

**Government of Nepal/ Government of Finland
Rural Village Water Resources Management Project
(RVWRMP)**

GENDER & SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION STUDY

**(A Comprehensive Assessment on Gender & Caste Based
Discrimination in the Hill Districts of Mid and Far Western
Development Regions)**



Prepared By:

SAMUHIK ABHIYAN

Kamalpokhari, Kathmandu

(Research Team:- Ms. Lila Tamata, Mr. Dasharath Od, Mr. Prakash Subedi, Ms. Laxina Lama, Mr. Bed Prasad Sapkota & Mr. Basu Dev Neupane)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SAMUHIK ABHIYAN (SA), a national NGO, has been commissioned by the Rural Village Water Resources Management Project (RVWRMP) to carry out a 'Gender & Social Discrimination Study' in its working areas. SA has completed this challenging task with the immense cooperation of several persons from different organizations and the use of relevant information from literature. SA would like to express its acknowledgements and would like to take this opportunity to give heartfelt thanks to the following;

- Project Support Unit (PSU) and the staff of Rural Village Water Resource Management Project (RVWRMP) for providing this opportunity to carry out this very important task and providing immense cooperation in arranging field study and logistics for orientation and pre-testing.
- Kari Leminen, Usha Baaniya, Jennifer Appave and all staff of RVWRMP who provided critical inputs during the study as well as comments in the draft reports which helped to make this report more reliable and reader friendly. The Community Mobilizers (CMs) of all the Village Development Committees (VDCs) were instrumental in the field work, without their help the study would not have been successful.
- The teachers, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) workers and local business persons who provided important information regarding the geographical setting of the study villages, the distribution of population by caste and ethnic groups, religious and worship places, the location of VDC centers and government services such as health, agriculture, schools, forest range posts and so on. This facilitated the preparation and implementation of the field study plan.
- The teachers and NGO workers who helped to translate the local slang into Nepali and to elaborate on the typical traditions which were practiced in the villages. Without their help it would be very difficult to understand the phrase of the villagers, especially women.
- Teachers of all schools, leaders of Users Groups (UGs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), police and health posts who provided relevant information to the study team which helped to complete field study.
- The respondents of all 6 villages who provided time for interviews, conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and other Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools to collect information.
- Ms. Naramaya Rana, Mr. Bishmu Hari Paudel, Mr. Himalaya Raj Ghimire, Mr. Indra Bahadur Karki, Mr. Nabin Karki, Mr. Yubalal Prasad Paudel and Mr. Kapil Neupane of SA for their professional support and services in completing this study.
- Ms. Anna Valero for professional editing of this document.

Acronyms

ANC	Antenatal Check up
CA	Constituent Assembly
CFUG	Community Forestry Users Group
ICERD	International Convention for Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination
CM	Community Mobilizers
DDC	District Development Committee
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteers
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
KII	Key Informants Interview
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSU	Project Support Unit
RVWRMP	Rural Village Water Resources Management Project
SA	SAMUHIK ABHIYAN
SI	Social Inclusion
SSI	Semi Structured Interview
VDC	Village Development Committee
WRA	Water Resource Advisor
DLGSP	Decentralized Local Government Support Program
VDPs	Village Development Program

Table of Content

Topic	Page Number
Part One: Introduction	
1. General Introduction	
1.1. Study Background	
1.2. Research Questions	
1.3. Objectives of the Study	
1.4. Scope of the Work	
2. Framework of the Study	
3. Methodology	
4. Field Study Process	
5. Limitations and Constraints of the Study	
6. Concept of Caste and Gender Based Discrimination	
6.1. Caste Based Discrimination	
6.2. Gender Based Discrimination	
6.3. Similar Studies/Findings that Substantiate the Study and Findings of Gaps	
Part Two: Presentation Of Information	
2.1. General Introduction of the Study VDCs	
2.2 Social Discrimination	
2.3 Gender Based Discrimination	
2.3.1 Prevailing Practices and Subject to Discrimination to Tolerate	
2.3.2. Factors & Actors to Reinforce and Follow Such Practices	
2.3.3. Gender Based Discrimination or Ownership of Productive Resources (Land, Enterprises, Livestock)	
2.3.4. Gender Based Discrimination in Decision Making at Household Level	
2.3.5. Gender Based Discrimination in Mobility and Employment	
2.3.6 Gender Based Discrimination in Public Places, Ceremonies and Community development	
2.3.7. Gender Based Discrimination in Access to Resources (Forest, Water, Physical, Infrastructure, and Education)	
2.3.8. Gender Based Discrimination in Community Representation in Local Institution	
2.3.9. Reproductive Health	
2.3.10 Social Security and Humiliation	
2.3.11 Work Load and Discrimination in Work and Wages	
2.3.12 Food Distribution Practices	
2.4. Caste Based Discrimination	
2.4.1 Prevailing Practices and Subject to Discrimination to Tolerate	
2.4.2. Factors and Actors to Reinforce and Follow Such Practices	
2.4.3. Caste Based Discrimination in Resources (Water)	

2.4.4. Caste Based Discrimination in Education Attainment	
2.4.5. Caste Based Discrimination in Employment	
2.4.6. Caste Based Discrimination in Public Places, Ceremonies and Community Development	
Part Three: Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion	
3.1. Major Findings and Critical Observations	
3.2. Recommendation	
3.3. Conclusion	
4. Annexes	
4.1. PRA and Observation Reports	
4.2. Checklist and Questionnaire Used in the Study	
4.3. List of Respondents	
4.4. Details of Literature Review	
4.5. The Descriptive Information of VDC Typology	
5. References	

PART ONE

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

About the Report: This is the final report of the 'Gender & Social Discrimination Study' commissioned by the Rural Village Water Resources Management Project. The report attempted to elaborate the general observations and findings of the study conducted by SAMUHIK ABHIYAN (SA) from December 2007 to March 2008, in a sample of six VDCs of the RVWRMP working area.

The report is divided into three parts. The first part includes background to the study, objectives, methodology and process and limitations of the study. The second parts of the report contain general introduction of the study VDCs, prevailing practices, factors & actors of gender & caste based discrimination and major findings. Recommendations and conclusions are presented in the third part of the report. A separate annex section includes observation reports and PRA reports, a list of respondents, questionnaires & checklists and detail description of literature review.

1.1. Study Background:

The Rural Village Water Resources Management Project (RVWRMP) covers ten districts of the Far and Mid-Western Development Regions of Nepal, from October 2006 for the period of 4 years. The main objective of the project is to improve the quality of life of the local people, improve environmental conditions and increase opportunities in rural livelihoods through rational, equitable and sustainable practices of water resource planning and use. On the basis of comprehensive Water Use Master Plans (WUMP) to be prepared for 80 VDCs selected by the DDCs, RVWRMP intends to develop the use of water resources. The WUMP is prepared through the direct involvement and participation of community organizations of the concerned VDCs. Gender equality and social inclusion are two crucial cross-cutting issues of RVWRMP's project activities, and the project aims to ensure the active and meaningful participation and representation of women, Dalit, indigenous communities and other vulnerable groups in all phases of the project cycle.

Among the strategies to promote gender equality and social inclusion, the project ensures inclusiveness in implementation, including the mandatory provision for employment of local people for skilled and unskilled labour. Other major approaches followed by RVWRMP to focus on and mainstream women, Dalits/ Janajatis and marginalized people include the following:

- Promotion of communication in local languages;
- Overcoming the social and cultural barriers by means of social awareness/training and use of social mobilization techniques;
- Empowerment of women, Dalits, indigenous and other deprived communities;
- Enhancing the capacity of the local community by providing intensive training program to at least one female of each VDC;

- Providing work opportunities for women and Dalit/indigenous family members to ease the lack of monetary resources; and
- Following the gender and social inclusion strategy prepared and positive discrimination in staff recruitment and Human Resource Development policy.

Against this background, a contractual agreement was made between SA and RVWRMP to carry out the detailed field study on gender and social discrimination in the selected VDCs of project districts.

1.2. Research Questions:

The following research questions were formulated and were the central focus of the study. These questions were considered at every stage of the study including methodology, tools, process and all other related activities.

- a) What are the prevailing social, cultural, psychological, legal, political, economic and spatial practices that are deep rooted in the social systems related to gender and caste discrimination faced by the subordinate groups in terms of power and wealth?
- b) What are the privileges and dominance of powerful people and the resistances & tolerances of the powerless caused by the negative discrimination practices, which result from various values and norms prevalent in the society?
- c) What is the potentials to increase the voice, choices and participation of excluded groups in the social/development mainstream?
- d) What could be the latent means and ways to ensure the meaningful and sustained participation of excluded groups (by gender or caste) in project work or community development processes?

1.3. Objectives of the Study:

1.3.1 General:

The study will contribute to finalising the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan of the project and enable the monitoring of progress, and ensuring that all project activities are more gender sensitive and inclusive.

1.3.2 Specific:

More specifically, the following objectives were identified:

- To identify and analyse the different social, cultural, psychological, legal, political, economic and spatial practices related to gender and caste (ethnic) discriminations faced by groups on both sides of the power/wealth divide.
- To provide a comprehensive account of the values and norms used to justify and rationalise the enforcement of the privileges and the tolerance of the negative discrimination.

- To explore and recommend possible opportunities and solutions to overcome these barriers and to increase the voice, participation, and representation and assertiveness of the excluded groups.
- To identify to the methods for ensuring the sustainable participation of excluded groups in project user groups and other community development processes.

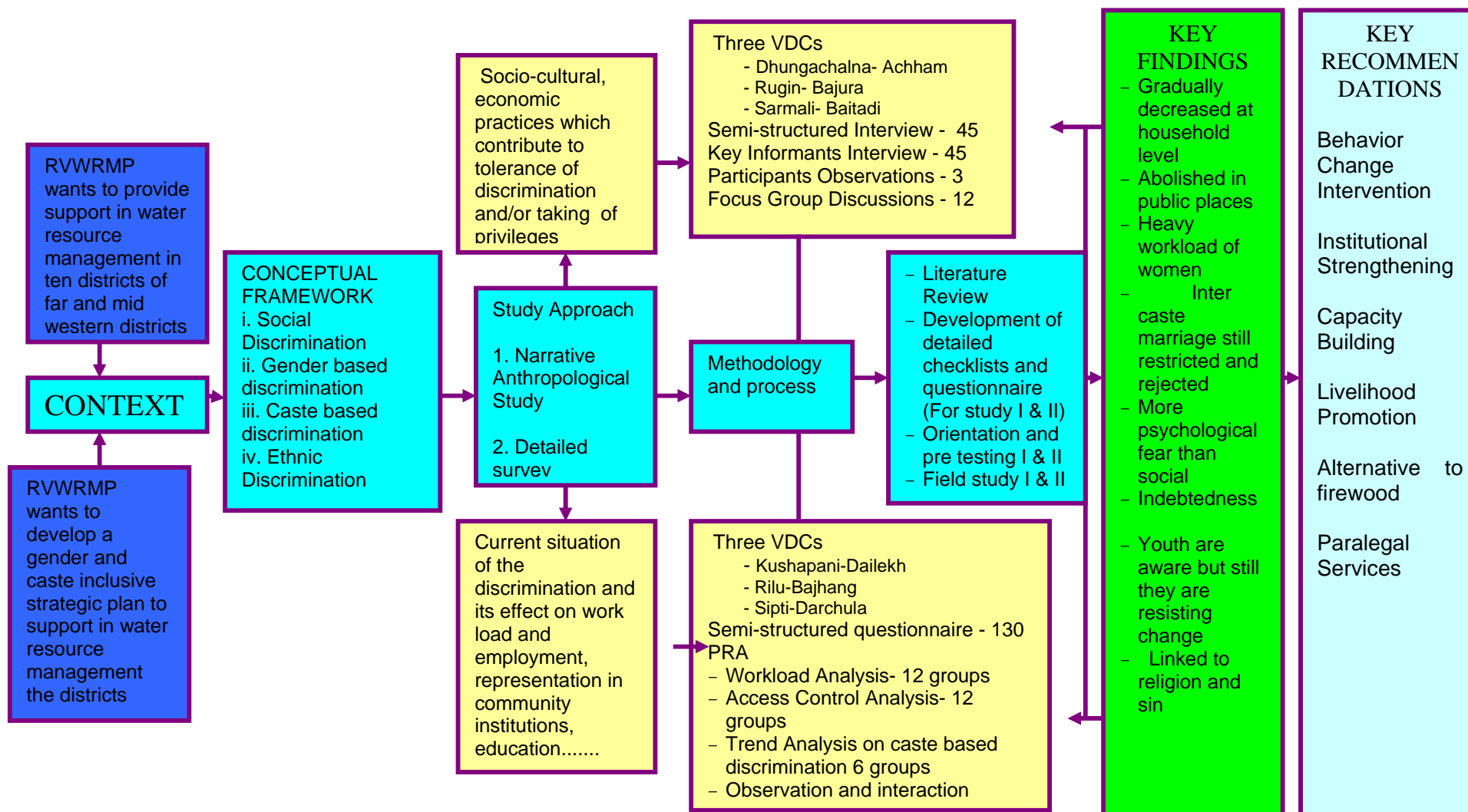
1.4. Scope of the work:

The following sets out the scope of the study:

- i. Brief desktop review of documents, studies and research related to gender and social discrimination.
- ii. Preparation of a brief inception report with findings of the desktop review, a detailed methodology including checklists/questionnaires, the selection of three VDCs for the study, a detailed work plan and schedule for field work and the list of documents and other sources of data studied.
- iii. Finalisation of work plan with RVWRMP.
- iv. Narrative anthropological and social study of selected 3 VDCs through interviews, focus group discussion, life history cases and participants' observation in the field.
- v. Preparation of interim report based on the narrative anthropological and social study.
- vi. Detail field study, compilation and analysis of data in at least three other VDCs and preparation of draft final report.
- vii. Preparation of a final report with detailed study methodologies, presentation of findings and results and recommendations of practical instruments and means for the GESI strategy and action plan.

2. STUDY FRAMEWORK

RVWRMP Gender and Social Discrimination Study



3. METHODOLOGY:

3.1 Review of Documents:

A review of five relevant literature sources identified by the project and some additional literature suggested by SAMUHIK ABHIYAN was carried out. The literature review aimed at identifying prevailing socio-cultural practices and their effects in society gaps of gender and socio-cultural discrimination. The literatures reviewed include:

- Mary Cameron: "On the Edge of Auspicious: Gender and Caste in Nepal";
- World Bank/DFID: "Unequal Citizens-Gender, Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal";
- Action Aid Nepal: "Existing Practices of Caste Based Un-touchability in Nepal and Strategy for a Campaign for its Elimination");
- Dr. Shibesh Chandra Regmi's, "Gender issues in the Management of Water Projects in Nepal";
- UNESCO, Nepal, Forms and Patterns of Discrimination In Nepal;
- The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law Caste Discrimination and conflict in Nepal, 2005;
- Dr.Dilli Ram Dahal, Social Composition Of The Population: Caste/Ethnicity And Religion In Nepal, 2006; and
- Human Rights Watch, 'Caste Discrimination, A Global Concern', A Report for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Durban, South Africa, September 2001.

The review of the literature has also justified the rationale of the proposed study on gender and social inclusion as there is very little evidence-based research informing discussions in the water sector on issues of gender.

On the basis of the findings from the literature review, the tools and techniques were selected for the field Study I and II.

3.2. Detailed Planning for Field Study

3.2.1. Final selection of districts and VDCs: After reviewing the available information and relevant documents and discussion with RVWRMP staff, all 47 VDCs of RVWRMP working districts were divided into three discrimination scenarios: worst, medium and best. In this way Sharmali of Baitadi (Worst), Dhungachalna of Achham (Medium) and Rugin of Bajura (Best), were selected for Study I and Sipti, Darchula, Rilun, Bajhang and Kushapani, Dailekh for Study II. The descriptive information regarding the typology of VDCs is in Annex 1.

3.2.2. Sampling of the Respondents: Systematic random sampling techniques were applied to select respondents for semi-structured interview (SSI). In Study I, altogether 45 persons (23 female and 22 male from Dalit and non-Dalit) were selected for SII. Similarly, for the Key Informant Interview (KII) 45

respondents including school teachers, religious leaders/priests, FCHVs, pregnant women, elderly citizens, and local leaders of political parties, Dalit youths and Dalit representatives of VDCs were interviewed. Four groups of FGDs (8-12 participants in each group) were conducted in each VDC. The groups included adolescent girls, mothers, Dalit males and well-informed persons of the VDCs. In total 12 FGDs with 132 participants were conducted. This helped to explore different perspectives on the facts contributing to exclusion and discrimination. Participant observation in a wedding, naming ceremony and the meeting of school management committees were carried out.

For Study II, 130 respondents (60 Dalit, 60 Non Dalit and 10 Janajati, split evenly between male and female) were interviewed. Besides the interview, transect walk and general observation were also carried out during the study period. Some PRA tools and methods were also used to gather relevant information. Assessment of working hours and gender role was carried out with workload analysis in 12 groups of Dalit and Non-Dalit males and females. Access control analysis tools were used in 12 groups of Dalits and Non-Dalits. Trend analysis was carried out, using caste discrimination tools, in 6 groups of Dalit and Non-Dalits. Altogether, 120 (62 male 58 female) respondents from all Field



Respondents engaged in analyzing access and Control

Study II sample VDCs participated in the PRA activities. Use of PRA not only helped in assessing the various aspects of gender and caste based discrimination but also helped to illustrate a general idea of the sanitary situation, use of water resources, landscape and its current situation and discrimination behaviour in public places (tea stall, school, sub-health posts and groceries). A complete list of the respondents is in Annex 2.

Besides the use of structured tools and methods in the study, the study team members had some informal meetings and interaction on critical social-cultural practices and their trend, underlying causes and effects of the practices. The respondents were *Dhami* (traditional healers), elderly people, teachers and *Jetha Ba* (the oldest and respected person of the village), and single women. The study team also visited schools, health/sub health posts, police posts, users' groups & CBOs to have in-depth interaction on the current situation of caste and gender-based discrimination and its effect in all 6 sample VDCs.

Topic guides for participant observation, focus group discussion and other PRA tools were developed in user friendly Nepali language. Similarly, the checklist/questionnaire for the SSI and Key Informant's Interview (KII) for Study I and the detailed questionnaire for Study II were developed for selected sample respondents in



Researcher, interviewing the respondent

the VDCs. The topic guide and questionnaire was primarily focused on the main research questions but also attempted to capture information relevant to socio-cultural, political, economic and spatial practices related to gender and caste/ethnic discrimination. The Detail Checklist for Interview, questionnaire for detail survey and PRA checklists are in annex 2.

4. FIELD STUDY PROCESS

4.1. Orientation to the study team

Based on the detailed planning and necessary inputs from RVWRMP team, a workshop was organised in Dhangadhi from 28 November to 1 December 2007 for Study I and February 12 to 15 for Study II. The team leader, senior researcher, assistant researcher, enumerators from SA and concerned staff of RVWRMP at PSU and district level participated in the workshop. The tools, methods and processes were pre-tested on the third day of orientation. On the basis of feedback and learning from the pre-testing and suggestions from the RVWRMP team, the tools were slightly revised. The final field work schedule for the field study was also developed during the orientation.

4.2. Mobilisation of the field team:

After the pre-testing and finalisation of the checklists and schedule, two field study teams were formed and began work. Team 1 was led by the team leader with assistant researcher and one enumerator. Team 2 consisted of a senior researcher and one enumerator.

The Water Resource Advisors (WRA) and community mobilisers helped the study team to reach up to the VDCs and provided the preliminary information about the demographic situation, services and some social norms and slang of the community. This helped the study team to have general understanding about the community people.

5. LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE STUDY:

Due to the fact that this study was limited to the time frame agreed to in the scope, there was a constraint on rapport building, which is prerequisite for any in-depth anthropological study. Considering the duration of observation, interaction and interviews, this study was a rapid narrative assessment, not an in-depth anthropological

study. Language was another major barrier in gathering information from the respondents. Many respondents did not speak the Nepali language. This barrier was overcome by appointing local enumerators, mobilising local people and seeking help from the RVWRMP community.

At a meeting held between SA and RVWRMP in Kathmandu, it was decided to limit the scope of the study to gender and caste only and it was agreed not include the discrimination at the *Janajati* level. The sample VDCs were selected on the basis of gender and caste based discrimination scenario. In the sample VDCs there were limited number of *Janajati* people. However, some *Janajati* respondents were included in Kushapani VDC, field Study II.

Several physical barriers such as broken vehicles, general strike in Terai regions also impeded process, which was managed with mutual discussion and cooperation between RVWRMP and SA.

The Constitutional Assembly election also considerably inhibited respondents in providing longer time for the interviews or discussion as they had to attend election meetings.

In addition, the sudden sickness of a trained and well-oriented enumerator was another obstacle of the study. SA managed this tactfully by finding as a replacement another trained human resource.



Broken vehicle-- longer travel duration

The RVWRMP management team was also cooperative in approving the change in human resources.

It must be noted that this study was carried out through the in-depth study of 6 sampled VDCs of 6 districts, which were defined by gender and caste related data. This study cannot be taken as representative of the discrimination situation of the entire Mid and Far-Western Development Region.

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

6.1. Caste – based discrimination:

The caste system in Nepal has its roots in traditional Hindu mythology which categorises all people into one of four levels of the caste structure. The system is based on degrees of purity and pollution with the lowest ranks being considered ‘untouchable’¹.

The caste system is known as one of the oldest surviving social hierarchy in the world. The caste system permeates, to varying degrees, all major religions in the Indian

¹ Dr.Dilli Ram Dahal, Social Composition Of The Population: Caste/Ethnicity And Religion In Nepal, 2006

subcontinent and orders persons into caste categories or varnas on the basis of ritual purity². The traditional hierarchy places Brahmins (priests and teachers) at the top, followed by Chetris (rulers and soldiers) and Vaisyas merchants and traders). Dalits or “untouchables” (laborers, cobblers, and manual scavengers) occupy the lowest position within the caste hierarchy. One’s caste is determined by one’s birth into a particular social group. It is therefore not possible to change one’s caste or move between caste categories. Caste divisions are preserved and reinforced through the practice and threat of social ostracism or physical violence. Because one’s caste can be determinative of one’s occupation, caste discrimination is also referred to as discrimination on the basis of “work and descent.”

Dalits are typically restricted to tasks and occupations that are deemed too “dirty” or “polluting” for “upper-caste” communities.³

Caste rank is hereditary and maintained through intermarriage restrictions; it relies on economic interdependence and dictates livelihood occupation, with the high castes playing the roles of rulers, priests and advisors and lower castes taking on menial tasks⁴.

“Un-touchability” and Segregation: The hallmark of the caste system and discrimination against Dalits is the practice of “un-touchability.” Based on the belief that Dalits are “polluted,” Dalits are segregated from members of other castes and are prohibited from touching Non-Dalits and their possessions. Dalits are also denied entry into public places, such as hotels, shops, and restaurants. They are routinely denied entry into “upper-caste” temples. The non-discrimination provisions of the Nepal Civil Code also contain an exemption for places of religious practice. Defiance of the proscribed social order is consistently met with punitive violence and social ostracism. Strict prohibition on inter-caste marriage, particularly between Dalits and Non-Dalits, also helps preserve caste hierarchies. These prohibitions are sometimes enforced by punishing entire communities.

Economic Marginalization: One study indicated that Dalits represent 80 % of the “ultra poor” in Nepal, dramatically increasing their vulnerability to bonded labor, slavery, trafficking, and other forms of extreme exploitation.⁵ The practice of “un-touchability” relegates Dalits into work considered to be “ritually impure,” such as manual scavenging or leather work. Because these professions require the handling of dead animals or human

2 Caste Discrimination and conflict in Nepal, The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law , 2005

3 Human Rights Watch, CASTE DISCRIMINATION, A GLOBAL CONCERN, A Report for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Durban, South Africa, September 2001.

4 Action Aid Nepal, Rights-Based Advocacy Campaign Against Caste-Based Discrimination in Nepal, 2005

5 Human Rights Watch, Caste Discrimination, A Global Concern, A Report for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Durban, South Africa, September 2001

waste, often with one's bare hands, they further exacerbate restrictions on Dalits' ability to enter public spaces. Generally Dalits are excluded from entry into temples, restaurants, hostels, and milk cooperatives because they are considered impure. Dalits are also denied adequate compensation for this work, resulting in severe and disproportionate economic vulnerability. As a result, squatter colony inhabitants and landless bonded laborers are overwhelmingly Dalit. In the mid-western and far-western hills, bonded agricultural laborers, or *Haliyas*, hail mainly from "un-touchable" castes. Dalits are charged much higher interest rates on loans from landlords than their "upper-caste" counterparts. Such discrimination is intentionally designed to keep alive a system of debt bondage and free farmhands for cultivation of "upper-caste" lands.⁶

As possession of citizenship papers is a precondition for purchasing land, evicted Dalits were unable to acquire new land. The few Dalits fortunate enough to have evaded such restrictions and retained or acquired land are often isolated into one section of a community. The segregation of Dalit land puts Dalits at a significant disadvantage, as does the lack of adequate facilities and resources. In contrast, Non-Dalits, who are not subject to this type of segregation, can purchase various plots of land in different parts of the community. Non-Dalits, who have diverse landholdings, are not as seriously affected. Additionally, most Dalit families live without toilets and running water. As a result, human waste pollutes Dalit land to an extent not experienced by non-Dalits.

Employment Discrimination: Rampant employment discrimination makes it difficult for Dalits to enter into, much less excel in, non-caste-based occupations. While agriculture is the sector which absorbs the majority of the work force and most of the discriminated people are seeking casual labour/temporary employment, the government recruitment policy and practices do affect the workforce diversity of the public services.

Without viable economic options at home, many Dalits migrate to other countries, particularly India, in search of better employment. While some are able to send money to their families back home, many Dalits return with even more debt, handicapped by the high interest loans obtained from Non-Dalit lenders in the community to fund the overhead expenses of foreign employment.

Lack of Access to Resources: The caste system and its concept of 'untouchability' directly influence access to adequate water supplies for certain groups. Though water scarcity affects many parts of the country, Dalit communities suffer disproportionately because they are denied access to communal water sources for fear that they will "pollute" the water supply. Dalit women and girls are often forced to fetch water from springs located hours away. Attempts by Dalits to access Non-Dalit natural springs and wells, are met with ostracism and punitive violence.

6.2. Gender Based discrimination

Gender based discrimination is a cross cutting issue in social discrimination. Focusing on broader social categories like caste and ethnicity can only partially allow us to analyse the

⁶ Caste discrimination and conflict in Nepal, The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law , 2005

discrimination of any one segment of the population. Therefore, it cannot accurately reflect the problems of the totality. Caste and ethnicity based discrimination do not account for the discrimination faced by the members within the units. Gender based study helps to explore into the discrimination more adequately as it would open up the possibility of analysing the problems by breaking them down into the context of male and female components of each social unit.⁷

Men and women always comprise the two halves of the population in every society. However, the rights and opportunities accorded to women have never been on par with the rights and opportunities accorded to men of the said societies. These differences in the opportunities of life found between men and women have forced women in many contexts to bear a subordinate position. This can be seen in a number of sectors, namely the economic, political, social, and cultural life of each society.

The prevalence of early marriages and polygamy, social aversion towards widow remarriage, and other factors like low literacy rates, confinement to domestic work and lack of adequate access to productive resources for females are also some examples of social discrimination against Nepalese women. Regrettably, these types of discrimination are historical phenomena. They are supported by the ideological contents of culture and rules and regulations of society. They appear in different forms and to different extents in different types of social settings.

Ideologies are the fundamental forces perpetuating the socio-cultural milieu of any society. They are manifested in culture of those societies and influence many aspects of the lives of people living within those societies. As a country inhabited predominantly by Hindus, the ideological contents of Nepali society have been shaped by the religious ideologies provided for in the ancient Hindu scriptures. These ideologies are still the basis of many ideological elements adopted by the state, and play a primary role in shaping the structure of relationships between different sections of the population including that between men and women. Classical Hindu laws that discuss women almost exclusively place them in an oppressed position. They have stressed that women need to be controlled as they bear many evil characteristics (Wadley, 1977). In this regard Manu, the great Hindu Philosopher, stated in his "*Manusmriti*": "In childhood a female must be subject to her father; in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons. A woman must never be independent (Manu, V, 145, cited in Kumari, 1990)". The central motif that revolves around women in this statement and other such sayings of Hindu Holy scriptures is that women need to be controlled by men. This type of ideological belief is put into practice in many spheres of the life of women. On the one hand, it is exercised by imposing the notion of "purity" and "pollution" with regard to certain aspects of their life cycle events. Menstruation and childbirth are two important events in which women are required to remain in confinement. They are also not allowed to enter the shrine of family God during the time of worship. A male child is considered a must to perform death-

⁷ UNESCO, Forms and Patterns of Social Discrimination in Nepal, A Report, Kathmandu Office, Nepal

related rituals in the family. The social ideologies prescribing to this patriarchal form of marital relations have also negatively contributed to the defense of the interests of women. As one who has to leave the parental home after being married at a young age, the daughter is generally perceived as “someone that adorns the other’s house”. This type of concept is paramount even in the preference of children. This has manifested itself in the form of popular sayings such as ‘Never mind the delay as long as it is a son.’ Alternatively, ‘Birth of a daughter is a doomed fate’.

This attitude has directly contributed to the strengthening of the patriarchal norms and values in Nepal today. It has helped to justify the relative differences of opportunities available to men and women. Patriarchy as an institutionalised system of male dominance is expressed in a variety of ways in Nepal. It is legally supported, and tied to the ownership of property, access to political power, and the attainment of social status. Women are for the most part confined to the domestic sphere. Males are considered the breadwinners of the family, and their roles are defined in the public spheres. We will now explore these modes of discrimination against women.

Nepal has been classified as having considerable levels of son preference since the World Fertility Surveys first documented the phenomenon in the 1980s. Although daughters are desired, sons are very highly prized because they continue the family name, can perform funeral rituals and are expected to provide support in old age. Nepal's patrilineal social structure discourages women from practicing contraception until they have a son. Such practices have resulted in various forms of gender-based discrimination in Nepalese society.

The Double Burden of Caste & Gender Discrimination: Dalit women and girls in Nepal endure the double burden of caste and gender discrimination. Dalit women lag far behind Dalit men and “upper-caste” women in terms of healthcare, education, and remuneration for their labour. Dalit women also bear the brunt of exploitation and violence in the country and are largely perceived as being “sexually available” to “upper-caste” men. As a means of crushing political dissent, Dalit women are targeted with impunity by landlords, the police and the army. Economic vulnerability including widespread debt bondage, has also forced Dalit women into prostitution, exposing them to sexual violence and the ensuing health risks.

Literacy rates for Dalit women are substantially below the national literacy rates for women in Nepal (12.0 per cent)⁸. The health of Dalit women is considerably compromised by high maternal mortality rates, malnutrition, and poor healthcare associated with extreme poverty. The average life expectancy for a Dalit woman is five years lower than the corresponding average for a Non-Dalit woman⁹, and Dalit women

⁸ Action Aid Nepal, Save the Children and Care Nepal, National Dalit Strategy Report, Prepared for GoN/National Planning Commission

⁹ Caste Discrimination and conflict in Nepal, The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law , 2005

are at significantly increased risk of suffering from prolapsed uteruses because of multiple pregnancies

6.3. Relevant Findings of Similar Studies

Feature of Exclusion: The society is fiercely divided into dominant and subordinate group of people and this division clearly illustrate different dimension of exclusion in Nepal. Historically, the dominant group of people include men and boys in terms of gender, Brahmin and Chettry (A particular caste group who wears a sacred thread and is called Tagadhari. Taga= thread, Dhari=wearer) in terms of caste, Caucasoid in terms of ethnicity/race, Nepali speaking people in term of language, Hindu in terms of religion and parbate (hill dweller) in terms of geo-political situation. Whereas, the subordinate group of people include women in terms of gender, Janajati/Mongoloid in terms of ethnicity/race, non-Nepali speaking in terms of language, non-Hindu in terms of religion and Madhesi (plain dwellers) in terms of geo-political situation. The caste based exclusion is highly related to ritual purity and so called high caste people by virtue of being ritually pure are more privileged.

Caste and gender based discrimination as a consequence of exclusion is wide spread around the country but the nature, form and intensity vary from one place to another even within the mid and far-Western region, where it is found to be predominant. This is despite the promises that came with democracy, that human rights would be respected to the fullest extent. Even now the high caste dominant people from many areas favour discrimination (mainly untouchability) despite being aware of law against discrimination. This is mainly due to structured access of old hierarchy to political system that influences economic opportunities. As a result, even after democracy, women, 'untouchables' who call themselves Dalit, ethnic groups, Muslims, and plain dwellers (Madhesis) remain on the fence. Being on the margin between dependent and powerful, impure and pure, inauspicious and auspicious, the lower caste people especially women are "on the edge of auspicious" a place whose intended image draws our attention to multiple ideas. As members of the lower castes, untouchable women are marginalised ideologically, ritually, economically; socially and politically likewise the females in Hindu society are the victim of same fate.

In attempting to understand how gender and caste hierarchy are intertwined, we need to be aware that these are not always direct correspondences. Far less gender hierarchy exists at the lower levels of caste hierarchy than at the top, and not strictly for reasons of impurity.

Most subordinate groups of people feel that the dominant and privileged groups of people are not only responsible but are key players in discrimination and exclusion in entering temples and accessing services, socio-economic opportunities and resources.

Definitions of gender being used in the water sector are weak. The water sector at all levels, sees women as a homogenous group, not a group divided by class, caste, geography, religion or wealth. They largely understand a woman's role in relation to

water as relating to the gathering of domestic drinking water; women are not seen as key users of water for production and other activities.

Gender is not a luxury the water sector can afford to ignore. Addressing gender inequalities goes to the heart of our ability to meet the commitment to water for all. Current policies and practices are often worsening, not alleviating or challenging, the gender inequalities which in turn determine who does and does not achieve access to and use of water.

Consequences: As consequences of exclusion the dominant groups are obviously powerful and subordinates are powerless socially, economically and culturally. Through this process of exclusion there is a systemic lack of respect for the people denied access to basic services, socio-economic opportunities and resources, including water. The lack of appropriate water supplies affects many aspects of life, including productivity, health and education; while control over water is inevitably control over life and livelihoods.

Exclusion has an effect on many areas of life, mainly on psychology as people lose their self-confidence and are forced to live without dignity. It has its economic effect as people are working in traditional occupations as dictated by caste, with low education and access to services. Often they are abandoned and unemployed. Excluded people are not represented in policy-making bodies and other government sectors.

Dominance of the powerful and the resistance of the powerless have been key characteristics that significantly illustrate the consequences of exclusion. The following are some examples of dominance that have been illustrated in the literature under review: (1) Lower caste women return everyday from the fields with their high caste co-workers, when the high caste women reach their caste's water tap they sprinkle one another with water to remove the impurity of contact. (2) Lower caste men sit outside tea-shops and share tea with upper caste friends sitting inside, however when finished they must wash their own glasses.

Behaviour and cultural practices which contest the hegemonic social formations, and threaten to unravel the strategies of domination, are considered to be resistance of the powerless people. Everyday forms of resistance are less disruptive than outright conflict, protest or direct confrontation. They come in culturally acceptable forms that make life difficult for the dominant groups and empower, albeit in small ways, those less fortunate.

Attempts in Addressing Exclusion: The literature under review failed to identify many examples of best practice in terms of reducing exclusion, but it has illustrated much malpractice and social stigma that prevail in society.

At the government level, recognition of the issue of inclusion has been included in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper as one of the four pillars. But achieving this ambitious goal needs a fundamental shift not only in structure, governance and access to opportunities but also in underlying hierarchical norms, values and behaviour. The subordinate groups of people are further excluded legally (even though the law prohibits

discrimination on the basis of sex, caste and tribes) due to failure in effective enforcement of law.

The Government continued concentrating on inclusion since it first addressed the issue in its eighth five-year plan (1992-1997). In the three-year interim plan that is being currently formulated, inclusion has a separate chapter and has addressed not only the issues of gender, Dalit and Janajati but also Madhesis and the Muslim minority.

Collective intervention through the formation of community groups has proved to be effective at addressing the issue of exclusion. But the success is limited to selected areas and has failed to be sustained due to a lack of political will, strong commitment and a lack of proper support mechanisms at all levels. Furthermore, the positive outcome of such successful interventions are rarely identified, nor systematically institutionalised into society.

However, it is noteworthy that some of the group based interventions not only failed to address the issue of exclusion but further reiterated exclusion particularly in the issue of leadership. Most community-based groups tend to be captured by elites and dominant groups of people (generally Nepali speaking high caste men from hill areas).

It must be recognized that working with the subordinate communities, especially where women are to be involved, is often a much slower process, since it requires working to change traditional patterns or beliefs, building the confidence of women, Dalits and the very poorest, which have often previously been excluded from village affairs.

There have been some collective campaigns to raise awareness on human rights instruments among excluded groups of people at the national level and bringing the issue to the attention of policy planners. However, these campaigns and movements are not free from challenges in gaining the attention of government and political parties, and their recognition of the extent and magnitude of the issue. The human rights campaigners have felt the need for revolutionising the education system; a rights based movement and capacity building of the excluded people in nurturing political will and commitment among government and political parties.

6.4. Women, Dalit and Legal Provision: Discrimination against women is deeply rooted in all aspects of social and cultural practices. There are laws in place that ensure the protection of women against discrimination. However, there are several legal provisions spread in different acts and rules and regulations themselves which are discriminatory against women. The 11th amendment of civil codes of Nepal has given partial inheritance rights for women through the "women's property rights" bill. According to that law women and men, at birth, have equal entitlement to inheriting their parents' property. However if a woman marries, she gives up her inheritance right to her parents' property and is entitled to half her husband's property. This is clearly impractical in a country where social norms dictate that women are expected to marry.

A study carried out by a high-level committee to review the existing discriminatory laws against women, has indicated that there are 28 provisions in the code that discriminate against women in different areas. (See Annex ... for detail)

The Interim Constitution, 2006, of Nepal has made some non-discriminatory provisions ensuring women's rights. Article 8 b of the Interim Constitution ensures the rights of a mother to transfer citizenship to their children. Similarly Article 13.4 of the constitution states "No discrimination in regard to remuneration and social security shall be made between men and women for the same work."

Nepal's legal protections against caste discrimination are strong. The constitution specifically forbids discrimination against Dalits. No person shall, on the basis of caste, be discriminated against as untouchable, be denied access to any public place, or be deprived of the use of public utilities. Any contravention of this provision shall be punishable by law. However the practice of the legal provision is not strong in reality.

Article 14 of Interim Constitution of Nepal 2006 states "No person shall, on the ground of caste, descent, community or occupation, be subject to racial discrimination and untouchability of any form. Such a discriminating act shall be liable to punishment and the victim shall be entitled to the compensation as provided by the law."

In addition to the constitutional prohibition on caste-based discrimination, the government has also taken some legislative action to prohibit discrimination against Dalits. Under the Civil Liberties Act of 1954, unequal treatment of Dalits by the government is prohibited. Section 10A of the Civil Code also prohibits some forms of discrimination against Dalits, but excludes places of religious practice from the scope of the act.

Despite these provisions, gender and caste-based discrimination remains a central feature of life and social interaction in Nepal, and the government regularly fails to prosecute individuals engaged in gender and caste-based discrimination.

A national commission for the welfare of Nepalese Dalits was established in 2001 and was effective only in 2002. However the commission could not work effectively as expected. Dalits are victims of targeted attacks. Police officials often fail to investigate reports of violence against Dalits, and perpetrators of attacks on Dalits often go unpunished. Nepal being a signatory of the International Convention for Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), is obliged to provide effective remedies for acts of racial discrimination, including violent attacks under article 6.

For detail description of literature review please see annex 6 of this report.

PART TWO PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY VDCS

The six sample VDCs were all remote hill districts and the least developed VDCs among the districts. All VDCs have mixed populations in terms of caste but smaller populations of Janajati. The Brahmin, Chhetri and Thakuri are dominant and Dalits are found as the dominated caste. Within the Dalit caste, there are Bishwakarma (Blacksmiths), Sunar (Goldsmith), Sarki (Cobblers), Damai (Tailors), and Badi (Musicians). In Janajati there are Magar and Gurung. The Total populations of the six sample VDCs are shown in a table below;

Table 1: Population distribution by caste in the study VDCs

VDC	Total Households	Total Population	Dalit Population	Other Population	Percentage of Dalit Population
Sarmali	976	6376	1208	5403	19%
Dhungachalna	850	4617	1818	3767	39%
Rugin	459	2533	355	2178	14%
Sipti	642	3637	351	3286	10%
Rilu	677	3762	461	3301	12%
Kusapani	786	4330	644	3686	15%

Source: Population Census 2000

In all sample VDCs, people go to India for seasonal labor at least for six to nine months per year. Generally males (from 13 to 61 years of age) go to India and women remain at home to maintain the household and take care of agricultural activities. Most of the men going India return home before planting seasons such as May-June and stay home up to November.

The health and sanitation of the community is very poor. Interactions with health personnel revealed that most of the people are suffering from the water-born disease and gastritis which ultimately affects the people's livelihood opportunities. There are health/sub health posts in each VDC. The service of health/sub health posts is not adequate and the community people go to the district headquarters and sometimes to India to get treatment. The major health problems of the area are diarrhea, fever, pneumonia, common colds, worm infestations, eye infections, headache, abdominal disease and many other problems related to reproductive health.

Sanitation is one of the major issues of the sample VDCs. Due to a lack of awareness on the importance of improved livelihoods and their unhygienic lifestyle, the sanitation of the area was very poor. This might be one of the reasons of poor health status of the community. Village trails are also not properly maintained and domestic waste is thrown randomly around the trails and houses. There is improper human waste management such as a lack of toilets and waste exposed to the trail edge and public places. Animal dung

and garbage is commonly dumped on courtyards, edges of trails and closed to the house. The villagers do not wash their hands after going to the toilet and even before taking meal. This is not due to a lack of water, but due to attitudes. Even teachers and educated persons are used to taking meals without washing hands.

Most of the Dalit households do not have space for toilet construction.. Therefore, they cannot construct a toilet near their home and must use streams or any open spaces.

1.1. Social Discrimination

There are many forms and patterns of social discrimination in Nepalese society. Caste and gender based discrimination are severe forms of discrimination and the main causes of exclusion of women and Dalits. The Non-Dalits, including both caste and ethnic communities, exclude Dalits by following several discriminatory practices underpinned by the belief of 'un-touchability'. Social discrimination is one of the underlying causes of exclusion through which the discriminated groups are excluded from the development mainstream. In the context of the study area, Dalits and women are the main excluded groups. Therefore, this study focused on caste and gender based discrimination. These types of discrimination are expanded upon below. .

1.1.1. Gender Based Discrimination

Gender discrimination is elaborated in the following two sections: The narrative descriptions of prevailing social systems, practices and customs are presented analytically in the first section. The second section describes the current situation of women in terms of access to resources, representation in community institutions, mobility and employment, participation in social and public ceremonies, workload and social security.

a. Prevailing social systems, practices and customs

Chhaupadi (Separation of women during menstruation): *Chhaupadi* is a Hindu social practice in the western part of Nepal whereby women are excluded from normal family activities during menstruation because they are considered impure. Women are kept out of the house and have to live in a shed with cows and other animals. This lasts for eleven days when an adolescent girl has her first period, and four to seven for every following period. Childbirth also results in an eleven-day impure state.

Women are forbidden to touch men and even to enter the courtyard of their own homes. They are barred from consuming milk, yogurt, butter, and other nutritious foods, for fear they will pollute or spoil those goods. The women must survive on a diet of dry foods, salt, and rice. They cannot use

CASE STUDY 1

Amrita in CHHAU-KATERO

Amrita B.K., Thara tole of Dhungachalna VDC was sitting near a CHHAU KATERO (the small shed where menstruating women have to stay) on a sunny day of December 2007. She was menstruating and staying in the hut for that period. "We stay in this hut during CHHAU (menstruation) period. It is our DHARMA (Religious tradition) and we must respect this tradition." said Amrita. The women consider this as a religious practice and they do not want to sin by going against it. The women's family members take them food from the house. Amrita said, "Today is my 6th day and I have to bath and go to house. I will be impure until 7th day." According to Amrita, god will be angry if she stays at home during menstruation. She said that she wants to continue this tradition because she does not want to be sinner neither to be the cause of any sickness of her family members or livestock.

warm blankets and are allowed only a small rug (most commonly merely a jute sack). They are also restricted from going to school or performing their daily functions like taking a bath while they are forced to stay in the barbaric conditions of the shed.

This system comes from the superstition of impurity during menstruation. The belief is that if a woman touches a tree it will never again bear fruit; if she consumes milk, the cow will not give anymore milk; if she reads a book about Saraswati, the goddess of education, she will become angry; if she touches a man, he will become ill.

The CHHAU KATERO is built far from the house and the playground of children. Generally, all sheds are without a safety compound wall where everyone can go easily. Usually these sheds are made in a place where waste is disposed of. All parts of the sheds are covered except for a small hole –which is the door. The floor is made of mud, and the shed is not furnished. There is a common myth that their deities would get angry if a bedstead were kept for in the shed. Mostly women sleep alone in the shed in



A typical CHHAU KATERO

menstruation period. Sometimes three to four women have to share. These sheds are seen in a large number at Dhungachalna, in Rugin they are built attached to the house, and the cow shed within the house compound is used for this purpose in Sharmali. A woman has to stay for up to five days in general and is allowed back home on the fifth day of menstruation after taking a bath.

Dunguna (First visit of a bride's father to the groom's father): This ceremony is performed 5 to 6 days after a wedding. The groom's father invites the bride's father (and any other close relatives) to visit his home. There is a practice that the bride's parents do not eat any meal at her home until she has a child. Therefore, the visitors do not stay at groom's home, but somewhere nearby and the groom's family provides them with food items such as rice, vegetables, goat, ghee and cooking utensils. The visitors prepare food outside in a safe place near by groom's home. The groom's father has to respect the visitors by providing accommodation facilities and meal items. This shows the social status of the groom's family. The visitors stay there for one day, and then return home after thanking the groom's family. At this time the bride could go to her parental house with her father, if she wants. But the bride's relative leaves her at groom's home by telling her to stay at her own home.

It can be assumed that this tradition was started while there was still a child marriage system. At that time the brides and grooms were small children and they wanted to stay at their parental home with their fathers. Nowadays this tradition is declining.

Dhan Khane (taking money from the bride's side): In the far western region, particularly in the Dalit community, the bride's father takes money from the groom's

family for marriage. This tradition is rarely practiced, though a case was found in SIpti while conducting field research. When a family, especially father or any male guardian decides on the wedding of his daughter/sister or cousin, he demands money from groom's side, which is amicably greed between the two families. This is called *Dhan Khane*. The money is taken as a compensation for the investment made in raising the girl as well as covering the wedding cost.

***Kanyadan* in marriage (Handing over the bride to the groom):** According to Hindu philosophy, the girls are considered to be dependents of males from early childhood until death. The girl child is dependent on her father, a young lady is dependent on her husband and an old woman is dependent on her son. Based on this philosophy, the *kanyadan* is performed during a wedding ceremony. *Kanyadan* is a religious ceremony through which the bride is handed over to the groom. The bidhawa (single women), and menstruating women are not allowed to perform the *Kanyadan* for their daughter. The *Bidhawa* are considered inauspicious and menstruating women are considered impure, and are discriminated against in this ritual.

Jari Khane: (Claiming compensation money by previous husband from the new husband) This is a common practice in Bajhang and other study VDCs. When a women marries with another husband by leaving the previous one, the previous husband claims money with the new husband as a compensation of his wedding cost.

***Bratibanna* (initiation ceremony):** The ritual practiced to allow sons to perform and continue activities in honour of the names of their fathers and forefathers. This is practiced among Brahmin Chhetri, Bishta, Thapa Chhetri and blacksmith (Kami), and is known as *bartibanna*. Bramhin and Chhetri people of the area also wear sacred threads (Janai), but they do not go through all the processes in this ceremony. Usually priest is invited to chant mantras while boys wear the sacred thread. According to the prevailing practice, sons are only allowed to perform certain work in honor of their fathers and forefathers once they have completed. This ceremony for daughters is conducted just before marriage or during marriage. The Brahmin girls who do not perform this ritual are considered as *Chhetri* and they will have to marry with *Chhetri*.

b. Factors and actors to reinforce and follow such practices: This gender based discrimination is mainly faith based, embedded with fear and myth, and is deep rooted in the culture and social norms. People fear God enough to continue discriminating practices. They often say, “*DEWATA LE SAHANNA*” (God will get angry). --). Usually people consider tradition as an excuse to continue discriminating practices and they are not able to resist it mainly due to the hidden powers of influential people in the society. People do not dare to try to break the long lasting societal traditions. To do so would be considered a “crime” leading to “ritual impurity”, bad luck and retribution from the gods.

The *Dhamis*, (Faith healers, Shamans) also play an influential role in the enforcement of tolerance of discrimination. In the name of tradition and God's wish, people are forced to believe what *Dhamis* instruct, and do not have the courage to contradict them.

However, even a Dharni accepts that there some change in traditional practices, for example, a reduction in the number of days that women remain separate during menstruation or un-touchability in public places, particularly amongst the younger generation, but he would still instruct that certain practices must be maintained in public places, temples, water taps and other religious events.

Factors responsible for this changing trend include the schooling of girls, exposure of people to different INGO and government projects or events, and increasing awareness. The Maoist conflict also contributed to stopping discriminatory practices. However, it has not been possible to sustain the change, mainly due to fear of going against the traditions. Mainly is has been the fear of unseen incidents such as pile disease which have been responsible for resisting change.

Chhaupadi also severely affects the Dalits and the poor, as the women of the family cannot cook food, and the male counterparts have to do this work and therefore cannot go to the work. This directly affects the livelihoods of the family. Where the husband is working abroad, particularly in India, the family must ask their neighbours to prepare food.

During the woman's stay in the cowshed (in Sarmali) or CHHAU *KATERO* (in Dhungachalna and Rugin), she is also at high risk of sexual abuse/rape, or being harmed by snakes or other wild animals. This creates additional psychological pressure on the women.

The period of menstruation is traditionally considered to be rest time for the women. However this study found that the workload of the women during this period is actually increased. This is mainly due to increased responsibilities for heavy outdoor work and caring for children so that they do not touch elderly people, food, milk as well as the other forbidden things in the family.

This practice of separation is affecting the women's health as they have to bath early in the morning even on cold days and they cannot get warm clothes. Likewise, the women cannot get nutritious food, and must live in unhygienic conditions. The women cannot use the nearest water tap, though in Rugin there has been a small change whereby women can now use the nearest tap and children no longer need daily bath.

c. Ownership over productive resources (Land, enterprises and livestock)

Usually land is registered in the male's name, be it husband, son or father. No cases were cited of land being registered in the name of female family members. However, in a significantly low number of cases land was registered in single women's, where she did not have a living son. Women have access to production, maintaining land and carrying out agricultural activities. In fact women do most of the agricultural activities. Most male respondents claimed that land is sold or purchased in consultation with family members. However, most female respondents felt that family consultation is only a

formality and female cannot resist the decision taken by the legal owner, the male members of the family.

The table below illustrates the number of male and female land owners in all three VDCs.

Table No 2: Gender based land-ownership in the sample VDCs

Gender	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Dalit	51	85	9	15	60	100
Others	50	83	10	17	60	100
Janajati	7	70	3	30	10	100

Source: Field Survey 2008

The table shows that out of total 60 Dalit respondents 85% respondents reported that the land of their households is registered in the male head of the household. Likewise out of 60 Non Dalit respondents 83% reported that the land is registered in the male's name. In the case of Janajati, 70% land is belongs to male of their households.

Most women have access to taking care of the cattle and livestock. Women are able to use milk but in case of meat they can use only the quantity decided by male. They can sell and purchase cattle without permission of the male members. In some households, females can decide to exchange their buffalos with the neighbours. However, most male respondents claim that only the males have sale and purchase rights of cattle and livestock (buffaloes/oxen) in their families.

d. Decision making at the household level

Table 3 below shows that the role of female guardians in decision making at the household level is minimal. Among 130 respondents, only 13 (10%) female guardians have made decision relating to the marriage of their subordinates, 15% in the case of participation in social community work, and 6% in the case of employment. Most of the female guardians involved in decision making were single women. In case of economic activities, male members in the family are the key decision makers in most cases. However, decision of marriage and employment are increasingly being taken by the individual concerns. Economic activities are mainly performed by males so self decision is obvious, and male and female guardians do not have a great role in decision making in the case of employment. In the case of marriage, elopement (*bhagi bibaha*) is increasing so the number of people making their own decision is high.

Table No 3: Gender based decision making in sample VDCs.

Decision at Household Level	Marriage		Participation in Social & Community Work		Employment		Economic Activities	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Female Guardian	13	10	19	15	7	6	9	7
Male Guardian	67	52	64	49	77	59	76	58
Self	26	20	32	25	22	17	23	18
Family Consultation	24	18	15	11	24	18	22	17

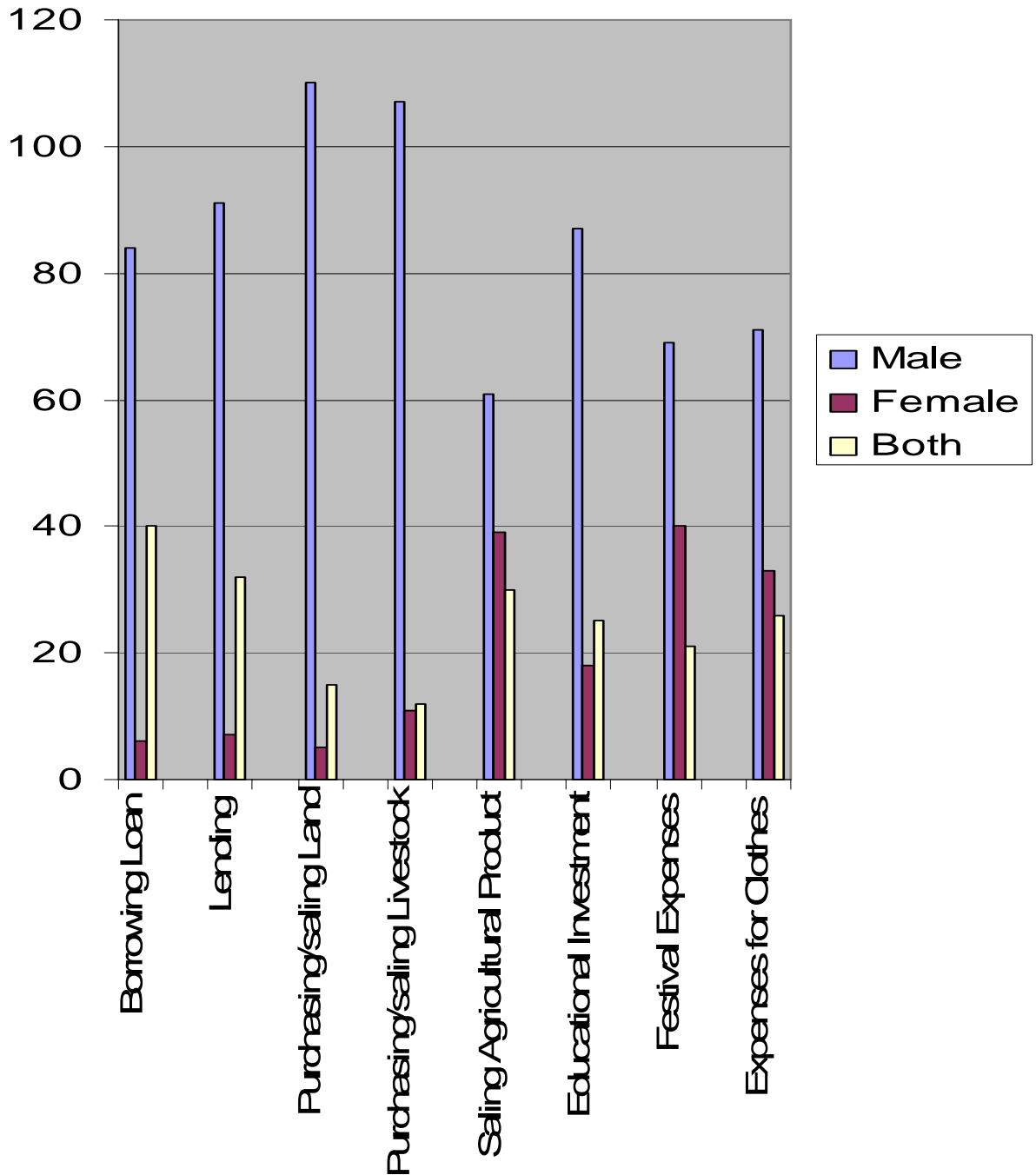
	130	100	130	100	130	100	130	100
--	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

Source: Field Survey 2008

The table below illustrates gender role in various economic activities such as borrowing, lending, sale and purchase of cattle/livestock, land, festival expenses, agriculture products, education, and purchasing clothes. It shows that in all activities, the male making dominates the decision-making process. The number of women making decisions alone is minimal, though there are a significant number of cases where decisions are made jointly.

Graph 1: Gender Based Decision Making in Economic activities in sample VDCs

Gender Based Decision Making at household level



Source: Field Survey 2008

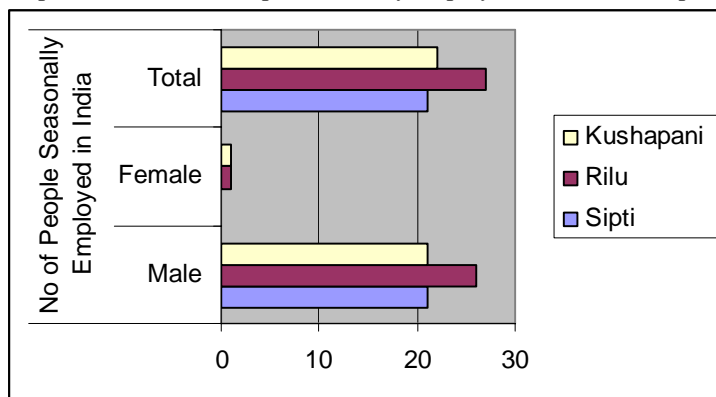
Women have no access to financial institutions. Even males have little access to banks and other financial institutions; generally, they have to borrow from local money lenders.

e. Mobility and employment

Local employment opportunities are very limited due to a lack of industry and other services in the area. People exchange labour for farming in their own limited land. Local males from all VDCs go to different cities in India for seasonal job opportunities, especially in construction and usually they spend about nine months in India. Due to severe competition and exploitation by the labor contractors, the people who go to India do not bring back much money compared to hardship they endure. It was revealed that women are not allowed by the family to go to India for job opportunities, except in the case of women going to India as a dependent to their husband or son.

The number of women going to India for seasonal jobs is significantly low according to the table below. This could be attributed to the traditional practices of the woman's role in reproductive activities only, social security of women, or the male ego driven by patriarchal societal system. A deep rooted socialisation process prevents women from taking initiatives in seeking seasonal jobs in India, and they fear back-biting if they spend a long time away from home.

Graph 2: Number of People seasonally employed in India in sample VDCs



Source: Field Survey 2008

f. Public places, ceremonies and community development

Generally, women are allowed to participate in public places religious and social ceremonies and community development works in all sample VDCs. Though Dalit women are allowed to participate and pray, they are restricted in many other activities

"Menstruating women (*CHHUI BHAYEKA SWAINI MANISH*) are impure. Therefore, the god and goddess do not accept them. If any woman, in menstruation period, enters into the (worship places) *THANs*, the gods will be angry and the ghost will attack her and she will become sick. If any Ghost attacks anybody, s/he will not recover by allopathic medicine (*DAGDARI DABAI*). Only we can treat the person who suffers from such disease."

- A Dalit Dharni, Rilu

including preparing and having Pooja Prasad or performing Aarati. Likewise menstruating women also must refrain from all those activities, and are restricted from entering places of worship such as *MAHAKALI DEVI*, *DURGA DEVI*, *BAGESHWORI*, *MALIKA*, *GAURA* and *MATE THANs*, which are considered as holy or sacred places. But in all places (the *MATE THAN* or other *DEVI THAN*), the menstruating women are not allowed to enter. This is due to the deep-rooted beliefs and practices of purity and impurity, whereby Dalits and menstruating women are considered highly impure.

Contrary to the prevailing inclusive policy of nominating at least 33% of women for local management committee positions (such as schools health posts, or community user groups) in most VDCs the number of female members is very low, making their representation a mere token. However, in the Water User's Groups and WRMC, female representation is at least 50%, and ever increasing. The number of female teachers in the school is also significantly low. Though government policy guaranteed at least one female teacher in each school, it was found that female teachers tended to be in the lower grades only.

In leisure time, male elders and children usually go to public places such as the tea stall and meeting places to spend time talking to friends, playing the carom board, cards, listening new information from political leaders/teachers or any other new comers like NGO workers, researchers and so on. However, the female elders and children stay at home and are involved in the household work. According to the female respondents, they can ask their daughter to help them and daughter will obey, but the sons do not obey their mother or sisters, and go to play or talk to their friends. Most of the male replied that it is their leisure time, and they came to the public place to pass the time. They said women and girls have their work at home, and so they prefer not to come to the public places. The men do not consider the household work as their work. Only men are seen working in tea stalls and other shops.

Most respondents argued that traditional practices, lack of education and awareness and the reproductive role of women are the causes to promote gender based discrimination at the public place and in community development works. Most people have faith in God

"MATE God has supreme power. During the Maoist movement, one of the menstruating ladies entered a MATETHAN (a worship place of MATE God). She touched the Dhami and also spoke against the DHAMI system to the villagers. After four days, she died in an encounter with the government forces. After this incident, no one dared to enter there."

- Parvati Thapa of Dhungachalna 7

and fear to go against traditional practices related to God. This incidence further substantiates the profound fear of the invisible power of God among the community people through a socialisation process.

Widows are restricted from performing Kanyadan, an event in wedding ceremony where the bride is handed over to the groom. This ritual is usually performed by the bride's parent. If only the mother is surviving then she is not allowed to perform this ritual and the bride's brother will take

over this event jointly with his wife. The widows are generally considered inauspicious

and the wedding ceremony is an auspicious occasion where inauspicious persons are restricted.

Similarly, women are not allowed to attend funeral processions. The reasons attributed to this restriction include the fact that women are considered more emotional and it would not be possible for them to tolerate the agony, or that the attendants of the funeral procession need to be fed with *khaja* (tea and snacks) which the women are required to prepare instead of participating in the procession. The last reason is related to *sati pratha*, a custom in which the women used to burn themselves with their dead husbands. Female members of the family, along with the wife of the deceased used to attend the funeral. But now that this custom is abolished, no women are allowed at the funeral.

g. Access to resources (Forest, Water, Physical, Infrastructure, and Education)

Water: Both male and females in Dalit, non-Dalit and Janajati communities have equal access to water. Usually, the females fetch drinking water, wash clothes and bathe their children and themselves. But the female cannot decide where to fix the water tap, when and where it should be repaired. Only males decide about the management and maintenance of the drinking water supply. As mentioned previously, menstruating women are not allowed to touch the water tap and they are not allowed to visit the water tap stand area. In Kushpani however, there is no restriction on the menstruating women from touching and using the water tap, where it is a constructed piped water tap, though the restriction does apply to traditional water sources such as well and spring. Women are engaged in watering crops from irrigation and cleaning the canals but are not engaged in its management, which is controlled by men in most cases which involvement of very few women.

"I was bold enough to make a change by drinking water in the tap where, a Dalit menstruating women was bathing. I did not tell this incident to any one and was sure that I would not have any trouble. But after a day my lips swelled out. I took bath and went to Dhalpura, a religious place and made the commitment by offering some strips of the different color clothes (Dhwaja pataka) that I would never touch a female with menstruation. After this event I am always far from a menstruating female and behave accordingly in the home."

-Nani Babu Sarki- Dhami of Rugin

Forest: Usually, women fetch fire wood and fodder from the forest. Though women are members of the forestry user committees, the men influence most decisions. This is the case even where there are fewer male members on the committee than female. *Petari Community Forestry Users Group (CFUG)* of Riluv VDC ward No. 4, 6 and 7 was established in 2003. According to the participants of Riluv Ward No. 6, 7 and 4, The CFUG was led by women (including Dalit women) who held decision-making positions. The committee worked hard and succeeded in conserving the jungle from deforestation. Most of the users were happy and they were following the rules and regulations of the CFUG. In 2006, new CFUG was formed by the general assembly. Male and Non-Dalits became the leaders and decision makers. The new committee blamed the older

committee for being un-transparent and stated that it did not handover the documents and accounts to the new committee. Following this change, no one followed the rules, and the jungle is being cleaned and converted to barren land.

Education: Parents prefer to send their sons to school. They are not confident in the opportunities available for girls after education. They believe that even if the girls get the higher education, they are meant to remain at home, whereas sons will have to go outside to earn money for the family in the future. Dalit women have very little access to the education sector, mainly because of their work-load, traditional practices and risk of humiliation in the school. In the recent past, the level of awareness has been raised significantly, and this has promoted the enrollment of girls at least at the primary level. The critical observation prevails that the attendance of girls was very low. The number of girls dropping out suddenly increases after completion of grade 5 in most schools observed. One of the reasons for this is the distribution of cooking oil to the girls up to grade 5 only. Some teachers argued that parents send their children to school from the age of 10 and above. The girls will be 15 to 16 years of age when they complete primary school, and this is the age of marriage for girls in that area. The parents prefer to teach the girls to perform household work properly so that they will be good at housework in their husbands' home after marriage. But the boys do not have to go another's home and they have to earn money to maintain households' expenditure. Therefore, parents prefer to send their sons to school even after the primary education.

It was encouraging to note that there are cases of daughter-in-laws attending school in

CASE STUDY 2

Daughter-in Laws Started Attending School in Sipti

Maya Demi Dhami (Chhetri) is 21 years old, a married woman and studying at grade 11 in higher secondary school ward no 7 of Sipti Village in the Darchula district. She has two children and her husband is also student of a bachelor degree in a college outside the Darchula district. Maya has to face several problems in completing secondary education as she is the eldest daughter with six younger sisters. She had to meet her education expenditure by raising chickens and selling the eggs, in addition to supporting her mother in domestic work.

Her mother-in-law who is an active social worker and member of several community user groups along with her husband are instrumental in motivating her to attend the school. And she admires both of them for allowing her for supporting her in fulfilling her quest of higher education. But even now being a daughter in law she has to face several challenges to continue her education. She reveals, with tears in her eye, that being a daughter-in-law it is not so easy to continue education due to several customary practices such as taking meals after all family members eat, cleaning utensils, taking care of cattle, cleaning clothes and a lot of other agricultural work.

"Maya is quite energetic and self encouraged and is committed to continuing her education as an inspiration to many other daughter-in-laws in the village" says her school teacher Jagat Singh Chaiser of Shree Ganesh Binayak Higher Secondary School in Sipti.

many places, mainly due to increased awareness, individual commitment and job opportunities created by NGOs for women.

The students, mostly girls, were forced to leave school as the bread earners were outside the country and the girls have to help their mother in her household work. In this case both poverty and the work-load of women has reinforced the fact that girls have limited access to education. Boys are also forced by parents to leave school in the middle of their education to go to India to earn money from construction labour.

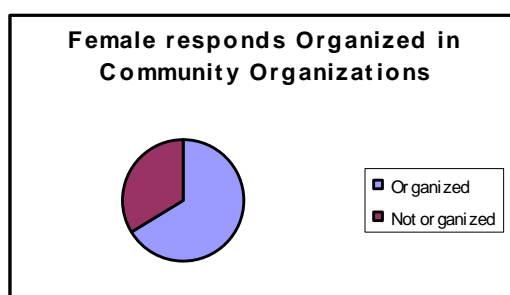
Physical Infrastructure: Construction or repair of a thatched roof by women is considered inauspicious and women are not allowed to do this. It was also observed that women initiate any such activities. A woman in Dhungachalna has not been able to repair her roof as her husband has been in India for the last five years and other male members of the community have not helped her. As a result the roof is about collapse.

h. Community representation in local institutions

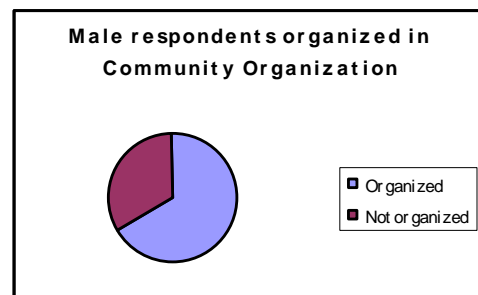
The women (Dalit, non-Dalit and *Janajatis*) are organised in many community groups, mainly savings and credit groups. These groups are usually promoted by I/NGOs and community based groups such as the Poverty Alleviation Fund, DLGSP/VDPs. Out of a total 130 respondents, 98 (55 male and 43 female), which is 75% of respondents, reported that they are organized in various types of community organizations.

Graph 3.1 shows, 86% of organized male respondents in various community organizations whereas graph 3.2 shows that 66% women are organized in various community organizations. However most of the male respondents reported that they are in key posts such as chair person, secretary and executive committee members whereas the majority of female respondents (73%) reported that they are organized in savings and credit groups as a members and their responsibilities is to deposit savings every month.

Graph 3: Male and female involved in community institutions in sample VDCs.



Graph 3.1



Graph 3.2

i. Reproductive health

Women can decide to go sub-health post while their children get sick. But the women cannot decide to go sub-health post for a check-up of their own health without permission of their husband or their mother-in-law. Men can go to the sub-health post when they want.

Most respondents reported that the women in the sample usually deliver their babies at home and often not are attended to by skilled health workers. This is mainly because of the traditional concepts among the mother-in-laws and other female members of the family. They do not foresee any need for women to deliver at the hospital. Only eight, three Dalits and five Non-Dalits, out of 130 respondents delivered at the health institution in the sample areas, despite the fact that even the health post in Sipti has delivery care facilities. Usually, women are encouraged to visit antenatal clinics where iron and folic acid tablets are distributed. Maternal Child Health Workers and Female Community Health Volunteers are actively engaged in promoting safer motherhood in the villages. Most of the female respondents reported that pregnant women do not want to go health facilities mainly because of the male health workers attending the deliveries and ANC clinics. The families are reluctant to take the pregnant women to the health facilities for delivery also because of the location of the birthing centers which is often very far from the villages. Male members are not allowed to touch the women after eight month of pregnancy up to the eleventh day of delivery. Since men have to carry the pregnant women to the health facilities and get them back home after delivery, this presents a difficulty, as women about to deliver are considered 'impure'. Most women in the village were not aware of the Government implemented "Safer Delivery Incentive Project" that provides a cash incentive to the women who deliver in the health institutions. The pregnant women are not taking any supplementary nutritious food to meet their additional requirements.

j. Social security and humiliation

Females are less secure than males in society. Women do not dare to go to the police station if she is victimised by someone but men can easily go in such cases.

A few respondents reported cases of humiliation on different occasions. One woman in Kushapani felt humiliated by her brother, who did not allow her to attend the wedding procession of her other brother. She was told that being a daughter she cannot attend the procession, and even her mother took her brother's side and did not allow her to attend the procession. As a result she wept for the whole night for being a daughter. Had she been a son she would be enjoying her brother's wedding. Prevailing socio-cultural practices do not allow women to attend the wedding procession. This incident happened some twelve years back, now women have slowly started attending wedding processions.

In Rilua a Dalit woman was not allowed to fetch water from public tap in another cluster, just because she was a Dalit. She was scolded very badly by the non-Dalit women. The non Dalit women threw water and she was forced to run away. This incident could be attributed to many causes, such as a lack of power due to the smaller number of Dalits in

the community and more specifically women. Secondly, the Dalits are totally dependent on the Non-Dalits for their subsistence livelihood, non-Dalits being their patrons. Dalits are trapped in a vicious circle of traditional socio-cultural, economic and other systems and is very difficult to break this 'knot.' The Dalits have no other choice than to tolerate the discrimination even if they have to bear humiliation.

In Sipti a women reported that she had to skip the school at least five days in a month during the menstruation mainly because she was humiliated initially by her female classmates and subsequently by male classmates. She used to feel that had she been a son she would not have to skip the class and would have been getting good results. Now she is married and attending grade 11 in the school as a daughter-in-law. She does not skip school now and this practice is gradually reducing in the community.

k. Work load and discrimination in work and wages

In all three sample VDCs women work for about 18-19 hours every day whereas men work only for about 15-16 hours. Since women usually are responsible undertaking agricultural work combined with other housework, they do not have any leisure time throughout the year. Due to

increasing awareness, girls are attending school but they are forced to complete their household activities before attending school. As a result they are overloaded and are forced to dropout before completing their education. Boys on

If men are limited to only household works such as cleaning utensils and taking care of the house then who will go outside home to earn? How can men earn with hard work and sweat and also work at home like women?

- An Elderly Woman

the other hand, have less work at home, and have more time to concentrate on their education only. Early in the morning, the mothers wake up their daughters so that they can help her, whereas they do not wake up the sons because they do not obey what their mother says.

Girls are involved in cleaning rooms, cleaning utensils, fetching water and washing clothes but boys are not involve in such work. Girls are also helping their mother in carrying fertilizers, collecting saplings and carrying firewood from the forest. Mostly girls go to take care of the cattle and oxen (*GOTHALA*). Most of the participants said that the son will have to go outside (India and other places) to earn money. They do not have to do domestic work like women do.

During planting and harvesting seasons of paddy, barley and wheat (From April to July and October to December) males return from India to support the family and go to the field for agricultural work. Most males who do not go to India and are not engaged in other work such as road construction, lumbering, carpentry, do not work other than in the planting and harvesting time. The women prepare meals for the men and go to the field by taking the meals at 10am and join with the male to work in the field. Both male and female go back home from field after 5 or 6 pm generally.

Generally the women and girls clean the utensils of the evening meal in the evening on bright nights (when the moon gives light) and in the following morning on dark nights (*JUN LAGEMA BASA BHADA CHHOLNE JUN NALAGEMA CHHAKALA CHHOLNE*).

In Sipti, it was observed during the research that the women are spending the majority of their time fetching firewood from the forest which is located far away. The men sit in the fireplace gossiping until late at night, burning the wood collected by women. This is mainly due to deep rooted patriarchal feeling among men.

1. Food distribution practices

Usually, girls and women take meals last in the family. They have to serve the food first to the elderly people, male members and children of the family before taking food themselves. They have to make do with the remaining food after the males, elderly and children eat. On the other hand they prefer to provide nutritious food to their sons first by considering that the boys will have to do hard work in future to earn money for the family. They provide such food to daughters after providing for their sons. Because of this, the women are malnourished compared to the men and it is even more difficult to go outside to do hard work.

A common practice in the community suggests serving meals to the daughters-in-law last. If there is more than one daughter-in-law, the older one serves the food and the younger one has to clean the utensils and kitchen after eating. But all daughters-in-law eat together and they have to make do with what is left over after the other family members have eaten. During pregnancy, most Dalit women are not fed properly and as a result they become anemic, which creates danger in the delivery of their babies. After delivering babies, the women (both Dalit and Non-Dalits) are fed *teli-bhat* (rice fried in mustard oil). This is not sufficient to meet the nutritional requirements of lactating mothers. However, discrimination in food supplies to the mothers delivering a son or a daughter was not reported.

1.1.2 Caste Based Discrimination

The information on caste based discrimination is presented in two sub parts. The narrative descriptions of prevailing social systems, practices and customs are presented analytically in the first part. The second part includes the current situation of Dalits in terms of access to resources, representation in community institutions, mobility and employment, participation in social and public ceremonies, workload and social security.

a. Prevailing beliefs and practices which reinforce discrimination

Untouchability: Like in other parts of Nepal, discrimination marked by differences in touchable and untouchable status is one of the major social practices in the study area.

Despite the law declaring untouchability as illegal in the New Civil Code in 1963, the practice still occurs in the VDCs. This practice is based on the Hindu philosophy of

purity and impurity but this is practiced by both Hindu and some Janajati. The Non-Dalit people perceive that their objects become polluted if touched by Dalits. Based on this belief, Dalits are discriminated in entering the temple and worship places, eating together in parties and food stalls, or taking *Prasad* by Non-Dalits. Such inherent discrimination is practiced in the denial of entry, services, access to common resources, kinship and/or social relationships, participation, forced labor, dominance, atrocities and social boycott. Water is one of the main things which is very sensitive to touch. A Dhami of Rilu 5 said, "If any Dalit enters there, the Goddess or God will be angry and s/he will get sick. We can identify that by mantra. Dalits are an impure caste. They eat buffalo and live in bad sanitation. Therefore, they are not suitable for entering into sacred place and take PRASAD." Like the Dhami, the Non-Dalit people follow the belief of 'untouchability'.

Water, milk and other wet things are considered to become polluted when touched by Dalits. However, dry things such as rice, vegetable and fruit are not considered to be polluted even if a Dalit touches them.

Khalo System: *Khalo* is a central harvesting place where Dalits collect crops or food grain provided by the *Gosains* (Masters). Generally Dalits collect food grain twice a year, during the harvesting time, as the service that Dalits provide to the landowners within that particular year. The process of collecting food-grain is called *Khalo* and the system of providing labour service and taking food-grain is called the '*Khalo* System'. This is a socio economic relationship between Non-Dalits and Dalit. The Non-Dalits are considered as *Gosain* or *Rithi* (patrons) and the Dalits as *bhage*, (the client).

In this system, Dalits (especially the blacksmiths) are supposed to make and repair ironware such as agriculture tools, other metal utensils and also perform other hard work in the *rithi's* house for the entire year. For the service, the *bhages* are entitled two to three *supo* (one *supo* equals to about 5 kgs) of grain during harvesting period, from the *rithis*.

"I have to make agriculture tools such as a sickle, plow and other utensils for my Gosain (The land owner) for whole year and I get only about three supo, (which is 15 kg) of rice, which is not sufficient to feed my family even for one month. I have no alternative. It was my fate that made me Dalit. There are no opportunities and I have no other skills."

- Dane Kami of Thara Village

Beside making agriculture tools or stitching clothes in patron's house for whole year the Dalits are supposed to work as an unpaid labor during weddings, other social events and feasts. Dalits are supposed to clean the place for feast, blow trumpets and perform other hard work. Sometimes Dalits are paid extra rice, sometimes a small amount of cash and also offspring cattle for this additional piece of work that they perform occasionally. The socio-economic relationship established in the *khalo* system is further tightened in big festivals such as *dasin*, *tihar*. If a buffalo is sacrificed by a patron in any festivals or offered in a temple, then Dalits are entitled to get the whole buffalo, whereas if goats are sacrificed, then head is given to the *phulpate*, (one who worships the animal being sacrificed), the tail is given to *kami*, (who makes the tool being used to sacrifice) and the stomach and intestines are given to *damai* (who blow the trumpets during the sacrifice). The *Rithi* (patrons) allow only their *bhage* (clients) Dalits only, who help them for the

whole year in various occasions and festivals. This system has ultimately forced the Dalits, not only to act as authorised labour but also to be dependent for their livelihood on their patrons. As a result, the Dalits have little decision making power and are forced to obey what their patrons ask them to do.

This system might have started when the land-owners required agricultural labour and other services such as tailoring, repairing of equipment and so on. The land owners asked the occupational castes mainly considered as Dalits to provide their services and in return the land owners took responsibility for their livelihood, especially the food grain. Gradually the exchange of labour services and food grain developed as a socio-economic relationship between the service providers and the land-owners. The service providers totally transformed into dependent labour and worked as semi- bonded labour in the landowner's home. Over the generations, the land-owners became patrons and the Dalits became their clients. Most of the Dalits have insufficient land to survive themselves by the product of their own land and therefore they have to depend on the landowners. This practical problem enforced the *khalo* system to prevail in the rural villages. The misconception of untouchability, based on Hindu mythology and restriction against Dalits to become involved in other occupations or business is also reinforcing this system in the villages. Due to the lack of opportunities to maintain livelihoods, Dalits are compelled to tolerate this discriminatory practice.

b. Factors and actors to reinforce and follow such practices

On the basis of observation, interaction and analysis of the field based study, it can be concluded that main effects of existing practices of discrimination are psychological, economic and political. Concerning social and legal effects, responses varied depending on their age, sex, education, level of awareness, and organizational affiliation.

The psychological factor of caste discrimination is the root of all problems. Economic, social and political effects are also directly associated with psychological factor. Centuries of caste-based untouchability have brutally damaged the psychology of Dalits paralyzing their efforts not only to get rid of developmental problems associated with food security, education, health, etc. but also to protest against such inhuman discrimination. Many Dalit respondents felt that a positive psychological attitude is a powerhouse of success but if turns negative then it paralyzes the individual. Many non-Dalit respondents argued very strongly that it is not the non-Dalits who have destroyed their self-confidence but it is their own inferiority complex that is responsible for such a sad state of affairs.

Inferiority complex & lack of self-respect and self-confidence: Most of the Dalit respondents who have experienced untouchability while drinking tea or eating food, whether they are alone or with others, feel hurt and almost in tears. Non-Dalit political leaders, teachers and officials often make different excuses not to take food or tea in a gathering. Often they do not go for a second helping after Dalits have taken food. In such situations, Dalits feel worthless and helpless. Dalits are socialized in such a way that

they take caste-based un-touchability as natural and accept the fact that they cannot even keep buffaloes or cows to sell milk in the bazaar.

Attitude to accept silently rather than to protest or revolt: Many Dalit respondents said that they have attitude of silent acceptance of caste-based discrimination due to their inferiority complex. For example, last year, some Dalits made efforts to protest against an issue to enter a Bhagawati temple while performing *pooja* in Rilu 6, Bajhang. *MALLO JATI* "upper caste" peoples were prepared to confront them, and they had planned to beat the Dalits leading the process. Later, the Dalits themselves cancelled the protest with a belief that even entering in the worship place would not change the situation of Dalits overnight and that the confrontation would disturb the age-old social harmony. This recent event further perpetuates the long practiced attitude of accepting injustices and practicing a culture of silence.

Acceptance of discrimination as fate: Most of the respondents said that although they now know that untouchability is socially constructed and all of them were systematically socialized from their childhood to accept un-touchability as their fate written by the *Bhavi* (fate). Some respondents still believe that it is their fate and can not blame others for discrimination.

Often Dalits face difficulty in getting access to legal services as they do not get justice even if they complain to police, VDCs, district offices and courts. Dalit respondents from Dhungachalna, Achham said that when their VDC Vice-Chairperson himself has been the victim of caste-based un-touchability in the VDC, how can the ordinary Dalit people complain against such practices? The Dalits of the sample VDCs, therefore, do not trust that laws are protecting them from caste-based un-touchability.

Dalits are generally not allowed to write their family names in citizenship certificates. Instead, they have to show their caste identity. This is because of similarity of many family names of Dalits and Bahun-Chhetris. For example, both Bahun-Chhetris and Dalits use family names such as Sharma, Koirala, Ghimire, Risal, Gautam, Bohora or Bogati.

Most of the Dalits' traditional occupations are stigmatized by the society and even if somehow they try to continue it they cannot compete with the products available in the market at low price. Low price readymade clothes, shoes, utensils etc. have systematically displaced the means of livelihood for Dalits. A Biswakarma had opened a cosmetic shop in a Dalilekh bazaar but he was forced to close it as other Non-Dalit shopkeepers would never cooperate with him. Many respondents of all six sample VDCs reported that Dalits could not keep additional water buffaloes so that they can sell milk and milk products. Often they keep one or two buffalo for their own household consumption.

Low representation of Dalits was found on VDC councils and committees in all 6 sample VDCs. Similarly, there are only a few representatives in community institutions, such as community forestry users committees, water users committees, school and health posts

management committees and so on. Taking advantage of illiteracy, poverty and lack of awareness, major political parties (mis)use them as "vote banks."

Some Dalit respondents believe that most Dalits, including leaders and activists are not aware of human rights as they were not covered by awareness raising projects of donors, (I)NGOs, and human rights organizations.

A number of factors are found to be predominant in caste based discrimination. Due to caste-based un-touchability, Dalits are treated as second class citizens by the State, all Dalit respondents from the study areas said that local administrators treat them like second class citizens. The vast majority of Dalits in all study areas are not aware about their basic rights due to lack of education, poverty

and failure of development projects to reach them. There is no doubt that caste-based discrimination prevents them from getting access to education and benefit from development activities. But confusion still persists over whether to start the programs to fight against caste-based un-touchability or to raise levels of awareness.

These social factors such as lack of self-confidence and extreme poverty have an indirect link with caste-based discrimination. Some Dalit intellectuals, however, have suggested that the reasons for caste-based discrimination could not be limited to these factors only as there are many other hidden factors.


Health problems: Many Dalit leaders and Non-Dalit intellectuals from all study areas mentioned that Dalits suffer from different diseases such as uterine prolapsed, malnutrition (anemia), high maternal and infant mortality, skin diseases, worms, diarrhea, tuberculosis, asthma and other sickness/illness.

Violence against women: Some Dalit women become victims of violence, including sexual abuse and occasional rape. Many Dalit respondents said that rich and powerful Non-Dalits often tend to think Dalit women as their "own property". Even if they sexually abuse Dalits, neither the society nor the local administrators would punish them. They are, therefore, further encouraged to engage in violence against Dalit women.

Problem in inter-caste marriage relationship and family disintegration: When Dalits are engaged in inter-caste marriage with Non-Dalits, it generates tension and problems in

CASE STUDY 3
Inter Caste Marriage Rejected by Brahmins Family

A 23 year old Brahmin boy of Kushapani, Dailekh has married a 20 year old Dalit girl in December 2006. Now the couple has a nine months old son. The couple had eloped to Nainital of India and spent a couple of months there. After three months, the couple returned home but the boy's family (Brahmin) rejected them and restricted them to enter the home. The couple was forced to live at the girl's parental (Dalit) home. Now they has constructed a new house with the help of the bride's brother and the Dalit villagers and started to stay in the new house.



their families. Often either the married couple has to divorce or break their relationship or leave family to go and live elsewhere. And they have to face many difficulties for their livelihoods as most Dalits are poor and landless. They also have do not have capital, education and modern skills to start enterprising works.

Religious-Cultural: Some respondents mentioned the following two religious-cultural factors of caste-based discrimination:

CASE STUDY 4

Dalit do not have to wash Utensils any longer

Kabi Subnar (Kami) is a Goldsmith who operates a small gold stall in a rented house in Khambagade Baza, Kushapani. Every day, he buys a cup of tea from a tea stall run by a Brahmin family a little bit farther to his stall. The members of this family do not ask him to wash his cups after he pays for it. However, they bring the cup into the tea stall only after they wash it out. They do not allow him to touch their oven where they cook their family food. Ksbiram and the brahmin family's children are friends and play together in the street. However, Kabi's children are not allowed to enter the house of their Brahmin friend.

Both Dalit and Non-Dalit respondents opined that Dalits have rights to exercise their religious rights, including entry in the temple. Non-Dalit respondents were of the view that the society is not prepared to change overnight whereas the Dalits are impatient for quick changes and want to exercise their rights immediately. They also said that it has created a confrontational situation in many places. They, therefore, suggested Dalits not hurry in exercising their rights; instead they should move forward slowly. Dalit respondents, on the contrary, do not agree with such views. They

argue in favor of fighting against caste based discrimination rather accepting it as they have to suffer in both cases. They further argue that fighting is expected to get some result sooner or later than accepting it which they have done for years.

Weak dalit movement: Compared to other noted movements in Nepal such as the women's movement, community forestry movement and land rights movements, the Dalit movement is yet to be strengthened. Without any doubt, the Dalit movement has achieved many successes that include promulgation of Nepal as a country free from untouchability. But in practice, caste based discrimination in the form of untouchables is still practiced predominantly in far western Nepal. Responses from the contributors and the observation of the study team reveals adequate evidence to conclude that the main bottle-neck is untouchability within Dalits themselves. Ironically, the Dalit communities have difficulties in accepting this bitter truth whereas other so called high caste people are making this as an excuse to safeguard the caste based discrimination. Unseen 'tension' between Dalits and so called high caste people on this issue is impeding the Dalit movement in achieving its desired result.

c. Access and control over resources

Various studies illustrate that Non-Dalits do not allow their Dalit neighbors to collect water from sources that are used by them for their domestic use (Bhattachan et al 2001; Onta et al 2001). However, this was not confirmed by Dalits of all places, covered by this study. Especially, newly established/constructed water tap stand are open to both Dalit and non Dalit in the study area. But there are still discriminations in old sources of drinking water. It was shown that Non-Dalit households in all these areas are unwilling to use water touched or offered by Dalit neighbors. Unlike water, people believe that there are materials that cannot be polluted merely by the touch of a person. For example, people, religious places, forest products like firewood, timber, and grass and leaf fodder. As a result, the issue of caste-based discrimination does not arise concerning touching these products. Yet, the Dalits that participated in our case study reported that the issue

CASE STUDY 6

Discrimination within Different Dalit Castes in Kushapani VDC, One Sarki Dalit restricted to a Damai Dalit to fetch drinking water from a common water tap. Damai Dalit is considered as lower caste than Sarki Dalit. Sarki considers that Damai are impure than the Sarki. The Damai registered a writ in the police post against the Sarki. The police called both parties and resolved the case by making aware the Sarki on the rights of all caste to have equal access to common resources.

of respect still arises. It would appear that Non-Dalits would like Dalits to treat them in a respectful way and that the division of labor benefits the Non-Dalits, in that more tasks are assigned to the lower-caste members.

Un-touchability as a form of social discrimination can be observed in most rural areas. It is highly manifested in domestic and religious sectors compared to that of the

business sector. Such discriminatory practice even occurs among the various castes within the Dalits themselves. See the box (case studies) that substantiates the experience of prevailing practices.

d. Attainment of education

Caste based discrimination is not seen in the schools. According to the respondents, such practices had been eliminated during Maoist Movement. Before some years, Dalit students were not allowed to drink water from the same water pot from which Non Dalit students and teachers drink water. Dalits had to bring separate pot and glass for drinking water, but now all the students and teachers use the same pots and glasses.

Observation of school attendance in all VDCs suggests an increased number of Dalit students both boys and girls, mainly in the primary level. However, the number of Dalit girls in secondary level was found to be less compared to the Dalit boys. During the Field Study I and II, a total 21 primary schools were visited and observed. In that

CASE STUDY 5

Dalit Boy did not Touch the Water Pot
One school boy (13 years old) came to drink water at the water tap near his school. There was a water pot which was left by a Non-Dalit person to fetch water to his tea stall. The Dalit student looked around the tap and waited for somebody. The researcher went there and asked the boy why he was standing. The school boy replied that he was a Dalit and was waiting for some Non-Dalit friend to take out the water pot so that he could drink water from the tap. The researcher took the water pot out from the tap and asked him to drink water. After then the Dalit boy drank water and went to the classroom.

observation, it is found that number of Dalit students both boys and girls, mainly in primary level are approximately equal. Table 4 below shows the number of school students in primary level.

Table No 4 Number of school students at the primary level. (Figure within parenthesis indicates percentage)

Grade	Total Student	No of Students			
		Dalit		Others	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1	1403	96 (7%)	73 (5%)	702 (50%)	532 (37%)
2	1232	81 (7%)	67(7%)	603 (49%)	481 (39%)
3	945	67(7%)	35(4)	520 (55%)	321 (34%)
4	525	41(7%)	19(4)	302 (58%)	163 (31%)
5	402	31(8%)	14(3%)	253 (63%)	104 (26%)

Source: Field Survey 2008

The table above clearly shows the decreasing percentage of female students as the grade increases. One of the reasons of increasing enrollment of Dalit students in primary school is that the government policy of providing scholarship to the Dalit students.

In case of 4 secondary schools observed during the field visit, the number of girls was found to be fewer compared to boys in case of both Dalit and non-Dalit students which is very low compared to the figures in primary level. The table below shows the number of students in secondary level.

Table No 5: Number of school students in secondary level. (Figure within parenthesis indicates percentage)

Class	Total Student	No. of Students			
		Dalit		Others	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
8	120	12 (10%)	5 (4%)	87 (73%)	18 (15%)
9	103	9 (9%)	2(1.94%)	79 (77%)	13 (12.62%)
10	99	7(7%)	3(3)	81 (81%)	8(8%)

Source: Field Survey 2008

e. Employment

Employment opportunities at the government sector is limited and most Dalits have to face a tough competition to get job mainly teacher. Because of this Dalit even after completing high school are compelled going India for semi skilled construction and other type of labor. This also discourages other Dalit to complete the education. However, few number of Dalit teachers working in the school reported non discrimination practice within the school. They do not have to face humiliation and other type of discrimination just because they are Dalit.

Table No 6 Mobility of males and females for different purposes

Purpose	Others		Dalit		Janajati	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Study	0	11	0	1	0	1
Employment	0	2	1	0	0	1
Labor	0	13	0	14	0	0
Others (Treatment)	0	1	0	0	0	0

Source: Field Survey 2008

The table above shows that number of Dalit and non-Dalit women going outside their village for various purposes is significantly low with only one Dalit women who has gone outside the village to work as a teacher.

f. Public places, ceremonies and community development

There are some places of Gods and Goddesses (*DEWATA or DEVI THAN*), such as *MAHAKALI DEVI, DURGA DEVI and MATE*. The *THANs* are considered as holy or sacred places. Dalits are not allowed to enter in the places. The Dhamis in the community reinforce that entrance of Dalits in the worship places will make Goddess or God angry and the person entering will get sick. Therefore, they are not suitable for entering into *DEVITHAN* and take *PRASAD*. Dalits can enter and perform Pooja in *MATE THAN* because the *MATE DEWATA* belonged to Dalits.

Within this area, caste based discrimination is manifested in different ways. Dalits bearing an untouchable status are not permitted to work in enterprises such as, tea-stalls, restaurants, or hotels. However, some Dalits have started to establish some tea stall and food establishments in Dhungachalna VDC, Achham. Furthermore, non-Dalits in the study villages do not buy milk from their Dalit neighbours. Such a practice has discouraged the Dalit people of this region from being involved in businesses related to the production and sale of milk and milk-based products.

In older days Dalits were forced to clean the utensils that they have used in the public places such as eating establishment and others. But in recent past these practices have been abolished and no Dalits clean utensils that they have used in public places. Even in the case of tea stalls and restaurants, no cases were found in any of the study areas of any entrepreneur demanding that Dalit clients wash their cups and utensils after they paid for food and drink. However, in some places though they do not have to clean they have a fear of being humiliated and would rather not eat there.

CASE STUDY 8
A Priest Refused to Have Tea

A priest in Sharmali village in his regular visit to a local shop for his morning tea refused to drink a cup of tea one morning just because he knew that one of the members of this study team happens to be a Dalit woman. But he pretended that he is not practicing discrimination between Dalit and women and attempted to justify his refusal to drink a cup of morning tea in the shop with an excuse that he is fasting that day. But later the shop owner confirmed that his refusal was just because of Dalit woman in the shop.

The Janajati also excludes Dalits in the same way as the people of Non-Dalit caste groups. Non-Dalits wells are not openly allowed for Dalits. If needed, Non-Dalits bring the water out from the well for Dalit and Dalit fetch water. It is believed that the flowing water of tap is touchable. But the water in the well is untouchable. Further, the water in naulas does not flow and once touched by the impure can not be used by others. But water in the tap stand regularly flows and water made impure by Dalits flows so it is allowed to touch. Non-Dalit people fetch the water first then only the turn goes to Dalits. If Dalits takes water from the tap before Non - Dalits, then they first sanctify (purify) the tap and before filling the water bucket. But menstruating women of both Dalit and non-Dalit households are strictly forbidden to take bath and washing clothes in the *Neula* and taps. This ritual is found identical at Dhungachalna, Achham Samali, Baitadi and Rugin, Bajura.

2. MAJOR FINDINGS

2.1 Gender Based Discrimination:

- **Women forced to remain with limited power, access and control:** Despite the legal provision of equal property rights, women do not have ownership over household assets. Even now, the daughters are considered as a dependent of their husband's family and are not treated as one of the rights holders of paternal property. Albeit women have heavy input in agricultural and livestock production, they are entitled to consume the quantity decided by the male members of the family without any power to decide on sale or purchase of the land, house and agricultural supplies. However in case of the female headed household, though the land and other property is registered in the woman's name all other decisions are taken in consultation with other male family members.

Often the key decision makers at the household level in both Dalits and Non Dalits are male family members in career development, marriage and economic activities in general. In very few households the decisions are taken in consultation with other family members. It was clear in table 3 and graph 1 that a significantly higher number of males than females make self-decisions related to marriage and employment. However, the decision making process among Dalits and non Dalits is heavily influenced by male members. Among Janajati respondents, key decisions at the household level are taken mutually between male and female members.

Women have access to the use of natural resources such as forestry and water. However this is because women have to fetch or carry those things from far distances. However women do not have control over the decision making and management of these resources. This is mainly because of the balance of power between men and women. It is hard for a man to treat women as having the same status or an equal footing, due to deep rooted and socialized practices in both males and females.

Generally the role of women in the management of natural resources is limited to fetching water, fodder, saplings and firewood etc. Women have a minimal role in other dimensions of management such as decision making, controlling, influencing and coordinating.

- **Increased school enrollment of girls but minimal attendance:** In the recent past the enrollment of girls in the primary level classes has increased. This is mainly due to the enrolment campaign launched by the government, increased levels of awareness among the parents and increased accessibility to the primary

school. This again could be attributed to deliberate intervention of I/NGOs, some conducive government policy and ever increasing levels of awareness among the women in particular and community people in general. An increased number of girls with menstruation attending school have also helped to increase the number of girl's enrollment in the school.

But interestingly, compared to the increase in enrollment, female attendance after completing the primary level or even less, is very low. Usually the location of higher level schools is far from the village and parents are reluctant to send their daughters to the school at the longer distance. The mounting work load of girls at the household level, helping their mothers in household work and taking care of the younger ones, is another factor responsible for large numbers of girl absentees. Unavailability of proper toilet facilities and psychological fear of being harassed by boys during menstruation can be taken as one of the causes of lower attendants in upper classes.

- **Less number of women teachers:** The number of female teachers is very low despite the government policy of appointing at least one female teacher in each school. Appointment of the female teachers is limited to lower classes such as pre-primary only wherever female teachers are available.
- **Restricted mobility, participation and representation:** Dalit and Non Dalit women also do not have power in making decisions regarding their own mobility and are compelled to remain at the household level to take care of the home, livestock and agricultural activities whereas most of the male members of the family make their own decisions and go to India for seasonal work. Because of this, mobility of women for employment, education, and other economic activities is heavily restricted. Higher numbers of Dalit men compared to non Dalits are going to India for seasonal work mainly because the land holdings of Dalit family are very low. Menstruating women generally are considered impure and are restricted in their access of water tap stands, worship places, religious ceremonies, rituals and food intake. However, the extent varies from one village to the other in the area. The following may vary as the restricted number of days, whether the women are allowed to stay at home or at *CHHAU KATERO* and the type of food intake. Widows are restricted in certain rituals and religious activities such as *Kanyadan*.

Most man and boys spend their leisure time usually in *CHAUTARA* (A meeting point for people under the tree), tea shop and other public places whereas women and girls usually do not have leisure time and even if they have they are forced to remain at home.

Despite of the current inclusion policy, the number women in school management committees, health facilities and other users groups is very low. The representation of women in local institution is ceremonial and meaningful participation of whatever number of women in the local institution management

committees is not ensured. It was observed that the inclusion policy was launched without properly building the capacity of women who do not have sufficient exposure and confidence. The current workload of women usually not shared by men at the household work also restricts them for their meaningful participation in many local institutions.

- **Poor reproductive health:** Primarily, women are not aware of their nutritional requirements during pregnancy and eat as normal, except for taking *teli bhat* (rice with mustard oil). Often the families do not have sufficient resources to provide nutritious food to pregnant and delivering women. Furthermore, the pregnant women, being daughter-in-laws or younger members of the family, are forced to abide by the traditional system of eating whatever is left after the rest of the family has eaten.

Elderly female members of the families insist on the practice of traditional systems during pregnancy and delivery care. Even if the women seek delivery care services, their accessibility is limited. Usually the husbands, being the bread-winners of the family, take the decision on the provision of nutritious food, physical rest during pregnancy and the use of delivery care services. Often the husbands are away from the home or the wives are shy and reluctant to influence the husbands in their decision-making.

Usually the delivery care period ranges from 12 days to one month from one village to another. However, the women are forced to start household work such as *Parso Phalne* (carrying organic manure), fetching firewood, and fodder even after three or four days of delivery which is mainly due to poverty and the absence of male members. This has severely impacted on women's general health and more specifically on reproductive health.



Mother is away from home to fetch fodder -- A grand mother taking care of 12 days old baby.

Both in Dalit and Non Dalit families, awareness on reproductive health care service has increased but the physical accessibility of the birthing centers is very

poor and attitude of elderly female members of the family is negative in relation to delivery care service.

- **Heavy work load and discriminatory wages:** Women are forced to work 3 hours more than the men in a day. (See Annex 2 Work Load Analysis) Similarly the girls also are forced to work longer hours than boys. This has affected in school attendant of girls, health of women and limited representation of women in the community representation.

The traditional reproductive role of women reinforces them to remain at home and undertake household activity only. Since most husbands or male members of the families are away from home women are forced to undertake the male's other community roles, adding to their workload. Very few men were found to be

sharing the women's work load at the household level.



Hardship-- A women doing rice manually

Males and females perform different types of work either in agriculture or other types of work. And often, the wage rate is different for males and females in the sample VDC. Males get up to Nrs 100 to 150 per day while female get Nrs. 60 to 80 per day that varies from one village to other. The children get Nrs. 40 to 60 which depend upon their work performance.

2.2. Caste Based Discrimination:

- **Un-touchability as a reason for discriminatory resources allocation:** The discrimination in water tap-stands built in the recent past does not exist. Both Dalits and Non Dalits can use water freely from the tap-stands. But discrimination is visible in the traditional *Naulas* and other water resources such as *Dhunge Dhara* (stone tap-stands). However, Non Dalits do not allow Dalits to touch their water pot at the tap. This is related to the general belief of Dalit impurity. The older water sources such as *naulas* are considered to be the house of God so 'impure' Dalits are not allowed to touch. Since the new tap stands are not the house of God, Dalits are allowed to touch. Further, the water in *naulas* does not flow and once touched by the "impure", it cannot be used by others, whereas the water in the tap stand regularly flows .

Even in some Dalit communities, there is discrimination in water use. In some isolated cases those who are considered upper caste Dalits do not allow the low caste Dalits to use water in the same taps.

- **Restricted mobility in public places and ceremonies:** Systems of purity and impurity are practiced in the rituals and ceremonies such as the naming ceremony, marriage, funerals and *bratabandha*. In most cases some Dalits especially Damai (tailors) are considered auspicious but impure because the ceremony will not be auspicious without blowing trumpets and beating drums by Damai whereas they can not touch main actor and can not enter the ceremonial place. However, these days people do not sprinkle gold dipped holy water to purify themselves. And this system has almost been abolished in most villages. Now Dalits can also participate in the *pooja* process in worship places but they still must refrain from taking *Pnachamrit*, sacred liquid made out of five nectars such as cow milk, honey, yogurt, semi processed sugar (*sakkhar*) and ghee and taking warmth of *Aarati*.

2.3. General:

- **Faith, fate and fear:** Both gender and caste based discrimination in fact is trapped in a triangular equilibrium of faith, fate and fear which is further backed-up by myth and superstition. The main factor which maintains and promotes gender based discrimination is a myth that daughters are born for another home and son is the only one who will take care of this house and will continue paternal line. In terms of caste based discrimination, most Dalits have a myth that it was their fate that they were born as Dalit and they have so much fear that if they do not tolerate discrimination then they will go to hell and again be born as Dalit. People of both castes are reluctant to accept change because of deeply socialized practices amongst all castes due to ideas of ‘ritual impurity’, fear of bad luck and retribution from gods if they don’t follow the customs.
- **Towards changed attitude & behavior:** Up until the recent past, women with menstruation, girls with their first menstruation and Dalits have to face and tolerate discrimination in public places like schools, tea shops, temples, eating establishments and more significantly in water taps. These types of discriminatory behaviour in public places by *Mallo Jati* (so called high caste people) used to be a matter of pride. But these days these types of discrimination in meetings, drinking tea in shops, attending school and public gatherings have been almost abolished. Recent political changes in the country that have significantly focused on local democracy and inclusion. Deliberate intervention of I/NGOs and other development agencies in avoiding discrimination and ensuring inclusion had contributed significantly to achieving a change of this level. The research team observed non-discriminatory practices in public places. People now feel embarrassed to practice gender and caste based discrimination in public places. Many respondents have clearly indicated that they no longer practice discrimination in public places. However, *Mallo Jatis* are still reluctant to provide decision-making opportunities to Dalits and women. Often they take the lead role and do allow others to act as key decision makers.

- **Physical inclusion but restriction from power:** As a positive and encouraging sign of behavioral change and inclusion of excluded groups such as women and Dalits in local level political and social institutions, community based groups are making progress. But dignified and meaningful participation and sharing of power in decision making is yet to be ensured. Still the excluded groups have a sense of humiliation and do not have confidence to argue for making decision in their own favor.
- **Lack of initiation to tackling the agent:** Due to heightened awareness both among oppressor and oppressed, many positive signs are visible among many people against discrimination. But by and large Dhamis are one of the key agents in promoting, reinforcing and protecting discriminatory practice. Dhamis, faith healers are seen a part of upholding the discriminatory practices. In the fear of tradition and god's wish people believe and obey what Dhamis instruct.
- **Lack of confidence on youth:** The youth forces are against gender and caste based discrimination, which by all means is a positive sign to abolish discrimination. But youth forces were found to be lacking confidence to promote non-discriminatory behavior. Youth are quite rightly accusing tradition, the elderly and faith for continuing discrimination due to “hidden power” embedded during the socialization process. And there is no doubt that this is hindering the elimination of gender and caste based discrimination.
- **Change but not transformation:** Maoist conflict was in many ways instrumental in bringing different kinds of changes to society, mostly in reducing gender and caste based discrimination. Examples include entering temple as a Dalit, girls with *Chhau* attending school regularly and many more. But the elimination of some of the practices such as restriction in entering temples and staying in *Chau Katero* could not be retained. Many people are now following discriminatory practices because of the psychological fear of being a sinner and the cause of harm to assets and livestock. Respondents, both Dalit and non Dalit of the study area clearly stated that Maoists can not protect them from divine power so they could not retain the new practices which were forced. This clearly indicates that the change during the period of conflict was due to fear of guns and was not a distinct transformation in the society. It is due to lack of mechanism to transform and institutionalize the change that people have started practicing in reducing gender and caste based discrimination.

3 TREND OF CUSTOMARY DISCRIMINATION PRACTICES: Untouchability is underlying cause of caste based discrimination. *Chhoi Chito* practice is a purification process for Non Dalits who touch Dalits. The system which was predominant and enforced by the prevailing law during the Rana regime gradually decreased over time among different groups of community people. During the Rana regime, almost all Non Dalits used to practice *chhoi chito* as a mandatory legal provision that continued up to the late sixties. At that time some people voluntarily refrained from discriminatory behavior. The practice continues to decrease gradually and has been almost completely abolished

from most villages during late eighties or even more distinctly after the launch of the Maoist movement. (See Annex 4 "Trend Analysis). Other forms of discriminatory behaviors such as cleaning utensils at the restaurant or drinking water from separate pots are gradually decreasing in most villages but have not been completely abolished and traces are visible in some villages.

The *khalo system*, a socio-economic practice where the relationship between the Dalit and land owner used to be client and patron. This is not totally practiced as it was 20 years ago. Traces and consequences still remain in the community. This has made most Dalits totally dependent on land owners and as a result Dalits lack confidence and are reluctant to confront this system due to threat to their livelihoods.

Kariya is a practice where Dalits are provided land for their settlement and are required to do all agricultural and household work of their land owners till they use the land. This has also made Dalits dependent, however this system which practiced up to 40 years ago is now completely abolished.

Some of the gender based discriminatory practices have shown diminishing tendencies. For example, the untouchable behavior with pregnant women has been significantly diminishing. The trend of discriminatory feeding practices for women has also shown a reducing trend. The practice of hiding during the first menstruation and even in other time has been reduced significantly and some girls go to school even in the first menstruation.

Factors responsible for this changing trend are awareness, exposure of people in different events, and people's participation in different I/NGO programs. The Maoist movement was also found to be contributing in stopping discriminatory practices.

4. VDC WISE COMPARISON OF DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

Table No 7 VDC wise comparison of discriminatory practices

Selected VDC(Based on Discrimination Typology→)	Best		Medium		Worst	
	Rugin, Bajura	Kushapani, Dailekh	Dhungachalna, Achham	Sipti, Darchula	Rilu, Bajhang	Sharmali, Baitadi
Chhaupadi Practice	Separate bed for menstruating women in the same home/room for minimum of four days. They are not allowed to use common water tap and to touch wet and cooked food, or to enter worship places	Separate bed for menstruating women in the same home/room for minimum of four days. They are allowed to use common water tap and to touch wet and cooked food, and to enter worship places	Menstruating women sleep in <i>CHAU KATERA</i> . Not allowed touching water tap. Not allowed touching wet and cooked food	Separate bed for menstruating women in the same home/room for minimum of four days but it may vary from one caste to other. Same water taps for all.	Separate bed for menstruating women in the same home/room for minimum of four days. Are not allowed to use common water tap and to touch wet and cooked food, to enter worship places	Menstruating women sleep in cow shed but no separate <i>CHAU KATERA</i> . Not allowed to touch water tap. Do not allow touching wet and cooked food
Food distribution	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family eat. But delivered women get separate and nutritious food for 12 to 22 days. Food distribution between son and daughter same.	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family. But delivering women get separate and nutritious food for 12 to 22 days. Food distribution between son and	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family eat. But delivering women get separate and <i>Teli Bhat</i> for 10-12 days. Food distribution between son and	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family eat. But delivering women get separate and <i>nutritious food</i> for 10-12 days. Food distribution	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family eat. But delivering women get separate and <i>Teli Bhat</i> for 10-12 days. Food distribution between son and	Pregnant and lactating women get same food as other members of family eat. But delivering women get separate and <i>Teli Bhat</i> for 10-12 days. Food distribution between son and daughter is different. Son gets

		daughter same.	daughter is different. Son gets first priority.	between son and daughter is not different	daughter is different. Son gets first priority.	first priority.
Workload of women		Usually women have to work 2 hours more daily than the men work. Women mostly have to be involved in household and agricultural work whereas men have to involve in labor work and heavy agricultural work.		Usually women have to work 3 hours more daily than the men work. Women mostly have to be involved in household and agricultural work whereas men have to involve in labor work and heavy agricultural work.	Usually women have to work 3 hours more daily than the men work. Women mostly have to be involved in household and agricultural work whereas men have to involve in labor work and heavy agricultural work.	
Discrimination between son and daughter	Parents send both son and daughter to school. Food distribution between son and daughter same.	Parents send both son and daughter to school. Food distribution between son and daughter same.	Parents send both son and daughter to school in primary level but they prefer son to send at secondary level.	Parents send both son and daughter to school. Food distribution between son and daughter same.	Recent days, parents send both son and daughter to school in primary level but they prefer son to send at secondary level. Sons get preference to get nutritious food first and than daughters	Parents send both son and daughter to school. Food distribution between son and daughter is different. Son gets first priority.
Jari System	It prevailed before some years but not practiced today.	It was commonly practiced in both Dalit and non-Dalit castes before some	It prevailed before some years but not practiced today.	It was commonly practiced in both Dalit and non-Dalit castes	Still it prevails especially in Dalit caste. It exists in non-Dalit castes	It was commonly practiced in both Dalit and non-Dalit castes before some

		years but it are rarely practiced today.		before some years. Still it prevails but not commonly.	also but not commonly practiced.	years. Still it prevails but not commonly.
Dhan Khane	It is not found in this VDC.	It is not found in this VDC.	It is not found in this VDC.	It is found in this VDC. One case is found during study.	It is not found in this VDC	It is not found in this VDC
Traces of Khalo system	It is not found in this VDC.	It is not found in this VDC.	It significantly prevailed in the VDC before 1990s. But the relationship between Dalit and non-Dalit still continues.	It is not found in this VDC.	It significantly prevailed in the VDC before 1990s. But the relationship between Dalit and non-Dalit still continues.	It significantly prevailed in the VDC before 1990s. But the relationship between Dalit and non-Dalit still continues.
Discrimination in water tap	Dalits are allowed to take water from the water tap which is used by non-Dalit.	Dalits are allowed to take water from water tap which is used by non-Dalit.	Dalit are allowed to take water from water tap which is used by non-Dalit. But Dalits are not allowed to touch the <i>Naula</i> which is used by non-Dalit.	Dalits are allowed to take water from water tap which is used by non-Dalits.	Dalits are not allowed to take water from water tap which is used by non-Dalit. Neither to touch the <i>Naula</i> which is used by non-dalit.	Dalits are allowed to take water from water tap and also <i>Naula</i> which is used by non-Dalit.
Representation of Dalit and women in community institution	Significant representation of Dalits is found but women's representation is still very poor. Dalits are elected and nominated in decision making position in	Significant representation of Dalits is found but women's representation is still very poor. Dalits are elected and nominated in decision making	Significant representation of Dalits is found but women's representation is still very poor. Dalits are elected and nominated in several community	Few representation of Dalits and women are found in several community institutions and their participation is	Few representation of Dalits and women are found in several community institutions and their participation is not active and meaningful	Few representation of Dalits and women are found in several community institutions and their participation is not active and meaningful

	several community institution in the VDC	position in several community institution in the VDC	institution in the VDC	not active and meaningful		
Denial of entry in temple/worship places	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places. Dalits can participate in religious events but they are not allowed to take <i>Prasad</i> and <i>Panchamrit</i>	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places. Dalits can participate in religious events but they are not allowed to take <i>Prasad</i> and <i>Panchamrit</i>	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places. Dalits can participate in religious events but they are not allowed to take <i>Prasad</i> and <i>Panchamrit</i>	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places. Dalits are not allowed to participate in religious events.	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places. If any Dalit dares to enter s/he has to face violent attack. Such cases are found during study	Dalits and women with menstruation are not allowed to enter in temple and worship places.

PART THREE

Recommendations and Conclusion

1. RECOMMENDATION:

The following recommendations are made which could be helpful in designing a gender equality and social inclusion strategy. The narrative description of the recommendations is elaborated below, whereas the detail and specific activities for short term, medium term and longer term implementation are presented in the table

1.1. Behavior Change Intervention:

Behavior Change Intervention (BCI) could be the most important factor in achieving social transformation. Hence, a comprehensive BCI package for Dalit, non-dalit males and females is strongly recommended. This intervention is expected to be instrumental in:

Increasing Knowledge

- Ensure that people have the basic facts of learning in a language, visual medium or other media that they can understand and relate to.
- Motivate audiences to change their behaviors in positive ways.

Stimulating Community Dialogue

- Encourage community and national discussions on the underlying factors of caste and gender based discrimination
- Create a demand for information and services, and should spur action for reducing risk, vulnerability and stigma.

Promoting Advocacy

- Can ensure that policy makers and opinion leaders approach Advocacy at all levels, from the national down to the local community level.

Reducing Stigma and Discrimination

- Should address stigma and discrimination and attempt to influence social responses to them.

Promoting Services for Improving Livelihoods

- Addresses immediate needs of women, Dalits and other excluded groups.

1.2. Capacity Building:

Capacity building is a process of enabling community people, especially Dalit, poor, ethnic minorities, women in asserting their rights and resisting the customary discretionary practices. Community animation is an integral part of capacity building that awakens people to undertake gender friendly, inclusive and sustainable development activities by themselves.

1.3. Institutional mechanism to promote and sustain the change:

Institutional mechanism was found to be lacking to bring and sustain change. Hence, an appropriate mechanism is recommended.

1.4. Livelihoods Promotion:

Livelihoods of Dalit were found to be threatened mainly because of a changed relationship between client (Dalits) and patrons (Non Dalits). Most Dalit and Non Dalit males from the community are forced to go India for livelihood opportunities that have contributed in increasing workload of women. Hence, a livelihoods promotion program

is recommended. Depending upon the community situation, different dimensions of livelihoods could be addressed while developing livelihoods promotion programs.

1.5. Alternative to Firewood:

Most women were found to be spending a longer duration of time in collecting firewood, which is ever decreasing in the forest and is getting further every year due to heavy deforestation. Support to develop alternatives to firewood is recommended.

1.6. Paralegal Services:

There are number of legal provisions that ensure rights of women and Dalits. Effective implementation of all these laws, policy and rules is expected to address issues related to gender and caste based discrimination. With the aim of raising legal awareness and also lobbying for effective implementation of all legal provision, paralegal services and legal education to Dalits and women is recommended. This could be through integrating human rights education to both male and female-Dalit, Non-Dalit to promote access of women and Dalit in resources and institutions.

Table No 8 Recommended activities for immediate, mid term and long term implementation

Recommended activities	Immediate	Mid term	Long term
1. Behavior Change Intervention	<p><u>Identification of a role model</u> as a change agent to develop and follow non discriminatory and inclusive practices. Dhamis, FCHVs, local progressive teachers and some exemplary persons such as a couple who have had an inter-caste marriage could be potential role models.</p>	<p><u>Facilitating the demonstration of change</u> at the community level and advocating the policy/system change with the micro level experience and examples.</p>	<p><u>Providing appropriate training</u> and other motivational support (recognizing the change attempts, providing small incentives) to the identified role models.</p>
2. Capacity Building:	<p><u>2.1. Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciative inquiry for positive attitudes among stakeholders, NGO workers, community activists, WRMC members, users committee members and local political leaders. - Rights of women, Dalits and other excluded groups (Rights Based Approach (RBA) to development, human rights and other rights holders) - Human Rights Education to the community people 		

	<p><u>2.1. Community Animation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitization on rights and responsibilities of people in general and women, Dalits and the poor in particular. Sensitization camps should be organized in different villages. <p>Encouraging the targeted people in exploring issues and activities that need immediate attention. On-site coaching should be provided for exploring issues & activities, developing steps of planning & implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership development of community people in general and women, Dalits and the poor in particular by providing appropriate opportunities to take initiatives, allowing them to participate in training and gain exposure, - Providing following skills by training and on-site coaching, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing following skills by training and on-site coaching, community organization, effective meeting facilitation and decision making - equitable distribution of resources - promoting meaningful participation - negotiation skills and enhancing collective bargaining - fostering assertive dialogue - advocacy and lobbying
<p>3. Institutional mechanism to promote and sustain the change:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Providing appropriate training</u> and other motivational support (recognizing the change attempts, providing small incentives) to the identified role models. ▪ Promote the Water Resource Management Committee (WRMC) as community based development organizations, as a priority. ▪ Strengthening users committees by providing training, exposure and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elaborate clearly the relationship of WRMC with local government (VDC and DDC), non governmental organization, users groups such as forestry, water, CBOs, savings and credit groups and road building groups. ▪ WRMC could be the messenger of non discriminatory practice as there is less discrimination in recently established water taps. 	

	<p>institutional building inputs such as on-site coaching, system development and implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to establish linkage and coordination of WRMC with other existing governmental and non-governmental institutions. 	<p>With this example, the WRMC could be mobilized to abolish discriminatory practices in other issues.</p>	
4. Livelihoods Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing training and financial support to initiate income generation based on their interest and existing skills such as <i>Bhango</i> knitting, Nepali paper making, Knitting ▪ Providing income generation support to start small enterprises such as small grocery, stall and retail shops, goat raising, small scale poultry, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline study on livelihoods situation, threats and potentials of promoting enterprises including feasibility and market-chain analysis. ▪ Developing a livelihood improvement plan focusing the livelihoods of Dalit , single women, poor and ethnic minorities ▪ Supporting implementation of livelihoods improvement plan 	
5. Alternative to Firewood	<p>Distribution of 'tukimara' Promotion of improved cooking stove</p>	<p>Promotion of Solar energy and small hydro power</p>	
6. Paralegal Services		<p>Legal Education related to women and Dalit's rights</p>	

2. Conclusion: The discriminatory practices are chronic and deep rooted in the community, in both the powerful and powerless segments of society. Many initiatives have attempted to change this - much success has been recorded but not sustained due to lack of institutional mechanisms. Attempts were exclusive to certain castes and/or gender that generated conflict and dispute at the individual, household and community level, and created confrontation among the castes or male-female rather developing consensus and respecting the rights of others.

Custom or traditional practice is an excuse, as is the fear of 'SIN' and psychological fright of becoming sick or harm to assets and, therefore, the majority of people are not ready to change their discriminatory behaviour towards women and Dalits. For the same reasons, Dalits and women are also afraid of raising their voices against the discriminatory practices.

Dalit awareness has been raised but no opportunity has been created to break the discriminatory socio-economic relations between Dalit and Non-Dalits. This has created a threat to the livelihoods of Dalit. As consequences Dalit women are forced to work longer hours as males are continuing to work away from home for want of job.

Considering the extent of gender and caste based discrimination prevailing at the community level, isolated and exclusive intervention is not sufficient to make meaningful social transformation. Hence, integrated attempts are inevitable to address this situation. We have recommended initiatives which are expected to be instrumental in developing a short term, medium term and longer term Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.

Annexes

Glossary

Bhage (Client): The family who have to provide their services to the Gosain (Patron) in their agricultural work and other household activities as per the need of the Gosain Family.

Bhakal Garne: Practice of making a promise to God. People often believe that if they ask God for something with the promise of offering something valuable, then they will get what they ask for. Usually such promises are made for requests such as getting a son after having a large number of daughters, winning pending court cases, having good fortune in the betterment of family, being released from sorrow and pain, recovering from severe diseases, getting a better job in India and so on.

Bhnada Laune: Purification process of delivered women. This is local slang which is used by local people of Dhungachalna.

Bitalu (Impure person): The marriage between a Dalit and non-Dalit is restricted by society. If they fall on love and marry, they are met with disapproval from both sides, and it is taken against their caste culture. They are considered to be *Bitalu* (impure) by both castes. Such beliefs also prevail within the Dalit caste. If a son of Bishwokarma marries with a daughter of Damai (considered lower caste) the couple is considered as Bitalu. The Dalit community would accept a love marriage between a son from their family and a girl from non-Dalit family. However, the non-Dalit family considers their own daughter married to a Dalit as equal to a Dalit, and offspring from the couple are also considered Dalit.

Caste: Caste is the traditional social stratification of the people belonging to Hindu religion in which status is ascribed by birth

Chhau Padi Katera: A Small hut where menstruating women have to stay for seven days every month. These are used jointly by 7 to ten households and the huts are approximately 5x6 feet in size and about 5 feet high. The woman's family members take her food in the dishes.

Chhaupadi or Chhau: A woman/girl with menstruation who is considered impure for five days during her menstruation.

Chhoi Chito: A purification process practiced by non-Dalits after being touched by a Dalit. Water dipped in gold is sprinkled for purification.

Dalit: The lowest strata in the Hindu caste system, Dalits are traditionally treated untouchables by the so-called upper castes.

Dhami: A Traditional healer of who treated the sick people in the rural areas of western Nepal. Such Dhami are found in Both Dalit and Non-Dalit castes. Both Dhamis can work for both castes. But Dalit *Dhami* is not allowed to be in worship in Non-Dalit's worship places. Dalit *Dhami* is only involved in the worship places of Dalits. The *Dhami* is considered sacred person. Non-Dalit Dhami does not take anything touched by Dalit. Both Dhamis do not take anything touched by the *Chhaupadi*.

Gosain: The land owner who provides food grains to Dalit at the time of harvesting against the agricultural and other works which is done by the *Bhage* Dalit. The *Gosain* are considered as *Rithi* (Patron) of the *Bhage* (Client)

Janajati: Ethnic groups of Nepal having their own language, culture and linked with their origin.

Jari Khane: First husband claiming money to compensate the wedding cost from the second husband.

Kariya: A kind of agricultural bonded labor (usually Dalit) that is provided with the piece of land for their settlement, and required to perform the entire domestic and farm activities of land owners. The land owners also have to provide food annually to support the Kariya's livelihood. But the amount of food to be provided by the landowner is decided by the landowner. The Karaiya has to accept the amount fixed by the landowner. This system was prevalent in Kushapani before 1975 but it is abolished nowadays.

Khalo: *Khalo* is a center place for harvesting corns from where Dalits collect food grains left by the *Gosains* in the field. Generally Dalits collect food grains twice a year, according to the harvesting time of food grains.

Laspas Hune (Touching): As mentioned, the *Chhaupadi* (or menstruating woman) must stay away from home for five days according to tradition in the rural areas of the far western districts. They spend seven days in a small hut (shed) away from the home and they cannot touch other people or even crops, plants, herbs or cattle.. If the menstruating women touch these things, it is believed to be a sin, and that God will get angry, causing loss. This practice is prevalent in the far-Western region, especially in Dhungachalna VDC.

Mallo Jati: Local slang to address the non-Dalits who are considered so called high caste – Mallo means upper and Jati means caste.

Matha (Mashta God): Generally, the God which is worshipped by the Dalit traditional healer, is called Maitha or Mashta God. The place of worship is selected in the forest or in a location of high altitude, which is away from the settlement. The healers offer worship to their gods at full moon in the December, January, May and July. Dalit and non-Dalit locals also make offerings, which were previously promised. Those offering animal sacrifices to the gods are also considered to be Dalit, and called *Phulpate*. There is a tradition that *Phulpate* keeps the head of the animal sacrificed for taking responsibility of severing it and offering blood to the Maitha.

Naula (Well): A small well which collectswater. The wells are in gorges near to the villages or in wetland. Villagers fetch drinking water from the well. Menstruating women are restricted from using the common *Naulas* and they go to the streams, ponds or other *Naulas* further away than the common *Naulas*.

Non-Dalit: The other castes, besides Dalit who are not considered as un-touchable. The Non Dalit is considered touchable according to Hindu mythology.

Pnachamrit: Sacred liquid made out of five nectars such as cow milk, honey, yogurt, semi processed sugar (sakkhar) and ghee.

Rithi (Patron): The Non-Dalit land owner for whom the Dalits have to provide their labor service in agriculture as well as household activities.

Teli Bhaat: Rice dipped in mustard oil, which is considered to be nutritious food, and often given to women who have recently given birth.

Some local words which are used by the local peoples in the study VDCs

SN	Local	Nepali	English
1.	PUDA	PARA	Far
2.	WADA	WARA	Near
3.	FIYO	RUGHA, KHOKI	Cold
4.	BELI	HIJO	Yesterday
5.	BHOLA	BHOLI	Tomorrow
6.	PORU	ASTI	Day before yesterday
7.	BAIJANU	JANU	To go
8.	BHAIRA	BAHIRA	Out
9.	PIDDO	PIDA	Pain
10.	NAULA	KUWA	Well
11.	CHHORETTI	CHORI	Daughter
12.	CHORRETTA	CHHORA	Son
13.	PARSUTI, CHHAU	PRASUTI, MAHINAWARI	Menstruation
14.	SAURA, RAJABAR	SASURA	Father in law
15.	HADDU	HIDNU	To walk
16.	SAAG	TARKARI, SABJI	Vegetable, Curry
17.	GHOGA	MAKAI	Corn, Maize
18.	KADDU	PHARSI	Pumpkin
19.	TAMI	TAPAIN	You
20.	BARTI	JUADA	More, Enough
21.	ROPNERI	ROPAHAR	Female labor who plants paddy
22.	ROPARU	BAUSE	Male labor who works for planting paddy
23.	BALLA	GORU	Oxen
24.	GORU	GAI	Cow
25.	BHUISA	BHAISI	Buffalo
26.	FERO	GHUMAURO	Longer way
27.	MAKHI	MALAI	To me
28.	KHOCHO LAUNU	KURA CHHINNU	Engagement for wedding
29.	BASA	SANJH	Evening
30.	CHHAKAL	BIHAN	Morning
31.	HOBHA	BHAYO	[insert meaning]
32.	HITHIN	YAHA	Here
33.	JHIKAI	JYADAI	More enough
34.	MALLO	MATHILLO	Upper
35.	TALLO	TALLO	Lower
36.	NANU	SANU	Little, few
37.	NIKO	RAMRO, THIKAI	OK, Good
38.	BHADA CHHOLNE	BHADA MAJHNE	Washing utensils
39.	CHHEULI	KHOL	Cover
40.	HAPRE	UKALO	Upwards climbing
41.	PANGLA	TERSO	Plain

SN	Local	Nepali	English
42.	BAIKANA	TANDERI	Adult male
43.	BAIKANI	TARUNI	Adult female
44.	JHARO	DAURA	Firewood
45.	JHORO	Diyalo	[insert]
46.	CHELO	CHORA	Son
47.	CHELI	CHORI	Daughter
48.	PUTARI	SWASNI	Wife
49.	BAUNSE	LOGNE	Husband
50.	KHAILATI	BAJA BAJAUNE (Dalit)	Drummer, Trumpet Blower
51.	PARSO	MAL	Organic Manure
52.			

References

1. Action Aid Nepal, Save the Children and Care Nepal, National Dalit Strategy Report, Prepared for GoN/National Planning Commission
2. Action Aid Nepal: Existing Practices of Caste Based Un-touchability in Nepal and Strategy for a Campaign for its Elimination;
3. AHUTI, Self Reliance Development Forum, Katmandu, Question of Dalit's Emancipation in Hindu Society, 2004.
4. Asian Legal Resource Centre, Alternative report to the 16th periodic report of State Party Nepal to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, December 2003,
5. Associated Press, Nepal Untouchables Doubt Govt's Vow to Ban Discrimination, 25 August 2001.
6. Binaj Gurubacharya, Nepal bans bias against untouchables in move to end Hindu caste system, Associated Press, 17 August 2001.
7. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Fifty-third session, Concluding Observations to the ninth to the thirteenth periodic reports of Nepal, CERD/C/53/Misc, August 1998.
8. Dor Bashadur Bista, Fatalism and Development, Orient Longman Ltd, Calcutta, 1993.
9. Dr. Hari Bansh Tripathi, Fundamental Rights and Judicial Review in Nepal (Evolution and Experiments), Pairavi Prakashan, 2002,
10. Dr. Shibesh Chandra Regmi, Gender issues in the Management of Water Projects in Nepal.
11. Dr.Dilli Ram Dahal, Social Composition Of The Population: Caste/Ethnicity And Religion In Nepal, 2006
12. FWLD, Kathmandu, Special Provisions for Women in Nepal and Their Impact, 2004
13. FWLD, Kathmandu, Discriminatory Laws in Nepal and Their Impact on Women.
14. Human Rights Watch communications with Dalit activists, January 2004.
15. Human Rights Watch would like to thank the Nepal-based Dalit NGOs that provided information for this report. Human Rights Watch would also like to thank Laurie Vasily, a US-based expert on Dalits in Nepal, for her assistance in providing information on cases of abuses against Dalits.
16. Human Rights Watch, Caste Discrimination, A Global Concern, A Report for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Durban, South Africa, September 2001.
17. Informal Sector Service Center, Katmandu, Caste Discrimination in Nepal, 1996
18. Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063 (2006)
19. Mary Cameron: On the Edge of Auspicious: Gender and Caste in Nepal;

20. Padmalal Bishwakarma, Caste Discrimination and Untouchability against Dalits in Nepal, paper prepared by the Society for the Liberation of Oppressed Dalit Castes, Nepal, for the Global Conference on Caste Discrimination, New Delhi, March 1-4, 2001.
21. Prof. Hari Bansha Jha, Strategies of Dalit Upliftment in Nepal, Centre for Economic and Technical Studies, Kathmandu, 2000.
22. Team Consult Pvt. Ltd, the Condition of Dalit in Nepal Assessment of the Impact of Various Development Intervention, 2004.
23. The Centre for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU School of Law Caste Discrimination and conflict in Nepal, 2005
24. UNESCO, Nepal, Forms and Patterns of Discrimination In Nepal;
25. World Bank/DFID: Unequal Citizens-Gender, Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal.