

Social Families

In the Empowerment of Marginalized People

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Central Workshop Concluded

A three -day workshop cum seminar was organized in Kathmandu from 30 October – 2 November and it was participated by 26 representatives drawn from field offices located at Siraha, Saptari, Udaypur, Mahottari, Dhading, Gorkha, and Lamjung, including regional coordinator, head office staff and the General Secretary of the Executive Committee.

Unlike in the past, the workshop got started in an official manner and unique way. On the first day, it focused on sharing knowledge and experiences amongst the participants, revealing past mistakes and weaknesses, and taking account of the lessons learned from them. Besides, it also dwelt on how to avoid making the past mistakes. On the remaining days, the discussion concentrated intensively on how best to implement the programme activities planned for the fiscal year starting from 1 Sraavan 2067 till the end of Ashad 2068, with an eye on producing



envisaged outputs for the beneficiaries. In the process, there was a demonstration how to perform the activities through the display of drama, singing songs, and physical gestures.

On the last day i.e. 2nd November, Dr. Jit Bahadur Gurung, Senior Advisor, DanidaHUGOU, deliberated the participants on various ways, techniques and process related to conducting monitoring and evaluation exercises in respect of the activities under implementation of the ongoing

programme. He also dealt on how to conduct periodical monitoring exercises in respect of the long term and short term objectives. That was all done in a very lucid and convincing manner. In the process, he also explained how the envisaged five year strategic outputs were broken down into the related annual activities that were designed to achieve them, including the criteria that reflect



their fulfillments. The participants were thus thoroughly oriented on the subject matter and they openly appreciated the way it was explained. It was as if viewing one's images in a mirror! One participant expressed his opinion like this - "How clearly was it explained ... !"

The participants, drawn from Madhes-Terai, Hills/mountain and the Valleys got the good opportunities for exchanging their field level experiences and got their misgivings/queries clarified. Having being fully satisfied and thereby motivated, they exchanged good wishes and returned to their own field offices. A song that was publicly sung was ringing in the airs that commonly touched them went on like this - "*We will certainly meet again in this ground like this ... !*"

Last but not the least, heart-felt thanks were due to Ramhari K.C., Manager of Chetna Kendra in Dhudikhel including his family and staff members, who, in addition to providing the venue, extended excellent hospitality to the participants/organizers.

Orientation on Human rights at SF level

On 2nd October 2010, SAMAGRA organized a one-day training programme at Diman VDC-3, Dhatatol (Aapgachhi) for the executive committee members, including the general body members of SFs, located at Lohajahar, Gohithi and Koshi Tapu VDCs and representatives of Shavishakti, Apanga Dalit, Mahanta Baba, Durga, Om Shanti, Ma Kamala, Nava Durga and Tilganga Mahila Uthan, altogether 15 SFs representatives of Diman VDC. There were 125 participants (59 women and 66 men). The focus of the training programme was on how to monitor human rights violations and the deliberations also addressed on how to take legal action on those responsible for human rights violation, how to ensure justice to the concerned victims and what are the kinds of human rights violations and abuses and where and how to report the incidences to the concerned agencies. The interactions also dealt on the kinds of domestic violence, especially violence against women, fundamental human rights and its



various kinds. The local organizer of the event was Dadaji Dalit SF Diman VDC-3.

At the end of the event, some participants put forth their views/impressions about the training, while exchanging greetings and best wishes amongst the participants and organizers, In his welcome speech, Chandra Narayan Yadav, ex-chairperson of Diman VDC, expressed his thankfulness to SAMAGRA, for taking the trouble of visiting the remote VDC, far away from the headquarters and made the event so wonderfully successful in disseminating the knowledge on how best to monitor human rights. He was widely appreciated for openly presenting the annual income and expenditure statement in regard to Dadaji SF.

The speakers in the event included Baleswor Ram of Dalit and Youth Committee,

Saraswati Sardar and Rita Sardar from Koshitappu, Chitra Narayan Ram from Lohajhara, and representatives of local political parties, namely, Balaram Yadav, Nepali Congress from Dimal VDC, Biseswor Yadav and Devchandra Yadav of UCPN (Maoists). They, commonly,



appreciated the SAMAGRA's noble initiative of forming SF at the local level with the aim to eradicate caste-based discriminations from the society, doing away with exploitation and harmful social habits, in the process of empowering the suppressed and marginalized communities to accessing human rights and self-advancement. Above all, they expressed their full cooperation with the programme in achieving its objectives. They also commonly wished the programme be extended to other VDCs to the southern part of Saptari as a matter of priority.

The Chairperson Chandra Narayan Yadav, while thanking for organizing this orientation programme on human rights, stressed that community-based social discrimination is the most dangerous evil and so is the caste-based untouchability practices, which need to be gradually eradicated. Durga Prashad Mahato, Regional Coordinator, took the role of the master of ceremony of the event. Dornath Neupane, Executive Director, informed that all the programme activities of SAMAGRA at the grassroots level are undertaken through SFs because they have been recognized as an effective campaigning medium for achieving the liberation of disadvantaged communities and, therefore, he stressed that it is the responsibility of all to oversee that the emancipation of the targeted communities take place at all levels, for example, at the VDC and ward levels. Moreover, he added SAMAGRA had maintained a cordial relation with the Diman SF. He, therefore, advocated for the formation of SFs at each ward. At the end, he thanked all participants/representatives for extending full cooperation with SAMAGRA in making the training event a success.

Transparency of SF

Since Dadaji SF has been involved in several programme related to social transformation, it has managed to tap resources from the concerned VDC, and, at the same time, it has also engaged itself in campaigning for the rights of the landless people and in preserving public assets. In that process, Dadaji Dalit SF made a presentation of its income and expenditure statement in the public in the spirit of transparency soon after the conclusion of the training programme held on 2nd October 2010 and whereby all minute details of the financial statement was laid out as follows :

S.N.	Income	Amount Rs.
1	Monthly Savings of 26 persons @ Rs. 5 from 2062 to till date	1,820
2	Membership fees	4,220
3	Contribution from VDC in 2066	3,000
4	Other contributions	143
	Total	9,183

S.N.	Expenditure	Amount Rs.
1	Constitution printing	700
2	Stamp	325
3	Letter Head printing	650
4	Stamp Pad	45
5	Register 2 pcs.	90
6	Postal stamp 13 pcs for constitution	65
7	Photocopy – application form number-9	68
8	Photocopy of constitution	220
9	District Administration Office registration fee	1,020
	Total	3,183
	Bank balance (Rs. 9,183 – Rs. 3,183)	6,000

Out of 33 members of this SF, 21 are female and 12 male. They are from Dalit community. They wish to see the transparency in all the organizations as in their SF.

Shivadev Sada: This is how my door of awareness opened

Born in 1976 at Diman-3 in Saptari district, Shivadev Sada somehow managed to undergo the formal education upto 10th standard forbearing all kinds of painful struggle. Brought up in a very poor / marginalized and landless family, he served neighbouring households on a daily wage basis, when he was just 8 or 9 years old, in the social context characterized with orthodox and exploitative caste-based discriminations. He felt very insulted deeply when the others behaved with him as if he was an untouchable being low caste Musahar and they stayed away from him. He could hardly withstand insulting words from the rich and well-to-do people alleging that he was an untouchable person. But alas! he has no option but to patiently listen and bear with it. He had only a marginal interest in local politics and, by profession, he is a manual labourer. He recalled his past memory of how prior to the formation of the SF, his socio-economic condition forced him to bear with the exploitative behavior of others and be victimized under the greedy dealings by them. Besides, he had no gut to speak out in front of others, let alone the gaining knowledge on human rights, good governance, and fundamental rights. He had no

saving habit. Whatever earned is utilized in procurement of daily necessities and, on some days, without any means, he had to go to bed with hungry belly. This was how he was spending his life.

Around January of 2005, he came to know about the activities of Social Family. With growing interest in that, he gathered more knowledge about the SF. In due course, under his initiative, Shree Dadaji Dalit SF was formed and he was elected the chairperson of the SF with the membership strength of 33 household representatives.

Along with that, another feature of his self-development came to the limelight was described as follows: “When I got introduced to Radheshyam, a field staff of SAMAGRA at that time, I got exposure to the primary level of awareness. Struggling through the plight of marginalization and exclusion, we were oriented on how the communities could be emancipated from the age-old clutches of caste-based discriminations and traditional evil practices through the medium of rights-based empowerment / development and we could ourselves make it happen on the strengths of group solidarity under the framework of SF. To me, those words sounded like “Golden Advice”. Currently, I am motivated to honour the values of human rights, avoid wasteful expenditure to promote saving habit, and fight in unison against the age-old evil practices and



poverty. He further added that under the encouraging words/advice from SAMAGRA, I made significant progress in accessing/enjoying human rights, making my presence in the local politics as well and fought against the clutches of the absolute poverty level. In pursuing this goal, I got myself kidnapped on several times. On one occasion, a group of 10-12 people hijacked me in one mid-night, while I was asleep. They took me to a distant place and exerted all kinds verbal and physical torture to me, even threatened to kill me saying "How dare you, being a Mushahar (belonging rat-eating community) act like a leader!" They warned me saying that that was the first threatening words warning me with evil consequences if I ever indulged in such activities. But against such odds, I pursued my activities and on 9 Poush 2065, on the eve of election of Constituent Assembly members at the district level, I organized a public meeting at the premise of Diman Secondary High School. Since then I have been recognized as also a local political leader. In the social field, being

involved in the SF activities, I engaged myself to activating the process of social transformation, in conflict management and the peace building process. Currently, I have concentrated my attention to eradicating caste-based discrimination, age-old evil traditions/practices, besides being involved in the maintenance of rural roads. Currently, I am involved in the awareness creation amongst the local people, in the advocacy against the encroachment of public land, public ponds and mango orchard lands. Such activities have been, unfortunately surfacing these days. I have been preaching the idea that those public assets have to be preserved as a part of our civil/social responsibilities. Thus, through the medium of SF, I have been promoting social awareness in the public.

Another issue in which I am involved is related to a land covering 400 bighas in Diman VDC, which was officially recorded as a public property following the land surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2028. Those land areas are being privately registered by socially dominant people under private ownership. It has, thus, been our moral duty of all SF members to protect the public property from being privately encroached under individual ownership registration.

In deliberating the above experiences, the eyes of Shivadev Sada with sweet smiles, were sparkling brightly, exhibiting his sincerity and dedication to the organizational mission. That was clearly an indication that he is seriously committed to realizing the envisaged changes in the broader sense.

Information

From 4th Decemer 2010, a radio program "Social Families – an introduction" is being broadcast through Youth FM 96.8 MHz from 6:30 PM every Tuesday. Please do not miss it. This is broadcast from its seven stations at Bhendetar, Hetauda, Kathmandu, Sindhupalchok, Chitawan, Pokhara and Nepalgunj, and can be heard around those areas.

Heart-felt condolence



Birth :
Baishak
Chaturdashi
1977



Late Laxmi Nani Joshi



Departure to
the Divinity :
Kojagrat
Purnima
Kartik 2067

We express our deep heart-felt condolence for the departed soul of the late Laxmi Nani Joshi, the beloved mother of Bal Krishna Lal Joshi, Chairperson of our Organization.

Holistic Development Service Center
(SAMAGRA) Family

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