

# Social Families

In the Empowerment of Marginalized People

  
**SAMAGRA**  
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**Our heart-felt virtuous Greeting  
on the occasion of New Year 2067,  
wishing all communities to be  
united for New Constitution,  
Permanent Peace and Sustainable  
Development**

## Convening the 31<sup>st</sup> GA Meeting

SAMAGRA organized the 31<sup>st</sup> GA meeting on Friday, 20 Chaitra 2066 at Pasang Lhambu Mountaineering Foundation, Dhumbarahi, Kathmandu and it was chaired by SAMAGRA's chairperson Bal Krishna Lal Joshi. The GA meeting approved the half-yearly progress reports for the year 2066/2067 presented by General Secretary, and Income and Expenditure Statement for the same period presented by the Treasurer. The session also endorsed the work-plan and budget for the ensuing six months of the year. The GA reviewed the Monitoring and Evaluation framework as of the Five Year Strategic Operational Plan and incorporated some refinements. In addition, the revised Financial Regulations and Human Resource Regulation have been approved. Similarly, the newly formulated Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines, 2066 have been endorsed for subsequent implementation.



Delivering the welcome speech, ED Dornath Neupane observed that SAMAGRA has managed to put into effect holistic development of the remotely located marginalized communities on the strengths of its past successful experiences and in cooperation and partnership extended by Social Families and all other concerned. He observed that SAMAGRA is facing the challenges of extending the model of holistic development services to all 75 districts.

The Executive Committee members Mr. Durga nanda Sada opined that SAMAGRA has been appreciably performing a noble task. He observed that in



the present scenario of failed attempts of the political parties to formulate New Constitution, the SF representatives have the required capabilities to accomplish the task, if they are given an opportunity to do so. Another Executive member Dr. Chheki Sherpa observed that in the present context, when the women are sidelined at all fronts, SAMAGRA has been effectively empowering women through its programme activities and have thus enabled them to access their rights. As a result, she said that the participation of women in public events has been accorded greater importance.

### The interaction event at the national level to address the Inclusion -related Issues

At the initiative of SAMAGRA, an interaction programme was organized in Kathmandu on Chaitra 20, 2066 with the objective of highlighting various issues/concerns related to the formation of New Constitution and Inclusion. In the event, the discussion focused on whether the CA Members, who bear the responsibility of formulating a new constitution, are seriously addressing the inclusion issues in the process. Have the various aspects of inclusion concerning gender equity, Dalits, Janjatis, Pahadis, Madeshis have satisfactorily addressed? Are the sentiments of the rural people being reflected? How the intellectuals were reacting to that?



The interaction event was thus organized not just to orient the participants on the current state- of- affair on those agenda. More importantly, it was intended to give a forum for the rural people to express their views/opinions in the presence of the architects of constitution, intellectuals and SFs. There were more than 60 participants coming from Madhes, Himal/hills, representing various SFs of Siraha, Saptari, Udaypur, Dhanusha, Mohattari, Gorkha, Dhading and Lamjung. There was a remarkable presence of women as participants in the event. Amongst them there were several women CA members. A key feature of the event was the predominance of participants, coming from Terai and Pahadi who were forced to live in an environment of discrimination and exclusion. Besides, there was remarkable presence of experts / specialists, journalists, and representatives of various civil societies and legal experts in the event.

### Opinions expressed by Participants

From amongst the participants, at least two representatives from each district stood up to give expressions to their feelings. The speakers were mostly women. Listening to the expressed opinions of the speakers, one gets the impression that they were highly concerned about the making of the constitution, along with the related topical issues. They observed that there should be 60% reservation for the Dalits.

They warned that patch-work assistance policy would not yield the intended results to ensure effective mainstreaming of the communities at the national level. They stressed the need for compulsory education, provision of free text books for them and full scholarships/grants to those who are

pursuing medical and engineering courses.

Lip-deep sympathetic notes for Dalits upliftment has no meaning. They demanded for an announcement of specific welfare programme and provision of certificate for Dalits. They were convinced that without the issuance of ration-cards for Dalits, it was out of question for them to be eligible in the competitive environment.





One of the women participants observed “We, Dalits are obliged to earn our livelihoods as hired labour force in farms owned by others. We demand humanly treatment from the rich people. The ongoing social discrimination must be banished under the provision of new Constitution.

Pointing to CA members, Siraha's participant Joginder Ram said, “ They are the representatives of our region; but alas!, there is no attempt from them to address our voices/grudges. Thanks to SAMAGRA,



we got this opportunity to attend this programme, we were not invited by CA members. In order to uplift Dalits from the quicksand of discrimination and extreme poverty, SAMAGRA has organized training programme to Dalits without discrimination. The Constitution must be written in every mother tongue. If it is to be written only in Nepali, it will have to be rendered into Maithili language to enable us to understand the text of the document”.

The CA members, attending the event were Binda Pandey, Sunita Mahato, Jwala Kumari, Indravati Sunuwar, who assured the participants that they have been seriously engaged in the formulation of Constitution. The various committees formed for the formulation of constitution have submitted their draft

reports and there is room for incorporation of suggestion / observation that come forth calling constitution committee. The CA Members commonly observed that the intellectuals have to play an important role at this stage to bring forth new recommendation drawing the attention of the committee members. In particular, there is possibility for incorporation of the suggestion and corrective actions to rectify any misgivings/shortcomings in the draft. The draft reports have, indeed, addressed the poorest people's priority needs for food, clothes and shelter/accommodation. In addition, there are some rights- based concerns that have been addressed in the draft. We have stressed that some provisions will have to be incorporated that enable the Dalits to compete with the people of the privileged castes. To ensure the rights for the women, the mothers bearing children will have to be given due respect on the ground that the children of disgraced mothers face great difficulties to live in the society.

The programme, was chaired by Bal Krishna Lal Joshi, the chairperson of SAMAGRA and the chief guest was Hon. Binda Pandey. The vice-chairperson, Mr Laxman Prasad Gyawali proposed vote of thanks and ED Dornath Neupane delivered the welcome speech for the guests and participants.

### An Observation Tour of Terai-based SFs to Mountain/Hills (Pahade) based SFs

One of the objectives of SAMAGRA is to forge better understanding and foster mutual respect, love and affection between Pahadi SFs and Terai SFs through the exchange of visits. The process also facilitates social inclusion. In pursuing this objective, SAMAGRA has been facilitating the exchange of observation tours between Pahade SFs and Terai SFs for the last few years. During the last week of Chaitra, the Terai SFs visited Dhading and interacted with the SFs, exchanging the experiences.

The three day observation tour programme also covered an observation tour in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. The visiting team also included Executive Committee member like Meena Devi Choudhary and Durgananda Sada , GA member and SFs members from Siraha, Saptari, Udayapur, Dhanusha and Mahottari districts. Altogether there were 40 members in the observation tour team from the Terai. Soon after their arrival in the mountain terrain of Dhading district, they were led to observe the field level activities of the SFs, creating an environment for mutual interaction. During the tour, the visitors were



given the opportunities to observe the industrial sites and social environment on the way, thereby enhancing their experiences and capabilities. They also visited the model SF of Dhading and the concerned cooperatives. They also visited the model SF of Dhading district and the concerned cooperatives. They also interacted with the local people, fostering good will and mutual respect between the SFs belonging to Pahad(Hill) and Terai regions.

The visiting team observed important touristic sites in Kathmandu, for example, Pashupati Nath, Swayambhu Nath and Buddhanilkantha. The members of the observation team expressed their pleasure in getting the opportunity to join the observation team, since to majority of them, it was the first ever visit



to the sites they visited. For example, the visiting team from Terai interacted with the SF members, representing Shramajibi, Janajyoti, Majdur-kishan SFs of Tasarpu VDC in Dhading and mutually shared the experiences and state of affairs and lessons learnt. The visiting team members were given warm reception by the Tasarpu-based SF. Welcoming the visitors, Tasarpu SFs took them to observe community farming, community shop, grinding mills, high schools and electric installation, thus giving a good opportunity to overview the field level activities, minutely. They were also taken to observe how the "Food for People" Programme under implementation by Premsagar Foundation Nepal with initiative of SFs. Under the Food for People Programme, some 450 school going children and 50 elderly citizens have been offered healthy and hygienic lunch ( food in the morning) every day.

### Interaction Meeting held to critically review the Campaign

An interaction meeting amongst the stakeholders was convened at Kathouna in Mohanpur VDC with the objective of critically reviewing how effective there has been the Marginalized People's Empowerment Campaign, currently under implementation in Saptari district. The meeting, conducted under the chairmanship of Durgananda Sada, member of Executive Committee of SAMAGRA, was attended by members of Social Families, local NGOs and civil society members, political party members. The interaction concluded that, while the ongoing programme has been very fruitful in fulfilling its objective of empowerment of marginalized people and the roles of SFs as agents, the programme activities have been limited to a few VDCs. The recommendation was that the programme should be extended far wider covering all wards/toles.



### GA meeting of Bagh Bachhala SF

The Bagh Bachhala SF of Kumpur VDC of Dhading district convened its third GA meeting which was chaired by Bhawani Thapalia, Chairperson of the SF. The meeting endorsed its annual workplan along with the election of a new executive committee. The SF has 35 households as its members comprising of Dalits, Janajatis, Bramins, Kshetriyas and other castes. It has accumulated Rs. 52,000 under its SF fund which has been mobilized to meet with the financial requirement of its members for undertaking income generating activities, as reflected in the progress report presented by the Treasurer. The GA has selected a 9-member Executive committee under the chairperson of Bhawani Thapaliya. The other elected executive members are Sangita Thapalia, for the position of Secretary, Sukhal Bisunke for joint-secretary and Urmila Biswa Karma for Treasurer.

**Status of Programme activities in the month of Chaitra**

Activities		Number	No. of participants		
			Female	Male	Total
1.1	Human Rights monitoring at the local level	1	43	6	49
1.2	National level advocacy for Inclusion.	1	43	50	93
1.3	Awareness campaigns against human rights violation	1	61	21	83
2.6	SF level orientation on human rights, conflict transformation & good governance.	1	28	2	30
2.7	Exposure Visits	1	22	20	42
2.10	Network / Linkage / Lobbying	7 organizations			
3.1	Interaction for peace building	2	30	16	46
3.3	Post-conflict re-conciliation events	2	24	28	52
3.4	Events on peace & harmony	10	618	202	820
	Workshop on organizational development of SFs	20 SFs			

**Illustration of some Success Stories ..... Durga Bahadur Sharki**

My name is Durga Bahadur Sharki. I live in Udayapur-5, Hadiya. In the past, very few people in my own locality recognized me. I was not involved in any organization. Currently, I have now become the chairperson of janajagaan SF and GA member of SAMAGRA. I get invitation from VDC and district-based organizations. SAMAGRA started its program in our village in the year BS 2053. At that time, it was exclusively engaged in generating income generating activities.

It was only in 2062 with the launching of Dalits / Janjatis Empowerment Campaign, I have participated in number of trainings and seminars organized by SAMAGRA. Having undertaken training in human rights, I am oriented on several aspects. I engage myself to approaching VDC and DDC offices in pursuing issues related to human rights for justice and accessing rights. In the past, we were discriminated in the office just because we were Dalits. Now they behave properly with me. With the conviction of self-reliance, I opened a store to earn livelihood and currently engaged in enhancing awareness creation against social discrimination and for the promotion of social justice to dalit communities. Thanks to SAMAGRA, I have been transformed into a social worker and the leader of dalits.



**Let's pay due respect to human rights of all.**

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