised by AAN in partnership with Institute for Governance and Development (IGD) was held in Kathmandu in December 2014, with a key aim to generate discourses and build knowledge around the theme of participatory democracy for local governance and for participatory development. The participants from Nepal and other countries were academics, key political actors, thinkers, rights activists, policymakers, civil society leaders, youth leaders and students, bureaucrats and media persons. The academics and activists from Nepal, South and Southeast Asia, Europe and Africa made keynote speeches, presented papers and contributed through discussions. The experts presented 19 papers in the conference. The conference, held at a historic juncture of time following Nepali people's enthusiastic participation in Constituent Assembly election to draft a democratic constitution, brought together local and international perspectives from Nigeria, South Africa, Europe and South and Southeast Asia through various thematic papers.

Forum for Participatory Democracy (common platform formed in collaboration



*Interaction programme during International Conference on Participatory Democracy*

of AAN and IGD) published a book on "Participatory Democracy-Issues and Challenges", an anthology of Participatory Democracy Conference held on 2012. The book was disseminated to the public during the PD conference. Besides this, we have developed an interactive website "www.govaction.org" in which interested people can take part in the discussion; they can develop their own blog, and share their opinions and information related to the governance. The books, event briefings, papers from the conference will be posted shortly in the page for wider sharing. On top of that, the other Medias (print/visual) were mobilized to capture the PD discourse at local and national level. Moreover, we have been using a group "Governance Initiative Network-GIN" in facebook to share the information to its members.

### **9.7 WATER COMMONS INITIATIVE**

Water common initiative is implemented in partnership with Abhiyan Nepal for Koshi, Indreni for Gandaki and Fold Nepal for Mahakali River. Water common is a multi-country issue that has been nationalized and internationalized through media mobilization. The understanding and needs of partnership

between the affected people of Nepal and India is in increasing trend. Compensation was the main agenda of the bilateral dialogue during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Nepal whereas the amount of compensation is yet to be finalized. The people affected by the river are conducting dialogues with their constituent assembly members stressing the national policy development on the water use. Thirty new people's organizations have been formed in 2014, by expanding the catchment area at the upper basin of Koshi, to develop the Saptakoshi People Right Forum (SPRF) into a strong organization to augment advocacy. This organization advocates to provide compensation to the Koshi flood victims to ensure fair and just use of water. The 13 newly formed and 11 reformed SPRF at the local level are practicing democratic exercises to strengthen their leadership skills. These people's right forums are strongly advocating for their rights to use water and compensation for loss. The district and VDC level SPRFs are conducting regular interactions between Koshi affected people and the people from possible affected area, in order to deepen and widen the crux of

the issue. Similarly, data collection is also being continued to assess the possible effect of the high dam construction. This information will help generate powerful data-based advocacy.

The water rights campaign has been grounded at the local and the national level. Two events called 'Pani Sambad' (water dialogue) and National River Summit were conducted in Kathmandu, in order to link the issue at the national level. The Summit issued a 15-point deceleration to protect the rights of riparian people.

Though some positive changes are observed, several challenges have been seen over the water right campaigns. The treaty related issues are mainly bilateral between Government of Nepal and India. The Government of Nepal has not paid adequate attention to draw the agenda for review of the treaties because of the political reason. Moreover, there is neither a cooperation and coordination between the riparian people of Nepal and India nor has it been able to amplify the people's voices at the national level. National coordination mechanism is not functioning effectively for linking the agendas of water within the country and the South Asian region.

It was noticed that after internalizing the issues, Chadani, Gadariya and Masuriaya VDCs in Mahakali Zone have allocated NRs 250,000, NRs 5,000 and NRs 5,000 respectively to support the campaign in Kanchanpur and Kailali districts giving a strong message for solidarity.



# Organizational Processes and Changes

## 10.1 REGISTRATION OF ACTIONAID NEPAL (AAN)

After ten years of establishment of ActionAid as a charity organization in the United Kingdom, the organization started working in Nepal in 1982. Based on the learning from its engagement in various sectors from grassroots to international level, AAN has evolved through various changes on the working modalities in its 33 years' journey of the fight against poverty and injustice. Starting from charity-based work in the 1980s to improve the basic living conditions of the poorest people, AAN has now adopted a human rights-based approach with an aim to enhance the capacity of the poor and excluded people to claim and

exercise their rights to live a dignified life. Our approach reaffirms the role of popular struggles, social justice movements, popular actions, community-based organizations and people's organizations for rights conscientisation and transformation of unequal power relations.

With an aim to become more "locally rooted and globally connected" organization, AAN is legally registered in Kathmandu District Administration Office, in October 2014, with its strong international affiliation. ActionAid is a global federation and ActionAid Nepal is the member of this federation.

## 10.2 PHASE OUT OF SEVEN LRPs

This year, AAN was engaged in the phase out process of seven LRP i.e. Rasuwa, Dolakha, Kapilvastu, Parsa, Siraha, Dang and Dhanusha. The phase out process is a long and detail team-work, which starts three years before the project matures. AAN and PNGOs team discussed the exit strategies. One of the most important and emotional phases during the process is the flow of information regarding the phase out plan to the beneficiary children and the community we have worked with for 10 years. These 10 years are brought to the table in the form of series of meetings and discussions of the sustainable plans for the PNGOs. The process of phase out is a positive start where the actual impact can be seen. It's a phase where the partner organization is ready to sustain and work for the community more independently to bring the desired developmental changes.

## 10.3 SOCIAL AUDIT

Social audit is a process for ensuring its accountability and transparency. AAN and its partners have adopted social audit as a participatory process with the key stakeholders to review and assess the project achievements and shortcomings, so that necessary intervention can be made to improve the policies and practices. At the same time, social audit is a medium to disseminate information among the stakeholders regarding the programme achievements and gaps, the cost involved

and its effectiveness, and the organizational systems and structures.

AAN organized its 11<sup>th</sup> National Social Audit with different stakeholders, i.e. the partners, community representatives, the government officials and the I/NGOs, on 13 June 2014. The program critically reviewed the progress made in 2013 against the project plan of actions and the cost involved. The speakers from the respective resource centers shared their successful stories and expressed their views. The Chairperson of ActionAid shared his brief remarks and opened the floor for the audience to put forward their valuable comments and suggestions. Then, the AAN Country Director and other guest speakers briefly expressed their views. The social audit event was well captured by different media.

## 10.4 REVIEW, EVALUATION AND IMPACT STUDY

The review, evaluation and impact study are the accountability processes of AAN to help us assess and reflect back our performance over a certain interval of time and review the lessons learnt to plan for the next strategy. AAN has been carrying out the review, evaluation and impact study of the partnership programmes to generate reports for the programme outputs. The lessons drawn from such periodic review, evaluation and impact study complement the regular M&E work that lead towards a more comprehensive learning cycle. In

order to link the lessons learnt from the reviews with the improved future actions, efforts are made to critically discuss the review recommendations with the concerned partners. These recommendations will be incorporated in the renewed partnership agreements. It is found an effective practice to involve a one partner in the review process and the another partner as a peer reviewer to build partner capacity and improve the shared learning.

## 10.5 REGULAR AUDIT TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY

The internal and external audit of all types of partners was carried out this year too. The internal auditors produced 41 audit reports and the external auditors produced 54 reports of different partners and programs. The regular visit to the partners has resulted in receiving monthly financial reports. The holistic audit approach gave an insight to review the partner's governance, policies and social audit activities, cost effectiveness and the work efficiency. The auditors' recommendations and their effective implementation by the concerned Program Officer and/or Resource Centre Coordinator has become instrumental in institutionalizing the process, contributing for smooth operations of the finance staffs. Consequently, no cases of fraud or misappropriation of funds were found.

### 10.6 PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PM&E) - MODEL BUILDING EXERCISE

Considering the needs for making our 'participatory tools and techniques' more efficient, we developed a progressive methodology to create 'spaces' for rights-holders' groups so that they can take a lead role in gathering, analysing and using the information. It also provided us a space for getting closer to the rights-holders, and creating more and more political spaces for them. This was not only for generating information but it is also believed to be the process of empowering RHs, who could use the information in their benefits.

The primary purpose of this exercise was to develop a model for extracting information about a typical AAN Programme VDC, along the lines of our overall HRBA operations. This process would also develop the skills among the AAN staffs, partners and community members to generate required information using participatory approach, involving rights

holders, community members, partners, and other stakeholders throughout the process. Besides generating information and making PMIS strong, the overall process was also to help create space for community to become empowered through the right use of information for their own benefit. This process has helped to strengthen the connection between AAIN, community and the partners. Moreover, another benefit of this overall process was to build confidence to apply various participatory tools and techniques at the community level, for AAN and the partner staff. Following this process, ERC team has continued this work in LRP 18 and WRC has also planned this event in Palpa district.

### 10.7 GOING GREEN

A half-day orientation on "waste management" was organised for staffs. The orientation brought about some new practices, such as better management of waste paper and plastic, reduction in plastic bags, the shredded papers and tonner refills were sent for recycling. Moreover,

we need to submit carbon related data to AAI for analysis every year. In this period, we have collected the carbon related data of 2013 and submitted it to AAI. The audit unit circulated an email to the AAN CO staffs, regarding their commitment to support "Going Green", on the World Environment Day. A draft of comparative analysis report of 2013 has been received from AAI. The data collection on usage of fuel, gas, paper and electricity for 2014 is underway.

### 10.8 AAN ANNUAL FINANCIAL UPDATE

Actual Regular Giving Income in 2014 was Great Britain Pound (GBP) 1.6 million, which is in line with 2014 actual which is a slightly increased of 3 percentage. There has been a decrease of around 31 per cent in the actual other income (partnership) as compared with plan. There are significant decreased incomes earned from Global Platform, Frame grant than planned. The overall income position of AAN for the year 2014 is as follows:

GBP '000

INCOME	2014 (ACTUAL)	2014 (PLAN)
Regular Giving	1,638	1,582
Other Income	1,149	1,491
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,787</b>	<b>3,073</b>

The funding Affiliate wise breakdown of the Regular Giving Income for 2014 is as follows:

REGULAR GIVING INCOME	2014 ACTUAL	COMPOSITION 2014
ActionAid UK	516	32%
ActionAid Spain	289	18%
ActionAid Italy	529	32%
ActionAid Ireland	151	9%
ActionAid Greece	153	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>100%</b>

REGULAR GIVING INCOME	ACTUAL	PLAN
ActionAid UK	516	462
ActionAid Spain	289	305
ActionAid Italy	529	506
ActionAid Ireland	151	200
ActionAid Greece	153	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>1582</b>

AA UK and AA Italy are the major contributors of the 2014 budget, which hold 32% income with the comparison of the total income earned from the regular giving income. AA Spain contributes 18% and AA Greece and AA Ireland contribute each 9 percentage for the same.

There is a slightly (3 percentage) increased in the regular giving income due to new income earned for Doti, Palpa this year.

## Expenditure

GBP '000

NATURAL COST CLASSIFICATION	ACTUAL 2014	PLAN 2014
Grants and Community Inputs	2,168	2,457
Salaries and Benefits (staff costs)	483	663
Travel and transportation	69	101
Office and service costs	127	165
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,847</b>	<b>3,386</b>
<b>Statutory Cost Analysis</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Plan</b>
Project Costs	2,480	2,877
Fundraising Costs	86	118
Governance Costs	49	81
Support Costs	232	310
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,847</b>	<b>3,386</b>

There is 16% deviation of total expenditure from the budget plan.

The reasons for these are as follows:

Some positions, including the senior managers remained vacant while the restructuring plan was underway. The budget on the DRR activities was under spent. Moreover, the delay in implementing activities in Ready for Anything project funded by the Department for International Development of UKAid also contributed for low utilization of the budget. The deviation under program cost as compared to the previous year is because of the phase out of Qatar Foundation funded Reach Out To Asia (ROTA) project and UKAid funded Building Disaster Resilient Community project.

### 10.9 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) MANAGEMENT

The IT unit successfully tested and implemented cloud base (Google Drive) across the sponsorship partners. It has helped ease our photo transfer between sponsorship and partners. Similarly, IT is promoting green IT environment within the organization by re-using toner, minimizing use of papers and using the IT applications as much as possible.

In addition to this, user capacity building initiatives to maximize the use of IT skills was key priority for this year, which has helped enhance the IT knowledge of the staffs and the partners.

### 10.10 FUND RAISING (FR)

A few efforts initiated in 2014 for smooth FR process are systematising for fundraising through a project management guidelines, programme-led funding planning and making efforts for FR database. At the later half our fund raising department was intensively engaged with ActionAid International Secretariat to identify and explore funding base for Nepal.

We plan to intensify fundraising efforts around Institutional Income and High-Value Funding. This is a major priority that entails active donor scoping and a strong focus on building donor relations, both with existing and potential donors. In order to help us meet this goal, we will develop and roll out an Operational Guidelines for Institutional Priority Donor (IPD) and the High Value projects will help facilitate our efforts.

### 10.11 SPONSORSHIP SUPPORTER RETENTION

The available Child Sponsorship links as of December 2014 are 9,372. Similarly, Next Step (non-child sponsorship) links are 2,501. This year, the link rate saw negative growth rate of 7.78%. This is caused mainly because of withdrawal of the Spanish support from Asia, including Nepal. We lost 786 Spanish child sponsorship links at the end of the year. These links were transferred to various countries in Africa.

## CASE STUDY

### CHILDREN'S GROUPS – MEANS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

"I have become bold after I joined the children's group. I am now able to make my opinion in social issues, such as child marriage and convince the parents to reconsider the ill practices in the society. In the past, the parents would not listen to us, but these days, more than just listening, they believe us considering our knowledge and the group strengths. I am thankful to ActionAid for enhancing our knowledge on child rights through orientations and trainings." Says a 13 years old girl Phurpu Dolmo Tamang from Gatlang village who studies in grade seven in Nepal Rastriya Secondary school.

Phurpu continues, "We consult the community people; we conduct rallies, organise poem and

speech contests and conduct street dramas to raise awareness in the communities, on our rights. I am glad that all our activities work as an effective channel to reach our voices in the communities to demand our rights."

"All school aged children are admitted to schools; discrimination between boys and girls hardly exists; child marriage has been an issue of the past and there is no child labour as well."

A 16 year-old girl Premisha Tamang says, "It was the children's group who worked continuously to eliminate child labour. And today, I feel that if ActionAid was not there in our community, I would also have been involved in a labour work to support my family but I am now studying in class 10 and I aim to become a teacher in future."

In the past, people had always underestimated

the strength of the children. The girls were seen as a burden and their parents wanted them to marry off soon, whereas boys were seen as a source of income and were sent to do labour work; the children were deprived of their rights. But now, the situation is different; the children are fighting for their rights unanimously and it was made possible by ActionAid. To make it possible, ActionAid established nine groups of children with 2,396 members and trained them on their rights. The groups are now registered in District Child Welfare Committee that will allow them to work continuously for their rights.



The partner NGOs of LRP, at the phase out moments, conducted "Thank you farewell" programmes to thank the communities, the children and the stakeholders who had been inextricable part of the journey to eradicate poverty and injustice. The community people, children and the stakeholders expressed their words and thanked each other for their support in the community development.



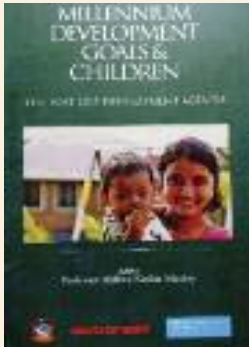


# Knowledge Generation in 2014

## 11.1 WOMEN IN TRANSFORMATION

'Women in Transformation', a joint publication of ActionAid and ASHMITA, a woman publishing house, is a collection of precious articles that revolve around women and their transformation. The articles, authored by the professionals from different disciplines cover the issues of access to resources, economic status, UCW, views on religion and women, philosophy and women, issues of women revolution, health, leadership, equality and other relevant issues of women.





### 11.2 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND CHILDREN

A book with a title, *The post 2015 Development Agenda* was published in September 2013 and distributed in 2014, by the Organizing Committee of Round Table on Post MDG and Children for Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Government of Nepal, AAN and SOS Children's Villages Nepal. AAN provided technical assistance, including editorial support to this work. The book is based on the papers presented and the proceedings of the event on MDG and Children. The book, in a comprehensive manner, presents the reflections and observations made at the Round Table on all important aspects and facets of the Millennium Development Goals related to children. They reflect realism, pragmatism and optimism. The participants were prepared to overcome the issues and challenges as they were devising new tools and approaches to promote networking, coordination and cooperation so that no child is left behind.



### 11.3 JADEED URDU TALEEM

A prototype book was developed in consultation with the experts and the Muslim community to support quality education for children pursuing Madarasa education. The book contains three languages - Urdu, Nepali and English for the same content and is targeted to grade 1-5 students. The product has been developed in partnership with Nepal Muslim Samaj Chetana Bikash Kendra, a partner organization based in Banke district after series of consultations with experts and Maulana, religious leaders and finalized after the approval was obtained from the Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education.



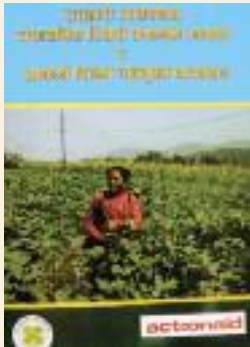
### 11.4 EDUCATION OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH DISABILITY

A book, which is based on compilation of the case studies related to the children with disability, was published in partnership with National Campaign for Education (NCE) Nepal. The cases were collected from the LRPs and the project districts. Similarly, a policy brief, which was developed based on the policy analysis and study on the situation of children with disability has been published in partnership with NCE Nepal.



### 11.5 CRSA HANDBOOK

The development of resource materials mainly focused on sustainable agriculture this year. A resource book on 'Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA)' in Nepali language has been finalized and is ready for publication. This book has been written to support AAN and partner staff, for promotion of sustainable agriculture and at the same time, this book is also expected to be useful for the farmers practicing sustainable agriculture. Similarly, policy briefs on feminisation of agriculture and policy implications on sustainable agriculture were written. Moreover, a paper on food security and land rights was written to contribute to the discussions on agrarian questions.



### 11.6 USE OF PESTICIDE

This book is a research based publication collaborated between Agriculture and Forestry University, Chitwan and AAN. This publication provides key information on the use of pesticide, its impacts and steps taken at the policy level for its mitigation. It provides the findings as well as the mitigation initiatives taken for the use of pesticide in our country. The book also consists of information about campaign formulation towards making Nepal an organic country.



### 11.7 PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY – PRACTICES AND REFLECTIONS

Representation of collaboration between Institute of Governance and Development (IGD) and AAN, this book is a collection of papers from 2013 International PD conference that reflects the understanding of the practices of participatory democracy. The issues and reflections are drawn from different sectors which are multi-dimensionally linked with the socio-cultural aspects, reflecting on the practices of participatory democracy. The book was launched during the 2014 international PD conference and disseminated to the stakeholders.



### 11.8 UCW POLICY SCOPING PAPER

UCW policy scoping paper is readied and shared with program unit along with safe cities coalition. It was also disseminated through different interactions and meetings to the partners, networks, CSOs and government officials.



### 11.9 LEAFLET ON BUILDING CODE

With the effective work of DFID funded Building Disaster Resilient Community (BDRC) Project, jointly implemented by ActionAid and Practical Action, achievement of our work in policy level has been witnessed in the field of National Building code. A leaflet has been prepared in order to further promote our work and disseminate the idea of what building code is and what the process of our advocacy at the policy level was. It can be used as a supporting information material for the work we have accomplished in this area. This leaflet can be used as a piece of information to the donor or for the general public.

Similarly, AAN BDRC project has published case studies based on the learning and reflection of the project outcomes.



## Glimpse of Quantitative Achievements – 2014

### **OBJECTIVE 1: To ensure improved livelihoods and build disaster resilient communities by enabling PLiP and marginalized people to claim productive resources.**

With regards to the quantitative coverage, 9450 women reported increased control over land or other natural resources against the target 5997. Similarly, 2831 women became aware of their rights and entitlements on the land and natural resources against the target 1979. As a result of climate responsive sustainable agriculture, 2027 people reported the increased food security. As far as the CRSA is concerned, 2920 farmers are practicing CRSA against the target 1292 and 1930 people were trained in CRSA against the target 79. While considering risks and resilience, 470 people became able to identify risks, and explain and demonstrate resilience-building plan against the target of 300. Moreover, 3466 women and men became able to identify risks and have developed plans to reduce the risks against the target 7843. 550 people reported having received humanitarian assistance in a manner that respected their rights.

### **OBJECTIVE 2. To facilitate political advancement of PLiP and marginalized people to hold duty bearers to account, develop propositions for national development strategies and deepen democracy.**

With regards to holding the duty bearers accountable, 201 VDCs and other local government agencies took steps to increase

accountability to their communities against the target of 65. Moreover, 89462 people living in poverty experienced improvements in quality and gender responsive public services.

### **OBJECTIVE 3: To engage with women and girls to build their active agency to challenge/ take action against all forms of discrimination and injustice against their body, sexuality and unequal burden of work.**

A total of 6126 women were mobilized to challenge violence and harmful traditional practices against the target of 14097. In order to fulfill the goal to support women to strengthen their capacity, 2424 women participated in the organized income generation activities against the target of 260. 1584 incidence of GBV cases against women and girls were reported. 1719 women reported increased control over income and greater negotiating power within the household.

### **OBJECTIVE 4: To support all children attain quality education in a safe and equitable environment.**

In 146 communities, the schools have significantly progressed on two or more of the 10 core education rights against the target of 109. Similarly, 4808 people are aware of the 10 core education rights against the target of 810. 3449 women participated in the REFLECT Circle against the target of 6000.

# Annex 1

## List of Local Rights Programme (LRP) Partner Organizations – 2014

LRP	NAME OF LONG-TERM LRP PARTNER
<b>LRP14</b>	Manekor Society Nepal (MSN) Nepal Agro forestry Foundation (NAF)
<b>LRP 15</b>	Ecology Agriculture and Rural Development Society (ECARDS) Human Rights Awareness and Development Centre (HURADEC)
<b>LRP 16</b>	Sahaj Nepal (SN) Siddhartha Social Development Centre (SSDC)
<b>LRP 17</b>	Arunodaya Yuba Club (AYC) Divya Yuba Club (DYC)
<b>LRP 18</b>	Dalit Jana Kalyan Yuba Club (DJKYC)
<b>LRP 19</b>	Society for Environment and Education Development (SEED Boat for Community Development (BCD)
<b>LRP 21</b>	Dhanusha Sewa Samiti (DSS) Social Development Path (SODEP)
<b>LRP 23</b>	Siddhartha Club (SC) Children and Women Empowerment Society (CWES)
<b>LRP 24</b>	Indreni Social Development Forum (ISDF) Majhi Musahar Bote Kalyan Sewa Samiti (MMBKSS)
<b>LRP 26</b>	Janchetana Jagaran Abhiyan (JJA) Rural Development Centre (RDC)
<b>LRP 27</b>	Madan Bhandari Memorial Academy Nepal (MBMAN) Nari Bikash Sangh (NBS)
<b>LRP 28</b>	Nepal Social Development People Empowerment Centre (NESPEC) Chelibeti Club (CBC)
<b>LRP 29</b>	Human Resource Centre (HRC) Participatory Effort at Children Education and Women Initiative Nepal (Peacewin)
<b>LRP 30</b>	Bheri Environment Excellence Group (BEE Group) Nepal Muslim Samaj Bikas Chetana Kendra (NMSBCK)
<b>LRP 31</b>	Dalit Awareness Society (DAS) Deurali Society (DS)
<b>LRP 32</b>	Homenet Nepal (HNN) Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj (NMES)
<b>LRP 33</b>	Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj (KMJS)
<b>LRP 34</b>	The Society Touch (TST)
<b>LRP 35</b>	Equality Development Center (EDC)
<b>LRP 36</b>	Dalit Jana Kalyan Yuba Club (DJKYC)
<b>LRP 37</b>	Social Resource Development Center Nepal (SRDCN)

## Annex 2

### Projects Managed by ActionAid Nepal in 2014

SN	PROJECTS	DONOR	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	DURATION
1.	Kamaiya Housing	Electric Aid, ActionAid Ireland, UK Volunteer	<b>Bardiya: Radha Krishna Tharu Jana Sewa Kendra (RLJS)</b>	September 2014 to September 2015
2.	Saksham	Irish Aid/ActionAid Ireland	<b>Mahottari:</b> Community Development Project <b>Parsa:</b> Divya Yuba Club <b>Makwanpur:</b> Makwanpur Mahila Samuha <b>Chitwan:</b> Chitwan Sakriya Samuha <b>Kathmandu:</b> Mahila Adhikar Manch	January 2012 to December 2015
3.	Building Disaster Resilient Communities in Pokhara Sub-metropolitan (Consortium with Practical Action Nepal)	DFID	<b>Kaski:</b> Siddhartha Club, Child and Women Empowerment Society Nepal	April 2012 to March 2014
4.	Strengthening Women's Collectives Project	EC	<b>Terhathum:</b> Dalit Awareness Society Deurali Society	March 2013 to February 2016
5.	Aid Match Project	AAUK, DFID and Aid Match Fund	<b>Bardiya:</b> Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj <b>Nawalparasi:</b> Indreni Social Development Forum <b>Sankhuwasabha:</b> The Society Touch, Nepal	August 2013 to July 2016
6.	Early Childhood Development Centre	Guy Foundation	<b>Kaski:</b> Community Support Group	January 2013 to October 2014
7.	Fellowship to Deepening Democracy in Communities in Nepal	Danida AA Denmark	Capacity building of Fellow (area not specified)	January 2013 to December 2014
8.	Empowerment and Democracy – Maintaining the Role of NSAs in Local Governance and Accountability	EU Delegation in Nepal	<b>Palpa:</b> Women Welfare Association <b>Baitadi:</b> Bhumeshwor Community Development Organization (BCDO)	March 2014 to December 2017
9.	Making It for Women	UK Giving Club	Bardiya: Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj	July 2015 to July 2017
10.	Global Platform	AA Denmark	Kathmandu (Carry out trainings and capacity building initiatives)	April 2013 to December 2017

# act:onaid



ActionAid Nepal is a member of ActionAid international federation. With an aim to become “locally rooted and globally connected”, AAN has legally registered its entity in the concerned Nepal Government’s authority. At the same time, for stronger international affiliation, ActionAid Nepal has transformed “Country Programme” to “Associate” member and will soon become an affiliate of ActionAid International.

After ten years of its establishment as a charity organization in the United Kingdom, ActionAid started working in Nepal in 1982. Based on the learning from its engagement in various sectors at various levels from grassroots to international AAN has evolved through various changes on approaches and working modalities in its 33 years journey of the fight against poverty and injustice. Starting from charity-based work in the 1980s to improve the basic living conditions of the poorest people, AAN has now adopted a human rights-based approach with an aim to enhance the capacity of the poor and excluded people to claim and exercise their rights to live a dignified life. Our approach reaffirms the role of popular struggles, social justice movements, popular actions, community-based organizations and people’s organizations for rights conscientisation and transformation of unequal power relations.

The logo for ActionAid, featuring the word "actionaid" in a bold, lowercase, red sans-serif font. The background of the entire page is a stylized, low-poly mountain range in shades of purple, red, and blue, with a white horizontal band across the middle containing the contact information.

**act:onaid**

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