

SAKCHAM and Women Empowerment in Nepal

Stories and strategies – lessons and guidelines



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Acknowledgements

This manual needed to grow over some time. It looks back on more than nine years of cooperation between communities in Sarlahi, Mahottari, Chitwan, Makwanpur and Kaplivastu districts, local NGOs and stakeholders from these districts, CARE Sakcham team, first in Hetauda and later in Bharatpur, CARE Nepal, CARE Austria/Österreich and the Austrian Development Cooperation represented by the Austrian Development Agency. It has been financially supported primarily by the Austrian Development Cooperation, by CARE's Austria's fund raising from private persons in Austria as well as by the entrepreneur Mr. Windhager.

The project which was implemented by the above mentioned cooperation was called "Sakcham" – "competent" in Nepali language. It has become a symbol of strength and competency for various reasons – firstly because of the individuals who supported or worked for this project, many of them stayed with the project throughout all the nine years – this manual is sharing their work and is dedicated to them; secondly because women in the project area, particularly poor, vulnerable and socially excluded women have, with the support of Sakcham, organized themselves in local and regional "networks" (women's advocacy groups) and have become a voice in local and regional development processes that proves their competency for leadership .

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Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---------------|---|
| BZ..... | Buffer zone | MoU | Memoranda of Understanding |
| CA | Constituent Assembly | NAP | National Action Plan |
| CBO | Community based organisation | NFOWRC | National Forum for Women's Rights Concern |
| CBPCW | Community Based Psychosocial CARE Worker | NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| CBSW..... | Community based social worker | NMG | National Monitoring Group |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women | NWC | National Women Commission |
| CMC | Centre for Mental Health and Counselling (Nepal) | PAF | Poverty Alleviation Fund |
| CRSV | Conflict-related sexual violence | PEC | Popular Education Centres |
| CSB..... | Community Score-Board | PSS | Psycho-social support |
| CVICT..... | Centre for Victims of Torture | PVSE | Poor, vulnerable and socially excluded |
| DCO | Division Co-operatives Office | R&R | Review and Reflection (CARE approach) |
| DDC..... | District Development Committee | REFLECT | Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques |
| DPAC..... | District Project Advisory Committee | RTI | Right to Information |
| DV. | Domestic violence | RWSC..... | Rural Women Service Centre |
| FEDO | Federation of Dalit Organisations | SGBV..... | Sexual and gender-based violence |
| FNJ..... | Federation of Nepalese Journalists | SII | Strategic Impact Inquiry |
| GAD..... | Gender and Diversity (approach) | ToC..... | Theory of Change |
| GBV | Gender-based violence | ToT | Training of trainers |
| GEWE | Gender equality and women's empowerment | TPO | Trans-cultural Psychosocial Organisation |
| HH | Household | UCPA..... | Underlying Causes of Poverty Analysis |
| IASC..... | Inter-Agency Standing Committee (UN) | UCPVA | Underlying Causes of Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis |
| IGA | Income generating activity | UNSCR..... | United National Security Council Resolution |
| LACC..... | Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre | VAW | Violence against women |
| LGCPD..... | Local Governance and Community Development Programme | VDC | Village Development Committee |
| LIP | Livelihood Implementation Plan | VMGO..... | Vision, Mission, Goal, Objectives |
| LPC | Local Peace Committee | VPAC | Village Project Advisory Committee |
| MoA&C | Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives | WOSCC..... | Women Skill Creation Centre |

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Part 1

The story and impact of SAKCHAM

Introduction

This document is both a free-standing overview of SAKCHAM and Part 1 of a manual to engage development practitioners and donors in learning about how CARE Nepal successfully used a right-based approach to tackle women's empowerment (WE) in post-conflict Nepal. This portion of the manual profiles CARE Nepal's exciting WE work in the SAKCHAM project, which was implemented from 2007 until the end of 2015 in the Terai region of Nepal. Readers will be able to see the main components, the most important learnings, key steps and the outcomes of a holistic model, which we hope and believe, can be replicated elsewhere.



The “SAKCHAM” story

In 2008 the first Learning Conference of the “Claiming Rights, Promoting Peace: Women’s Empowerment in Conflict affected Areas” Program took place in the Terai region of southern Nepal. Participants gathered in Kathmandu and then wound their way steeply down from the snowy Himalaya Mountains to the green, lush and hot plains where the SAKCHAM project was located.

A multitude of colourful community women and CARE Nepal staff waited eagerly to meet the participants from sister projects in Burundi, Uganda and Austria – giving time and space to get to know each other, to exchange and reflect together. It was an enormously enriching experience to hear and feel women’s joys, pains and sorrows, their ways to overcome the hard parts, and then suddenly grasp the turning points where hopelessness turns into power.

The deepest impression came from a visit to one of the programme’s “Popular Education Centres” (PECs), founded only a year before. On the way there, the group observed a little, colourful ceremonial march – led by a very young, pre-adolescent girl with a red scarf, under a glittering Baldachin. Curious about the procession, we asked our Nepali colleagues what this was all about – expecting to hear about another little goddess encountered reborn in this village, like the “Kumari” (living goddess) in Kathmandu.

But soon a heavy sadness overwhelmed us, when we heard that this girl was about to marry and that this was also the reason why she was crying so heartbreakingly. “It is a day of sadness for most of us women, if we marry here in Nepal” murmured one of our colleagues, leaving our hearts squeezed, witnessing the helplessness of the girl and her mother, marching with tears to the house of the groom and the in-laws.

This is then, where the story of SAKCHAM begins. Let Radha, a young Dalit women in her late 20s – tell us her very personal story of SAKCHAM:

“I was born Dalit and raised in Phapar Bari, Makwanpur district in the Terai as the 5th daughter out of seven siblings. My parents were very poor landless people – they needed to work in rice and sugar cane fields as daily labourers to feed us. Money only allowed my two brothers to go to school. We girls had to help in the household and fields to make our living, and couldn’t learn to read and write.

One hot day, it must have been in 1998, we were picking tobacco leaves in the fields, when suddenly we heard the loud explosions of a close-by gunfight. Desperately scared, we ran for our lives and hid in the woods until it was dark and calm again; but now war had come to our place. That night, I listened to my parents talking at the fire place – my father said, “It is getting harder to survive now. Let’s look for husbands for our girls so that they are safe and have something to eat. Anyway, we cannot afford a good dowry ... It is getting too dangerous to work in the fields; the girls might even get raped. I don’t see any other option.” My mother pleaded with my father in tears to change his mind, but he didn’t. Within three weeks everything was arranged and I was married off at the age of only 11. I will never forget wearing the red scarf – sign of a bride - at this saddest day in my life.

My husband was 15 years older than me, and I became basically the maid of his mother – my in-law. All day long I did the washing of clothes, cooking, cleaning and other household work for them. Nevertheless, I was treated like a useless person and many nights I cried wanting to go back with my family. Everything got worse when I became an adolescent and my husband started to touch me. Soon I got pregnant and by 14 I gave birth to my first daughter, Nirmala. Instead of congratulating me, the in-laws blamed me for not having given birth to a boy. Luckily my next child was a boy and at 18 my second daughter Devi was

born. By then, my husband had gotten into heavy drinking. When he came home he quarrelled with me, or even slapped me until one Sunday in 2005, he didn't return any more. The villagers said that he had been killed in an ambush between the army and the Maoists. All of a sudden I was 19 years old, had three children and was a widow! To be a widow in Nepal means disdain, constant humiliation and agony – and wearing white clothes.

Exactly the day that the 11-day mourning period was over, my in-laws drove me off their land and said I had no right to stay there anymore. Only after an intervention of my parents, they gave me back my little dowry and I built a humble hut at the outskirts of the village for me and my three children. Now I was in total agony and despair – what should I do? How could I care for my children, how to feed them? How could I defend myself from the men who were waiting outside in the dark? Wishing to die, I didn't see any way out any more. Now I was not only a Dalit and a woman, but also a widow, the worst of the worst! The villagers didn't allow me to access the well for drinking water any more – so I needed to carry it from a pond in the forest, which created heavy stomach problems to my kids, even causing the death of my beloved Devi. Sadness crouched over me like a dark, black cloud, taking over my mind.

One hot and sunny market day, I went to Makwanpur, trying to sell some fresh fruit I had gathered in the woods. I saw a crowd of people gathered and when I went near, I caught a glimpse of a street drama about a woman in the armed conflict, a woman who was a widow like me. The scenes touched my heart, as they felt so familiar to me. At the end, the actors mentioned that a project called SAKCHAM is coming to the communities, and that it would help poor women suffering due to the armed conflict, which had finally ended in 2006 after ten long years.

Identifying Poor, Vulnerable and Socially Excluded (PVSE) women by using UCPA process, women group formation

Some weeks later in 2007, some strangers - CARE and Rural Women's Service Centre people - came to visit my community, Dhiyal. Together with the Land Rights Forum and the VDC, they had identified landless households and the poorest and vulnerable people – and I was one of them. I didn't even dare to answer and just blushed when they asked if I would like to participate in a "Popular Education Centre", as they were higher caste people. But when they nicely explained that I could bring my kids to the meeting, and that we would work together on solutions for the poor women of the community, I shyly agreed.

I remember, in the first meeting, we were about 25 really poor women. We started to meet each week in the shade of the very big Banyan tree near the village centre, with Sarita from Rural Women's Service Centre who was assisting our dialogues. In those precious spaces, where we could finally talk and be listened to, we started to share our personal stories and I understood all of a sudden that I was not alone! Many of us had lost their husbands, fathers, or brothers and sons in the conflict and many had experienced violence – be it in their own family, or in the armed forces. While sharing our sorrows, we felt a strong tie starting to unite us, each time a bit more. All of us were immensely relieved to understand that we were NOT alone. We had finally found somebody to trust and a place where we felt safe. Therefore, we called our PEC "Ramailo" (Joy).

Weekly discussions, sharing on women's rights, psychosocial support, problem identification, depth analysis, men engagement; UNSCR 1325 & 1820

Sarita taught us how to analyse our poverty and dig down to the very roots of our problems with the power mapping and well-being ranking exercises and using the psychosocial support cycle chart. We finally understood that it was not our fault for being poor; that we were not dumb and that our voices and stories are worthy. We understood that our body, mind and souls formed us as individuals, but that family and friends, our organizational, spiritual and traditional environment, as well

Explore alternatives, possible actions and prioritising issues – develop group understanding and advocacy plan, action plan preparation

as the universe all had influences on us, and that we needed to address all those aspects to be well at heart. Being a woman or Dalit doesn't mean no rights or being worse than male or high caste people. Power needs to be shared equally among all people!

Whenever we were sad or anything happened to a member of our group, the psychosocial care workers were a great relief. We can now talk to them in private and share our grievances, often related to violence against us or our children – and they help us to overcome it. Soon we started being real friends in our PEC, helping each other with child care and cooking, and thereby got deeper and deeper into the analysis of our problems.

Advocate and implement local issues and provide psychosocial support, collaboration with others, review of reflections of achievements and challenges

Once we had mapped our community, we made an action plan about how to change for good. Each of us chooses where or what she wanted to follow up on. I decided to work for the good education of my kids. We had seen that teachers never arrived in time, left early and treated the children, especially Dalit kids, badly. There were no toilets for girls, which resulted in many families forbidding girls to go to school. We made up a school committee and visited the teachers and headmaster. At first they didn't want to listen to us. But as we learned in the PEC about claiming our rights, and that institutions are there to deliver services to the people like us, we firmly insisted and also went to the VDC secretary to complain.

And my dear - our plans started to fly! We had successes; the irresponsible male teacher was replaced by a young Dalit woman. After a PEC session on the rights of women to 10% of the local government budget, we organized a sit-in in front of the VDC and finally received money to build a girls' sanitary at the school. We, the women, gave our volunteer labour and it was a joyful day of victory when we inaugurated it! This was in 2008. Weekly, we heard about successes in other PECs that were created by SAKCHAM in three districts, and we eagerly learned from the good practices of others. At this point in time, we had already understood that women of all castes had the same rights as men, and we learned about citizenship, land rights, the rights of women in and after conflict. We learned about access to the communal lands, and we also received literacy classes and income generating trainings. All of a sudden, it was as if my hopelessness had turned into a feeling of self-worth and joy, and the sun shined again in my heart. We were finally listened to and speaking out loud!

Increase access and control over private, social property and services and improved livelihood

With a little seed funding I got from CARE, I started a tiny retail shop in my village. I could do that, because my friends in our PEC helped me with the household when I had to travel and buy supplies, and then I helped them when they needed me. This made our lives, especially for single mothers and war widows, so much easier! In 2009 our PEC also founded a cooperative, as some of us had started group farming of grains, turmeric and ginger, by leasing land with some seed money.

One big challenge we faced was that my friends suffered a lot of violence in their families, often related to alcohol drinking by their husbands. A really ugly case was when one villager, Asastamawa, beat his pregnant wife, Indivar, so hard that she broke her leg shortly before delivery. Outraged by this huge injustice, some of our PEC group took care of Indivar and brought her to medical services; others of our group went to his house, took him and delivered him to the Makwanpur police station.

Men engagement, eliminate social harmful practices, change in existing gender roles and norms

This was in 2009, and was when the engaging men campaign started in our community, Dhiyal. First, the religious and community leaders got an orientation on the problem and the legal situation by CARE and the women's centre. Then, the social mobilization people

started to work with men directly. It was so helpful when respected men like the school headmaster spoke out in favour of non-violent behaviour, as the fellow men listened to them. Our group started to help each other whenever we heard that one of our friends was in danger. We formed a Psychosocial Support Committee, which is extremely helpful. It is where we can talk about cases of abuse with the VDC secretary, who is on the committee, and look for solutions for social problems in our community.

Over the months, men started helping us with household chores, when they understood that we women work more than double the hours in a day that they do. This happened after doing a daily work-load analysis in the couple discussions at our PEC, and some really brave role model men openly started to do women's work.....this didn't go uncontested, but it made the starting point of change. Men liked it, too – now they could openly enjoy being with their kids, and caring for them.

Improved women's social position and political engagement, increase self-esteem and self-efficacy

In 2009, our PEC became a first member of the VDC women's network. It was so exciting to exchange with the women of other PECs! I remember when Government all of a sudden claimed that men who would volunteer to marry widows would get a benefit of Rs 50,000 (463 U\$)! This was terrible! I felt so upset that we organized a rally against this government provision, as all the bad experience of my first marriage flashed back on me. Again, we women were seen as something to trade off, without any possibility to make up our own life. That day I decided: My daughter will only wear a bride's red scarf if she wishes to do so – voluntarily and happily, with the person of her choice, but not crying, forced and under-age! All my friends from the PEC joined in, we wrote poems and songs about it and since that time we do our best to send our girls to school and ease their future.

Alliance building on women's rights and concerns for women's empowerment, gender equality

Later that year we heard that at district level, another women's network was forming; and it was in 2010 when we also joined. Many of us now had gained a lot of self-confidence; and we started to be present in the different village committees.

Advocacy for implementation of strategy, policy and gender responsive constitution

Although at the beginning it was difficult to speak out loud, we got used to it and I was even elected to the school committee! In 2010 we participated in the campaign for a gender-friendly constitution with NFOWRC – it was so interesting to discuss, with Sarita's support, the importance of the constitution and its content in our PEC and we proudly transmitted our views together with our own signatures to the district level. We were now determined to change the world for our children, especially our daughters and nobody could stop us!

Increase women's meaningful participation at all levels – household, community, government and other structures

The VDC people, who first thought we were “only poor women”, now take us seriously and listen to us; one of our colleagues voices our women's interests at the VDC level. The PEC is respected by men and women in the community, and by all castes. Dalit can now fetch water from the public well and are also allowed to take part in the religious ceremonies in the temples.

Many things have changed to the good. We, the women, now have a say in our houses and in the community, we can make our living much easier. We now know that we are all worthy persons! My daughters will soon finish school, and will go on with their education – we have decided that they will only marry once they are ready on their own. With the income from my little shop, I can afford to send them to school. Thanks to Sakcham; our life got better and has turned to the good. When I stroll through our community in the evenings, I hear lots of laughs of happy families instead of crying, and this fills my heart with joy. Looking back in life, SAKCHAM has really been the turning point for me and my daughters.”

Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

CARE's approach to Gender Equality

In the NGO world, the term “women’s empowerment” has become a buzzword or ‘catch phrase’ used to describe almost any project that aims to improve the lives of women or girls, often without addressing the true meaning of ‘power’ at its centre. Aware of this devaluation of the concept, CARE designed the Strategic Impact Inquiry (SII¹) on women’s empowerment, a three-year impact research (2004-2006), in which thousands of women across dozens of research sites around the world helped shape an authentic story of empowerment. The SII researchers found that lasting empowerment for any given woman relies on a combination of changes in her aspirations and achievements (agency), in the societal rules and customs that shape her possibilities in life (structure) and in the nature of relationships through which she navigates her life (relations). This empowerment framework is applicable at family and community levels and in economic or cultural life, as well as around peace-building and higher-level governance.

CARE understands that women’s empowerment is complex, nonlinear and unpredictable. It is beyond the scope of one organization, let alone any one-time/resource-bound project. Striving effectively for gender equality requires us to engage the diversity we know to be true for our own lives and relationships. Therefore, **CARE defines women’s empowerment as the combined effect of changes needed for a woman to realize her full human rights. In these efforts, women must struggle to balance practical, daily, individual achievements with strategic, collective, long-term work to challenge biased social rules and institutions.**

The general programmatic implications arising from the women’s empowerment SII are:

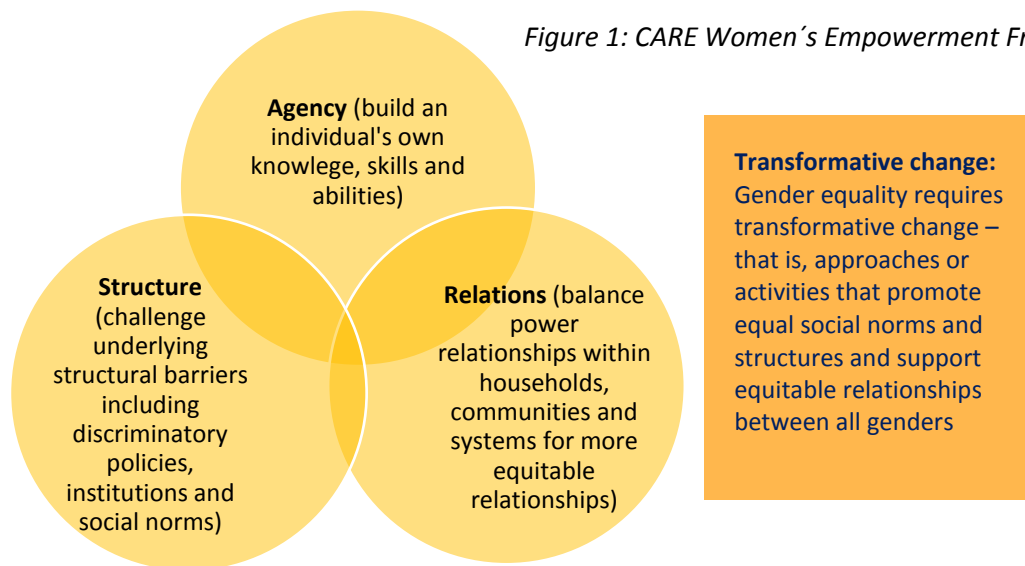
- **Start with local contexts**, realities and power dynamics, including the analyses and agendas that women’s rights and social justice movements are already defining and leading.
- **Solidarity groups** can provide women with empowering space and support, but we must recognize that our work with groups is often a woman’s first step into collective identity / action, and use group strategies to link to wider movements for social change.
- Build a deeper **understanding of women’s preferred paths** and strategies for empowerment, while not being timid about consciousness-raising.
- Make **empowerment goals explicit from programme design to evaluation**, ensuring that interventions contribute to holistic change in agency, structure and relations.
- Seek entry points to maximize chances of engaging / learning about local communities, **building relations of trust and interdependence**, and bringing opposing interests together.
- **Engage men/elites** to explore their interests, beliefs, and fears – expanding alliances for affirming socially just gender-power relations, and reducing backlash against women.

Building from the SII research, CARE asserts that true empowerment for women emerges from the interplay of changes in three dimensions (see also diagram on the next page):

- **Agency**: her own skills and knowledge self-esteem and personal aspiration;
- **Structure**: the environment that surrounds and conditions her choices (including societal norms, customs, institutions and policies);

¹ <http://www.care.org/our-work/womens-empowerment/gender-integration/strategic-impact-inquiry-womens-empowerment>

- **Relations:** the power relations through which she negotiates her path (including power dynamics within the household, with intimate partners and support from others).



CARE has a commitment to be – wherever possible – gender transformative, which requires more effort than just including women and girls in projects to claim progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality. There is wide recognition in development and relief work that all programming should, at a minimum, be gender sensitive, but reaching for gender equality needs a transformative change approach. This means transforming gender roles, altering structures that maintain inequality and promoting gender equal relationships between men and women.

CARE and women's empowerment in post-conflict Nepal

CARE Nepal has operationalised the global women's empowerment framework in its programmes by three critical pathways:

- Enhancing the capacities of women and institutions:** By enhancing women's and institutions capacities, CARE Nepal expects to increase critical awareness on patriarchy and gender roles (among both men and women), improve self-esteem of women, strengthen their skills to make choices and help them to be better organized to defend their rights.
- Strengthening systems and structures for service delivery:** By influencing attitudes, social beliefs, policies, laws and socio-cultural practices, CARE Nepal expects to influence patriarchal structures to change and become more gender-just and gender-responsive.
- Power relations:** Social, economic, political and gender hierarchies in Nepali society grade women as inferior to men. CARE Nepal expects to influence unequal power relations between men and women, rich and poor, upper and lower castes, over and under-represented communities to become more equal and just.

Humanitarian crises, whether natural or man-made, usually compound gender inequality and poverty. When people are uprooted from their normal circumstances, there is increased stress within families and communities as they become refugees or displaced. Meanwhile, there is also little scope to fulfil the socially ascribed gender roles that they are accustomed to. At the same time, however, they often also provide a **window of opportunity for**

gender transformative programming. In emergency situations, **survival often requires breaking traditional expectations and gender stereotypes.**

Care Nepal has adopted a **rights based approach since 2007**, after having started the discussion on the linkages between human rights and development in 2000. This was based on observing that:

- “Development efforts made in the past could not properly address the underlying causes of poverty. Although these efforts have succeeded in bringing about some changes in the human condition, [it was] not to the extent desired.
- In spite of all development efforts, the poor became poorer and the rich richer. Those who had access to power became more powerful. Life for the deprived was getting more and more miserable.
- The gap between the poor and rich (be it individual, region or state), those powerful and powerless people, men and women, so-called higher and lower castes, rural and urban areas was widened even more than before and it was further deepened.”²

Therefore, CARE Nepal concluded that until and unless human right issues are addressed and right-based approach adopted in development programs, the issue of underlying causes of poverty and social injustice cannot be addressed. It is imperative to adopt the approach of right-based development in order to address the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice, bring about changes in unequal power relationships, improve the social status of the excluded people and achieve overall social transformation.

SAKCHAM'S Theory of Change

SAKCHAM has been designed firmly upon the findings of the SII. Based on those, local partner organizations and CARE programme staff developed an overall programme hypothesis³:

Women's agency in and after conflict is strengthened through enhanced psychosocial wellbeing and active integration into Solidarity Groups (with a special emphasis on economic empowerment) along with an array of other locally determined psychosocial activities. Women's human rights awareness raising through training, and the linkage of grass-roots women's voices and needs to national and international level advocacy initiatives, enables them over time to negotiate (=relational aspect of empowerment) the structures (legal and cultural aspects) around them, and speak out for themselves. Thus sustainable women's empowerment for grass-roots women in post-conflict can be reached through specifically addressing in a holistic way agency, structural and relational aspects and by mainstreaming the strategic engagement of men⁴.

SAKCHAM's rights-based approach:

In line with CARE Nepal's commitment, SAKCHAM adopted a **Rights-Based Approach**, in accordance with internationally recognised core principles of human rights – universality, indivisibility and inalienability. With this approach, SAKCHAM sought to translate the government's commitments to promote women's rights and gender equality into action through the application of substantive equality measures. SAKCHAM has provided training

² Santosh Sharma: Reflection on UCPA for Social Mobilization and Way Forward, CARE Nepal, June 2011, p. 6.

³ Sakcham was part of a three country Women Empowerment Program, named: Claiming Rights, Promoting Peace. Women's Empowerment in Conflict affected areas (Burundi, Nepal, Uganda), and a learning component, and this TOC was pursued on multi-county programme level.

⁴ Conference Report, Barbara Kühhas and Tonka Eibs: Learning Conference Women Empowerment: Claiming Rights – Promoting Peace. Burundi, 15th to 20th of June, Vienna 2009, p. 72.

and supportive space for both rights holders and duty bearers from 2007 till 2015 to close the implementation gap in human rights and gender equality on the ground.

SAKCHAM's empowerment strategy

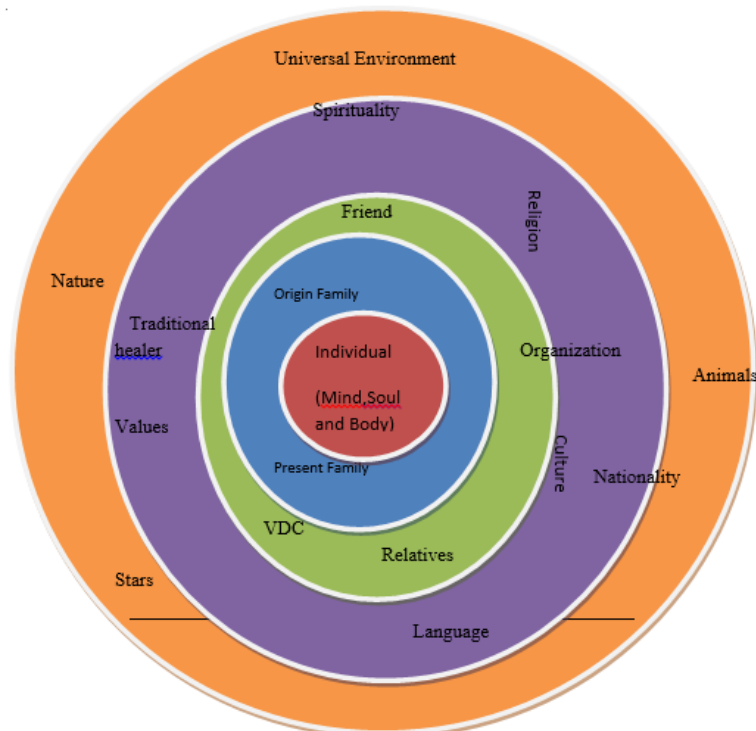
A recent study on SAKCHAM states that if a development practitioner⁵ would ask for advice what to do to enhance women's empowerment in a context of multiple poverty and discrimination, then the work of CARE in Nepal would suggest the following key elements:

Strategy element 1: Invest in psychosocial wellbeing of women and strengthen their agency

Many development practitioners recognise that psychosocial wellbeing, not just physical health by itself, is an essential precondition for development. It is difficult, and sometimes even impossible, for women, men, girls and boys to take active steps to improve their lives when they do not feel well physically or emotionally. Recognising the lesson that **programmes are more efficient and sustainable if people's emotional and social wellbeing is adequately addressed**, CARE Austria mainstreamed a "psychosocial approach" into its women's empowerment programming.

Psychosocial wellbeing is understood as *"a state in which one is able to master life tasks of love and work, family and community and ascribe meaning to daily life, so that one can raise the next generation in an atmosphere of hope. Every culture has its own more specific definition of psychosocial well-being and how it should be represented, maintained and acquired."*⁶ It thus refers to the close connection between psychological (cognitive) aspects of our experiences, thoughts, emotions and behaviours, and to our social environment and learning, including the relationships between family, society, nature, traditional practices and culture.

Figure 2: Psychosocial Support circle/Systemic circle



In the Nepali context, the Community Based Psychosocial CARE Workers (CBPCWs) used the explanation that "Psycho" refers to the soul of a person and her inner world – her feelings, thoughts, emotions, desires, beliefs and values and her self-perception. "Social" are the relationships and interactions with society and nature – as an individual and in groups. The material world, as well as the cultural, social natural and spiritual context are included. The inner world (psycho) and the outer world

⁵ Draft report (Holzner, Brigitte): A Successful Anti-Poverty Strategy and Women's Empowerment in Nepal: a Practitioner Report, 2015.

⁶ Becker and Weyermann, B: Gender, Conflict transformation & the psychosocial approach. Toolkit, Swiss agency for development and Cooperation. Cit.op: Achieving our Vision. The psychosocial approach within the CARE 2020 Program Strategy, 2015, p.2.

(social) influence each other. The psychosocial circle model was used as explanatory chart; it is the Nepali adaptation of the “ecological model”.

Some of the commonly agreed upon and most relevant critical capabilities for psychosocial wellbeing are:

- **On individual level:** a sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy; ability to connect to other people, form and maintain caring relationships; a sense of belonging (to a culture, a group,...); ability to make sense of one’s experiences and to have faith in the meaningfulness of life; opportunities to express feelings through creative means; conflict resolution skills, ability to find solutions; positive outlook; and ability to access available resources.
- **On family/group level:** adults who role model healthy relationships; positive child-caregiver relationships; healthy caregivers; relationships with extended family members and others; and ensuring a stable living environment.
- **On community level:** Access to services, provision of education in a positive/supportive way, role models (on solidarity, on non-violent behaviour,...); safe, connected and inclusive communities.

In a specific research study about how adult women define psychosocial wellbeing, CARE found that women particularly value the following elements:

- Voice in home, community and beyond;
- Family harmony;
- Friendship and support outside the family;
- Education/access to information that could change one’s quality of life.

Strategy element 2: Solidarity groups and advocacy: Create strong women’s groups with training on social justice, rights, and entitlements, and link them with national women’s rights and gender equality movements

Women in the SAKCHAM programme area cherished their experiences of working in Solidarity Groups, locally called Popular Education Centres (PECs). The PEC members found that the groups provided women with empowering space and support, and collective identity and action, leading to linking the PECs to wider women’s rights and gender equality movements for social change. SAKCHAM based the design of the “Popular Education Centre” on Paulo Freire’s writing, in which education enables the oppressed to regain their humanity and overcome their condition. For this approach to be effective, the oppressed have to play a role in their own liberation. The PEC women have seen that learning about human rights in the REFLECT groups is a strong empowerment tool. They have gained critical understandings of traditional gender roles, popular concepts of masculinities, practical needs and strategic gender interests that have led them to action.

The PEC Groups generally meet once a week (2-3 hours) with their facilitators. The facilitators have evolved over time from ‘Community Mobilizers’ (CMs) in SAKCHAM I and II; later becoming ‘Community Based Psychosocial Care Workers’ (CBPCWs); and now known as ‘Community Based Social Workers’ (CBSWs). The women in PEC groups and their facilitators discuss different vulnerability issues, identify problem contexts and situations, and decide together on change-oriented solutions. The women (previously identified as ‘Poor, Vulnerable and Socially Excluded’ - PVSE) receive helpful information about government policies, available services, citizen rights, laws, and allowances for women in need. Equally important, they get **information about entitlements**.

SAKCHAM shows very clearly that if PVSE women are empowered and given the opportunity, they themselves begin to untangle the knots of politics, gender and caste-based

discrimination and work out their own solutions. Women in the groups experience increasing awareness and changing attitudes towards women's subordination, gender-based violence and discrimination, traditional belief systems that have disempowered women. As they learn, they are motivated to action planning, and achieve irreversible alterations in their self-esteem.

The PECs thus play an important, very central role as places where women can meet in a safe space, learn about their rights and gain access to information. As they listen to each other, they learn that they are indeed not alone. They see the reality of explanations around common psychosocial reactions to the highly distressing environment of poverty and discrimination. Destigmatizing and normalizing their self-perceptions gives them the confidence and the information to claim their rights. Over time, these groups become increasingly engaged in publicly voicing their demands for human rights and gender equality.

Practical examples: Slogans at a public rally against discrimination of women⁷ included:

- *'Equal education should be given to both sons and daughters'*
- *'Women should not hide if there is any violence on them'*
- *'Child marriage and dowry system should be eliminated'*
- *'Women should be given equal opportunity as men'*
- *'Dalit and marginalized women's meaningful participation should be ensured at all levels'*
- *'Ghumto (face covering) should be abolished'*
- *'Common voice needs to develop among all stakeholders to stop violence against women'*
- *'Ensure our community is an alcohol free zone to reduce domestic violence'*
- *'Increase men's participation in household chores'*
- *'Men should give respect and value to women for violence eradication'*

Strengthened by their group solidarity, PEC women groups have successfully pursued advocacy on many issues for gender equality. Among the issues that they have lobbied for are equal wages for equal work, obtaining vital documents (citizenship, registration of birth, death, marriage, travel, etc.), gender-based budgeting at the VDC level, stopping school corruption and even mobilising funds for road construction and adult literacy classes.⁸

The manifold advocacy efforts by the Women's Networks have resulted in most of the SAKCHAM VDCs allocating 10% of the VDC mandatory budget allocation as per government policy for women's capacity building and their economic empowerment.⁹ The PEC women's participation in local government planning processes has been a logical outcome of participatory monitoring for implementation of women's programmes and budgets including the National Action Plan (NAP) for UNSCRs 1325 & 1820.

A strong Women's Network has been established by CARE for PVSE women from community to district up to national level. The core objective of the network is the promotion and protection of PVSE women's social, economic, cultural and political rights. As such, the PEC women's groups have metamorphosed from groups for the "poor, vulnerable and socially excluded" to "watchdog groups" that know about and monitor the principles of good governance, transparency and accountability by local governments.

⁷ Draft report (Holzner, Brigitte?): A Successful Anti-Poverty Strategy and Women's Empowerment in Nepal a Practitioner Report, 2015, p.7.

⁸ Progress Report submitted to Austrian Development Agency, May 2009, p. 19

⁹ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 13

SAKCHAM project and partner organization staff members have also repeatedly presented findings and learning on women's empowerment in post-conflict settings at international fora, such as the yearly CEDAW meeting in New York; at annual debates on Women, Peace and Security of the UN Security Council; and on the European Union level.

Strategy element 3: Transforming gender roles: Improve gender relations by rewarding men who 'walk the talk' in terms of partnership with women and active fatherhood

During SAKCHAM 1 (2007-2009), the PEC women and SAKCHAM staff came to understand that men's power, particularly regarding violence against women and influencing community attitudes and controlling behaviour, posed a huge obstacle to achieving women's empowerment. Therefore, SAKCHAM started to include a strategic component of "Engaging Men" as from 2009¹⁰. The main aim was to redefine hegemonic masculinities and promote positive male role models to enable the men to play a more active role in supporting and safeguarding (women's) rights.

Preparatory work for Men Engage in SAKCHAM III was undertaken during 2010. In all 45 Village Development Committee (VDCs) where SAKCHAM III operated, men's support groups and networks were established and linked to women's REFLECT¹¹ centres. In this activity, the programme demonstrated an explicit effort to learn from experience acquired during previous iterations of SAKCHAM.

During 2011, **REFLECT centre members recommended potentially supportive men**¹² who were then selected to participate in gender transformative trainings. The supportive men received orientations on women rights, violence and harmful practices, as well as on psychosocial support. Furthermore, these men were encouraged to participate more equitably in livelihood and household activities. Participants became deeply engaged through developing and then, after the training, **implementing personal action plans within their own households and communities**. During the trainings, the men discussed and identified positive local traditions, norms and masculine characteristics that could be used for ending violence against women. Collectively, they challenged the generic explanation of 'culture' as an excuse for discriminatory behaviour.

Men in the groups were linked to the PEC women's centres were encouraged to engage in participatory community learning activities, such as power mapping, poverty pocket identification, and well-being ranking. Each of these activities was linked to participation in joint discussions with PEC women members. Topics included gender roles, being a "model couple"; and selecting and mobilizing men campaigners. Men were additionally sensitised in relation to local government planning processes for women's and children's budgeting.

Within SAKCHAM III (2012-15), key methods for engaging men have included: identification, selection, training and support of *Men Campaigners and Supportive Men*:

- **Supportive men** are selected on the basis of their willingness to demonstrate their commitment to gender equality through their own everyday domestic and social conduct. They are also expected to take advantage of opportunities that arise in daily life to engage other men in discussion about gender equality, to participate in groups of supportive men in their own community, and to intervene in the event of gender-related problems in the community, including domestic violence.

¹⁰ Gordon, Peter: Two wheels of a cart, two sides of a coin. Engaging Men in Gender Equality. Using Systematization to understand experiences and lessons learned in Mali and Nepal, Nepal 2014, p. 15 ff

¹¹ Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowerment of Community Techniques

¹² Who function as 'change agents'.

- **The *model couple* concept** is a logical development of the work conducted separately with women and men. The model couples are from the community, so they are locally relevant and realistic. They are demonstrating a real-life gender equitable relationship, and are thus underlining the possibility of achieving such a relationship, while also showing the rewards.

The supportive men's groups on VDC level met on a monthly basis and held quarterly review meetings with SAKCHAM project staff. During 2012 and 2013, members of the supportive men's groups participated in joint discussions, some with women's groups and some as couple discussions. They also dialogued and collaborated with women on issues of shared concern within their communities, such as tackling alcohol consumption and violence. Individual Men Campaigners used group meetings, personal testimonies and street theatre as tools to engage with other men. In those men-to-men interactions, the supportive men and Men Campaigners questioned stereotypes about masculinity and risk-taking to promote understanding and support for women's rights and gender equality. Throughout the project, the numbers of supportive men have progressively increased; over time, SAKCHAM also provided refresher trainings for both men campaigners and supportive men.

In this way, the work with men moved strategically from initial sensitization, to encouraging changes in lived gender relations within households and then within the wider community. This has been a dynamic and holistic approach to facilitating change within communities, by starting to work with men and women in single-gender groups, and then in mixed groups and couples. SAKCHAM has thus successfully promoted collaboration between men and women, within the household and in the wider community, and contributed to transforming harmful gender stereotypes.

Strategy element 4: Women's economic empowerment: Improve economic livelihoods and reduce poverty by saving and income-generation in groups and a revolving fund

The initial phase of SAKCHAM (2007-2009) developed REFLECT/PEC groups and dialogue around women's psychosocial wellbeing and their active inclusion in post-conflict political processes in line with the UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security. During the second and third phases (2010-2015), SAKCHAM placed more emphasis on activities to promote economic empowerment, given the severe economic situation of the majority of women participating in the PEC centres. Income generation activities proved to be particularly important. The economic empowerment component supported individual and group IGA activities.

CARE Nepal developed income-generating and entrepreneurship trainings for women to improve their livelihood options, including more access to and control over economic resources. Economic empowerment interventions were added, such as trainings on income generation and planning micro businesses, providing a "revolving fund"¹³ component for some PEC centres, and supporting women's cooperatives. Women's skills and resources for specific vocations were enhanced and their capacities in accessing private and public resources increased. The PECs initiated savings and other economic groups for income-generating activities (IGAs). CARE provided access for individuals and groups to seed money ranging from Rs10,000-15,000 (= 80-120 Euro). Members of IGA groups used a revolving fund mechanism to consider the needs and well-being of individual members and then drafting a business plan.¹⁴ Successful IGAs included various shops – for retailing, tailoring, cycle maintenance, and mobile vendors selling cosmetics and fruits and vegetables – and agricultural activities such as vegetable farming, chicken, goat or, pig rearing.

¹³ based on the revolving fund mobilization guideline

¹⁴ Draft report (Holzner, Brigitte): A Successful Anti-Poverty Strategy and Women's Empowerment in Nepal a Practitioner Report, 2015, p. 10.

SAKCHAM directly supported the establishment of 20 economic co-operatives, and used a specific revolving fund to enable the poorest PEC women to secure membership in 24 other Co-operatives, partly supported by various agencies such as DWCO, PAF, etc.

These economic activities were closely linked with the psychosocial well-being approach of the PEC Centres. They supported raising the self-esteem of women, analysing gender equality practices within the household, increasing opportunities for access and control over private property, developing family support, and ultimately social mobilization. In such a way, economic empowerment acquired a broader value through linking income with emancipatory practices and increased confidence and self-esteem. Women could now pay for their children's education; most of the children of all SAKCHAM households are now being sent to schools. Women could also buy some basic household utensils, warm clothes, or even jewellery. For many women, obtaining a loan from the income generation funds at the PEC centres enabled important changes in their life. The training and provision of information to the women group members also strategically increased their capacity for interaction with local governments and expanded their interaction with government line agencies for improving women's livelihoods and economic status. The more the women's capabilities and income were enhanced through skill development and financial improvements, the bigger their courage became to dream of yet better things to come.

Outcome examples: Some of the most important changes reported include¹⁵:

- Nutrition levels of households: In past there wasn't enough food but now about 65% of all households eat meat once a week and have varieties of foods once a day.
- Clothing: with increased financial status, the quality and quantity of dressing improved.
- Education: People gained knowledge about education; now almost all households send their children to school.
- Workload: Due to increased income, women bought utensils and electronics devices that have lightened their workload.
- Housing: Most have constructed houses and sanitary toilets.
- Access to services and resources: previously, many women did not access government facilities due to lack of skills, knowledge or permission from their head of household; with SAKCHAM's support, most of them now have access to government and private services.
- Rights: Increase in awareness concerning woman rights.
- Freedom from violence: Women now report reduced levels of gender based violence at household and community levels
- Community engagement: Women are seen participating meaningfully in decision making at local, community levels and national level.
- Engaged men: Men report positive changes in attitudes regarding gender roles and norms.
- Income: Women have reported increases in their income.
- Economic influence: Women take more control over assets and income at household level.
- Communal resources: Women report increased access to public resources (water, fodder, public land, pond, fund, etc.)

Strategy element 5: Engage actively with local government: Structural changes at community level follow from women's appearance, participation and leadership in public institutions

In line with Nepal's national 33% quota policy for women, SAKCHAM has successfully

¹⁵ Humagain, Yadav: Report on Livelihood Outcome Study, Women Empowerment for Transformation in the Churia Area, Sakcham III, June 2015, p.36.

helped to increase the representation of women in local government committees, including Ward Citizens Forums, Local Peace Committees, Health, Sanitation, Agriculture and School Management Committees. Through these experiences, PVSE women report increased self-esteem and pride at their roles in shaping a participatory process for peace-building and development in Nepal.

SAKCHAM's activities¹⁶ with the PEC solidarity groups have contributed to very significant changes in women's participation in village meetings in all aspects: in discussions and decisions about social issues like personal disputes or physical assaults in the community; regarding village development issues such as drinking water, electricity or road construction; and regarding resources.

A recent study¹⁷ (2015) found that women's participation in community decision-making and their economic decision-making role in the household appear to be linked: there is a strong correlation between women with a high position in public committees and all forms of economic decision-making in the household (land, expenses, and goods). There seems to be a mutually supportive link between intra- and extra-household power. Women who are co-deciding in the household on sale or purchase of land are also participating more in village meetings about social and community issues ($P=0.056$). And women who participate in decisions about overall household spending also participate more in village meetings about resource distribution; they seem to be generally concerned about material expenses inside and outside the household. The study concluded that **membership in CARE-initiated groups generally increased women's agency and impacts on changes in the gender structure of local society – women get the strength and interest to participate in village affairs.**

Enhanced collective action, bargaining and social expression by PEC women groups and increased interaction with local governments have helped to promote good governance. The positive results achieved through women's advocacy and actions are, again, having an empowering effect on the PEC women's psychosocial well-being, leading to improved self-confidence and self-esteem. The recognition and respect given by local government officials, representatives of political parties and the community have given some of them the confidence to stand for local elections. Some women are even aspiring to become members of Parliament at the provincial and national levels.¹⁸

Some key conclusions and general recommendations

Women's empowerment is a process of social change, and we only capture part of its richness when we assess the process of empowerment in terms of its outcomes. SAKCHAM has been repeatedly evaluated as relevant and effective. Important lessons learned from SAKCHAM and recommendations to development practitioners include:

Lesson 1: Make a long-term commitment

In order to reach gender equality, it is necessary to work on gender transformation. As this takes time and is not an uncontested avenue, everybody claiming to work for real gender equality needs to plan for long-term commitment to accompany these change processes –

¹⁶ To remind: CARE women's groups address in the framework of psychosocial well-being activities also women's rights, gender discrimination and family welfare, topics that are not directly related to the formal themes of village development.

¹⁷ Humagain, op cit

¹⁸ FGDs and SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan, 26-29 December, 2015

especially when addressing the structural and relational aspects of gender transformation on the path to equality.

Lesson 2: Strategically address all three spheres of women’s empowerment

It is possible to make quick wins for “empowerment” at agency or individual levels. However, supporting an enabling environment for women to negotiate their way to gender equality will require attention to all three spheres of empowerment – agency, structures and relations. CARE’s SII identified 23 key domains of change for empowerment that are helpful to consider when developing gender equality programs (see Figure 3, below):

Sub-Dimensions of Empowerment

| Agency | Structure | Relations |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Self-image; self-esteem | 11. Marriage and kinship rules, norms, processes | 19. Consciousness of self and others as interdependent |
| 2. Legal and rights awareness | 12. Laws and practices of citizenship. | 20. Negotiation, accommodation |
| 3. Information and skills | 13. Information and access to services | 21. Alliance and coalition habits |
| 4. Education | 14. Access to justice, enforceability of rights | 22. Pursuit of accountability |
| 5. Employment and control of own labor | 15. Market accessibility | 23. New social forms: altered relationships and behaviors |
| 6. Mobility in public space | 16. Political representation | |
| 7. Decision influence in household | 17. State budgeting practices | |
| 8. Group membership and activism | 18. Civil society representation | |
| 9. Material assets owned | | |
| 10. Body health and bodily integrity | | |

Figure 3: CARE International: Sub Dimensions of Empowerment, Women’s Empowerment Overview Brief, 2009

Lesson 3: Address multiple discrimination (or intersectionality) right from the start

Facilitate a gender and power analysis¹⁹ at the beginning to reach the vulnerable and poor while avoiding elite capture. Power has a variety of characteristics: First of all, everyone has multiple roles and relationships. Within each, the level of power can vary. Power can be economic, political, social, cultural and symbolic. People are rarely powerful in (nor powerless across) all forms. Power is not a zero-sum game, which means that as any one person gains power, others do not lose that same amount. Power is socially constructed, it always depends on where you are, who you are and what culture you are from. A person’s experience of power can depend on their gender, race, class, age, etc. CARE’s UCPVA tools have proven to be especially helpful for analyzing power and gender relations in a participatory bottom-up way.

Lesson 4: Create safe spaces for participatory reflection, e.g., Solidarity Groups based on REFLECT methodology

The main vehicle for transformative change in SAKCHAM has been the REFLECT groups, called Popular Education Centres (PECs) in this project, which have irreversibly changed the mind-set of the participants. The PEC groups enable the members to understand the structures surrounding them and the influence between individual and structural environment. By analysing their situation and creating action plans, the participants (both women and men) have become active change agents.

¹⁹ For example, using the Underlying Causes of Poverty Analysis (UCPV)

Lesson 5: Inclusion of a psychosocial component addressing psychosocial well-being, especially in post conflict settings, as a pre-condition for participation

The suffering of poor, marginalized, conflict-affected women has been well documented and studied. What is less well described is the creativity, energy and vitality that these women use to overcome adversity and strive toward solutions for themselves, their children and their communities. CARE's multiple studies²⁰ in this field have created solid evidence that psychosocial well-being is a precondition for successful participation in development activities.

Affected women themselves define psychosocial well-being not as an absence of suffering, but as the affirmative presence of those capabilities required to live a good life in the present and the future. Using what we learn from their creative voices can lead to advances in human welfare beyond the locations in which these women survive, work, think and dream.

“By increasing protective factors and reducing risks, psychosocial interventions create resilience. They do so by the way that they address issues within programs designed to meet basic needs, and by providing a set of targeted experiences as people move from survival to rebuilding their lives, from relief to development. Psychosocial programs do not stand alone; they are part of the mixture of activities that communities design in partnership with CARE toward meeting empowerment goals and objectives.”²¹

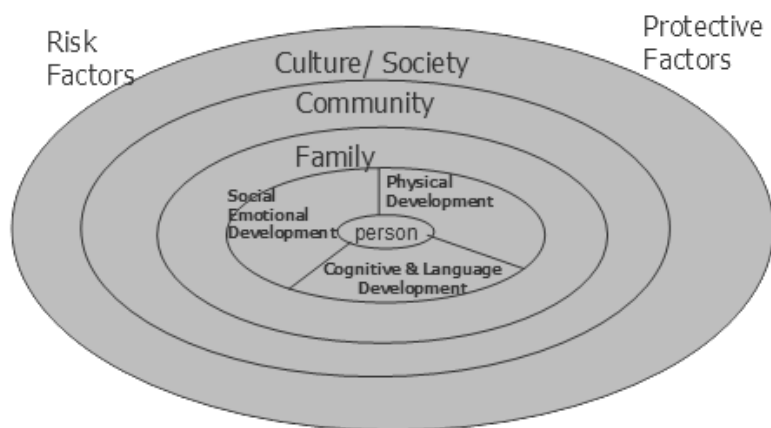


Figure 4: The social Ecology of a Person

The purpose of psychosocial programmes targeting women's empowerment is to enable the women to form relationships, exercise agency and work together with men to change those structural arrangements that are necessary to achieve power.

In order to be successful, CARE recommends beginning any new psychosocial program with a plan to develop baseline indicators for psychosocial well-being by working with the women themselves. Because psychosocial well-being has not been operationalized in a cultural context, it is often used as a metaphor for surviving violence and abuse. Affected women indicate, however, that such survival is dependent on a constellation of positive experiences and opportunities that programs can co-create with them (e.g., education, social supports, a loving home, voice in the home and community, and access to resources). Create a baseline to begin that journey with survivors who can then measure whether these positive experiences and opportunities are effective in making the changes that they seek.

Lesson 6: Engage men and boys for gender equality

²⁰ Bragin, M., Onta, K., Taaka, J., Nzeyimana, G., Eibs, T. (2013). *To be well at heart: Conflict-affected women's perceptions of psychosocial well-being: A participatory study in Burundi, Nepal and Northern Uganda*. Vienna: CARE Österreich.

²¹ CARE Austria - Bragin, Martha and Janine Wurzer: *Integrating the Psychosocial Dimension in Women's Empowerment Programming: A Guide for CARE Country Offices*, Vienna, New York 2009., p.10.

CARE's approach to working with men and boys for gender equality is strongly grounded in local contexts and rights-based approaches. "Synchronization" suggests to integrate coordinating approaches for engaging men and boys with women and girls' empowerment approaches – to ensure both streams of work thoughtfully intersect with and complement one another to advance gender equality.

Promising programming practices point to five key elements for engaging men and boys to improve gender equality²²:

Conscientization: Structure spaces for men and boys to reflect on hegemonic masculinities, gender, power and privilege in their lives.

Intimate Dialogue: Conversations with intimate partners, and within families to promote more open communication, equitable relationships, nonviolence, support and trust;

Build the Base: Mix individual outreach and regular meetings to share testimonies and strengthen relationships among male allies for expanding social support and solidarity;

Stepping Out, Stepping Up: Capacity building and support to men to facilitate discussions and campaign around gender and masculinities to transform social norms; and

Alliances for Advocacy: This element focuses on linking with advocacy efforts led by women's and feminist movements for social and policy change at local, regional and national levels



Figure 5: Model Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality

Lesson 7: Work with a human rights-based approach to weave a sustainable social fabric

A rights-based approach can be usefully defined as: "A rights-based approach deliberately and explicitly focuses on people achieving the minimum conditions for living with dignity (i.e., achieving their human rights). It does so by exposing the roots of vulnerability and marginalization and expanding the range of responses. It empowers people to claim and exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities. A rights-based approach recognizes poor, displaced, and war-affected people as having inherent rights essential to livelihood security – rights that are validated by international law."²³

CARE suggests that being serious about rights-based programming is both as simple and as difficult as operationalizing commitment to: (1) affirming people's right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, (2) seeking to address the roots of poverty and human suffering, (3) refusing to tolerate discrimination and inequity, and (4) holding ourselves and others accountable for respecting and helping to protect and fulfil human rights. The value added is that structural changes are possible when working with a rights based approach; working on both the rights holders and duty bearer's side while facilitating spaces for them to negotiate has an impact on social fabric.

²² CARE International: Brief 1 - Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality Series - Stories of Engagement, 2014; and Brief 2 - Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality Series: Lessons Learnt

²³ Andrew Jones: Incorporation of a Rights-Based Approach into CARE's Program Cycle. A Discussion Paper for CARE's Program Staff*, more information under: <http://www.eldis.org/go/home&id=6914&type=Organisation#.VtATZ33hCUK>

Lesson 8: Include the international women-peace-security agenda in post-conflict as a door opener to a wider women's rights agenda for transforming structural aspects

With SAKCHAM working in post-conflict Nepal, the Women-Peace-Security Agenda, especially UNSCR 1325 and 1820 have proven to be a valuable vehicle and door-opener for addressing the wider women's rights agenda for transformative change. The PEC women have proactively used the content of the UNSCRs for their advocacy efforts for gender equality and women's rights from grass-roots, up to district and national levels, even bringing the grass-roots women's voices up to national and international levels.

Lesson 9: Get your own house in order

Ensure gender and diversity capacity building for your own staff and that of your partners to be able to 'walk the talk'. If staff and partners are not well aware of the approaches to use, and are themselves caught up in their identities without having respect for the other – your project will not fly. It is of utmost importance to ensure that all implementing and managing staff do have the capacity and capabilities to engage seriously in the work towards gender equality. As it is not a linear trajectory, many unexpected challenges may arise. People will need to reflect in an on-going way about their own identities and biases to avoid causing harm and to carry the gender equality agenda forward. Thus, include sufficient funding for trainings in your budgets, and revise staff TOR to enable assessment and promotion of gender and diversity capacities.

Lesson 10: Include a learning agenda and safe spaces for implementing staff to share their observations about intended and unintended successes and challenges, in order to redirect interventions

Transformative gender work is evolutionary, sometimes revolutionary, and often unpredictable. Making safe spaces for learning and sharing is crucial to ensure that the growth and development of social change is effective as well as constructive and nurturing for the participants.

Part 2

The SAKCHAM approach on the ground

Introduction to Part 2

Part 2 of this manual will speak to women empowerment practitioners. The target audiences are mainly Project Managers and staff providing technical support to women empowerment programmes. The whole of Part 2 is divided into two parts, a) and b); and within these segments, the content has been organised to permit user-selective reading. For example, a project manager working with Women's Networks could pull out and read that specific chapter. Or someone could read only the chapter on working with Local Government to learn from SAKCHAM's interventions on integrating psychosocial well-being with women's economic, social and political empowerment.

Part 2 a) highlights how SAKCHAM's Theory of Change, which links with CARE Nepal's pathways of change, has been able to influence transformative change for PVSE women. At the core of the strategy is a psychosocial approach to economic, social and political empowerment. Part 2a) includes a summary of key SAKCHAM elements and outcomes in a Stakeholder and Activity Matrix (see below, page 28). The programme used an 'ecological model' with interventions at multiple levels – with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities, as well as local government and policy levels. The major activities are grouped by the three principal results: **Psychosocial well-being; Access and control over resources; and Women's meaningful participation and representation**. Activities are categorised into **participatory assessment, capacity building and engagement** to help show the holistic approach of SAKCHAM.

Part 2 b) documents how SAKCHAM was implemented on the ground. It is broken into sub-sections for the major strategies used in the programme, and shows their links to the domains of change in the women's empowerment framework, which was **agency, structure and relations**. This grouping helps show how women strive to balance their practical, daily, individual achievements with their collective aims for strategic, long-term change in gender biased social rules and institutions.

The programme strategies were not individual silos, but were mutually reinforcing. One strategy did not apply exclusively to one result area as they were operationalised through activities that simultaneously addressed many result areas. For example, the REFLECT methodology raised the consciousness of multiple stakeholders, ranging from the PEC Women's Groups to Male Campaigners and Supportive Men about the nature of women empowerment, enhancing their self-confidence and ending GBV. Likewise, capacity building was a strategy to build the agency of women, but also to develop the capacities of other stakeholders. Similarly, PEC discussions to analyse work-loads led to greater sharing of household chores and responsibilities by men, which in turn enabled more participation by women in planning and decision-making about their own priorities. The section organised by stakeholders narrates how tools were used in different activities to achieve the outcomes. It also provides success stories showing how SAKCHAM was able to transform the lives of PVSE women.

Pathways of Change

CARE defines women's empowerment as the sum total of changes needed for a woman to realise her full human rights. CARE sees that achieving empowerment involves an interplay of changes in:

- Agency: her own aspirations and capabilities.
- Structure: the environment that surrounds and conditions her choices.
- Relations: the power relations through which she negotiates her path.

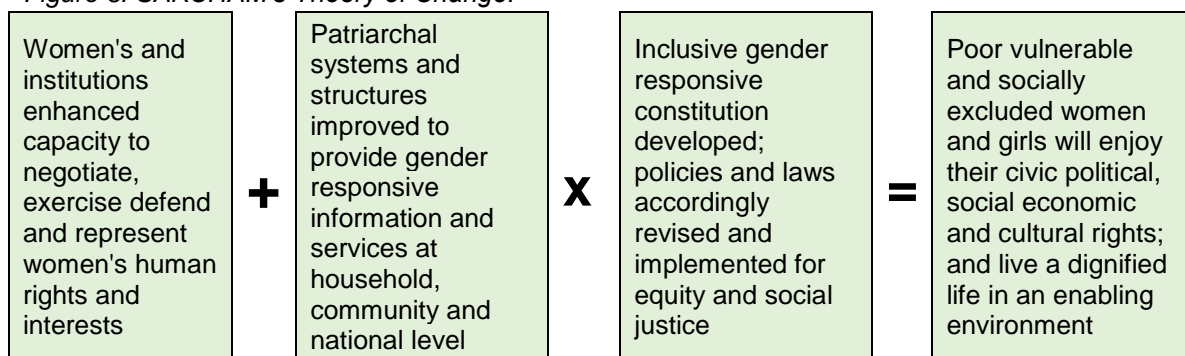
CARE Nepal has operationalised the global women’s empowerment framework in its programmes by describing three critical pathways for Nepal:

- d) **Enhancing the capacities of women and institutions:** By enhancing women’s and institutions’ capacities, CARE Nepal expects to increase critical awareness on patriarchy and gender roles (among both men and women), improve the self-esteem of women, strengthen their skills to make choices and help them to be better organised to defend their rights. The targeted institutions include women’s groups, networks, civil society organisations as well as state institutions such as Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, National Women’s Commission and so on.
- e) **Strengthening gender consciousness of systems and structures for service delivery:** By influencing attitudes, social beliefs, policies, laws and socio-cultural practices, CARE Nepal expects to influence patriarchal structures to change and become more gender-just and gender-responsive. CARE Nepal aims to work with the state machinery to support efforts to bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes toward women and girls.
- f) **Transforming power relations:** Social, economic, political and gender hierarchies in Nepal rate women as inferior to men. CARE Nepal aims to influence unequal power relations between men and women, rich and poor, over and under-represented communities to become more equal and just. CARE Nepal believes that achieving gender equality between men and women also necessitates addressing inequalities between castes and classes.

SAKCHAM’s Theory of Change (see Figure 6, below) is aligned with CARE’s Women Empowerment Framework. It aims to empower women by transforming patriarchal mind-sets at household, community and political levels. SAKCHAM’s TOC links with the ecological model (see page 18), which says that a positive shift in one level will also have impacts at other levels. From this perspective, SAKCHAM sought to improve the psychosocial well-being of women. This was the platform from which women were able to improve their economic status, enable their participation in decision making at household and community levels, and engage in the national peace process.

The change process leading to women’s empowerment is understood within SAKCHAM’s framework to have three components that work in synergy: 1) enhanced capacity and agency of women to represent and defend their rights; plus 2) equitable and non-discriminatory service delivery systems and structures, in an environment where 3) socio-economic and political inequalities are reduced.

Figure 6: SAKCHAM’s Theory of Change:



SAKCHAM can be regarded as a success story of a rights-based approach from the grassroots-level upwards – linking rights holders and duty bearers to enable PVSE women to enjoy their civic, political and social and economic rights. The programme contributed to

significant impacts being felt in areas of deep poverty and high disaster risk. These are the very places where PVSE women and girls from the lowest strata of society (e.g., Dalits, ethnic minorities/Janajatis, single women, migrant women workers, and wives of migrant men) have been most excluded from development processes and opportunities, and have the poorest access to basic services and resources.

SAKCHAM recognised psychosocial well-being as a critical precondition for women's empowerment. The programme's core strategy built PVSE women's personal agency through REFLECT/Popular Education Centre (PEC) groups. The REFLECT (i.e., 'conscientisation') approach helped women to gain greater awareness and understanding of patriarchy, poverty, discrimination and inequality as structural issues. It also built women's confidence to raise their collective voices against the inequality, discrimination and violence they had suffered, particularly during the armed conflict (1996-2006). Women in the PEC groups powerfully supported each other's well-being through a solidarity approach linking their psychosocial well-being and empowerment.

The programme complemented direct work with PVSE women in PEC groups by orienting and training relevant stakeholders. The stakeholders were stimulated to provide technical and financial support to the PEC women groups. This support enabled PEC women members to participate meaningfully in economic activities, peace-building and decision-making processes and structures. PEC women group members have also learned from their increased access to information and collaboration with government about improving their livelihoods and household economic status. Information shared in the PEC meetings has influenced women's ability to access public economic services (e.g., agriculture and livestock centres, community forest office, bank, and health centres). This result is seen as achieving economic agency through personal and social empowerment.²⁴

Facing a male-dominated society, SAKCHAM set out to transform unequal gender relations between men and women. By the latter stages of the programme, the exemplary activities of Male Campaigners and Supportive Men toward changing gender stereotypes made it easier for their male peers to accept women's empowerment as fair and just.²⁵ This has contributed to a shift in power relations within households and communities, which further improved PVSE women's self-esteem. In turn, this shift gave them more confidence to negotiate public spaces (structures) and represent their interests and rights in local governance processes.

SAKCHAM demonstrated that women with psychosocial well-being are more able to engage in peace-building and decision-making processes. They confidently participate in income generating activities, inspire trust, hope, and have a sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem. This self-worth has given them greater courage to challenge gender oppression in all settings. They can now interact more freely with their families, community leaders and government officials to negotiate and claim their rights to resources, opportunities and choices.

The programme adopted this 'personal is political' approach to encourage PVSE women to become politically aware and active on issues affecting their daily lives. Concurrently, SAKCHAM advocates with decision-makers to pay attention to women's lives in a holistic view of structure, relation and agency issues. SAKCHAM's outcomes attest to the solidarity and agency achievable through PEC women groups. This result has contributed to women's socio-economic growth, which is leading to political empowerment. The PVSE women are now getting immense respect from family members, from the community, from local

²⁴ Holzner, B., and Torija, P., Internal Report for Care Framework Programme Analysis of SAKCHAM Programme in Nepal, p 18

²⁵ Khanal, Gyan Prasad and team, Final Evaluation Report of SAKCHAM II, December, 2012, p. 15

government officials and from political parties. In consequence, more of these women are now aspiring to vie for public positions in the impending local and provincial elections.²⁶

SAKCHAM has fostered partnerships and alliances with like-minded organisations, local and national government bodies and supportive men as integral players in the programme strategy. Through these linkages, SAKCHAM has leveraged support and additional resources – human and financial – to implement PEC Action Plans and the NAP for UNSCRs 1325 & 1820. The following paragraphs summarise the main stakeholders with whom SAKCHAM has worked (see also matrix on page 28).

Popular Education Centres (PECs): PECs are community-based groups, now being promoted all over Nepal and federated at National level. They have proved to be effective platforms for engaging communities on a variety of development initiatives. SAKCHAM pioneered the use of PECs to guide / mentor PVSE women to claim their rights within families and communities, as well as with service providers and local government authorities. The PECs were the key entry points for mobilising PVSE women into groups as well as sustaining outcomes and impacts. The PECs enable poor women to engage in local development planning processes and programmes, such as the NAP for UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. SAKCHAM started forming the PECs during a participatory assessment of existing issues for poor women using the “Underlying Causes of Poverty Analysis” (UCPA) tools of CARE. A total of 395 PEC groups of PVSE women have been formed in 45 VDCs of the SAKCHAM Programme: 10 VDCs in Chitwan; 12 in Makwanpur; and 23 in Kapilvastu districts.

Community-based Social Workers (CBSWs): Each CBSW fulfilled multiple roles as a social mobiliser, psychosocial worker and counsellor, trainer, and socio-economic officer with the PVSE women. The CBSWs acted externally as a co-ordinator and interlocutor in promoting PVSE women’s rights in dialogues with key stakeholders. In this way, the CBSW cadre became the focal point or fulcrum of SAKCHAM on the ground. In the first two phases of SAKCHAM, the programme had dedicated CBSWs and Local Resource Persons. In the third phase, these two functions were rolled into one because the PEC women groups had become more organised. In addition, other local structures were also now more functional, such as Psychosocial Support Committees, Women’s Networks and Men’s Supportive Groups. Thus, for the third phase, SAKCHAM strategically recruited CBSWs²⁷ from among the members of PVSE PEC groups within the communities of SAKCHAM’s working area. The CBSWs were selected through pre-defined criteria, especially for having prior experience in working with the REFLECT approach. That experience could have come as local resource persons, social mobilisers, psychosocial support workers or men campaigners. This requirement ensured that they already had a conceptual understanding of PVSE women’s rights and that they were motivated to work as social change catalysts for the project. Hiring locally facilitated their acceptance into the community and contributed to trust building – an essential component of the REFLECT approach.

Once hired, the CBSWs received additional training on the principles and application of REFLECT methods from the Education Network of Nepal. The CBSWs learned about popular education, PVSE women’s rights, GBV, good governance, management, co-ordination and advocacy. They then applied these methods in the PECs, supported by monitoring in monthly review and reflection meetings with implementing partners and in the quarterly SAKCHAM meetings.

²⁶ FGDs conducted by Bharati Silwal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan, 26-27 December, 2015

²⁷ In the first two phases of SAKCHAM, the programme had dedicated CBSWs and Local Resource Persons. In the third phase, these two functions were rolled into one as PEC women groups became more organised and local structures such as Psychosocial Support Committees, Women’s Networks and Men’s Supportive Groups became functional.

Male Campaigners and Supportive Men: SAKCHAM mobilised the participation of men *opportunistically* by training potentially supportive men identified by PEC women members to become role models. It also engaged men *incrementally* by developing a critical mass of supportive men over time.²⁸ The Men Campaigners took up responsibility for identifying harmful local practices, traditions, norms and manifestations of hegemonic masculinity. They promoted women's rights by working towards changing gender stereotypes and challenging cultural relativism, including impunity. SAKCHAM institutionalised male engagement by creating 35 Men Campaigners and establishing 35 Supportive Men's Groups at the VDC level. Collectively, this approach is regarded as a model activity.²⁹ This intervention was critical and strategic, considering how various men, especially political leaders, questioned the SAKCHAM Programme already in its first year about the sole focus on conflict-affected women. In their perception, everyone irrespective of class, caste, creed and sex had been impacted by the armed conflict in one way or another. SAKCHAM'S engagement of Men Campaigners and Supportive Men was able to diffuse men's resistance to the involvement of their wives and daughters in the SAKCHAM programme.

Women's Network: to amplify the voices of PEC women's groups and prepare for sustainability beyond the end of programme support, SAKCHAM helped establish and strengthen women networks at the level of Village Development Committees (VDCs).³⁰ SAKCHAM formed VDC level networks with women from PEC groups and other women's groups in all nine wards of a VDC. SAKCHAM aggregated the VDC women networks into a District Women's Network by holding a general assembly with the full participation of all the VDC level women networks.³¹ SAKCHAM then supported the District Women Networks to affiliate with the National Forum for Women's Rights Concern (NFWRC).³² In this way, they facilitated development of a strong network for all 395 PEC Women's groups. This network enables women's voices to engage in policy advocacy for legal and structural reforms right from grassroots to national level.

Cooperatives and Revolving Fund: The Co-operative movement in Nepal has gained momentum to address not only economic, but also social and cultural needs of people. The Government of Nepal plans to establish a Co-operative in every village to contribute to community development, service delivery, and local self-sufficiency. This is reflected in the slogan, "Co-operative in every village; and self-sufficiency in every household". As an engine of economic growth, Co-operatives³³ have been instrumental in ensuring optimal participation of local people, especially of women, in economic activities according to their needs and aspirations. SAKCHAM viewed stronger Co-operatives as a conduit for institutionalising PECs, and therefore helped set up 20 PVSE co-operatives. Co-operatives are legal entities through which PVSE women can continue their social, economic and political empowerment long after the programme phases out in 2015.

The Revolving Fund set up by SAKCHAM provided seed money to the poorest PEC women's groups on a rotational basis. Once the seed money is paid off by the women's groups, it was extended to another women group to kick-start their enterprises. The Revolving Fund was also extended to poor PEC women groups to facilitate their affiliation into the relevant Co-operatives.

Local Government: Nepal has a two-tier system of local governance, with village and municipal bodies as the lower tier and district bodies as the higher. The village bodies are

²⁸ Gordon, Peter, 'Two wheels of a cart, two sides of coin' Engaging Men in Gender Equality: Using Systematisation to understand experiences and lessons learned in Mali and Nepal, p. 17

²⁹ 2-day SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan district, Nepal, 27- 29 December, 2015

³⁰ The VDC is the lowest level of administration in the Local Authorities structure, overseen by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development

³¹ SAKCHAM Project Implementation Guidelines, 12 May, 2013, p. 6

³² SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p. 14

³³ The 18th SAARC summit held in Kathmandu from 26- 27 November, 2014 recognised the potential of cooperatives in achieving inclusive, broad-based and sustainable economic growth and development, and called for sharing of experiences, expertise and best practices in this sector

called Village Development Committees (VDCs); 'municipalities' serve the same function in towns. The next level up are District Development Committees (DDCs). These government bodies are responsible for development planning to address local needs and priorities through an inclusive approach. They are expected to follow participatory planning with implementation, service delivery and monitoring that enhances government accountability to local people. SAKCHAM collaborated with Government bodies to promote the NAP for UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. This effort helped address the impact on women of the 10-year long armed conflict in Nepal. The critical issues were sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and promoting women's active and meaningful role in conflict resolution and sustainable peace. At the same time SAKCHAM sought to institutionalise government accountability through encouraging PVSE women's participation in local planning processes. Participating women were able to raise their priorities and the local planning could strengthen prevention and response mechanisms for their concerns.

National NGOs and networks: The designers of the SAKCHAM project also developed partnerships with national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to address the needs and priorities of conflict-affected PVSE women. These NGO partnerships have provided essential and specialised psychosocial support and services for supporting the rehabilitation of women affected by severe psychosocial trauma. This approach is strongly aligned with SAKCHAM's focus on community-based psychosocial interventions targeting people living in distress. Working with Nepali NGOs was also seen as a sustainable exit strategy for developing on-going psychosocial support as well as advocacy for policy reforms. In addition, SAKCHAM collaborated with national women's networks to advocate on promoting women's rights in national processes related to peace-building and constitution-making.

National government: SAKCHAM was designed to help operationalise the National Action Plan (NAP) for UNRSC 1325 & 1820 in Nepal. These international conventions enable conflict-affected people to participate in peace processes and influence decision-making in areas that impact their lives. Nepal's NAP recognises victims of SGBV as an explicit target group. In reality, however, most programmes working on conflict-related issues have prioritised interim relief, usually as cash compensation. They have tended to exclude the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). SAKCHAM addressed this gap by conducting advocacy capacity building and contributing to policy advocacy toward the NAP. CRSV survivors now have better access to basic services as a result of more equitable implementation of the NAP.



Stakeholder & Activity table

| 'Stake-holders' | Psychosocial | Access & control over resources | Women's meaningful participation & representation |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Popular Education Centre (PEC) activities with women Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SAKCHAM significantly empowered poor, vulnerable & socially excluded (PVSE) women by enabling them to their address their own needs, aspirations & interests.³⁴ ✓ Community resilience focused approach helped women cope with hardships & acquire greater sense of control over prospects.³⁵ ✓ Increased representation of women in local government & community committees, e.g., Ward Citizens Forum, Local Peace, Health, Sanitation, Agriculture & School Management Committees reservation policy for women | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification & classification of poor through UCPA tools • Study on psychosocial issues of conflict affected women • Psychosocial Support Resource Map <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group formation based on analysis of UCPA tools • Training on psychosocial issues • Psychosocial implementation strategy in Nepali based on CARE-Austria manual "Integrating the Psychosocial Dimension in Women's Empowerment Programming: A Guide for CARE Country Offices" <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions on well-being in women's groups | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social resource mapping • Wage analysis matrix to analyse to advocate for equal wages for equal work • Gender role analysis in livestock rearing <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in literacy classes • Forming credit & savings groups, co-operatives for IGAs <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular advocacy & coordination with VDC/DDC & different government line agencies to claim women's rights over community resources | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment of changes before & after establishing PECs • Watchdog monitoring of government plans • Monthly, quarterly & annual review meetings of progress on Action Plans. <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Action Plans to address the issues identified by PEC women groups • VDC level meetings with stakeholders. • Celebrate International Women's Day, 16 days of activism, eliminating discrimination • Form pressure groups for service delivery, vital statistics registration & citizenship • Formation of networks & alliances |
| <p>Community Based Social Workers (CBSW) activities Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 8,885 PVSE women mobilised & organised by CBSWs into 395 PEC women's groups for the first time to claim their rights ✓ Enhanced capacities of CBSWs to address psychosocial issues faced by PECs women group members ✓ CBSWs successfully locate PVSE women's interests high on the agenda of local government planning | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV mapping & problem tree to identify GBV vulnerable households, consequences & clarification on all forms <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint psychosocial expert at programme & CBSWs at community levels • Psychosocial trainings & refresher trainings for CBPSWs on psychosocial support to PEC women groups • Psychosocial trainings to traditional faith healers | <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication to PEC women groups on information & updates on services provided by government line agencies for accessing services & resources for income & asset creation <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly discussions by CBSWs in PEC women's groups to identify their development needs & priorities | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Reflection Workshops <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train CBSWs in leadership & facilitation, human resource management, UCPA tools, social mobilisation, CEDAW, gender & social inclusion, policies & laws on sexual exploitation & abuse, CARE's Gender Policy, UNSCRs 1325 & 1820. • Identify & mentor PVSE women |

³⁴ Bhatta, Binod & Team, Final evaluation of Women Empowerment for Transformation, SAKCHAM, in Churia Area, Nepal, Social Welfare Council, March 2010, p. 14

³⁵ CARE Report Learning Conference, Burundi 2009, p. 20



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| 'Stake-holders' | Psychosocial | Access & control over resources | Women's meaningful participation & representation |
|--|---|---|---|
| processes | <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psycho-education by CBSWs for individuals & groups • Home visits to monitor GBV & domestic violence cases • CBSWs co-ordinate with service providers & referral networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of PVSE Savings & Credit Groups & Co-operatives | leaders on leadership, negotiation & advocacy skills <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PVSE women needs presented by CBSWs in VDC Council meetings (later by PEC women speaking up on their own) |
| Men Campaigners & Supportive Men Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advocate mainstreaming to end GBV for local governments plans & budgets ✓ Increased positive behaviour & attitudes of men who demonstrate good practices at individual, household & community level for women's empowerment & gender equality³⁶ ✓ Promote equitable relations between men & women & reduce violence against women. ✓ Increase number of Men Campaigners & Supportive Men working as volunteers for the achievement of the goal of GEWE | <u>Participatory assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCPA to analyse inequitable work-load of women & impact on well-being, mobility, income, disempowerment <u>Capacity building</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Men Campaigners & Supportive Men on gender, masculinity & women's empowerment <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Men Campaigners by PEC women's groups • Formation of Men Supportive Groups • Joint weekly/monthly meetings with PEC women groups • Couple discussions & recognition of model couples • Home visits by Men Campaigners & Supportive Men Groups to monitor GBV cases • Advocacy for GBV Free area strategy & planning | <u>Capacity building</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support PEC women groups to enhance women's access to services & resources • Mobilisation of local government funds for skill enhancement, IGA activities & Men Supportive Groups advocacy efforts <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint accountability of husband/wife in loan transactions • Joint property ownership of husband/wife • Facilitation by Men Supportive groups for gender justice on GBV cases | <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint advocacy with Women's Groups & Networks on 16 days' activism to end GBV • Lead by example to change rigid & discriminatory cultural practices against girls, women & Dalits • Advocacy & lobby with VDCs/DDCs & CBOs for women's meaningful participation |
| Women's Network activities Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong PVSE women's network community to national to promote & protect economic, social, cultural & political rights. Networks raised profile of women's rights & helped mitigate discrimination, i.e., GBV, lack access to private & public property, untouchability.³⁷ ✓ Women network advocacy led most | <u>Participatory assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint monitoring of psychosocial cases with PECs women group members <u>Capacity building</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Women Networks on psychosocial health • Monthly meetings with PEC women group members to discuss pertinent issues such as citizenship, health & sanitation, GBV, polygamy, trafficking <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Action Plans to address the | <u>Participatory assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments of PECs through the Community Score-board <u>Capacity building</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation of resources for awareness, skill development & office materials from VDCs <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review meetings with stakeholders & women leaders representing PVSE interests in | <u>Participatory assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops for collecting inputs on securing women's rights in the New Constitution <u>Capacity building</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building of VDC & district levels Women's Network members on leadership & advocacy skills <u>Engagement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with key stakeholders for enhancing access of PEC |

³⁶ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 6

³⁷ 2012 Evaluation & SAKHAM Annual Report 2012, p. 11



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| 'Stake-holders' | Psychosocial | Access & control over resources | Women's meaningful participation & representation |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>VDCs to allocate 10% of VDC mandatory budget per government policy for women capacity building & economic empowerment.³⁸</p> <p>✓ Networks raised grass-roots women's voices to national level in campaigns, e.g., Gender friendly Constitution, NAP on 1325&1820</p> | <p>PEC women groups' issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation of Men Campaigners & Supportive Men's Groups as role models for changing gender stereotypes & ending VAW/G | <p>various Committees to enhance their access to resources & services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular interaction with service providers ensures PEC women access to services | <p>women groups to services & resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in local government planning processes to prioritise women's issues • Beijing + 20 Review Workshops |
| <p>Cooperatives & Revolving Fund</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <p>✓ PVSE women have enhanced access to credit through credit & savings groups & co-operatives for improved livelihoods</p> <p>✓ With enhanced economic status, women report greater respect, & their views being heard by husbands & other family members; at community women's, income status & group solidarity is empowering³⁹</p> <p>✓ A total of 4,558 PEC women groups members from 285 PEC women groups have received membership in SAKCHAM supported & other Co-operatives⁴⁰</p> | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly discussions on social problems apart from Co-operative administration issues using UCPA tools <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to women recovering psychosocial trauma for their rehabilitation | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review pro-poor policies for Co-operatives on PVSE women's issues <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish VDC Information Centre to ensure PVSE women's right to information & services • Skill development training for potential women entrepreneurs & LIPs for IGAs <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form Savings & Credit groups • Link PVSE women to Co-operatives through Revolving Fund • Promote PEC group memberships in other Co-operatives via Revolving Fund | <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings on Pre-Co-operative, Co-operative management & leadership <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions/meetings with Division Co-operative Offices, Ministry of Agriculture & Co-operatives |
| <p>Local Government</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <p>More interaction with local government led to:</p> <p>✓ 10% of mandatory VDC budget for women fully invested for women's capacity building & economic empowerment by most VDCs</p> <p>✓ Group solidarity via UCPA tools</p> | <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building & annual reviews of PSS Committees • Orientations provided to district level government officials on PSS mechanism & process <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of VDC level Psychosocial Support (PSS) Committees | <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular sharing of information on available government services by local government officials as guest facilitators in meetings of PEC women groups • Access to & mobilisation of VDC resources for girls' education, skill enhancement & old age pensions | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly, Semi-annual & Annual progress review of PEC women's groups in DDC & VDC Advisory Committees <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientations/trainings to local government officials on UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 National Action Plan |

³⁸ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 13

³⁹ SAKCHAM Final Annual Progress Report 2009, p. 6 & 7

⁴⁰ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress



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| 'Stake-holders' | Psychosocial | Access & control over resources | Women's meaningful participation & representation |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>encouraged PEC women groups to pursue equal wages for equal work, lobby against school corruption, ask for gender budgeting at VDC level & mobilise funds for road construction & adult literacy classes.⁴¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhanced collective action, bargaining & social expression with gov't by PEC women to promote good governance ✓ VDCs mainstream GBV in plans & budgets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local governments mainstream GBV activities in their plans & budgets | <p>for PEC women members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with district level government line agencies for matching funds, technical assistance & support for IGA | <p>(NAP)</p> <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation of women in local government committees as per the 33 % reservation policy for women • Participation in local government planning processes • District Level Public Hearings & observations of Peace Days |
| <p>National Networks & Government Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Psychosocial issues & well-being acknowledged as a development issue ✓ Needs of conflict-affected women prioritised in UNSCR 1325 & 1820 NAP via advocacy ✓ UCPA tools adopted by LGCPD for reaching poorest of the poor ✓ PVSE women exercise adult franchise rights for first time as bona fide citizens of Nepal ✓ PVSE women provide suggestions for ensuring women's rights in New Constitution | <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAKCHAM PSS learning adopted in other CARE Nepal projects <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with national level institutions for PSS advocacy & referrals – CVICT, CMC Nepal & TPO • Book launching of, "To Be Well at Heart: Conflict-Affected Women's Perceptions of Psychosocial Well-being" – a participatory study in Burundi, Nepal & Northern Uganda | <p><u>Participatory assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring visits by Central Project Advisory Committee to track progress on PVSE women's access to government resources & services <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms submitted to the government for landless women • UCPA tool adopted by LGCPD for reaching out to the poorest of the poor | <p><u>Capacity building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity of PVSE women to exercise their adult franchise rights in CA elections <p><u>Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with National organisations on promoting women's rights • Submitted suggestions to make the new Constitution gender-friendly • Inputs to UN SGs Report on UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 for UN Security Council • Workshops organised to provide inputs for finalisation of UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 NAP |

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 19

Major strategies of SAKCHAM

Rights-Based Approach: SAKCHAM adopted a Rights-Based Approach in accord with internationally recognised principles of human rights – **universality, indivisibility and inalienability**⁴² – to translate government’s commitment to women’s rights and gender equality into action. In Nepal’s patriarchal society where gender norms are discriminatory, SAKCHAM acknowledged that equality does not mean sameness. In other words, treating women and men in the same manner in an unequal society will not result in equality. Instead, SAKCHAM emphasised building PVSE women’s psychosocial strengths and competencies. They worked on women’s self-confidence, increasing access to information and resources, increasing skills for decision-making, and enhancing their ability to negotiate for self-determination in their lives.

Use of Underlying Causes of Poverty Analysis (UCPA) tools: CARE’s package of UCPA tools has been used extensively by CARE Nepal, including the SAKCHAM programme, to identify poor, vulnerable and socially excluded (PVSE) groups of women and men. Specifically, the UCP analysis is a systematic & continuous process that:

- ✓ identifies geographically marginalised spaces and the poorest population within these (poverty pockets);
- ✓ explores the conditions and dynamics around poor people’s lives, social structures and forms of discrimination (especially class, caste and gender);
- ✓ provides access to public resources and state funded entitlement schemes, land tenure relations, and the larger political culture.⁴³

The UCPA process involves a participatory analysis of existing poverty issues for poor women. The vulnerability mapping tool helps to find the “poverty pockets”, and locate the ultra-poor, excluded and marginalised people. These steps help communities understand who comprises the “real” target group for participation in the programme and thereby assist to avoid elite capture.⁴⁴ There are many other tools in the UCPA package that have been used by SAKCHAM with the PEC groups, depending on issues arising in the group dialogues. These other tools include Power Mapping, Social/Resource Mapping of community, well-being ranking, dependency analysis, caste analysis, seasonal calendar, women’s mobility and work-load analysis, income and expenditure analysis and history taking (see Part 3 of this manual for details). These participatory tools have helped women (and men) to both analyse and mobilise their communities to address root causes of poverty and social injustice. SAKCHAM has found that it is most effective to use these tools from the very beginning of community interactions in an empowerment programme. They help to bring together community members in analysing the structures and systems that cause poverty.

Using the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT): The REFLECT methodology, originally developed by Paulo Freire in Brazil to raise critical consciousness about oppression (so-called conscientisation)⁴⁵, was applied in the PEC groups. It was a strategy that enabled the PVSE women to better understand the inequalities and discrimination they faced every day in their households and communities. Reflections on these issues deepened their understanding of socio/political

⁴² SAKCHAM applies the following treaties/guidelines: United Nations Charter & Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 1995 Beijing Platform of Action, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women, United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325, 1820, 1888 & 1889; Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) policy statement on Gender Equality Programming in Humanitarian Action; IASC guidelines on mental health & psychosocial support in emergencies.

⁴³ CARE Report Learning Conference, Burundi, 2009, p.25

⁴⁴ Singh, Kanta, SAKCHAM Project Medium-Term Review, February 2009, p. 11

⁴⁵ Critical consciousness focuses on achieving an in-depth understanding of the world, allowing for the perception and exposure of social and political contradictions. Critical consciousness also includes taking action against oppressive elements in one’s life that are illuminated by that understanding.

oppression. The discussions also built the women's awareness about how to take action for social change to address the oppressive practices. Women's ability to challenge traditional gender roles was strengthened through the REFLECT discussions. Collectively, they explored rights and responsibilities, peace-building, discrimination and marginalisation, gender based violence (GBV), and structural barriers to gender equality. The women in the PEC groups also analysed their own psychosocial reactions to their highly stressful environment of poverty, armed conflict and discrimination.

Capacity Building: SAKCHAM invested in capacity building to improve economic conditions, increase political participation and improve the psychosocial wellbeing of PVSE women and men. The programme provided capacity building for people, groups, and institutions as a core element of its strategy. Capacity building aimed to enable implementation, but also to enhance sustainability of change beyond the life of the programme.

Examples of capacity building in SAKCHAM, clustered by stakeholder group and content:

- PEC women - Psychosocial well-being of members affected by conflict or domestic violence.
- PEC women - Entrepreneurship skills for economic empowerment of PVSE women.
- PVSE women leaders - Leadership and advocacy skills for meaningful participation by PVSE women in community-based and government structures.
- Mentors and coaches - for women leaders to undertake effective interventions in local planning and peace processes and for making the new Constitution gender-friendly.
- CBSWs & PVSE women leaders – for a local pool of informed and skilful human resources
- PEC groups - Women and stakeholder's skills and knowledge in peace-building and UNSCR 1325 & 1820.
- Men – as male role models for transforming gender stereotypes.
- Networks – building social capital, e.g., with VDC and district level Women's Networks, Supportive Men's Groups, Village and District Project Monitoring Committees, GBV Free Committees, Savings and Credit Groups and Co-operatives.
- Stakeholders – how to do evidence-based policy advocacy on gender equality, learning from SAKCHAM's experience of empowering PVSE women to lobby for policy/legislative inputs into the new Constitution and a better implementation of the NAP for UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 and DV Act 2009.

Psychosocial well-being and community support mechanism: The initial UCP analyses with poor and vulnerable women highlighted their on-going psychosocial distress. These women were stressed by economic insecurity, social marginalisation, and other residual impacts from the recently ended conflict. A holistic psychosocial well-being approach was therefore introduced as a crucial component of SAKCHAM. The programme designed and implemented the approach in partnership with several national level NGOs specialised in psychosocial care and support. These organisations facilitated the orientation of target groups on psychosocial issues, and trained SAKCHAM's CBSWs about supporting PVSE women and men with counselling and referrals. The training included GBV case management and follow-up with GBV survivors. CBSWs were also trained on existing guidelines and protocols of the do-no-harm approach and how to avoid burn-out. SAKCHAM expanded the support safety net by setting up Psychosocial Support Committees at VDC level. Local government was involved so that affected groups could continue to access services and resources locally for dealing with psychosocial issues even after the programme ends.

Economic empowerment of women: while selectively choosing to work with the very poorest women and communities, SAKCHAM also built intentionally on any existing livelihood assets. The programme used various UCPV tools to clarify any social, economic, human, natural and physical assets of the target beneficiaries. The CBSWs and other stakeholders then provided the women with enterprise skills training and promoted Livelihood Implementation Plans (LIPs). The LIPs enabled the women to invest their efforts and time in a more systematic manner. The plans also helped them to track their income, expenditures and schedule the return of loan instalments. SAKCHAM'S support was not limited to individuals. The PEC women groups were encouraged to form savings and loan groups. SAKCHAM set up a Revolving Fund to facilitate target groups' access to easy loans for kick-starting enterprises. The Revolving Fund was also used to support the establishment of 20 PVSE Cooperatives and register them at district level, according to the standard guidelines and policies of the Cooperatives Act of Nepal.

Partnership and alliance building: SAKCHAM engaged in partnerships and alliances across sectors and thematic areas at local and higher levels. At district level, SAKCHAM partnered with three NGOs in Chitwan, Makwanpur and Kapilvastu districts. These organisations were instrumental in implementing SAKCHAM on the ground. They assisted in highlighting PVSE women's needs, as well as enhancing effective coordination with target groups and communities, leaders and community members. Trust building among target communities was much easier with their support. They helped overcome various social and political challenges during project implementation. Partnerships were also developed with local government structures, especially the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and District Development Committees (DDCs). These partnerships helped facilitate both the access to information and services for PVSE women as claims holders and the delivery of such services to them by local government agencies as duty bearers.

At national level, SAKCHAM worked closely with various national organisations to address the psychosocial needs of PVSE women and men within the programme areas. These links focussed on policy advocacy, e.g., about sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), monitoring UNSCR 1325/1820, making the new Constitution gender-friendly, and helping women exercise their rights as concerned citizens. Networking with other government and NGO stakeholders enabled programme interventions to get more visibility, diversify support, and ensure local ownership.

Engagement with media: Recognising that public media are a powerful means to raise awareness on women's rights, SAKCHAM trained and mobilised journalists to expand its reach. Journalists were trained on gender-sensitive issues, like SGBV and UNSCRs 1325 & 1820. They also had the opportunity to learn more about SAKCHAM for informed coverage of programme interventions and success stories. Local newspapers and FM radios were used to disseminate information on issues that affect the lives of PVSE women, such as gender equality, and to cover success stories.

Men engagement for gender equality and women's empowerment: SAKCHAM saw that focussing on women apart from their relationships with men could undermine efforts to reduce gender disparities and end oppressive gender behaviours like GBV. Nepal is a male-dominated society, with most of the strategic positions in government and community-based structures held by men. The programme therefore adopted a Gender and Diversity (GAD) approach toward gender equality and women's empowerment. SAKCHAM decided to bring in men to challenge male stereotypes, attitudes and behaviours toward PVSE women. Men's participation in SAKCHAM was ensured *opportunistically* by using selected supportive men as role models – with these men being identified by PEC women members. SAKCHAM also worked *incrementally* through capacity building efforts to develop a critical mass of

supportive men over time.⁴⁶

Mainstreaming gender: Gender mainstreaming was adopted internationally by governments in 1995⁴⁷ as a critical approach to achieving gender equality. SAKCHAM used a gender mainstreaming approach to challenge the status quo of gender attitudes and behaviours in the programme areas. Conceptual clarity on gender and gender mainstreaming were essential to effectively engaging communities in SAKCHAM's interventions. Analysis and reporting of the programme outputs and outcomes based on gender-disaggregated data further displayed the gender gap and helped to mainstream gender issues in the programme.

REFLECT Centre (PEC) Activities with Women

Psychosocial well-being

SAKCHAM developed a psychosocial implementation guideline and strategy in the Nepali language that was based on the CARE Austria psychosocial manual.⁴⁸ The guideline explains all the important aspects of the psychosocial approach. It provides a brief overview of the participatory assessment process needed to ensure community ownership. It gives specific guidance for psychosocial support to address the main emerging issues for PVSE women in Nepal. These include stresses during and after armed conflict; CRSV/SGBV and marginalisation. The well-being circle tool stimulates dialogue about how each individual is connected - to family, friends, neighbours and the outside world. It helps discussants think about how people are affected and influenced by culture, religion and the environment. The discussion guide helps participants consider the cumulative effects of events that can lead to a crisis. They also talked about how an individual tries to balance/address those situations, and what can lead to overstraining oneself.

The CBSWs facilitated weekly psychosocial well-being circle discussions in the PEC groups. These discussions were held in an atmosphere of trust and confidence with the support of the guideline. Participants were asked to express their feeling and experiences of events that caused distress in their lives. Aided by the REFLECT methodology, the PEC women recognised common patterns of psychosocial reactions to stresses of poverty, discrimination and the consequences of the armed conflict. They were able to articulate the pains and trauma suffered during the conflict up to and including sexual and gender-based violence. They spoke about domestic violence, child marriage, trafficking, and not having citizenship. GBV mapping and the Problem and Solution Trees were used to identify GBV vulnerable households and causal factors, including alcohol consumption in the household. PEC women groups are now assisting their members through monthly couple dialogue sessions between women and their husbands that discuss the negative consequences of alcohol consumption and domestic violence. In a bid to end this harmful behaviour, PEC women

Example of peer support: In one extreme case, a PEC woman member in Dibyanagar VDC of Chitwan district was supported in getting justice for establishing the paternity of her child. She had shared her distress at being abandoned by the unborn child's father who repeatedly and vehemently denied his involvement in the case. The PEC women group members, VDC Women's Network members and SAKCHAMs local partner organisation rallied around this cause. In 2013, DNA tests were carried out to establish the fatherhood of the child. Ultimately, the PEC woman member was able to get justice through positive results of the DNA tests. The district court ruled that the man in question provide property for the upkeep of the child. The PEC woman member is now settled in another village.

⁴⁶ Gordon, Peter, 'Two wheels of a cart, two sides of coin' Engaging Men in Gender Equality: Using Systematisation to understand experiences and lessons learned in Mali and Nepal, p.17

⁴⁷ At the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995

⁴⁸ CARE Austria, "Integrating the Psychosocial Dimension in Women's Empowerment Programming: A Guide for CARE Country Offices"

group members decided to impose fines on perpetrators: Rs 500 for GBV offenders and alcoholism; Rs 100 for gambling; and Rs 250 for sending children to purchase cigarettes and alcohol. These discussions and action steps helped women get out from individual isolation. The group members supported each other by peer counselling, awareness-raising, and working as pressure groups.⁴⁹ SAKCHAM and CARE Nepal regard the psychosocial well-being component of SAKCHAM as a model intervention.⁵⁰

Access and control over resources

SAKCHAM used a number of participatory UCPA tools to analyse women's socio-economic situation, such as Power Mapping, community Social/Resource Mapping, well-being ranking, dependency analysis, caste analysis, seasonal calendar, women's mobility and work-load analysis, income and expenditure analysis and personal histories. CBSWs focussed discussions on women's rights and poverty through social resource mapping, wage analysis matrix, and gender role analysis in livestock rearing. Social mapping helped reveal types of resources, as well as who benefits most from access to or control of these resources. Wage analysis exposed differences in wages paid to men and women for doing the same work. The work-load analysis helped identify tasks done by each member of the household, the time they spent in those activities and the benefits of sharing household responsibilities. Analysing gender roles in livestock rearing identified who performed which tasks, who makes decisions in selling livestock and how the income is managed. Women identified gender biases in relation to land ownership and the acquisition or sale of important productive assets, including large livestock.⁵¹ In summary, the PEC groups of PVSE women became more aware of unequal gender relations, gender-based discrimination in household decision-making and constraints to their access to and control over resources. Based on their analysis of unequal entitlements, PEC women have gained confidence to make decisions over livestock and vegetable selling in the markets.

As mentioned earlier under economic empowerment (see page 32), SAKCHAM supported PEC women to develop Livelihood Implementation LIPs for engaging in income-generating activities (IGAs). The programme provided training on specific skills for sewing, animal husbandry, and non-traditional enterprises, such as bicycle and motorcycle repair. Women have used their LIPs to implement enterprises in a more systematic manner, track their income and expenditures and schedule payments of loan instalments.

SAKCHAM used a Revolving Fund to make enterprise start-up grants (Rs 10,000-15,000) available within guidelines set up by the programme. In 2009, 1,750 women received start-up support either through individual or group LIPs. Women in PEC groups are variously operating IGAs/enterprises for animal rearing (e.g., goats, pigs, buffalo, or poultry), crop farming (e.g., vegetables fruits), retail business (e.g., shops, cosmetics), and services (e.g., mobile phone, tailoring, cycle maintenance). In 2014, about 3 out of 5 women in PEC groups were involved in IGAs.⁵² The accountability monitoring of LIPs shows that PEC members have been paying off their initial loans (equivalent to US\$ 62.00).⁵³ PVSE women report that their living standards have improved due to earnings from these local skill-based businesses. They are now able to support their children's education and purchase some basic utensils, warm clothes, or even jewellery. Women say they have more self-confidence

⁴⁹ Progress Report submitted to Austrian Development Agency, May 2009, p. 41

⁵⁰ 2-day SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan district, Nepal, 27- 29 December, 2015

⁵¹ Kanchan Lama, SAKCHAM II Gender Analysis, Community level and rapid gender analysis of stakeholders in the SAKCHAM II Programme Area, CARE International in Nepal, Bharatpur Cluster Office with funding from Austrian Development Co-operation, September 2012, p. 8

⁵² Pokharel, Surya Binod, A Report of Potential Small Scale Business Study In SAKCHAM III Project Districts Makawanpur, Chitwan and Kapilbastu in Central and Western Terai, March 2014, p.4. 72% in Chitwan, 69% in Makawanpur and 58% of Kapilbastu district.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 6

and self-esteem. Participating women also report more respect within their own households.⁵⁴

Women's meaningful participation and representation

In the PEC REFLECT discussions, PVSE women identified social issues affecting them around equal wages for equal work, discriminatory practices against women and Dalits, and GBV issues. These PEC women then developed Action Plans to address the issues. SAKCHAM facilitates following up these plans with monthly, quarterly and annual review meetings. During these reviews, specific women's problems and challenges were discussed and decisions taken for follow-up action through local institutions.

Practical example: An Action Plan from a PEC women's group⁵⁵

| What to do | When | Where | How | Support |
|--|------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Gather information & status of alcohol consumption to reduce alcohol intake | In June | Own community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop Code of Conduct - Give punishment if someone drinks & disturbs family - Disallow practice of using children to purchase alcohol - REFLECT members coordinate with Men Campaigners & others to rally & campaign against alcohol drinking | PEC women members & Men campaigners |
| Raise voice & react individually on all kinds of violence | April onwards | In community & another place | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - React individually if one faces discrimination - Form committee for confidential data collection & complaints - Interact with perpetrators on gender roles & legal issues - Ensure that acts of violence are not repeated | Self & Committee |
| Look for access to services from service providers | As per cases | VDC, BZ, Cooperative, School, Health post | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enlist support from project frontline staff about the services & eligibility criteria - Manage time, participate in meetings, & demand budget etc. | Frontline staff & Community people |
| PVSE group conducts gender equality interactions | within 4 months | In groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct gender equality trainings adapted to local context Encourage those who are shy to speak - Support them regularly to practice communication skills | LRP |
| Use polite words, respect others & increase cohesion | From now | In family, community & all places | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beginning with oneself (especially male members) - Practice respectful behaviour in family & with each other | Self |
| Monthly meeting with VDC secretary, political representatives & other stakeholders | On regular basis | Own village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correspond with stakeholders to participate in PEC meetings - Make presentations on progress made - Provide information on future plans of PEC members - Request funds for skill development & IGA | Mobilise PEC Committee |

The action plan approach gained momentum from a guiding tool – 'Form to Analyse the Condition of REFLECT Centre' – that raised the bar for transformation. PECs used this tool for self-assessment of changes before and after the establishment of the PEC. Women in the PEC used the tool to measure each other's status regarding indicators of empowerment. The form's indicators variously cover education, assets, housing and sanitation facilities, discriminatory practices (untouchability and veil system), vital statistics registration, citizenship, membership in social organisations, vulnerability to violence and health status. They ranked women or group status on each dimension from low or medium to ideal.

⁵⁴ SAKCHAM Final Annual Progress Report 2009, p. 7

⁵⁵ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report, 2012 Final, p. 22

In REFLECT discussions, PVSE women explored the differential impact of policies on men and women, especially as they related to their own needs. By looking carefully at policies and policy processes, women have become more aware of their own potential to engage in community management and public decision-making. They had previously regarded such actions as 'men's work'. In the SAKCHAM programme areas, PVSE women now participate in a wide range of government and community social structures. These include Local Peace Committees (LPCs), School Management Committees, Health and Sanitation committees, and other user groups (e.g., for buffer zones, community forests, and water users' committees). Members of these local structures decide on the use and distribution of natural resources and their management. With the increased participation of PVSE women, the male members of these structures are hearing the voices and concerns of women, poor and marginalised groups. PVSE women in School Management Committees, for example, have contributed to the recruitment of female teachers, established separate toilets for girls in schools and organised safe spaces for girls to access sanitary napkins.

Success Story - My New Life¹

Mira Kori is 25 year old widow and single mother from Dohani VDC, Kapilvastu. Her husband died in 2009 from a heart attack following an accusation of arson in their village. According to Mira, her husband was innocent and did not know how the fire occurred. Mira was left with a six-year old daughter named Roshani. After the death of her husband, she became depressed but the thought of orphaning her daughter prevented her from committing suicide. She was confronted with monetary problems, food, clothes and ill-health. With no house of her own, she lives in a rented house. To make ends meet, she took on work as a wage labourer, but the seasonal wages from agriculture work was not sufficient for her survival needs.

At the start of Sakcham II in 2010, her village identified Mira as a PVSE woman through the social analysis tool. From there on, the weekly PEC meetings of the women's group became her life support mechanism for engaging in mutual cooperation. The group women members empathised with her situation. They selected her to implement an income generating activity with the grant support of the Rs 15,000 provided through SAKCHAMs Revolving Fund.



After being helped to develop a LIP for a small mobile cosmetic shop, she received Rs 5400. She also got an additional Rs 1250 that had been collected through fines imposed on training participants for disregarding the rules of the training. As per the LIP, she purchased the cosmetics and a box to contain them. She travelled from village to village to conduct her business carrying the box of cosmetics on her head. Today she is able to save Rs 100-200 per day from her business. However, she cannot operate the business on a regular basis as sometimes she has to help in the household chores of her landlord.

Her citizenship was taken up as an agenda item in the PEC women group's weekly meetings and an action plan was developed. Accordingly, with the support of the women's group and in co-ordination with VDC stakeholders the death certificate of her husband was made out. Following this, the VDC Secretary recommended her case for obtaining citizenship. She has now received her citizenship as well as the birth certificate of her daughter. This helped her to enrol her daughter in Class 1 in a local school. Mira has opened a 5-year life insurance account for which she has to deposit Rs 1600 on a monthly basis. In the process of all these events and changes, she has become literate and can now sign her name and read. Therefore, she has been selected as the leader of her PEC women group. She has also been selected as the treasurer of Misty Co-operative Ltd of Dohani VDC, which was registered in June 2013. In addition, she is a member of the VDC level Women's Network.

Life now holds great promise for her. In her own words, Mira speaks happily of the changes through her involvement in SAKCHAM, "It is significant to me because my involvement in the women's group and the regular discussions at meetings and starting the cosmetics shop provided me with a new lease on life. I did not consider myself as a human being because I had no identity, work, good health or any relation in the society. I was planning to take my life in the past but now I have the courage to live and work for the identity of my family. Now, I respect my life.

More than 100 PEC groups have entered into strong networks and alliances with like-minded women's groups and other organisations at VDC levels. These networks have linked PEC groups in Buffer Zone committees, Ward Citizens Forums, and meetings for the LGCPD and Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF).⁵⁶ The networks have been advocating at district and national levels on women's rights and ending all forms of discrimination. Women in these alliances have also formulated long-term plans at the district level to address these issues.⁵⁷

CBSW activities

Psychosocial well-being

SAKCHAM used mentoring and training to build the capacity of the CBSWs to deal with psychosocial problems of PEC women members. A psychosocial expert worked with the project to provide technical backstopping to the CBSWs. Two NGO partner organisations developed and carried out psychosocial trainings for the CBSWs.

One of SAKCHAM's partners, the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT), started with a community psychosocial needs assessment. The needs assessment showed that armed conflict affects the emotions and social relations of women and children as well as affecting their access to services. Their findings also indicated that SGBV was a major contributing factor to the psychosocial problems. After the needs assessment, CVICT provided the programme CBSWs with an 11-day training that focused on concepts of psychosocial well-being. The training also built their knowledge and skills to identify psychosocial problems at the community level and support psychosocial well-being. The training helped define the roles and responsibilities of the CBSWs for community level psychosocial interventions.⁵⁸ CBSWs learned about GBV case management and the guidelines of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support in Emergency Settings.

Another SAKCHAM partner, the Centre for Mental Health and Counselling Nepal (CMC Nepal) complemented CVICT's work with trainings on group facilitation and psychosocial support (PSS) supervision skills. The CMC trainings particularly emphasised listening skills, group facilitation, emotional support, and applying the psychosocial approach to GBV and community-based case-management. Subsequently, CBSWs received refresher trainings for upgrading their skills and knowledge on psychosocial support. The refresher trainings have provided an opportunity for discussing cases handled by CBSWs, and the challenges they face in fulfilling their roles.

The trained CBSWs conduct psychosocial education sessions for PEC women groups members and their families. These sessions provide a basic introduction to psychosocial well-being and mental health issues, psychosocial issues in the community, causes of psychosocial problems, and look at options like livelihood improvement and recreational activities.⁵⁹ The structured discussions conducted by CBSWs use GBV mapping and Problem/Solution Trees to identify GBV-vulnerable households and problems arising from GBV in the home and community. The tools play a big role in creating awareness about all forms of GBV and the psychological, physical, social and economic consequences at the practical level.⁶⁰

The trained CBSWs are part of the community and, as such, they are very close to the PEC women group members. The CBSWs conduct regular home visits to monitor and evaluate

⁵⁶ Target setting of SAKCHAM III Project Progress Report, November 2015, p. 9

⁵⁷ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2013, p. 17

⁵⁸ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2009, p. 14

⁵⁹ Psychosocial Learning Conference Report, February 2012, p. 13-14

⁶⁰ 2-day SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan district, Nepal, 27- 29 December, 2015

psychosocial cases and domestic violence. The CBSWs do not provide formal psychological counselling, but they do give emotional support. The CBSWs refer women having severe psychosocial problems to CVICT, CMC Nepal, and TPO (Trans-cultural Psychosocial Organisation), all of whom are SAKCHAM partners with signed MoUs.⁶¹

The CBSWs also co-ordinate with other service providers and referral networks to enable the PEC members to access quality and confidential services. The CBSWs are popular among PVSE women and their families for the support they provide through the PECs.⁶² The effectiveness of the CBSW approach can be seen in an increasing demand for support by CBSWs.⁶³ CBSWs meet monthly with PEC women group members to discuss social issues that trigger psychosocial problems and limit their potential to get on with their daily lives.

Access to and control over resources

CBSWs make many contributions to empowering PVSE women. CBSWs facilitate weekly discussions in PEC women groups, thereby enabling members to identify their own local development needs and priorities. Afterwards, the CBSWs co-ordinate with relevant line agencies to facilitate fulfilment of the women's demands and action plans. For example, arranging for adult literacy classes has helped PEC women members to graduate from being thumbprint groups to neo-literate groups.

CBSWs regularly share practical information updates about benefits and services provided by the government at local levels. These updates are very relevant for the women, e.g., with news about health⁶⁴ and nutrition allowances⁶⁵, roles and responsibilities of local governments, right to information, VDC resources and the schedule of local government planning processes. With access to these kinds of information, PEC women groups and surrounding communities have been able to register vital statistics such as household births, deaths and marriages and to obtain citizenship.

The CBSWs have also helped PEC groups to access resources from VDCs, e.g., agricultural assets and livestock from agencies for goat rearing and fish farming, as well as leadership training.⁶⁶ CBSWs have supported PEC women to participate in entrepreneurship skills training and developing Livelihood Implementation Plans (LIPs) for engaging in IGAs.

CBSWs also facilitated setting up savings and credit groups among the PEC women. They applied the Income/Expenditure Analysis (Ghaito Analysis) to help them understand sources of income and analyse the trends of their monthly expenditures. This enabled them to decide which IGA was better suited to their skills and practical needs. The CBSWs facilitated the establishment of 20 Co-operatives from among the PEC women groups, using the standard guidelines and policies of the Cooperatives Act of Nepal and the financial support of SAKCHAM. The CBSWs used data from the wealth-ranking tool to identify women's economic status and help justify Revolving Fund support for PEC women group members and ensure their smooth integration into the Co-operatives.

Women's meaningful participation representation

The CBSWs received comprehensive training through SAKCHAM on leadership and facilitation skills and human resource management. The skills training included use of

⁶¹ CARE Report Learning Conference, Burundi, 2009, p. 49

⁶² *ibid*

⁶³ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p. 42

⁶⁴ 32 kinds of free medicine are made available through health-post especially for pro-poor people. Pregnant women are entitled to four free antenatal check-ups and hospital delivery, free immunisation to children and free removal of uterus for the poor.

⁶⁵ Allowances for under 5 years old, allowance for Dalit caste children, widowed women, senior (after 75 years of age), and scholarships for girls

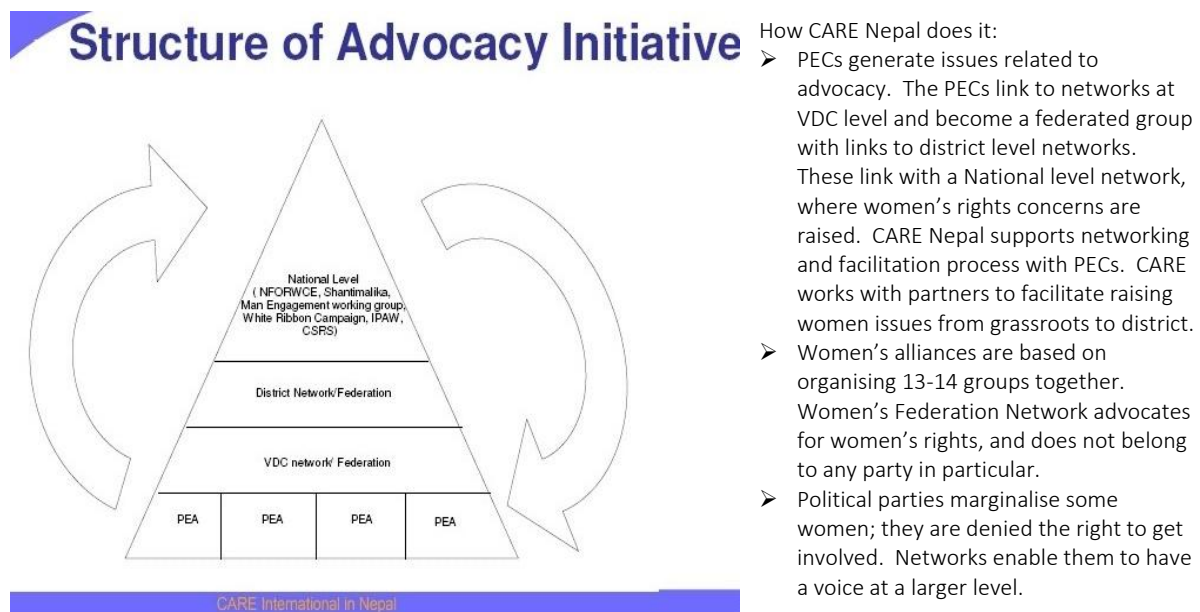
⁶⁶ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report, p.14

UCPA tools, review and reflection processes, and social mobilisation. They knowledge training covered topics like the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), gender and social inclusion issues, as well as policies and legislation on sexual exploitation, abuse and GBV, including CARE International’s Gender Policy. To promote PVSE women’s meaningful participation in public structures and processes, the CBSWs also got training of trainers (TOT) on various government policies and international guidelines. These included the United National Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325 & 1820 and legal provisions pertaining to natural resources management, users’ groups, and local government.

CBSWs represent PVSE women’s interests in VDC Council Meetings. The VDC Councils are responsible for developing local level plans and budgets and submitting them to the District Development Committees (DDCs) for incorporation in the National Plans. CBSWs’ interventions have effectively influenced planning processes in favour of PVSE women’s interests. For example, in 2010, Ms. Aarati BK, a CBSW in Chitwan district, was successful in securing Rs 700,000 (about 7,600 euros) for the fiscal year 2011 towards the empowerment of PVSE women.

The CBSWs conduct regular review and reflection workshops at various levels such as PEC women groups, Local Peace Committees, VDCs and DDCs in line with CARE Nepal’s Guideline on Review and Reflection (R&R). These review and reflection guidelines deal with review of progress against targets for specific periods. They guide critical reflections on the strategies, trends, achievements, issues and challenges encountered in the review period. They also help to generate learning and systematically document those learnings. Finally, they provide guidance for formulating strategies for more effective implementation of the Action Plans drawn up at the end of the R&R workshops.⁶⁷

Figure 7: Approach to advocacy



The CBSWs identify and mentor PVSE women leaders from PECs in leadership and advocacy skills. Apart from applying the advocacy guidelines, the CBSWs develop the facilitation and analytical skills of PEC women group members. These enable the PEC women to lead discussions in PECs and to participate in VDC planning processes. I.e., it is an avenue for strengthening the agency of PVSE women to engage in effective advocacy.

⁶⁷ Guidelines for Review Reflection Workshops, CARE Nepal, Bharatpur Cluster Office, February 2011

At times, the CBSWs also invite external resource persons as guest facilitators to coach PEC women members on pertinent issues as identified by them.

Men Campaigners and Supportive Men Activities

In developing the cadres of Men Campaigners and Supportive Men, the programme applied several UCPA tools, including work-load analysis, well-being ranking, dependency analysis, caste analysis, women's mobility and exploitation analysis. These tools helped community men to comprehend the inequitable work-load of women and its impact on their well-being, mobility, and economic status. Men also analysed power structures and the influence of community belief systems on women's disempowerment. Participating men critically reflected on sexuality, violence, family relations, entitlements and expectations. The men were conscientised to enhance their awareness about conditions and positions of women and socially excluded groups in their communities.

In this manner, SAKCHAM provided basic training to the men to address gender oppression, equality and transformation issues. The men specifically focussed on patriarchy, masculinity, violence against women (VAW), domestic violence, psychosocial problems and their causes, and women's rights. At the end of their training, the Men Campaigners prepared individual three-month Action Plans for personal transformation. These plans were reviewed after three months with SAKCHAM's district level partners⁶⁸. The review teams looked at the men's progress in implementing planned actions towards transforming unequal gender relations and practices.

Following the first review, the Men Campaigners developed a Campaign to end discriminatory practices and GBV/VAW. They also committed to mobilise the support of at least 20-25 men in their VDCs for transforming the individual and collective behaviour and attitudes of men. By nine months into the Campaign, 763 Supportive Men have been mobilised in 35 VDCs of SAKCHAM working area - 188 in 5 VDCs of Chitwan, 257 in 7 VDCs of Makwanpur, and 318 in 23 VDCs of Kapilvastu.⁶⁹

Supportive Men also receive an orientation on women rights, violence, harmful traditional practices and psychosocial support. At this time, they are also encouraged to participate more equitably in livelihood and household activities. Such orientation workshops led to the formation of 35 Supportive Men's groups at the VDC level.⁷⁰ Formation of the Supportive Men's groups is considered to be a model activity.⁷¹ Supportive Men's groups meet among themselves on a monthly basis. Quarterly review meetings are held between them and SAKCHAM staff. During such meetings, achievements and challenges on progress made are discussed. All of the 35 Supportive Men's groups are linked to the PEC women groups. Sub-Committees of Supportive Groups have also been formed at the ward levels of each VDC. These groupings have established linkages with the national level Men Engage Alliance Network.

The PEC women groups, Men Campaigners and Supportive Men groups hold joint weekly/monthly meetings using the psychosocial well-being circle (see Reflect Centre Activities with Women – Psycho-social well-being, page 60) to discuss and analyse symptoms, causes and remedies for women suffering from psychosocial distress. The women and men in these meetings discuss a wide range of women's rights issues, from GBV/VAW, social injustice,

⁶⁸ Men Engagement – SAKCHAM- Resource Book, p. 4

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

⁷¹ 2-day SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan district, Nepal, 27- 29 December, 2015

exploitation, and discrimination to good governance, public resources, and government services.

The Men Campaigners and Supportive Men jointly facilitate discussions between model couples and with couples going through a rough patch. They counsel men perpetrating VAW to change their behaviour and attitudes toward the womenfolk in their homes. Following these community actions in Chitwan, at least one perpetrator is now playing a key role in raising awareness against VAW.⁷²

SAKCHAM identified more than 100 model couples among the Men Campaigners, Supportive Men and their surrounding communities.⁷³ Model couples are publicly honoured on International Women's Day and during the 16 Days of Activism to end VAW. This recognition acknowledges their vital role in maintaining harmony within the household. The model couple intervention is regarded as a model activity⁷⁴ because it signifies a real-life demonstration that gender equitable relationships are achievable and rewarding.

Access and Control over Resources

Men Campaigners and Supportive Men Groups contribute to the efforts of PEC women groups to enhance women's access to local government budgets and services. Seeing that men are also involved, the local government officers and service providers are now giving more attention for women rights and empowerment.⁷⁵ The Men Campaigners and Supportive Men also help in mobilising VDC funds for IGA skills enhancement for both women and men, e.g., for fish farming.

These male role models have been sharing household responsibilities, which has freed up time for women to pursue economic activities. This has included women becoming affiliated with co-operatives and gaining access to loans for implementing their livelihood implementation plans (LIPs). Husbands and wives now sign jointly when accessing enterprise loans. In this way, both spouses become responsible for applying the loans to their identified purpose. In the earlier arrangement, there were only women signatures and some men pressured their wives to access easy loans for other purposes. With the dual signatures, both spouses are accountable for repayment of loans, which helps inspire husbands to support their wives' IGAs and enterprises. Men Campaigners have been motivating husbands to accept joint ownership of household property. Husbands are now more willing to register property in the name of their wives. This arrangement is also promoted by the Government's policy of providing a 25% tax cut for registering property in the woman's name.

Women's meaningful participation and representation

SAKCHAM designed the Men Engage approach so that role model men would lead by example in transforming gender stereotypes and discriminatory cultural practices against girls, women and Dalits. In 2012, SAKCHAM developed a Men Engagement Resource Book, which details the strategies and processes of Men Campaigners for engaging and forming Supportive Men Groups. In the book, men describe personal changes and activities undertaken by them to end GBV and empower women. SAKCHAM has shared this book with the national Men Engagement Alliance Network.⁷⁶

Practical examples: Men's actions toward positive social change for women:⁷⁷

⁷² SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2012, p. 12

⁷³ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

⁷⁴ 2-day SAKCHAM Facilitators Workshop by Bharati Silawal-Giri for SAKCHAM Manual Development, Chitwan district, Nepal, 27- 29 December, 2015

⁷⁵ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p. 16

⁷⁶ SAKCHAM Final Annual Progress Report 2012, p. 10

⁷⁷ KWDC, Quarterly Meeting Report with Men Campaigners and Supportive Men, Bharatpur, Chitwan 22 September, 2011, p. 2

- Sharing household responsibilities with women;
- Counselling other men to enable women to participate in public life;
- Providing equal treatment to daughters and sons;
- Abstaining from alcohol (which helps reduce VAW);
- Registering joint ownership of land for husband and wife;
- Giving up the chairman role in an agriculture-based organisation in favour of one's wife;
- Refraining from expletives, abusive words and behaving disrespectfully towards women;
- Upper caste Brahmins visiting Dalit houses and eating with them to eliminate discriminatory practices (untouchability) against Dalits;
- Joint advocacy with Women's Groups and Networks on 16 days of Activism to end VAW;
- Advocacy and lobbying with VDCs/DDCs and CBOs for women's meaningful participation;
- Encouraging PEC women to drink milk during menstruation previously considered an impure practice. Now other households have also stopped observing this cultural practice.⁷⁸

Success Story - Ending VAW¹

My name is Sarita Aryal and I am 40 years old. I live in Warm No.6, Ramauli, Manahari, Makwanpur. I got married to Mr. Ramkrishna Aryal when I was 16 years old and I now have 4 children, 3 daughters and one son.

Before the implementation of SAKCHAM, I was a member of an adolescent group created by Dibya Jyoti Savings and Credit Co-operative. I used to participate in group meetings without letting my husband know, as he was hostile to my involvement in social activities. He would assault me and hurl sarcastic abuse, saying, "So you're a leader of women going places"! He controlled my mobility to such an extent that I couldn't even go to my neighbour's house. I was mostly confined to my house doing chores whereas my husband would spend the entire day outside and come home only at night. This upset me immensely as compared to my husband I didn't have any freedom although I had a great interest to know about new ideas and do something better for my children and family and even for my society.

In 2010, SAKCHAM was being implemented in Manahari VDC. It was much later that I became a member of SAKCHAM PEC women's group known as "Ekataa Women's Group". Here we would discuss on different topics, like women's rights, VAW, and issues of poor, vulnerable, deprived, marginalised and socially excluded groups like us. I also came to know about services provided by government agencies, the value of citizenship, marriage certificate, child marriage and negative consequences of HIV/AIDS. In the discussions, I learned that my problems were also common to other women in our group. I gained confidence to give my introduction without any hesitation or shyness. It also gave me the confidence to use some livelihood fund to enhance my economic condition. I have used it to invest for goat raising and after selling it had raised some money from which I am able to fulfil some of my basic necessities.

This group became our second home where we could share our sorrows and console each other and sometimes share happiness too. Once my women group members came to know about my problems, we had discussion on it and they convinced me saying, "You shouldn't tolerate violence from your husband. Gradually my husband became convinced of the benefits of being a member of the women's group. He has started to help me in household chores and even encouraged me to join the women group's meeting. Because of this and the inspiration received from my women's group I have succeeded in becoming a member of the VDC level women network, School Management Committee, Watch dog Group, and Buffer Zone Committee.

This has been most significant for me because my self-esteem has been enhanced as compared to the past where I was confined to the house and lived under the negative impacts of men's domination. Now, I am able to advocate on issues related to women and domestic violence by participating in different social works in my VDC and through the PEC with the positive support from my husband. I also preach to all women that, *"we shouldn't endure violence and should protest against it to eradicate or wipe it out from our society. Unless we protest, we will always be the victim. Patience doesn't end VAW. Rather it perpetuates it!"*

⁷⁸ As narrated by Mr. Lok Nath Sapkota, Men Campaigner to Bharati Silawal-Giri during her field visit for SAKCHAM Manual development, 26 December, 2015

Men Campaigners and Supportive Men Groups are leading on advocacy efforts to increase women's representation in various government and community-based structures. The engaged men groups lobby with local government and CBOs to ensure that government's quota of 33% for women's representation is adhered to in local structures. Women are now members of the local government Planning and Monitoring Committees where they help ensure gender-sensitive planning and budgeting. They also participate in monitoring expenditures through gender budget audits.

Women's Network Activities

Psychosocial well-being

The District Women's Network meets on the 19th day of every month to discuss the achievements and challenges of the VDC Women's Networks, including their institutional development. The Network also holds monthly joint discussion meetings with Supportive Men Groups. The Network uses these meetings to mobilise men to address discriminatory practices in the household and community. They support the men to act as role models for changing gender stereotypes and ending VAW.

Together with the PEC groups, the Women's Network facilitates meetings with relevant stakeholders and agencies to find solutions to the problems faced by the PVSE women, including domestic violence.⁷⁹ The network collaborates with PEC women groups and Supportive Men's Groups to track the progress of violence survivors. This includes joint home visit monitoring for those who have suffered from domestic violence and conflict-related trauma.

Access to and control over resources

SAKCHAM conducted a two-day workshop for Women Network members and key stakeholders on the use of Community Score-Boards (CSB). Following the workshop, the Women Network developed a six-month plan based on the issues identified by the PECs women's group. The Network then met the officials of relevant stakeholders such as the Police, Health posts, VDC, Line agencies, Cooperatives, School Management Committees, Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) offices and service providers to assist in the implementation of their six-month plan.

Practical example: Criteria used to assess PEC performance with the CSB tool

- Group formation process;
- Holding regular meetings;
- Communication and interaction between women's groups and women's network;
- Coordination and collaboration with stakeholders; v) Issues raised and follow-up;
- Reporting, filing, and documentation;
- Resource mobilisation and utilisation;
- Capacity of group members; and,
- Planning process.

Women Networks organise regular review meetings with stakeholders and women representing PVSE interests in various committees. The Networks and stakeholders review actions and achievements to address the challenges that women face in accessing government resources and services. Women Networks also use the meetings as a forum for advocacy on women's economic empowerment. They have contributed to pressuring local

⁷⁹ As reported at the 2- day Workshop with SAKCHAM Facilitation Team, Chitwan, 28- 29 December, 2015

government and other stakeholders to mobilise VDC funds for the economic empowerment of PVSE women.

In 2015, for example, 19 VDCs in Kapilvastu provided financial support for skill enhancement of 35 PVSE women on tailoring and 15 PVSE women on candle making.⁸⁰ These trained women have been working and able to enhance the income for their households. They are now also providing skill development training to other PVSE women in tailoring and candle making, which they do for a small fee and thus earn further income.

Success Story

Janaki Raidas seized the opportunity of the resources mobilised through the Women's network to take a one-and-a-half months tailoring class, after which she graduated as a Master Tailor. She now trains other women and charges Rs 1,000 per trainee. She earned enough to be able to contribute Rs 50,000 toward her daughter's wedding. She can now avoid taking loans and has the confidence that she can stand on her own feet.¹

Meaningful women's representation:

SAKCHAM strategically built the capacity of Women Network members at VDC and district levels so they could exercise their agency on women's rights, including support to the NAP for UNSCRS 1325 & 1820. The programme has designed the intensive trainings to raise awareness on many gender-related issues. The topics covered ranged from patriarchy and masculinity, to all forms of GBV/VAW, to laws and provisions on women's rights in the Interim Constitution 2063. There were also sessions on women's empowerment, including psychosocial support, engaging men, savings and credit management, cooperatives, leadership, advocacy and networking skills. At the end of the training, each participant prepared an action plan. These plans typically included sharing the learning with their respective PEC members, streamlining the savings and credit programme, developing more links with women networks at VDC and district levels, conducting couple discussions in their PECs, organising interactions with stakeholders. The participants felt that these trainings enhanced their self-esteem and helped to create women leaders from each PEC.⁸¹

Women Network members participated together with PEC women group members in the 14-step local government planning process (See Figure 8, page 51). These discussions began from the priorities and issues identified in the PEC groups. The participating women articulated these concerns as demands to community structures for gender-responsive planning and gender budgeting. They sought to ensure that government strictly follows the mandated allocations for targeted groups/areas, especially PVSE women.⁸² Based on these efforts, the Chitwan DDC is conducting a gender budget audit of its plans and programmes.⁸³ The Women Network has also used this process to establish rapport with political parties at the local level.

Together with the Women's Networks, SAKCHAM also organised a series of workshops in the programme districts for collecting inputs about securing women's rights in the New Constitution. PEC women's groups, local representatives of political parties, women's organisations, media and Constituent Assembly (CA) Members participated in these workshops. Besides demanding for women's equal citizenship rights, the workshops identified the following issues to make the new Constitution gender-friendly:

- i) having women-only constituencies in elections to guarantee 51% women's participation in national, provincial and local parliaments, and 51% women's participation in various organs of the state (executive, legislative and judiciary);
- ii) women's fundamental rights to education and health, and

⁸⁰ As reported at the 2-day Workshop with SAKCHAM Facilitation Team conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri, Chitwan, 28- 29 December, 2015

⁸¹ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p. 20

⁸² 10% for children, 10% for women, 15% for disadvantaged groups and 15% for agriculture the as per the Local Body Resource Mobilisation and Management Procedure, 2069 B.S. (2013)

⁸³ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

- iii) women's property rights, e.g., parental property, joint ownership of land between husband and wife, and distribution of land to the landless;
- iv) accounting for women's unpaid work in the household; and
- v) freedom from violence, including establishment of a VAW Commission and punitive actions for those perpetuating practices that aggravate VAW, e.g., dowry system.

The Women Network collected signatures from villages up to district levels to submit together with the above suggestions to the Constituent Assembly (CA) through the National Forum on Women's Rights Concern (NFORWC). The Networks formulated Action Plans to create awareness and widely disseminated the suggestions for making the new Constitution gender-friendly. Journalists covered these workshops in the local media.⁸⁴

Success Story - My life journey from grassroots to national level¹



My name is Bimala BK. I live in Ward No.5, Patihani VDC, since my marriage. Now I am 34 years old. I have one daughter aged 16 years and two sons aged 14 and 12 years. My husband has been working in a gulf country since the last five years. In 2010, SAKCHAM began working in my VDC. During the start-up, Kalika Community Women Development Centre (KCWDC) organised a mass gathering in our community with the participation of all men and women community members, including leaders, authorities, community groups and deprived group members. By the end of that meeting, PVSE women households were identified through the well-being ranking tool. Following this, a PEC women's group (REFLECT group) was formed comprised of the PVSE women households. I was one of those selected. The group was named Adarsha Women Discussion Centre.

Weekly discussions were held on different topics such as women's rights, elimination of domestic violence, GBV, women's meaningful participation in this PEC women's group. I started to take a lead role in group facilitation process. As a result, I was selected to be the group facilitator. Later on, I came to know that SAKCHAM project was looking for a Local Resource Person (LRP) for my VDC. My eagerness to work for women's rights led me to apply for the same post. Fortunately, I was selected as a LRP.

After my selection as a LRP I was given training by SAKCHAM. In the training, I learnt about the various instruments pertaining to domestic violence, UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. I also learnt about the methodologies of the UCPA tools to lead free discussions in women groups. The group facilitation and coordination with VDC stakeholders helped me to enhance my leadership skills. SAKCHAM then formed a VDC level Women Network in my VDC. I again played a lead role to coordinate with different women's groups in all wards of my VDC. SAKCHAM oriented members of the Women's Network about the objectives of the VDC level Women's Network, which was to take action on different issues of women from the VDC to national level for influencing policy changes. During the VDC level Women's Network meeting a discussion took place with regard to forming the executive committee of the Women's Network. As I had played an active role in coordinating with different women's groups and stakeholders, the meeting recommended me to be a member of the executive committee. This provided me with a yet another identity.

As I was well familiar about the processes of the VDC level Women's Network, SAKCHAM provided me the opportunity to form similar VDC level Women's Networks in other VDCs. After the establishment of the VDC level Women's Network, SAKCHAM supported the formation of the district level Women's Network. The Patihani VDC level Women's Network nominated me as the representative of the VDC level Women Network to participate in the District level Women's Network. This inspired me to seek to be the President of District level Women Network. The District level Women's Networks were then coalesced into the national level Women's Network known as the National Forum of Women's Rights Concern (NFORWC).. Being chairperson of the District level Women's Network, I was nominated as a member of the NFORWC Committee.

Now, I am invited to participate in various forums and meetings by different stakeholders such as VDCs, paralegal committees and political leaders for addressing and taking actions to resolve women's issues. I am involved in co-ordination and advocacy efforts with government agencies, lawyers and police security forces from local to national levels for obtaining citizenship of women, raising awareness and updating women on latest information on available services and resources even responding to VAW cases at night-time. Today I am acknowledged as a feminist activist. This is the most significant change for me because as a woman coming from a deprived and socially excluded group I would never be in this position and enjoy the prestige from the local to the national level were it not for SAKCHAM. I am treated with great respect in my family and the society. Though my husband is out of the country, he supports me wholeheartedly. Likewise my father-in-law also appreciates my work and creates the enabling environment to pursue my interests in advancing the women's movement.

⁸⁴ Gender Responsive Constitution Village Women's Service Centre, Makwanpur, February 23, 2011

Co-operatives and Revolving Fund Activities

Psychosocial well-being

In co-operation with the Women's Network and PEC women's groups, the Co-operative members supported by SAKCHAM have provided rehabilitation support to women recovering from psychosocial trauma. They make joint home visits for monitoring and consultation with family members to facilitate their understanding about GBV and its effects on the GBV survivors. This collective action and support has enabled many GBV survivors to get on with their daily lives. It has also helped to reduce the trend of stigmatising female survivors while putting more focus on the perpetrators (sexual violence committed by men).

Access to and control over resources

PEC women were stimulated to form savings and credit groups after using a UCPA tool for Income/ Expenditure Analysis, called "*ghaito* analysis". Analysing their sources of income and expenditures motivated the women to curb unnecessary expenditures and develop the habit of saving. A total of 384 PEC women groups now operate savings and credit programmes.⁸⁵ PEC members save Rs 5-50 weekly, depending on their economic capacities. In this manner, the PEC women groups have accumulated a total of Rs 5,565,949 (US\$55,659) through their savings and credit programme.⁸⁶ These savings have enhanced their access to credit in times of need and for engaging in IGAs. PEC savings and credit groups also lobby with VDCs for women's economic rights and concerns.⁸⁷

SAKCHAM has supported establishment of 20 Co-operatives from among the PEC women groups, following the standard guidelines and policies of the Cooperatives Act of Nepal. SAKCHAM formed and registered the co-operatives with the technical support of the Division of Co-operative Offices (DCO), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives (MoA&C). The total fund of the 20 SAKCHAM supported Co-operatives is Rs 16,221,543 (US\$162,215), out of which SAKCHAM invested Rs 5,019,700 (US\$50,197). The PEC women's groups have accumulated the rest of the funds, more than double the amount invested by SAKCHAM.⁸⁸

SAKCHAM also supported PEC women group members to secure membership in 24 other Co-operatives. The project set up a Revolving Fund for securing membership of the poorest PEC women to these other Co-operatives. The wealth-ranking tool used to identify their economic status has helped to justify the use of the Revolving Fund for this support. These other Co-operatives have a total accumulated fund of Rs 400,545,085 (USD 4,005,451), which is almost 39 times the PVSE Co-operatives fund⁸⁹.

Based on lessons learned from the PVSE experiences with Co-operatives, SAKCHAM and the DCO at MoA&C conducted a collaborative review of Co-operatives policies, rules and regulations. Some PVSE women are reluctant to join Co-operatives because the compulsory loan interest rates are much higher than the PEC women group credit programmes. Having little income, PEC women say the stringent loan repayment policies of Co-operatives are a barrier. As such, PEC women prefer to access loans from their own group where interest rates are much lower and repayment schedules are more relaxed.

Several suggestions were received from the field about ways to make the Co-operative policies more pro-poor and thus encourage PVSE women to join the Co-operative. The

⁸⁵ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 29

⁸⁸ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

⁸⁹ Ibid

suggestions included setting a minimum saving scale of Rs 2 per month for poor women. Likewise, women suggested having a minimum criterion of at least one share for qualifying for membership in a Co-operative. They also suggested that the purchase of these shares by PVSE women should be facilitated through the Revolving Fund to ease the entry of poor women into Co-operatives.⁹⁰

The Co-operatives are beginning to diversify their economic activities through opportunities for resource mobilisation. For example, the Samunya Mahila Agriculture Co-operative is now operating a VDC Information Centre. The objective of the Centre is to ensure women's Right to Information (RTI) as per the RTI Act. The VDC Information Centre provides access to IT services such as internet, photocopy, scanner and computers. The Centre is strategically located next to the Municipality Office for business sustainability. It provides free services for PVSE clients or services at lower rates than other cyber cafés. It maintains a database of PVSE clients for disseminating information on services and resources available from government for this category of people. It intends to invest a portion of its profits into social activities for uplifting the economic conditions of PVSE people.⁹¹

Women's meaningful participation and representation

SAKCHAM is promoting cooperative management to institutionalise PEC Women's groups. The programme provided trainings prior to forming the Co-operative so that PEC women members would be oriented on policies, rules, regulations and processes of Co-operative formation. A training needs assessment was conducted with the Co-operatives to design trainings according to the needs and level of knowledge of PEC women groups members. Once the Co-operatives were formed, trainings on Co-operative management and account bookkeeping were provided to the staff and executive members. The trainings also included sessions on leadership, advocacy and coordination skills. The trainings were organised with the support of MOA&C's DCO. Support was also provided for audits and liaising with the DCO.

The Co-operatives coordinate with other relevant agencies through which they have secured various resources for organic farming, livestock farming, sewing and cutting including management funds for the cooperative. Local government has also contributed to the VDC Information Centre by donating computers and solar inverters. 11 PVSE women-led Co-operatives have been successful in receiving funding support for institutional development from the DCO of MoA&C.⁹² Around 70% of PVSE women are now members of SAKCHAM-initiated or other existing Co-operatives.⁹³ Out of 395 PEC women groups, 285 are affiliated in 44 Co-operatives.⁹⁴

Local Government Activities

Psychosocial well-being

Psychosocial Support (PSS) committees were formed in 16 VDCs⁹⁵ to strengthen PSS services for PEC women members. The PSS Committees were constituted under the chairmanship of VDC Secretaries. The membership of the PSS committees is broadly representative of key community leaders. The members include representatives of political parties, Mother's Groups and Para-legal Committees, Area Police In- charges, Health Post

⁹⁰ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2013, p. 24 & as reported at the 2-day Workshop with SAKCHAM Facilitation Team conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri Chitwan, 28- 29 December, 2015

⁹¹ As reported during the field visit for SAKCHAM Manual development conducted by Bharati Silawal-Giri Chitwan, 27 December, 2015

⁹² SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2013, p. 24

⁹³ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 29

⁹⁴ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

⁹⁵ The VDC is the lowest level of administration in the Local Authorities structure, overseen by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development

In-charges, Female Community Health Workers, Men Campaigners, CBSWs, Traditional faith-healers and VDC Women's Network Members.

SAKCHAM's CBSWs train the PSS Committee members on issues relevant to their mandate using a Nepali version of the psychosocial well-being circle (see Figure 2, page 10) and the PSS guideline based on CARE-Austria's PSS manual⁹⁶. The PSS Implementation guideline defines psychosocial health, as well as presenting causes and symptoms of psychosocial problems. It provides step-wise guidance on how to address psychosocial issues including roles and responsibilities of the family, community, PSS Committee, PSS focal point and CBSW. It also lists information on the Nepali agencies providing psychosocial services at national and local level.

The activities of the PSS Committees include awareness-raising on psychosocial issues and GBV, making home visits, providing emergency support and making referrals for GBV survivors for counselling. They co-ordinate with VDCs to follow up on GBV cases and lobby on PSS issues. Quarterly and annual reviews of PSS Committees are held on a regular basis. During such reviews, each of the PSS focal points for SAKCHAM's three local partner organisations gives a briefing to the PSS Committees on their activities. The PSS Committees then discuss emerging psychosocial and GBV problems and create action plans with steps for problem-solving. The PSS Committees also monitor the quality of service providers and help to mobilise resources for PSS jointly with the VDCs.⁹⁷ This mechanism has been considered a best practice.

CBSWs also provide an orientation on the PSS mechanisms and processes to the Village Project Advisory Committees (VPACs) and District Project Advisory Committees (DPACs)⁹⁸ that SAKCHAM set up in its three target districts. The PSS Committees co-ordinate with the three DPACs through the Village Project Advisory Committees (VPACs) in 45 VDCs of the three SAKCHAM districts. The VPACs are especially involved in pursuing legal remedies for GBV cases as the VDCs have quasi-judicial powers and the Appellate and District Courts are located only at the District levels. The VDC Secretary, who functions both as the VPAC Co-ordinator and PSS Committee Chair, is responsible to refer cases to the DPAC that cannot be resolved at the VDC levels.⁹⁹

In 2014, SAKCHAM proposed to pilot at least one GBV-free VDC in all three working districts. The programme facilitated a systematic process to select the three VDCs through the DPACs and VDC level stakeholders. SAKCHAM then formed VDC level GBV-free Coordination Committees in the selected VDCs and provided a three-day strategy and planning workshop. By the end of the workshop, each of the committees drafted a GBV strategy with indicators and a first year plan with detailed activities and budgets. The GBV strategies and plans for all three VDCs were finalised through the active participation of concerned VDC personnel, political parties, different VDC level organisations and networks. In their first year, the GBV-free committees mainly planned to focus on awareness raising at community levels and community structures, strengthening of VDC level GBV Free Coordination Committees and Ward level coordination committees, and developing more collaboration with community and government structures and mobilisation of the media.¹⁰⁰ Already by 2015, two of the GBV-free committees were successful enough with their advocacy to ensure mainstreaming of GBV activities in the annual plans of their VDC.¹⁰¹ In the longer term, the committees aim to declare all their VDCs as GBV-free areas by 2017.

⁹⁶ CARE Austria, "Integrating the Psychosocial Dimension in Women's Empowerment Programming: A Guide for CARE Country Offices"

⁹⁷ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2012, p. 18

⁹⁸ DPACs initiated by SAKCHAM have been adopted by DDCs as formal government structures to co-ordinate development projects of I/NGOs

⁹⁹ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

¹⁰⁰ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 18

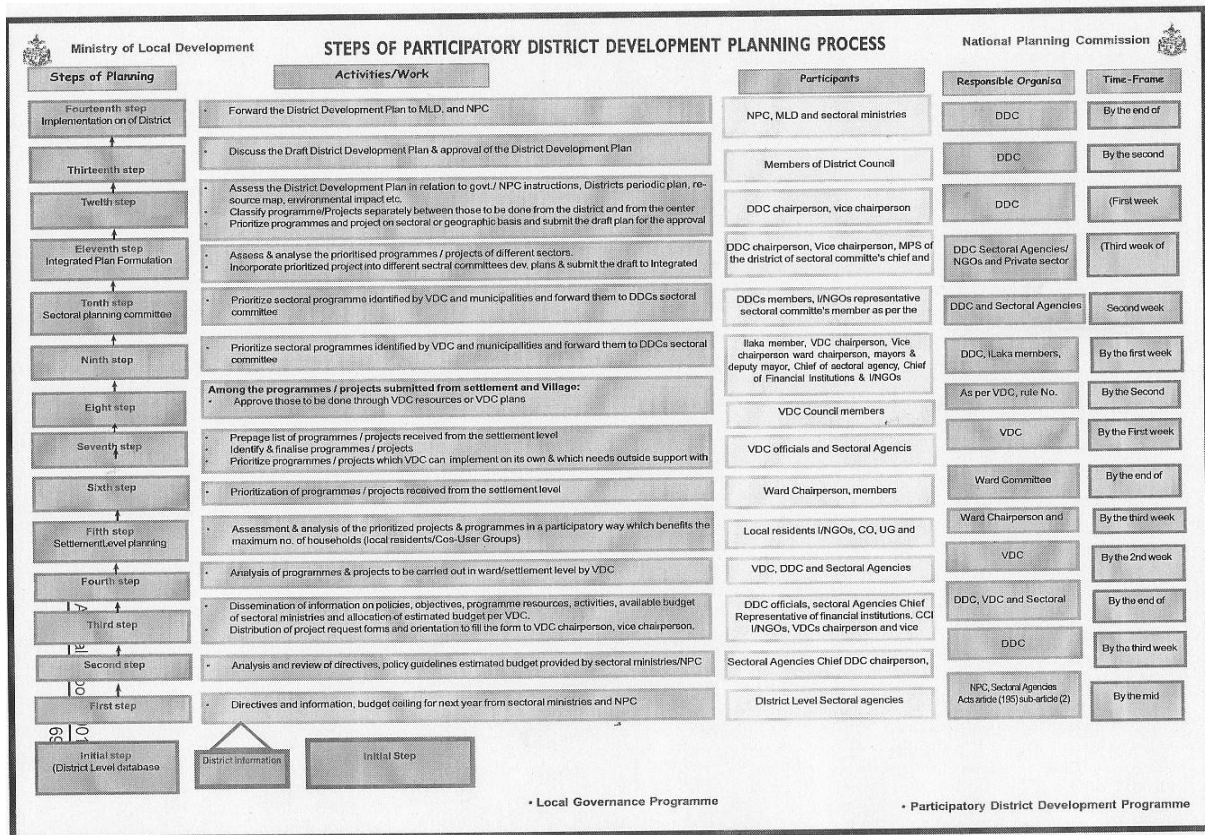
¹⁰¹ SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

Access to and control over resources

The PEC women groups receive useful information from government officials who are invited to the PEC meetings. The officials come as guest facilitators and share information on many government-related entitlements and services, including allowances for Dalit children, nutrition for children under 5 years old, scholarships for girls, entitlements for widowed women and elderly people, availability of free medicine through health-posts for poor people, antenatal check-ups for pregnant women and free hospital delivery, and treatment of uterine prolapse for poor women. PVSE women are now sending their daughters to schools, which was not the case previously.¹⁰² The women also get to hear about citizenship, including the provision requiring 33% of women in government structures. Based on the information received, PEC women members are now able to get citizenship and benefit from government services.¹⁰³ Additionally, they have been successful in ensuring that senior citizens above 70 years of age have access to government allowances for the elderly.

SACKCHAM has carried out regular advocacy efforts with VDCs, DDCs and different government line agencies on eliminating discriminatory and harmful traditional practices affecting women's ability to claim their rights to equal wages and resources. SAKCHAM's advocacy has influenced agencies to budget additional funds to support women in literacy classes and construct PEC meeting spaces. Local government contributions have enabled women to utilise public lands and community resources such as forests, ponds, and communal lands for income generating activities (IGAs) such as vegetable and poultry farming.

Figure 8: Government of Nepal's 14-step planning process



¹⁰² SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2009, p. 12

¹⁰³ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report, p. 14

The Forestry Department now grants joint user rights for women and men, which is a direct consequence of SAKCHAM's lobbying with the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation.¹⁰⁴ The district level ministry offices for Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Women and Children now collaborate with women's groups to support their IGAs by providing matching funds and technical assistance.

Women's meaningful participation and representation

SAKCHAM provides a variety of trainings that support participatory engagement for PEC women groups and Women's Network members. One key topic has been about how to work with the government's 14-step planning process (see Figure 8 below).

Other participatory engagement topics covered by SAKCHAM trainings have included gender-responsive participatory planning and budgeting, target groups (women, girls, differently-abled persons, Muslims and Dalits), and the roles and responsibilities of different institutions at community, VDC and DDC levels.

The initiatives to increase women's participation in the peace process contributed to 17% of PVSE women participating and influencing decision-making in peace processes from local to national levels.¹⁰⁵ PVSE women active in Local Peace Committees (LPCs) are voicing their interests and needs surrounding the peace processes and participation at various levels. Women LPC members collect data on persons affected by the conflict and link survivors to support from the government and local community.¹⁰⁶ SAKCHAM groups contributed evidence-based policy advocacy to prioritise needs of conflict-affected women in finalising the NAP for UNSCR 1325 & 1820. The programme hosted a district level consultation through its local partner organisations to solicit feedback and inputs into the draft NAP prior to its finalisation. SAKCHAM then helped forward women's feedback to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation.¹⁰⁷

Women's participation in local government planning has been a logical outcome of PEC and LPC involvement in monitoring implementation of women's programmes and budgets of the NAP for UNSCRs 1325 & 1820. The PEC women's groups have metamorphosed into "watchdog groups" emphasising the principles of good governance, particularly openness, transparency and accountability of local governments. The members of the PEC women groups and VDC Women's Network start the process by advocating their priorities and issues in the VDC planning meetings. The VDC then prioritises and integrates these issues into the VDC plans and forwards them to the VDC Council for approval. The VDC council forwards the approved VDC plans to the DDC for review and approval by the DDC sectoral committees. The DDC sends approved plans to the Ministry of Local Development and National Planning Commission for final approval. PEC women groups and Women Networks are able to use participation and advocacy to influence gender-sensitive planning and budget allocation to meet the women's quota, especially for marginalised women. As a consequence, most of the VDCs in the SAKCHAM target area are now spending the full women's quota of 10% of the total budget on women's capacity building and economic empowerment.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, p 19

¹⁰⁵ Khanal, Gyan Prasad and team, Final Evaluation Report of SAKCHAM II, CARE Nepal, December 2012, p. 16

¹⁰⁶ Lama, Kanchan, SAKCHAM II Gender Analysis, Community level and rapid gender assessment of stakeholders in the SAKCHAM II Programme Area, CARE International in Nepal, Bharatpur Cluster Office with funding from Austrian Development Co-operation, September 2012, p. 23

¹⁰⁷ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p. 17

¹⁰⁸ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 13

National Networks and Government

Psychosocial well-being

SAKCHAM developed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with three national level organisations working on psychosocial issues: Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT), Centre for Mental Health and Counselling (CMC) Nepal and Trans-cultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO). These partnerships have undertaken multiple collaborative efforts, including advocacy and awareness raising on PSS issues, improvement of PSS services provided by public service providers and referrals, as well as capacity-building of community-based social workers (CBSWs), Psychosocial Committees (PSS Committees), and PEC women group members. The national NGOs and SAKCHAM have also worked with three local partner organisations for implementing psychosocial activities on the ground¹⁰⁹. In support of these efforts, CVICT developed psychosocial training manuals and trained PVSE members and their family members on basic family and community psychosocial well-being. CMC trained CBSWs and field staff on group facilitation and supervision skills relevant to PSS. TPO provided training on the UN Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on GBV and GBV case management for CBSWs, the three local partners of SAKCKAM and local service providers. TPO also accepted referrals for managing severe cases of psychosocial trauma.

During the course of this project, CARE Osterrich commissioned a study of psychosocial issues affecting women in conflict¹¹⁰, from which the report was launched in close coordination with the Nepal Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction in 2013. The study collected data in each of the three SAKCHAM districts of Makwanpur, Chitwan and Kapilvastu about the meaning, language and concepts of “psychosocial well-being” for conflict-affected women (especially project beneficiaries). The study identified six domains of psychosocial well-being able to be measured by specific indicators: quality of education, power to access resources, freedom of movement, meeting of basic needs, love and harmony in the family, and friendship and support outside of the family. The women in the study described these domains as interlinked and indivisible.

Access to and control over resources

More than 80% of the women members of PEC groups do not own land or houses. SAKCHAM collaborated with the Land Rights Forum to collect data on landless people, after which families without land were assisted to request for government support.¹¹¹

Periodic monitoring visits by the Central Project Advisory Committee (CPAC) members to SAKCHAM districts have enhanced PVSE women’s access to government resources and services. Such visits help focus government attention on PVSE issues in project initiatives. They are a chance to exchange learning about changes taking place after SAKCHAM interventions and about SAKCHAM’s contributions to complement government efforts in empowering women. The CPAC monitoring visit in early 2014 expressed satisfaction with the progress being made by PVSE women toward awareness about their rights, as well as the roles and responsibilities of local government. The monitoring report noted that project activities were facilitating government’s efforts on voter education, citizenship, access to

¹⁰⁹ Rural Women’s Service Centre (RWSC), Makwanpur; Kalika Community Women’s Development Centre, Chitwan; Dalit Social Development Centre (DSDC), Kapilvastu

¹¹⁰ Bragin, M., Onta, K., Taaka, J., Nzeyimana, G., Eibs, T., To Be Well At Heart: Conflict-affected Women’s Perceptions of Psychosocial Study in Burundi, Nepal and Northern Uganda, Vienna, CARE Osterrich, 2013

¹¹¹ In 2013 and 2014, 186 landless PVSE women were assisted to fill out the government forms in Kapilvastu and Chitwan. SAKCHAM III Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework Progress

health services, as well as resource mobilisation from local government for toilet construction and literacy campaigns.¹¹²

The Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP) is one of the largest government programmes on poverty reduction. It emphasises inclusive, responsive and accountable local governance and participatory community-led development. The LGCDP aims to enhance the access of its target groups (women, Dalits, indigenous, ethnic, Muslims, Madhesis and disadvantaged groups) to public goods and services. Based on learning from SAKCHAM, the LGCDP has adopted UCPA as a best practice in identifying poverty pockets and reaching out to the poorest of the poor. The LGCDP is being implemented by the Ministry of Local Development and supported by a range of Development Partners.

Women's meaningful participation and representation

At the national level, SAKCHAM developed strong strategic links with various women's rights organisations for high level advocacy. Through these links, SAKCHAM contributed to national advocacy on implementation of UNSCRs 1325 & 1820, CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action. SAKCHAM hosted district level consultations to solicit inputs into the draft NAP for UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 prior to its finalisation. This effort helped to ensure that

Success Story - Effects of Armed Conflict

Nita Pahari, is a 28-year old woman living in Ward No. 6, Raigaoun, Makawanpur. She has four children, one son and three daughters. She is a member of Sahara Popular Education Center. She narrates her life story in this way.¹

"My life was not very happy even before marrying. I had to do all household chores, especially kitchen work and cleaning utensils, and go to the jungle to collect firewood, grass etc. Although I worked hard I got scolded a lot. We were altogether 10 siblings, five brothers and five sisters. Only my brothers were sent to school. I was very much interested to study but my parents did not allow me to go to school. My mother used to say, "Who will do the household chores if you go to study? If you go I will break your legs. What does it help if a daughter gets education? You have to go to your in-law's house anyway one day".

I was 14 when my husband convinced me to marry him. I consented in the hope that my life would be happy after getting married to him. We were blessed with three children, two daughters and one son. Everything was okay until one day in 2001 the Maoists came to my home and took away my husband. It was only after six months I came to know that he had been inducted as a combatant into Maoists group.

There was no option for survival if I did not go outside for work. When I went for work, I had to tie up my children to a wooden pillar so that they could not wander about. My youngest child was only eight months old; the middle one was one-and-half years old; and the eldest was two-and-half years old. Their legs today are not normally straight as they were tied up with ropes.

I also ploughed the fields on our small plot of land to grow crops. During harvesting time some of my neighbours helped me out but when I ploughed the land, the villagers took to backbiting about me. Some said misfortune will strike me as according to religious beliefs and practices women are not allowed to plough the land. Women discouraged me saying that their husbands were pressuring them to do the same and it would increase their work burden. But of course I had no option in the absence of my husband.

One day an encounter took place between the Army and Maoists in Jhurjhure in Makwanpur. I presumed my husband was killed in that incident. So the next day I reached the spot and saw lots of dead bodies piled upon one another. In one grave there were 10 - 12 corpses being readied for burial. I pulled up my strength and looked through all corpses one by one. Fortunately, he was not among the dead. He was very much alive and in the same place. We both wept. I requested him to come back to our house but he refused as he was under compulsion to fight the war. To this day I don't know how I mustered up the courage to get to that battlefield.

I hope that the armed conflict will not be repeated. I have learnt many things after joining the group (Popular Education Centre). If I got a chance to become educated maybe I would have more knowledge. I will not discriminate against my sons and daughters like my parents. My eldest daughter is studying in grade four. I will educate my daughters up to college level and make them respectable members of the society.

¹¹² SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2014, p. 29

the NAP would respond to the lived realities and priorities of those impacted by the 10-year armed conflict in Nepal. The consultation was organised in collaboration with SAKCHAM's local partner organisations: Rural Women Service Centre (RWSC), Women Skill Creation Centre (WOSCC) in Makwanpur and Shantimalika Women's Peace Network. The consultation was attended by the Chief District Officer, representatives of LPCs and district line agencies, conflict survivors, local leaders, security officers, women rights activists and journalists. The consultation results were submitted to the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation. Participants in the meeting hoped such initiatives could lay a foundation for sustainable peace.¹¹³

Programme advocacy efforts reached an international level when the UN Women Peace and Security Policy Advisor working in Peace-building Support Office New York, Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta, visited Chitwan district in the first week of May, 2012. The main purpose of her visit was to collect ground level peace-building information to include as best practices in the UN Secretary-General's report on the status of implementation of UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 for presentation to the Security Council. During her visit, she interacted with conflict-affected women, LPC members, VDC Secretary and local leaders. The women shared instances of SAKCHAMs support in empowering them to challenge the status quo, and facilitating their access to justice, relief and recovery services and in contributing to peace-building in the community.¹¹⁴

SAKCHAM and the PEC groups have also contributed on women's citizenship and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The advocacy partners have included the National Forum for Women's Concern (NFORWC), National Women's Commission, Women Caucus in Parliament, Interparty Women's Alliance, Shanti Malika (Women's Peace Network), Violence Against Women in Politics Network and Federation of Dalit Organisation (FEDO) and Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre (LACC). Partnerships have been established with the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ). SAKCHAM has worked with local chapters of FNJ to highlight PEC women issues through the media. Collaboration with these national level organisations has helped to influence social, economic and political processes related to women's empowerment.

Suggestions for ensuring the rights of women in the new national Constitution were gathered and submitted via the NFORWC. The District Women's Networks organised a series of workshops to collect suggestions for the constitution from VDC Women's Networks and PEC women's groups, plus local representatives of political parties, women's organisations, media and Constituent Assembly (CA) Members. Signatures were collected from village to district levels along with the suggestions for submission to the CA through the NFORWC.¹¹⁵ NFORWC submitted those suggestions to the Chairperson of the CA and other CA members in a national tribunal held in Kathmandu.¹¹⁶

Practical examples: Issues raised by women for making the new Constitution gender-friendly

- Unequivocal rights of women to citizenship;
- Fundamental rights to education and health;
- Rights to parental property and joint ownership of land between husband and wife in distribution of land to the landless;
- Accounting for women's unpaid work in the household;
- Women-only constituencies in elections with a guarantee of 51% women participation in national, provincial and local parliaments;

¹¹³ SAKCHAM Annual Progress Report 2010, p.17

¹¹⁴ Ibid p. 9

¹¹⁵ Gender Responsive Constitution Village Women's Service Centre, Makwanpur, 23/02/2011

¹¹⁶ CARE Nepal's Campaign for A Gender Responsive Constitution: Constituent Assembly Initiative

- Women's participation at least 51% in various organs of the state – executive, legislature and judiciary;
- Right to freedom from violence;
- Establishment of a VAW Commission, and punitive actions for those perpetuating practice that aggravate VAW, like the dowry system.

SAKCHAM promoted the participation of PVSE women in Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. The project engaged its local partner organisations and PEC women's groups in drawing up a list of PVSE women for inclusion in voters' lists, undertook voter education, supported gender monitoring of the CA elections and gender-sensitive analysis of election results after the CA elections.¹¹⁷ SAKCHAM collaborated with Nepal Journalist Federation (NFJ) to mobilise daily newspapers, FM radio stations and local televisions for raising awareness on the CA elections and voting process. Voter education was very helpful in clarifying the voting processes, minimising invalid ballots and seeing the value casting a vote in selecting candidates. SAKCHAM also assisted with support to forming a National Monitoring Group (NMG) of 30 civil society organisations under the leadership of National Women Commission Nepal (NWC) that monitored the CA elections through a gender perspective. The first round of such monitoring in Nepal was done in 240 electoral constituencies across 75 districts.

¹¹⁷ A total of 188 PVSE women were included in the voters' list by helping them to acquire citizenship certificates.

Part 3

Facilitation Guide

General advice – especially for CBSWs

Lessons Learnt: Reflections

The following points are ‘words of wisdom’ that have emerged from the SAKCHAM programme as advice to community and group facilitators. They include a number of important processes, reflections and lessons that emerged from the team’s experiences with participatory women’s empowerment in the field:

- ***The importance of preparation:*** it is critical to invest sufficient time to prepare for engaging in any participatory learning and action exercise. This point emerged repeatedly from the team experiences across the many PEC and community sites. Time must be dedicated to ensure that the team is clear about the objectives and questions guiding any discussions or enquiries, as well as the methods to be used. Staff should have the space and time to learn, practice, critique and improve their facilitation methods as well as the various tools involved in the work. In addition, the process of analysing power, discrimination and gender issues requires a deep sensitivity around the issues of gender, equity, diversity and equality. It takes both sensitivity and courage to challenge commonly held assumptions or cultural biases, e.g., about gender, caste, discrimination, etc. Staff and advisors found that trainings highlighting gender, equity, diversity and equality help staff to reflect on each of these issues. They also learned by role plays and by reflecting on how their own class might affect how they are perceived or interact with others in the field and on the team.
- ***Understanding of the study area and peoples:*** Facilitators should be familiar with the area where they are working so they can have a sense of the local social dynamics and gauge how to tailor discussions or the appropriateness of questions. In addition, having some local familiarity helps in discussing how current local issues fit with larger historical trends and the political economy of the context. Facilitators should demonstrate a balance of gender, and take into consideration the dynamics surrounding age, or other important cultural/ethnic factors, as well as language so that they are accessible to all parts of a community.
- ***Following an iterative process:*** Across all exercises, one important strand has been the value of continuity in participatory process. Each process was co-developed based on the ideas of the CBSWs, community reflections, interactions and emerging questions. There is no rigid framework or formula to prescribe a series of exercises for deeply engaging the community, including the most marginalised, vulnerable and excluded. Rather, plans were drafted, reviewed and adapted according to key emerging issues and questions with the community, especially the PEC groups.
- ***Learning from one another:*** Social action and promoting social change are skills that are refined and adapted for diverse contexts through practice and reflection. It is important for teams to support one another to develop and adapt these approaches for their own contexts. In this regard, CARE has found that exchange visits between community teams have helped in the exchange of experiences and deepened learning about social analysis and action.
- ***Sustained support over time*** – while many of these situational analyses began through intensive, short-term workshops, the one-off events alone are insufficient. Teams need on-going support to competently facilitate and analyse for participatory learning and action. The PEC groups, CBSWs and programme teams have shown that sustained follow-up support and guidance across time is essential to ensure that these approaches are effectively integrated into their ways of working.

- **Creating linkages across groups to raise voices and pursue broad-scale change through advocacy alliances and networks:** In Nepal, the team found that it was critical to leverage impact by not only linking groups from the grass-roots level of the popular education centres to the national level advocacy network, but also to build horizontal alliances with other organisations engaged in advocacy for women's rights. The initiative partnered with a local advocacy organisation and gained important networking opportunities and levers of influence for the impact group. However, the team is still reflecting how best to manage roles, responsibilities and relationships to ensure that the partnership keeps the rights and voice of poor, vulnerable and socially excluded women at the heart of the work. The team also found that a key strength of the initiative has been its flexibility to respond to a changing environment that enables it to respond to emerging issues by leveraging resources from across projects.

Tips for fieldwork

- Prepare ahead of time – consider whether any topic guide or checklists will be needed, and if so, prepare them. Think about what participatory exercises could facilitate the discussion and make sure you know what steps are involved. Allocate roles ahead of time between facilitator, note-taker and observer.
- In considering potential content for discussion, look back at any minutes of previous discussions with the same or similar groups, review previous analyses generated by/with the group, and check any previous action plans for commitments to particular issues for follow up.
- Contact the informants and make time for the meeting.
- When informants are gathered, introduce each other.
- Give a short briefing about the objective and subject matter of the discussion.
- When the discussion over, summarise points from the participants that have been written on posters, meta cards (idea cards) or on the ground. Request participants to correct the points, if necessary.
- Finally, thank participants for their time. Say good-bye and assure them that all information received will only be used in planning and implementation of programmes to benefit of poor people of the community.

From:

- File: UCPV Gender Toolkit CARE.docx
- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes & Analyses. A Handbook for Identification & Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Psychosocial Well-Being

The term ‘psychosocial’ is used to emphasise the close connection between psychological aspects of our experience (our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours) and our social environment and social learning (our relationships with family, society, nature, traditional practices and culture). “Psycho” refers to the psyche or the ‘soul’ of a person. It has to do with the inner world – cognitions, feelings, thoughts, emotions, desires, beliefs and values and how we perceive ourselves and others. “Social” refers to the relationships, interaction with Society and Nature of an individual and group. It includes not only the material world but also the social, cultural, natural and spiritual context in which people live, ranging from the complex network of their relationships to manifold cultural expressions to the community and the state. The inner world (psycho) and the outer world (social) influence each other. In short, “psycho-social” deals with the well-being of individuals and groups in relation to their total environment.

Objectives:

- Achieve individual and collective understanding of what is meant by ‘psychosocial’, and its importance in promoting/achieving social change
- Identification of existing and potential resources for addressing psychosocial concerns
- Discuss pathways of change showing where we want to get to and why it is a psychosocial wellbeing element

Information that can be collected/shared:

- Perceptions about what kinds of issues are linked internally and externally to the various relationships of women (and men) within their social environment
- Lists of existing and potential resources for addressing psychosocial concerns
- This tool is relevant for examining and describing psychosocial wellbeing as well as psychosocial problems.

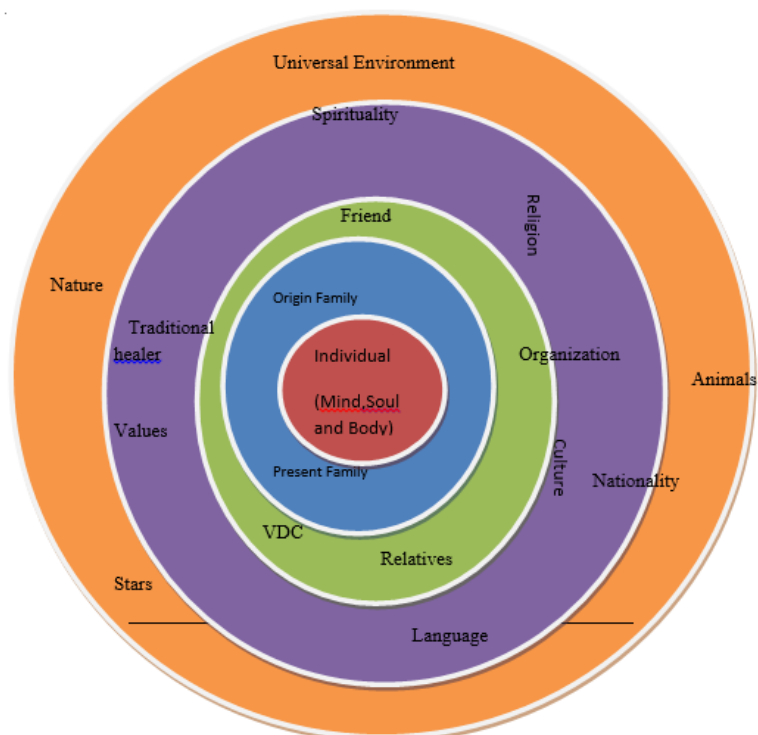
Materials required: poster paper, meta-cards (idea cards), coloured pens/markers, notebook

Key Informants: PEC members, men campaigners/supportive men, and CBSWs

Preparation: may be helpful to draw outlines of the psychosocial support circle ahead of time, but do not fill in details until doing the exercise with participants. It is important to work with women and men separately, at least in the first discussions about these issues – to allow the most open discussions to take place.

Process and guiding questions when applying

Figure 9: Psychosocial Support Circle/Systemic Circle



this tool in the field:

- The Psychosocial Support Circle tool makes it easy for everyone to understand about the psychosocial approach and the psychosocial support system. It is an easy way to learn and sensitise people.
- It starts with circle for a person and her/his surroundings to develop a discussion step by step about how each of those things has effects on people's daily life.
- Begin by explaining that each person can be seen to have a body, a mind and a soul. They are given birth by their original family; later, the person gets a partner, makes children and becomes their current family. Here, it is possible to ask what kinds of psychosocial issues arise in families, both supportive and negative or harmful, especially for women and girls
- The individual person is also linked with her/his surroundings such as neighbours, friends, VDC, school etc. Every individual has his or her culture, language, religion, value, nationality. The person is also influenced by nature, animal, plant, fish, star, universe, sun, moon etc.
- If any of these aspects is affected, e.g., by a crisis, this will have an influence on how the other parts function. Sometimes one part tries to balance the crisis while overstraining itself. That's why it's important to take care of every single aspect. It is important to address all aspects of a person in their life.
- Personal responsibility is important; everybody should be able to rely on herself/himself for self-care. Surrounding people (e.g., family) also need to understand the types of support that are most important for a person to survive in their life.
- Using the circle, it is easy to identify where there is a gap and what we can do with the psychosocial approach.

Here is an example of a Pathway of Change for the psychosocial wellbeing element of "Harmony within family, friendship and support from neighbours". The pathway of change was facilitated by CBSWs for participants of the REFLECT centres who considered it one that SAKCHAM had influenced the most. The example shows how the CBSWs (facilitators of reflect centres) structured/ sequenced the discussions that they facilitated with the REFLECT centre groups and other groups.

| Step | Actions |
|---|--|
| Step 1: Unity or solidarity in women group & reaching support from it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make affiliations to all women in community • Link women to the women group • Orientation about rights of women |
| Step 2: meeting with friends and discussion of problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building up relationship • Discussion on problems and identify how to address it • Regular support from group - follow up through group |
| Step 3: Discuss discrimination with family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on gender discrimination • Pair or couple group discussion • ... equality and behave well to children |
| Step 4: follow up women's groups | |
| Step 5: love between spouse: freely support and openness by husband | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do support each other in household chores and even in outside work |
| Step 6: equal love between children (son & daughter) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on right of children like health, participation. |
| Step 7: happy & healthy life of children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage specific rights for children • Use of respected words with children • Provide playing material to children • Equality between son & daughter |
| Step 8: participation in festive season | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint visit of husband and wife in relatives home • Wear new clothes by men and women too |
| Step 9: good relation with father-in-law and brother-in-law | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect to each other in family |

Group analysis: love and harmony begins with women knowing that they have the same rights as men. It starts when men and women (in couple meetings) understand that discrimination does not create love. Once this is understood, relations between all family members can improve. It starts between husband and wife, but also with children as well as father-in-law and brother-in-law. Support between each other will increase happiness especially of children.

History timeline

When aiming for social change, it is important to know the local history so that the change process can happen in a sensitive and appropriate manner, building on local strengths, addressing local challenges and having a clear vision for future. For this purpose, we have to identify the economic, social, political, cultural, natural events that have had significant positive or negative impacts on the villages or settlements. Most histories are about the people who were in power. It is not possible to empower the poor and excluded people until we know and include their histories as well. This process is very important in order to make the people realize that they can play an important role in a certain period of time and contribute to the tasks that make their future bright. Every individual has a role in society, and their role needs to be recognised and respected. Doing so will help in building confidence among the people. It is imperative to help people understand that not only the people with power but also those who have no power can influence society and make history.

Objectives

- a) To identify a chain of locally significant past events (covering a period of 10 years, 50 years and even 100 years). In addition to the nature of the event, we want to learn which events have had positive or negative impacts on the community.
- b) To assess the roles of individuals and social groups/categories of people in these events.
- c) To hold an analytical discussion on the roles that will be needed in making a new history.

Information that can be collected

- List of past events that had important positive or negative impacts on the local society.
- Individuals or groups of people related to these events and their roles and the impact it had.

Materials Required

- Notebook, pens, idea cards, newsprint and markers.

Key Informants

- Persons representing all sections and communities of the society, including male and female senior citizens who were associated with these events and have in-depth knowledge of these events.

Preparation

- Before going to the community for discussion, ensure that all the materials required are collected. Hold the discussion in the team to determine the nature of main events or information that will be discussed and prepare a checklist. Also keep in mind the most convenient time to the community. Determine the roles of facilitators, observers and assistants before going to the community.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field

- Gather adult and senior citizens representing all sections of population and communities who have information about the past events.
- Once people are gathered, introduce yourselves and the participants. Then, explain clearly what the objectives of the discussion are and how, where and why information thus collected will be utilized.
- Before starting the discussion on historical events, it is good to define the timeframe. For instance, it is better to request the participants to share events that have taken place in the past 10, 20, 30 years or other pre-determined time frame instead of asking them to share all the past events that they know.
- Events can be of different natures. That is why it is good to start by asking: What are the social, economic, cultural, political and natural events in this society that had either positive or negative impacts? If needed, give some examples: When did the people first settle in this village? Who played the leading role in that? When did deforestation a real problem? What (and who) caused the deforestation? When was this village affected by floods, landslides or droughts? These tend to be a good way of easing into the discussion in the beginning.
- Once everything is clear and informants start giving information, one facilitator will need to write it on cards or newsprint papers while the second facilitator conducts the session in an interesting and participatory manner. All of what has been said by the villagers may not require to be written. If the information is important but need not be written on cards, it has to be noted down separately.
- It is easy to find out the events that have positive or negative impacts on the community but it is sometimes more difficult to get consensus on the year in which that event took place. If so, there is no need to press people to perfectly remember the year; even an approximate time will suffice. If the date is not known, we can ask them: Who was the chairperson of the VDC during that time? Was it after or before the earthquake in 1934? Was it after or before the 1951 revolution or the 1979 referendum? In this way, we can find the period during which the events had taken place.
- In this discussion, the local informants are like teachers and the facilitators like students. The facilitators have to keep in mind that the local people know their own history far better than anyone else can do. The facilitator should not speak that much but let the local people speak. The facilitator should listen actively and intervene when there deviations from subject by asking “wh-” questions¹¹⁸.
- Facilitators should give everyone present an opportunity to speak in the discussion. They will have to apply various methods to guide or manage the discussion so that everyone participates, including women and people from excluded groups.
- Local people may not describe the events in chronological order. It is the responsibility of the facilitators to clarify the sequencing and put them in order. That is why it is important to listen to them and ask questions whenever it is necessary.
- An important point of this exercise is to determine how this information can be used for social change. Just a simple description of events does not lead to any learning and planning for future. That is why it is necessary to know who has played a leading role in particular events, organizations involved, environment and positive or negative impacts on a particular community.
- If all the information required is collected, the facilitator should explain to the local people his/her understanding of the points noted down on cards or newsprint papers. If a

¹¹⁸ Who, What, When, Where, Why?

correction has to be made, do it according to the suggestions given by the local people. Then, thank the people for their time and the information they have provided.

- When the discussion is over, facilitators should put the information in logical order so that everyone can understand it (For instance, classifying the events into economic, social, religious, natural, developmental events and so on). Write down the information on newsprint paper for presentations and discussion and computerize also for institutional memory.

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Caste and class analysis

Social hierarchy analysis

Nepal has a long history of castes, ethnic groups, and social classes. Many people are proud of the castes, but discrimination, injustice and exploitation are also prevalent in all Nepali communities, largely based on castes and social levels. While diversity is natural, exploitation is common. Such unequal relations are not justifiable in a modern society. We need to understand the inequalities and seek ways to change harmful contributing social factors. Unless we fully see issues from all views, especially those of the most vulnerable and silent, we cannot fight effectively against discrimination and injustice. This analysis examines the above and leads us to develop strategic plans.

Objectives:

- To prepare a list of all castes living in the society (and other exclusive social classes or strata)
- Find out reasons for keeping castes apart at different levels (social, economic, cultural, traditional, religious, etc.)
- To identify opportunities and strategies to fight against caste and class discrimination.

Information that can be collected:

- A list of all castes and other exclusive classes/social groupings in the society
- Reasons castes are kept at different levels (social, economic, cultural, traditional, religious, etc.)
- Perceptions about effects of castes and classes, including among the excluded and marginalised
- Strategies and actions to fight against caste discrimination

Materials Required: Meta (idea) cards, newsprint papers, markers, notebooks, pens, pencils

Key Informants: Male and female representatives of different castes, including the lowest groups

Preparation: The facilitator should have the prior knowledge about the community concerned or the castes living in that society and the local beliefs and practices. Before going to the study, it is necessary to collect description of different castes so that it will be easy for the facilitator to use this description as a checklist.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- First of all, manage to collect all participants representing different castes of the community in a calm place of the village. The first task is an introduction to each other and an explanation of the subject matter, objectives and planned use of the information to be received from the discussion.
- Next, ask participants to tell which castes of people live in this community and put the names of the castes in different cards as expressed by the participants (for low/non-literate groups, the facilitator can use symbols as nominated by the participants on the cards). Put the cards on the ground so that each participant can see the cards. Ensure that the names of all castes are included in the cards, then read them out to the participants.
- From this discussion, there will be many castes in the community. Ask them how they know that certain people in this community belong to any of the castes (practices, history, culture, relations, etc.). In your opinion, which castes are placed in higher position and which other castes are placed in lower positions? Give some time to the participants to discuss.
- This discussion can become heated; there may be disagreements as well as agreement. There might be even some disputes. The facilitator should listen to them, observe the discussion and note down the important points.
- Place cards in rank order; start with one at the top if the participants have reached consensus to put that caste at the highest level in a way that every participant can see the card. Then, ask participants which castes fall in the second category. After the answers are received through discussion, request them to tell the name of another caste. In this way, find out the levels of all castes of the people in the community as determined by the participants and put the cards in order. Upon completion of classification by levels of the different castes, read out caste names to verify the ranking. If needed, change the level of the caste as suggested by participants.
- Observe the discussion process very carefully. Listen to the views expressed by the people of different castes and note down the important points.
- Upon completion of the determination of the levels of all castes, start the second step of discussion. Thank participants for giving information and propose that they discuss on the reasons for keeping the aforementioned castes at the top level and serially to the lower levels.
- Ask participants the social, political, cultural, traditional, religious, and local or any other reasons for keeping the different castes at specific levels. It is possible to start either from the top or bottom for discussing the reasons for the various placements of the castes.
- Listen to and record on cards the participants' reasons for putting certain castes at a particular level. Put these cards down on the floor so that everyone can see. Another facilitator should simultaneously note these points in her/his notebook.
- The discussion of reasons is sensitive, and participants may have heated discussions on many issues.
- Keep cards on the floor in the open so that everyone can see the reasons for categorising people of different castes into different levels. Ensure that all the information received is correct by reading out the descriptions to the participants. Request the participants for any corrections.

- The responses to these questions about castes and their placement should be recorded as described by the participants – without filtering – and the same for the following questions. In our present context, is it justifiable to classify people at different levels according to the castes, to discriminate against or divide them into lower and upper castes and practice untouchability? Should this practice be maintained as it is or does it need to be changed? For social change and development, are these practices supportive or obstacles? Being a member of the civil society, is it our responsibility or not to support to changes in these practices?
- At the end, thank all participants for the information, opinions and time given by them. Assure them that the information received will be used to benefit the community and contribute to social change.

Example of Caste Analysis [can also be done by class]

| Caste Analysis description done in November 2007 at Gopalpur-2,Dhanusa | | |
|--|----------------|---|
| Lower Caste | Sub-castes | Reasons/conditions |
| Lower Caste | Muslims | We do not eat in the house of lower caste but the lower class people do come & eat. If water is touched at the time of fetching from the tap stands, that water is thrown out. Marriage is acceptable within the caste. We sit together in the public schools, but we do not take tea & snacks touched by lower caste people. |
| | Tatma | At weddings of lower caste, upper class participates (but has separate arrangement for feeding). There is one influential person in the Tatma community. To settle the litigation everyone is present (3 senior citizens included). If necessary, there is a practice to help each other |
| | Suri | In weddings of lower caste people, there is a separate arrangement of food for the upper class people. If the priest is from the Khatwae caste, prasad is taken by the people of all castes. Unmarried boys & girls eat food touched by Tatma; after marriage they don't eat. Tatma are not taken as Hindu. |
| | Teli | Transaction of money done in all castes. Raw foods can be taken together. The feeling of untouchability has been decreasing in new generation. The untouchability practice is prevalent within old society only. |
| Medium Caste | Kathbaniya Das | Marriage within the caste. Problem is solved with the common effort of all classes. |
| | Lohar | Transaction of money is done within all castes. The problems of the village are solved within the village. |
| | Hajam | An earthen pot touched by Tatma is untouchable. Water poured through earthen pot is also not touchable. |
| Higher Caste | Dhanuk | Indigenous caste. Do the prestigious work or occupation. |
| | Mukhiya Bin | They have been placed in the higher class because Mukhiya Bin had helped Ram to cross the river. |
| | Yadav | Hold in politics. Krishna is taken care of by Yadavas, Yadavs are Yadubanshis. |

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Exploitation analysis

Different kinds of exploitation are prevalent in society, e.g., in castes, classes, gender, languages and regions. Appropriate planning and effective implementation of programmes related to social change cannot be done without knowing about social patterns of exploitative discrimination, injustice and domination. We need to know the status of poor, socially vulnerable women or minority groups and how they are exploited. Analysing exploitation, poverty and marginalisation is indispensable for alleviating poverty and achieving social justice.

Objectives:

- To find out forms of exploitation prevailing in society, including castes, classes, gender and religions.
- To find out which classes or castes are exploited in what ways by which other classes, castes or groups (e.g., in terms of wages, working hours, behaviour, loans and interests charged).
- To examine historical and present relationship of exploitation related to social, political, economic, religious, cultural and other factors linked with classes and castes.
- To identify situations in which enforced exploitation is practiced.

Information that can be collected:

- The forms of exploitation related with classes, castes, age, gender and religions.
- Relation of exploitation with different social and economic aspects.
- Practice of enforced exploitation.

Materials Required: Notebooks, idea cards and markers.

Key Informants: Very poor, poor and marginalised groups, gender related participation and people of different castes recognized after class analysis.

Preparation: Analysis of exploitation should be carried out through intensive discussion. General information on different forms of exploitation can be obtained from power mapping, social mapping, class analysis, dependency analysis and REFLECT discussions made earlier. It is important to use available information from previous studies, as these topics are sensitive. People may be more comfortable talking about topics if the facilitator introduces them into the discussion. Use open-ended questions, however, for the best results.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- To analyse exploitation, prepare some main questions with a supporting checklist. In the discussion, it helps to have three facilitators. One person can conduct the discussions, another to note down the important points and the third one to observe and ensure whether all the points are covered.
- Based on the class analysis, 3-5 informants should be identified for exploitation analysis. As this discussion may be sensitive, select a quiet place out of the public eye. Try not to mix classes or castes in the same discussion group. If mixed groups are collected in one place, the real picture of exploitation cannot be reflected well because of social fears, resulting in an incomplete picture of the situation.
- Introduce informants when they are at the designated place. Brief them on the name of the organisation, the purpose of this discussion, confidentiality of information and use of the information to be received.



- Start discussing with a checklist of topics/guiding questions. It is useful to begin by asking the meaning of 'exploitation'. Capture ideas of the informants, being clear about meanings in the local context.
- Present ways of exploitation seen in previous studies with the help of pictures. Then encourage the participants to speak by asking: What are other types of exploitation they have experienced? (e.g., economic, social, cultural, class related, low wages, payment not in time, derogatory words, restrictions on loans, interest rates, occupations and for selecting work and work places, etc.)
- Observe who is speaking and who is not. Who has been able to put the ideas clearly from the inner heart and also find out why someone has been trying to speak but unable to do so. Address this situation.
- Note down the types and examples of exploitations expressed by the participants. If possible, try to conduct the discussion with the help of pictures.

Some questions that can be used for the analysis of exploitation:

- What is exploitation?
- What are the exploitations prevailing in the society related to the class? Do you think that there are class and gender related and other exploitations?
- Which caste and class of people are more exploited in the society? Who have exploited more?
- What are the exploitations prevailing within houses, communities and government offices?
- What is the worst form of exploitation? What are the reasons you think that this is the worst?
- What are the negative effects left by exploitation to individuals, families, society and others?
- What are the compulsions that a person has to tolerate and accept exploitations that he/she himself/herself is exploited?
- Are there any efforts made against exploitation in the past? If yes, please state the type of exploitation, when was it made, how was it made and under whose guidance it was made. If not, why?

- When types of exploitation are mentioned, who is exploited and by whom? Ask how they are exploited and proceed with discussion of personal events and examples. Note exact words and languages.
- Ask: Have you been exploited for many years? How do you feel? Had anyone raised voices against exploitations? If yes, were those voices organised or raised by one person only? Who took the lead? How did an exploiter refuse and further fuel the problems? How did that process end? Continue probing.
- Ask: Why are steps against exploitation not taken? What are the reasons behind it? Is it necessary or is it dangerous to oppose and to raise voices against exploitation? Continue the discussion by raising such questions and note down the points told by the participants.
- Proceed the discussion by asking negative effects on individuals, families, societies and other aspects caused by exploitation. Ask: What is its relationship with development and change processes?
- At last, present the main points discussed and clarify that the information will remain confidential and be used only for the development of the disadvantaged groups and reducing exploitation. Finally, close by thanking participants for their time and opinions.

| Exploitation Analysis | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Class | Types of exploitation |
| Rich Farmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make labourers do the work in the rice field and yards (for some time) without wage. ➤ Discrimination in providing food between the rich farmer and labourer. ➤ Put up a son/daughter as a mortgage (as bonded labour) for a loan by rich farmer to labourer ➤ Deny loans if person taking loan already has loans from other person. As an interest, they take the rice field. ➤ Selling of the land to pay the debt. ➤ High rate of interest according to the wish of the rich farmer (more than 48%) ➤ Keeps the records more than the amount borrowed. ➤ Uses derogatory words, dominates and files the case if unable to pay the debt in time. |

| | |
|--|--|
| High Caste | ➤ Lower caste people cannot live in house of high caste people as high caste people live in a separate house. |
| High Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Food served in a leaf plate. Do not eat together sitting in one place. Leaf plate should be removed after food. ➤ If married with lower caste, they are punished and considered outcasts. ➤ Restriction on fetching water at a time from tube- wells or wells. ➤ No attending in feasts in lower caste houses or taking only raw food. Dishes are cleaned by the lower caste. ➤ Difference in behaviour to the labour according to their castes. ➤ The lower caste people are not allowed to move ahead from the yard of the house. |
| Gender | Types of exploitation |
| At home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First, the males are fed, priority to the son in education. ➤ Women are not allowed to go out from the house as they wish. ➤ Early marriage of the daughter. ➤ Not allowed to speak freely with outsiders. |
| In the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same work but difference in wages between males and females. ➤ Women are not included in the decision making process. ➤ Women are blamed as witch. ➤ In the absence of male women are misbehaved when the lenders go to get back their loan. |
| In VDCs | ➤ Less priority to get the work of the poor done. |
| Health centres | ➤ Preferential treatment and respectful behaviour with the rich and vice versa to the poor. |
| Source: Dhanusha District, Gopalpur VDC, study done in November 2007 | |

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Dependency analysis

In general, being dependent means relying on others in some way, often for income, security, or emotional support. Many people in society are dependent on others in one way or another for their existence. Society itself has to rely on others or organizations for various issues or reasons. As such, dependency should not always be perceived in a negative manner. Dependency can be respectful if it an agreed arrangement with mutual understanding and discussion so that it benefits both parties. However, when dependency is unequal, unjustifiable, one-sided and not respectful, it is a form of exploitation or social injustice and against personal rights and freedom. In this situation, the inequality creates suffering. The purpose of this tool is to bring out the realities hidden under dependency, and in that way make it possible to transform injustices and inequality through appropriate thinking, and to ensure the respectful life of different classes and castes.

Objectives:

- a) To know which classes and castes of people depend on others (in terms of social and economic systems, livelihoods, etc.), especially in the face of difficulties.
- b) To learn how to assess the nature and type of dependency (respectful, justifiable, mutually agreed, one-sided or with consensus).
- c) To identify reasons for dependency.
- d) To consider implications and ways to transform negative or harmful dependencies into positive relations

Information that can be collected:



- Which classes and castes are dependent on what other groups for which issues.
- The reasons why people live under the circumstances of dependency.
- Causal factors and interrelationships within dependency.
- Barriers and opportunities in community and family for transforming or breaking dependency.

Materials Required: The description of prosperity or class standardisation (e.g., wealth ranking, caste/class analysis). Meta (idea) cards, newsprint papers, markers, notebooks, pens, pencils.

Key Informants: The groups of people identified from classes or prosperity analysis representing all levels of people. Our main concern is with the poorest; ensure some people from that group are primary informants.

Preparation: If a joint discussion involving people from different classes/castes is conducted, it is possible to discuss on the big issue of dependency. But to discuss on whether the dependency is justifiable or not, or how the richest treat the poor, the discussion should be conducted separately with different classes. If the discussion is conducted in one place, the poorest may not be able to express themselves before the rich. At the time of discussion, the chart of class analysis should be carried so that it will be easy to discuss the dependency of one group on others on different issues. Dependency analysis should not be conducted without also conducting a prosperity analysis.

Process and guiding questions to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- Gather informants representing different classes in a quiet place. Start with introductions and briefing on the discussion subject and objectives; then explain the use of the information to be received. Encourage participants to express without any hesitation who is dependent on whom and on which issues. Brief them that the information received from the discussion will be used for the benefit of the community.
- To find out the dependency and to analyse it, it is necessary to know which classes of people are dependent on which kinds of issues. Discussion should start from the dependency of one group on others. It is easy to start by asking about which issues do the poor and the very poor classes depend on getting from the rich and very rich classes. Explain with examples if the participants feel uncomfortable to understand. For example: With whom do you (the poor and very poor) depend upon for financial support or loans?
- When the participants start giving answers, the facilitator should fill in the table given below and another facilitator should note down the points in her/his notebook. Continue the discussion by asking who is dependent on whom and for which issues.
- To ensure that all dependencies are captured, put questions at the time of discussion. It is essential to discuss about how dependency is linked to economic, social and cultural factors. It is also good to discuss dependency issues related to family, labour and government.

| Dependency Analysis Schedule | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|------|--------|------|
| | Very poor | Poor | Medium | Rich |
| Very poor | | | | |
| Poor | | | | |
| Medium | | | | |
| Rich | | | | |

- The rich class may be dependent on the very poor for labourers; the poor may be dependent upon the rich for loans. In times of shortage, the very poor may have to borrow rice, wheat, etc. that they must repay as labour. Groups may be dependent on another group in relation to family, society, religion, culture, economic or politics and they

are guided by their needs or situation in a justifiable or unjustifiable manner for one or other reasons. Continue to ask and note down the responses.

- What are the conditions of access to services and facilities instead of depending upon certain pieces of work? Are these provisions fixed unilaterally or bilaterally? In what forms are the services compensated/ repaid, either in cash or in kind? Is this justifiable or not? For example, if very rich families are dependent on labour for their agriculture, how is consensus reached between the two parties for the amount, timing and nature of the labour? Who fixes the terms and conditions for services and facilities? Are the labourers free to take the wages either in cash or kind?
- The information received in this way can be interpreted in the prosperity analysis table indicating by arrows or can be presented in the table shown above.

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Power mapping

In developing an understanding of a given location, there is a need to examine the power centres and relationships of the area concerned. Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Nepal are regarded as units for planning purposes and program implementation. The objective of the VDC Power Mapping is to identify the local power centres, the sections of the population utilizing the most resources as well as the limitations facing the poor, deprived and excluded groups in the area. Information received through VDC Power Mapping shall be main basis for detailed discussions and action plans, and thus it is very important. Through this tool, participants are able to identify the poverty pockets (good area and poor area with prioritization) within the same VDC and map them in a participatory way as well as gaining a common understanding around specific indicators related to power.

Objectives:

- a) Identify the geographical location of the VDC;
- b) Assess economic opportunities and availability and management of natural resources as well identify the communities which are getting benefits from these resources;
- c) Identify power centres (individuals, groups, ethnic groups, classes) within the VDC; and
- d) Identify the areas and classes and castes which have benefited the most and least from the local, governmental and other resources.

Information that can be collected:

- Geographical location, types of natural resources, their conditions, management and its beneficiaries.
- Market areas, settlements and public places.
- Areas where the service providers are located as well as industrial and commercial areas,
- Other development and construction works

- Areas which are most developed areas where most of the resources are utilised as well as the most backward areas in which the governmental and other resources are least used.
- Areas which are economically, socially and politically developed, inhabited by the rich and powerful as well as the areas which are economically, socially and politically least developed and, inhabited by the poor and powerless people.

Materials Required: VDC map and cardboard or poster paper that can be used to enlarge the VDC map. Coloured stickers or markers for indicating different things, pencils, erasers.

Key Informants: Those who have general information about the VDC like VDC Secretary, people engaged in politics, local teachers, individuals who represent various ethnic groups.

Preparation: With the participants, make a big map of the VDC. The outline can come from the participants and/or be based on the small VDC map with clear marking for the wards using markers or sign pens. Determine places in the VDC from which the most representative and essential information can be gathered.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- Request the key informants for their time. When the key informants required are gathered, explain clearly what type of the work is going to be done and what is its objective.
- Ask the key informants to sit down making a circle or half circle, put the map in such a way that everyone can see it. If the discussion is being held in a hall, put it on the wall.
- Ask the participants about the geographical location of the VDC, wards, villages and blocks and how to show them in the map. Similarly, ask the people where the streams, forests, trails, highways, mining areas, irrigation facilities, canals, wells, facilities for electricity are available and invite participants to show them on the map by using different symbols and words.
- Next, find out the settlement patterns in the wards focusing on ethnic patterns, population of each ethnic group, which group is in majority in which wards, what their main occupations are. Then, indicate them by different symbols and also write the number where appropriate.
- Ask the locations of VDC buildings, schools, service centres, industrial and commercial areas and indicate each item differently with different signs. Also NGO offices, political parties, religious temples/ mosques/ churches, and other community gathering places.
- Then ask: Which development activities were carried out? Who took the lead? Where did the resources come from? How were they implemented? Note down the information.
- Who has been in the leadership from the last 20/30 years? From which wards or villages? What the duration? Was anybody elected to the District Development Committee (DDC) or parliament? Is there anybody from this VDC in any important positions of political parties at district, regional or national levels? Gather information and indicate them with symbols or write down the details.
- Which ethnic group in the village has been relatively powerful and influential and which group is powerless and lagging behind? Where do they live in? Ask these questions and indicate with signs and make notes on it.
- Once collection of information is completed, present the summary of the information collected, ask them if there is any information that needs to be corrected. Assure the people that the information thus collected will be used in their interest and thank all of them for their participation.

- Make a copy of the map for programme records (or take some good quality digital photos where everything is shown and readable) and leave the original with the leader of the REFLECT group
- At this point, team and the REFLECT group can discuss how to analyse the information further, which may lead to identifying issues for further exploration, e.g., about power relationships, exploitation, social hierarchies, etc. to identify and analyse the underlying causes of poverty.

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc
- Gupta Bahadur K.C (no date) A Short Manual of Reflect Methodology; SAKCHAM Project. File: Reflect Center - Manual.docx

Social Audit

A social audit is a systematic process of measuring the social works of an organisation. This can help in proper planning, management, flow of effective communication and mutual understanding. It creates an interactive opportunity among the respective organisations, supporting agency, donor, stakeholders, community and impact population, which can contribute to identify the improvement as well as realisation on social accountability of the organisation. It can also help promote the voices of poor vulnerable and socially excluded peoples. The social audit process promotes organisational transparency and accountability; it can also help an organisation to plan for possible actions for strengthening or improving performance. Through social audit, an organisation can assess the gap between vision, strategic goal and results, including work efficiency and work effectiveness.

Objectives of social audit:

- To assess the quality of works/services towards specific impact groups.
- To identify gaps or differences of financial investment, physical resources and resource needs.
- To promote accountability of organisation to impact groups, stakeholders, supporting agencies and donors.
- To seek feedback from impact groups, stakeholders, supporting agencies and donors.
- To identify the future strategy or actions.

Characteristics of a good social audit:

- Ensure the quality
- Participation
- Good governance
- Trustworthiness
- Inclusiveness
- Transparency
- Accountability

Benefits of social audit:

- Create the validity of the organisation towards impact group and stakeholders.
- Ensure transparency at different levels like as community, district, region and national.
- Increase the participation of impact groups, stakeholders and supporting agencies (donors) for proper planning, implementation, management and create the ownership environment.

- Gain understanding about the positive and negative effects and impact of implemented program/activities.
- Collect creative feedback and support to identify future plan/action for betterment.
- Create an enabling forum for PVSE people's voices, questions and opportunity for demanding their rights.
- Strengthening of organisation on good governance aspects.

Time of Social Audit: This is regular process and will be better to organize a social audit event at least once year. Such kind of event will support in various aspects of the respective organisation such as developing future directions, annual planning, implementation modality, activity implementation etc. It is preferred to complete a social audit event in one day.

Participants for Social Audit: Consider the program area, working area, impact population, target groups and concern stakeholders, e.g.

- a) Women, dalit, janajati, social leaders of the programme implemented area.
- b) Concerned government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and private organisation representatives.
- c) Concerned donor, supporting agency and partners.
- d) Respective organisation's responsible members, executives, staff and field staff.

Information that can be collected in a Social Audit:

- Organisation profiles: Vision, Mission, Goal, Objectives (VMGO) and strategic plans. Organisational norms and beliefs. Short history of the organisation. Organisational structure (executives and staffs). Key organisational policies and procedures (staff, gender, inclusion, financial etc). Project and program list. Organisational progress report/annual report. Donor organisations list.
- Organisational plan and budget (relative to the project/programme).
- Current year progress, budget and expenditure (relative to the project/programme).
- Major achievements, challenges and learnings.

Process of Social Audit: Generally, we use some method during the social audit process, e.g., short presentations, discussion, demonstration, question & answer. It all depends upon the numbers of participants and nature of available physical environment (hall, electricity etc.). It is appropriate to conduct the social audit by inviting all participants in one forum. If such event is not possible, it can also follow other interactions in different places or be done by self-completion of questionnaires. The venue should be easily accessible to the impact population considering distance and transportation.

Role of facilitator/mediator: It useful to have a skilled resource person/facilitator to conduct a social audit. He/she can promote open dialogue and let the participants trust more. The facilitating/mediator's role:

- Facilitating and presentation
- Orient on social audit to staffs and executives.
- Work division with staffs and executives.
- Collect programme and financial information
- Linkage and coordination
- Selection of participants
- Corresponding with selected participants
- Review the progress of social audit event.
- Prepare the social audit report and disseminate to concern stakeholders

Role of organisation in organising a social audit:

- Organize orientation workshop on social audit to its staffs and executives.
- Make decision to conduct social audit event with date, place and venue.
- Prepare specific action plan to conduct social audit.

Pre-preparation for social audit:

- Coordination or finalization of facilitator –resource person or institution.
- Formation of planning/organising committee with specific role and responsibility.
- Finalise social audit date, place, venue and participants; agree on agenda/activities and exercises to use.
- Collect organisational profiles, e.g., VMGO, strategic plans, norms, policies, program information, donor information, resources etc. Financial information (audit reports, annual budget, financial policy etc).
- Preparation of presentations, distribution materials and documents.
- Develop questions for stakeholders, donors and impact groups/peoples.
- Manage required logistics and budget; e.g., tea, snacks; camera, microphone, recorder, banner etc.

Steps of the social audit event:

- Welcome to participants; Sharing of the objectives; Sharing of the programme and some norms
- Sharing of organisational profile(s) - short history, organisation info (major policies, structure.....), programme wise activities, budget, implementation modality/process, progress, learning, challenges etc. – in sequential form (if possible provide as a handout document to all participants).
- Open to feedback or expression from participants; note down feedback and comments.
- Active listening; only clarify if there is any confusion among participants in any presentation.
- Compile summary of the feedback and share to all from organisation aspect with some commitments.
- Conclude the events and thanks to all participants.

How to conclude/use the social audit process:

After the social audit completion, the organisation needs to prepare or compile detailed findings and prepare an improvement action plan considering the incoming feedback. The report should be shared with executive level, board of the organisation, and with concerned impact groups and stakeholders. Periodically organize review meetings (e.g., annually) to map progress of improvement action plan.

From:

- Terms of Reference – Social Audit. CARE Nepal. File: ToR-Social Audit.doc

Expenditure and income analysis [in 3 parts]

1. Expenditure analysis

Each and every family spends money in different ways for their living. The expenses are affected by different factors such as social class, caste, gender and sometimes regional issues. Primarily, expense is affected by total income. Our concern is to find out how the poor and disadvantaged people have managed their expenses under different headings. This information helps to plan and implement programmes for people living a difficult life.

Objectives:

- To identify the headings of the expenses incurred throughout the year.
- To find out the average expenses under different headings.
- To discuss possible ways for expense management and to diversify sources of income at local level.

Information that can be collected:

- The expense headings of different groups and families in a year.
- The amount of expenses under each heading.
- Classification of expenses and the ways to effectively manage expenses.

Materials Required: Meta cards, markers, coloured pens, names of households (based on class analysis).

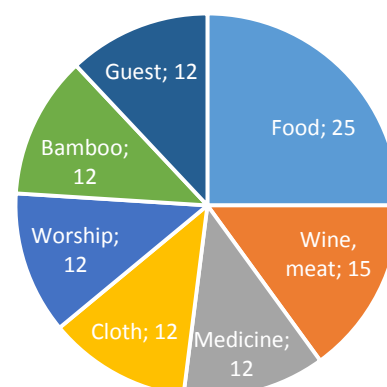
Key Informants: Different individuals from different income levels based on class and caste analysis.

Preparation: This exercise can be done for families identified by the prosperity/wealth analysis. Our main concern is with poor and very poor, especially women. However, it is also useful to do comparative analyses, so rich and medium class people are included for getting data about their spending patterns and expenses. As such, the name list of village households received from the class analysis should be with the facilitation team.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- First, gather all participants in one place. Reminder: expense headings and amount of expenses may not be the same in all places. It is good to break into small groups keeping people of the same socio-economic class working together separate from other classes. When informants from the same class are gathered, introduce with each other. Brief objectives of the gathering and the subject matter to be discussed and also brief about the use of the information.
- Ask: In what categories or under which headings, are they spending for their living? If they do not understand the headings for expenses, explain it with examples from the local context.

Figure 10: Expenditure pie chart



- Give some time to the participants to discuss. When they reach consensus as to the main headings of their expenses, write them on different cards and read them aloud.
- It is often easy to present the distribution of expenses under different headings in a pie chart. Request them to draw a pie chart in a dusty area.¹¹⁹ Pointing to the pie chart, explain that the whole circle is the total amount that they spend during the year.
- Ask them to indicate how much they spend under different headings in the pie chart. Start from one heading of the expense such as expense for the food or treatment during sickness or any other types of headings expressed by the participants. It is usually easiest to begin either from the lowest expense heading or the highest expense heading. When participants are ready, ask them to tell headings of the highest and lowest expenses. When they reach consensus on the headings of highest expenses, tell them to represent it in the pie chart. Repeat for second highest expense. In this way, ask them to present all the headings of the expenses in the pie chart.
- As soon as all the expenses under different headings are in the pie chart, repeat back to them the areas where they spend less, medium and highest. If they do not agree, give them time to correct the pie chart.
- At the end, thank all participants for their time. Reassure them that the information received will only be used in planning and implementation of programs for the benefit of the poor people of the community.

2. Income Option Analysis

Each member of a family may adopt different means of meeting her/his livelihood needs; and these means are affected by age, gender, class, caste, religion and regions. Educational status, employment opportunities, the number of the family members and local context also affect the livelihood. Our concern is to know how different groups of people achieve and maintain their livelihoods. It will help to plan and implement the programs to improve the economic condition of those groups that have difficulties in making a living.

Objectives:

- Identify sources of income from the viewpoints of different classes/groups of people, especially the poor.
- Identify and discuss potential ways to diversify sources of income at local level, especially for women.

Information that can be collected:

- The sources of income in a year (from the viewpoint of class).
- The income received from each source.
- Potential ways to diversify the sources of income.

Materials Required: Idea cards, markers, coloured pens, cards with the names of households.

Key Informants: Different persons from different income, class and caste levels.

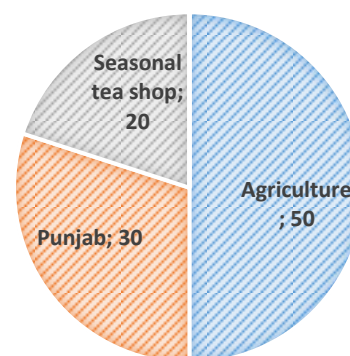
Preparation: This exercise can be done in a group identified through prosperity analysis. Our main concerns are the poor and very poor. However, to facilitate the comparative study, we also want to know the income sources and the figures of the income for the medium and rich groups.

¹¹⁹ Example expenditure pie chart from: Dhanusa District, Gopalpur VDC. Expenses of the poor family of Jogendra Malli as of November 2007

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- First of all, manage to gather informants of the targeted group in one place. According to the local context, they can gather in one place or separate discussion can be conducted with different families because the sources of income of the members of the same class may be different.
- When the informants of the same group are present, introduce each other. Brief objectives of the gathering and the subject matter that is going to be discussed and the use of the information..
- Ask them: What are the different sources of livelihoods? If informants do not understand the meaning of the sources of livelihoods, give examples and use the local context to make them understand.
- The participants should be given some time for discussion. When there is agreement on the main sources of income, facilitator should write down the sources of income expressed by the participants on different cards and should read it aloud before the participants.
- To present different income sources, request them to draw a pie chart on the ground (see below).¹²⁰
- Pointing to the pie chart, explain that the circle is the income that they receive in total during the year. Then, request them to indicate what portion of the income they receive from different sources in the pie chart. Start with a source such as income received from the wages. Experience has shown that it is easy to start with either from a lowest income or the highest income.
- When a participant is ready, ask him or her: What is the highest source of income? After the consensus reached on the highest source of income, request them to show it in a pie chart.
- Repeat for their second highest source of income. After consensus, request another participant to show it in the pie chart. In this way, annual income from different sources can be presented through a pie chart.
- As soon as the sources of income are indicated in the pie chart, ask them to tell the lowest, medium and highest sources of income; review and correct any incorrect information. After discussion, amend pie chart as suggested by the group
- Sometimes participants feel uncomfortable to show income sources in a pie chart. In that situation, proceed by discussing what part of income they receive from different types of work. Based on the discussion, the facilitator can put the description in the pie chart and can come to a conclusion.
- Conclude discussing by thanking everyone for their time. Say good-bye and reassure them that the information received will only be used in planning and conducting programs for the benefit of poor people in the community.

Figure 11: Income Source Pie Chart



¹²⁰ Example of income pie chart from: Dhanusa District, Gopalpur V DC, Prastoki village. The source of income of the poor family of Parbati Yadav- Agriculture, earning from the Punjab in India, income received from seasonal tea shop

3. Wage Analysis Matrix

In many rural communities, the primary means of livelihood for the poor and very poor will be wages for casual labour. Many people are landless and dependent on the upper classes for their livelihoods. Many, if not most, of the casual wage earners are exploited and underpaid due to ineffective implementation of laws and absent monitoring. They cannot get the work they like; there is no fixed time for the work. Wages are not paid according to the work done, and wages are unjustly low. In order to achieve the objective of the poverty alleviation, it is essential to know the conditions and wage systems.

Objectives:

- To list the kinds of work for which people are employed on wages.
- To distinguish the work done by men and women.
- To find out the wage rates, working hours and side benefits for the men and women

Information that can be collected:

- The main kinds of the paid labour done for cultivation (plantation, weeding, reaping, harvesting).
- The description of work done on contract or hiring labour.
- The work done by men and by women.
- The rate of wages provided according to the work and gender and types of wages (cash or kind).
- Total working hours and provision of tea, tiffin and breakfast.

Materials Required: Cardboard or poster papers, meta cards (idea cards), markers, coloured pens.

Key Informants: Male and female wage earners from poor and very poor families; can include migrant workers.

Preparation: Special preparation is not necessary to collect information with this method. Discussion should be conducted with informants from poor and very poor families (who are making a living by earning wages) identified on the basis of prosperity analysis. Based on the information received from making the seasonal calendar and exploitation analysis, the team can decide which issues or sources of income to focus on.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- First gather the poor and very poor informants identified on the basis of prosperity analysis in one place. After they are gathered, introduce each other. Brief them the objectives of the gathering, the subject matter for discussion and the use of the information received from the discussion.
- Based on the seasonal calendar and/or exploitation analysis, recall the kinds of work for which labour is hired. Likewise, the team can brief them that there are differences in wages and the labourer does not usually have the capacity to decide their wages. For this reason, discussing wages is necessary to start.
- Proceed with one type of wage work, e.g., one type of cultivation. Ask them: Do they enter into contract or are hired for cultivation of rice, for instance? Write down any conclusions in separate cards and put them on the top of the paper. If they are written on the ground, put them in one place. If both males and females are involved in all types of wages, mention them as indicated in the table below.

| Wage Analysis Chart | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|--------|----------|--------|------------------------------|--------|-------|
| # Crop | Wage earner | | Contract | | Laborers hired by contractor | | |
| Main work | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | group |
| 1.Rice | | | | | | | |
| Ploughing | | | | | | | |
| Planting | | | | | | | |
| Weeding | | | | | | | |
| Harvesting | | | | | | | |
| 2.Wheat | | | | | | | |
| Ploughing | | | | | | | |
| Planting | | | | | | | |
| Weeding | | | | | | | |
| Harvesting | | | | | | | |
| 3..... | | | | | | | |

- Ask participants to explain the process of rice cultivation from the start to end. Write down responses on the cards, e.g., ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting. Put the cards below the rice cards in order.
- Ask whether ploughing for rice cultivation is done by hiring the labour or giving the work on contract. Ask further if males or females or both are hired to do that particular work. Proceed with the discussion by asking how much wage males and females receive with or without any food. What differences in wages? The study team should continue the discussion like this and the participants should be given some time for discussion. Fill in the information in the above table.
- Ask what the provisions at the time of the plantation, weeding and harvesting are done. What is the rate of wage paid? When is it paid? In which form is it paid? Mention the information received in the table.
- All the information cannot be presented in the table. However, some of the points received from the discussion may be very important. Points like untimely payment of wages, wages in kind and of low quality, work for 12 to 15 hours and no provision of tea, breakfast and tiffin may come at the time of discussion. The reporter should note down the exact words, language, and examples in her/his notebook.
- After the discussion of wages of one crop, start to discuss about other major crops and write down the important tasks. Proceed with discussion as above; present points in pictures and note in the notebook.
- After discussing the main work and wage rates, share all points with the participants. Give them time to correct if needed. At the end, thank all the participants for their time. Say good-bye and assure them that the information received will only be used in the planning and implementation of the programs for the benefit of the poor people of the community

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-English Santosh 2009.doc

Seasonal Calendar

The seasonal calendar is used to find out activities carried out in different months of the year. This method also helps to find out the busy or free time, time for agriculture and income generating work, the coldest and the hottest months, festival times, seasonal illnesses, etc. We do not need all types of information at a time and it is not possible to collect all information at a single discussion. Therefore, according to the objectives of the program, the information sought can be selected. The user of this tool should be clear on this issue and plan it accordingly.

Objectives:

- To prepare the list of the works done in different months of a year.
- To find out the time for the opportunity of more work, time for less work and no work, i.e., the busy and free time of the community.
- To find out months in which labour is most needed and when opportunities for work are least available.
- To find out the month of shortages of food and the months of food crisis.
- To find out the local alternative livelihood and survival strategies in the months of food crisis.

Information that can be collected:

- The list of the main kinds of work done in each month, separated by gender (men and women)
- The time for more work, less work and no work.
- The busy and comparatively free time of the community.
- The time of food shortage and the time of serious food crisis.
- Alternative ways of the livelihood in the local level in the month of food crisis.
- To find out the workload of women and girls, especially those from poor and very poor families

Materials Required: Idea cards, markers, colour pens, cardboard or poster papers.

Key Informants:

- If the objective is to get the general information of the village, the participants should be selected who can represent the whole community.
- Representatives, especially women, from the poor and very poor families, based on prosperity analysis
- Informants selected from a certain class, caste or community according to the objectives.

Preparation: Generally, our concern is poverty and the people oppressed by the poverty and the disadvantaged people. So, the selection of the subject and preparation for the use of it should be done accordingly. The study team should be prepared for the discussion by consulting with the informants to make the analysis fruitful.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- First of all, gather the group of informants in one place. Introduce each other and brief them about the objectives and subject matter of the discussion; also about plans for use of the information received.
- Ask them to draw a straight line in the cardboard paper or on the ground and request them to divide the straight line in 12 different parts. Write down the names of the months starting from Baisakh to Chaitra (Nepali months) in the divided part.

- Ask the participants about the important work done during the year. Note in the notebooks any points received from the participants. Also ask them where they go to perform the mentioned activities and note down the points again in the notebook.
- Ask them in which month they perform the above activities and give them some time to discuss. Again continue to ask them what are the main activities they do in Baisakh, Jestha and rest of the other months and put them in the respective months.
- Ask them in which months and for how many days they will be busy. Depending on their responses, ask them to indicate it with short vertical line if they are engaged for a short time and indicate with long vertical line if they are engaged in that work for a long time. If this exercise is done on the ground, long and short twigs can be used instead of lines.
- If participants feel uncomfortable to indicate or start from Baisakh, then ask them to start from the very busy month or the less busy month and proceed with the discussion.

| Seasonal Calendar: from - Kurthawal VDC, Nawalparasi, June 2009 | |
|---|--|
| Baisakh | Males work outside-Rickshaw pulling, other work. Women do not do any work-they do not have agricultural work |
| Jestha | No work in this month. Males purchase vegetables in village & sell them in market & pull rickshaws. Females do not have any work |
| Ashadh | They have plenty of work in the rice field. Both males & females are engaged. Rice seedlings are planted. |
| Shrawan | Both males & females are engaged. |
| Bhadra | This is a very hard month. The parents feed their children without enough food for themselves & some go even hungry. |
| Ashwin | Very little work of agriculture for males & females. Some go out for agricultural work. |
| Kartik | Both males & females have plenty of work. They get sufficient food. |
| Mangsir | Less work in agriculture. Women stay at home & men pull rickshaws. |
| Poush | Getting cold. They do not have work in the village. |
| Magh | Coldest time. They do not have work in the village. |
| Falgun | No work in the village. They buy & sell vegetables. Men pull rickshaws & women do not have any work. |
| Chaitra | No work in the village. Some males work as laborer & buy & sell vegetables. Women do not have any work. |

- When they decide how to start (from busy month or from the month without work) ask them which is the busiest and the most free month for them. Further ask them why those are the busiest and free months. Also ask them what they do in these months and how many days they work in these months. Based on this information, ask participants to draw long lines if they are busy and short line if they are less busy (if this exercise is done in the cardboard paper). As mentioned above, if this is done on the ground, they can use twigs of different lengths to indicate relative busy-ness. Under the name of the months, ask them to mention the name of the work and work place.
- The exercise can be made more lively, pleasant and effective if some pictures that reflect the work can be drawn. If this exercise is done on the ground, one facilitator should note down all information in the notebook; remember you can also take digital photos to capture the process and results.
- In this way, mention the work done in all twelve months of the year and also indicate the time to finish that work. Try to present them through straight lines or the pictures. After completing the discussion, ask them where they go for the work. Put their statements and the name of the work under the same month.
- Then, ask them the name of the month when they experience food shortage and starvation. Give time for the participant to discuss. When they reach consensus about the month for starvation and food shortage, tell them to indicate in that particular month. Find out the reasons for food shortage and starvation and note down in the notebook.
- Ask them what strategies they will adopt and efforts they can make for feeding their families at the time of food crisis and note down the points discussed. As this part of the discussion is very important, give them time to discuss on it. Note making should be done carefully on the food crisis strategies taken by them. For example, poor families in

Nawalparasi experience food crisis for two months and at that time, they may manage some food for their children but parents go to bed after just drinking water with salt. They often take loans under the condition that they will pay it back by doing labour for money lender.

- Ask them what type of program or help they prefer to support for their livelihoods at the time of food crisis. Note down the suggestions received from the participants.
- Finally, thank all participants for their time. Say good-bye to them and assure them that the information received will only be used in the planning and implementation of the programmes for the benefit of the poor people in the community.

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Mobility analysis

Women mobility analysis

Women constitute half of the total population and play important roles in bringing about social change and transformation in the society. Unless and until the meaningful participation of women is ensured, it is not possible to bring about the social changes desired. Nepal is patriarchal and women are generally confined within the four walls of the house. They are taught that their role is to feed and take care of their children, not to talk with males, and to talk only in a low voice while covering their mouth.

Our objective is to eliminate gender-based discrimination and to ensure that women are able to meaningfully participate in society and social change. This requires that we become very clear about the current status and mobility of women, as that is a key factor affecting their development as a person. When a woman moves from one place to another, she gets the opportunity to learn about new environments and build up the confidence to take decisions. Thus, for women's empowerment, development and involvement, it is essential to know about their mobility.

Objectives:

- To find out the mobility of the women of the targeted group (within village, outside the village, within the district and outside the district).
- To learn about reasons when and why women travel beyond the village; and whether they go alone or with others.
- To find out the difficulties faced when they go outside the village.

Information that can be collected:

- Identification of the place, work, time and objectives of going outside the village.
- Whether they go out alone or with others.
- The difficulties when they go outside the village.

Materials Required: Markers, idea cards, newsprint papers, the list of poor and very poor families.

Key Informants: Women of the same class and caste if taken in a group (very poor, poor, medium and rich). One woman of one class and caste if taken individually or from a family.

Preparation: The study team should use the name list of households identified through the prosperity (wealth) analysis. Identify informants from that list and conduct the discussion. To really reflect women's mobility picture, the team should have a discussion on how many women members of different classes will be present in the discussion and plan it accordingly. Information from the exploitation analysis can be helpful in planning for these discussions.

Points to be considered and procedures to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- Contact the informants and take time for the meeting. When informants gather in one place. Introduce each other. Brief the objective and subject matter of the discussion.
- The study team can visit many places, but to make the process easy, they should first visit households one after another in the village, then outside the village and the VDC and so on.
- Tell the participants that they are going to discuss on how they manage their households and where and when they go for the work. Request participants to express themselves candidly without any hesitation.
- It is nice to present the discussion in the pictures. Write name of the woman involved in the discussion at the centre of newsprint paper and draw a circle and write down 'Within the House'. Then, ask them: What do they do within their houses? Put the answers in the circle of 'Within the House' using markers.
- Tell them to draw another circle outside the circle within the house and write 'Outside the House'. Tell them that just some minutes ago, they had discussed about the work done 'Within the House' and now request them to tell what they do outside their houses. Where do they go for work, chores, services, or other activities? In this way, proceed with the discussion. Write down the points received from the women participants in the circle. If something is not clear, ask them to give examples. The points related to the places they go for work and types of the work they do are important. If possible, emphasise that point and highlight the places and type of the work.
- Upon completion of the discussion 'Within the House' and 'Outside the House', exercise, ask them: Do they move in any places outside the village for work (or other activities and services)? Where and when do they go outside the village? Is it inside or outside the VDC? If necessary, give them some time to think. The facilitator should indicate the points expressed by the participants within the circle. What had happened when they reached there? Why did they have to go there? What problems did they face on way back home? The facilitator should write down these points in the notebook.
- Proceed with discussion telling them that the study team has come to know that participants have been traveling in many places within VDC. Propose them to talk about the district. Outside the 'Circle of VDC', draw another circle and write down 'Outside the VDC'. Ask them: why, when and where did they go to other VDCs within the district? Continue the discussion by asking such questions and note down the points.
- Again draw another circle and write down 'Outside the district'. Ask them: where, why and when did they do go outside the district? Continue the discussion by following the above process and note down the points received from the participants.
- Ask them: With whom do they go outside the village within and outside the VDC? Continue to ask them: What types of problems did they face while going to those places? How did they manage to tackle those problems? Note down the answers received from them.

- When the discussion over, brief the group about the points by participants that are written in the card board paper and request them to correct if necessary.
- Finally, thank all participants for their time. Say good-bye to them and assure that the information received will only be used in the planning and implementation of the programs for the benefit of the poor people of the community.
- Note that for good ethics, the facilitators should either take some good quality photos of the products or redraw them and leave the originals with the REFLECT group leader.

From:

- Sharma, S. (2009) Participatory Methods, Processes and Analyses. A Handbook for Identification and Analysis of Underlying Causes of Poverty and Formulation of Strategies. Care Nepal. File: Nepal UCP Manual-english Santosh 2009.doc

Advocacy strategy

Advocacy is an important strategy to support creation of an enabling environment for women empowerment. It is possible to carry out advocacy not only on the content of relevant policies, but also on the quality of implementation of such policies at all levels. In SAKCHAM, has been carried out with men and women stakeholders for addressing gender within the programme, and with various levels of government – from VDC to district and national levels.

Objectives:

- Clarify - what is meant by 'advocacy'? What is meant by 'networking'?
- Clarify needs for advocacy (e.g., to implement policy, amend existing policy, or formulate new policy).
- Clarify needs for networking (e.g., collective voice, information and experience sharing, etc.).
- Clarify the practical meaning of networking its advantages and risks.

Information that can be collected: it is important to explore and understand the perceptions of stakeholders, including PVSE women, CBSWs and partner organisations about what is 'advocacy' and ways to do it. We also need to know about the perceptions of stakeholders on priority issues where the voices of PVSE women have been silent or not heard and deserve support to enhance their voice.

Materials Required: poster boards, markers, idea cards and newsprint

Key Informants: PVSE women, CBSWs and partner organisations, representatives of VDCs/local government. Ensure participation and collaboration of community, VDC and district level networks for policy advocacy. Consider inviting local journalists to be part of the discussion as well.

Preparation: In preliminary discussions with PEC women and local authorities, identify some of the key laws related to women, including minimum wages, access to public and private resources, and domestic violence. Some of this material might also come from the exploitation analysis.

Process and guiding questions to be followed while applying this tool in the field:

- Start discussion with a welcome, introductions and brief explanation of the purpose of the discussion.
- Begin questions by asking participants to explain how they understand 'advocacy' – what it is, how is it done, who can do it, where, when, and why?
- Discuss the various steps of advocacy with questions and examples – identification and analysis of issues, assembling related evidence, planning, implementation of plan, review and integration
- Ask participants what 'network' means.
- Note down participants' answers on the board.
- Ask participants to play Rope Game [details pending from CARE Nepal/SAKCHAM teams]
- Along with the game, make clear the concept of network, including definition, need and advantage of a network. Give examples of activities conducted in the community through a network.
- Make clear the linkages between advocacy and networking.
- Make clear how to analyse *We, Supportive, Neutral, & Antagonist* and plan step-wise activities,
- Discuss linkages of men's network from local to international levels, and make clear the advantages.
- Discuss success stories of SAKCHAM Programme, and how this information is or could be used for advocacy and interviews of target community for airing from local (district) or community FM and TV.
- Create an action plan with PEC groups, and supportive partners (men, government, NGOs) for gender-related advocacy and advocacy on priority issues affecting PVSE women. Monitor and follow up the plan in regular PEC discussion meetings.

From:

- SAKCHAM: (no date) Two-day Training on Capacity Building of Supportive Men; Training Agenda. File: MSG - Orientation Training - Guideline.docx.
- SAKCHAM (2013) Women's Empowerment for Transformation in the Churia Area. SAKCHAM III. Programme Implementation Guidelines. File: SAKCHAM Project - Implementation Guidelines - 13 May 2013.doc

Action plans

Based on identification and analysis of the causes of poverty and social injustice in the working area, SAKCHAM has organised poor and vulnerable women in the target regions into 395 Women Discussion Centres (PECs). Participating women meet at these Centres every week to discuss and analyse many different issues related to women's empowerment. Examples of topics include violence against women, social injustice, exploitation, discrimination, women's rights, good governance, human rights, public resources, government services, women's state in different structures, and wages. These issues directly and negatively affect poor women. To address these issues, PEC women themselves have collectively been designing and implementing action plans.

Following the community and PEC selection of men campaigners and supportive men, SAKCHAM facilitated basic capacity building for these men. In the training, the men

campaigners grappled with many issues, all of which were fundamentally linked to gender equality. The specific topics covered sex, discrimination, socialisation, masculinity, patriarchy, violence against women, psycho-social problems, women's rights, women's empowerment, and men's engagement in women's empowerment. At the end of the training, each of the men prepared a personal three-month action plan in which they committed themselves to working on gender equality-related exercises and changes.

Objectives:

This guide will enable CBSW facilitators, women and men participants to:

- Prepare individual and collective action plans.
- Commit to implementing and reviewing the plans regularly to track progress and update them.

Information that can be collected:

- Collective prioritisation of issues to address in the short-term.
- Options for action that will involve the participants.
- Identification of specific additional resources or resource people and stakeholders that may need to be involved.

Materials Required:

Board, marker and newspaper

Key Informants:

Discussion group participants, CBSW facilitators, and selected key stakeholders.

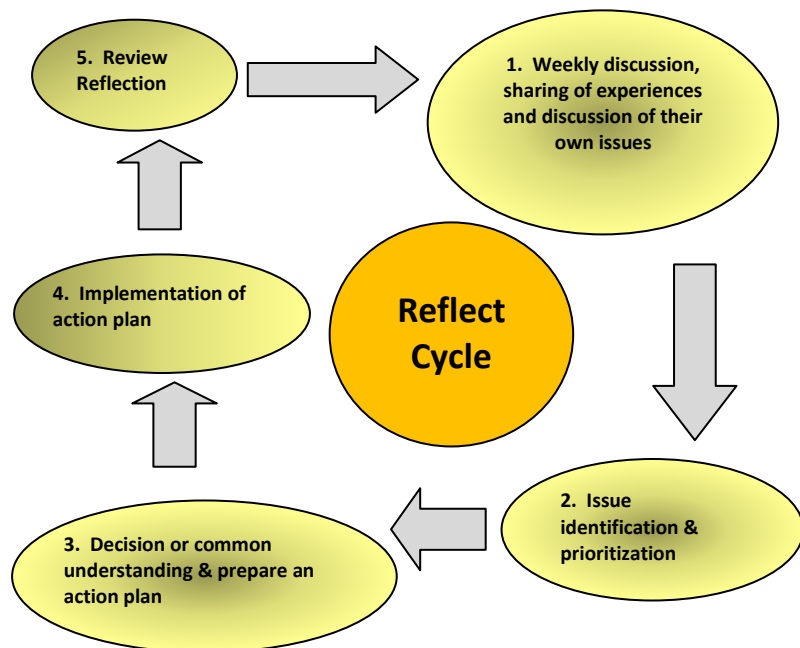
Preparation:

Share the accompanying REFLECT cycle with the group as a background to the planning steps.

Process and guiding questions for using this tool in the field:

- Divide participants into small groups (4-6 persons); ask each group to discuss roles that people like themselves have been playing and changed roles they could play; discuss the findings.
- Discuss emerging issues with the groups; help them prioritise a single issue (or a very short list) for a planning discussion. [see step 2 in Reflect Cycle].
- If the list of topics to address is too long, it may take a week or more of discussion to reach awareness, common understanding, consensus and self-confidence for the way forward. Sometimes, the facilitator will need to guide participants by focusing on one action, e.g., to explore options.
- After a decision is made by the group, the facilitator again starts to discuss or explore their suggestions for actions to implement the decision in coming days. [see step 3 in the cycle].
- After actions finalise, participants can prepare an implementation action plan using the following format.

Figure 12: REFLECT cycle



Action Plan

| S# | Action | Objective of action | When | Where | Target participants | Major Responsibility | Support from | Remarks |
|----|--------|---------------------|------|-------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------|
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | |

- In completing the action plan, the facilitator should try to sum up and validate the whole discussion by probing questions with the participants.
- It will be important to obtain individual and group commitment to the plan(s), e.g., with signatures and making a commitment statement in front of peers.
- The action plan is also shared to the responsible persons according to their responsibility and actions. [see step 4 in the cycle].
- In some situations, the action plan may include referral – e.g., for persons severely affected by psychosocial issues. For referral it is important to make sure the referral goes to services where the CBSW already has an existing relationship/is known, and they are sure that the services will be good and helpful. Always make sure to follow up on satisfaction and helpfulness of the service with the client.
- The action plan and its progress will be reviewed and mapped in each coming week as per the action plan. [see step 5] Sometimes the action plan is also changed as per needs identified during the progress review.
- Note that the group will not be expected to discuss all issues each and every week [see step 1 in the cycle]. The project will facilitate orientation sessions on different topics at successive meetings to raise awareness and build self-confidence among the members. Depending on the concerns of the group, the supplemental or emerging topics may include: women rights, gender, violence against women, advocacy, governance, UNSCR 1325 and 1820, peace work, men engagement, women networks, etc.

From:

- Gupta Bahadur K.C (no date) A Short Manual of Reflect Methodology; SAKCHAM Project. File: Reflect Center - Manual.docx
- Two-day Training on Capacity Building of Supportive Men, Training Agenda. SAKCHAM programme. File: MSG - Orientation Training - Guideline.docx
- Wurzer, J. (2014) Bharatpur SAKCHAM III Psychosocial Training Workshop, July. File: CaseManagementTraining2014Nepal.docx
- Women Empowerment for Transformation Project SAKCHAM II. Men Engagement. File: Men Engagement - SAKCHAM - Resource Book.docx

Review Reflection Workshops

Review and Reflection is a common and important activity of all CARE Nepal programs. The outcomes of the discussions have deep implications toward achieving programme objectives. Obviously, review and reflection has two parts. The 'review' is the assessment of the activities completed or not completed during the past period being reviewed. Reviewing mainly encompasses asking, 'what and how'. The second part, 'reflection' is about critical thinking and analysis of various actions, processes, strategies and outcomes. Reflecting is seeking the answers to the 'why' question. Review and reflection meetings contribute to learning through drawing lessons from the experiences of diverse stakeholders. The stakeholders can include community people, program team, network members and so on. It offers a good opportunity for the program team to share their experiences, demonstrate evidence of success, discuss about failures and make the strategies more effective.

In reality, however, it is often too easy for the review process to become merely a ritual. Poor planning, inadequate time allocation, lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities during reflection, overly lengthy and circular discussions, poor documentation, and repetition of the same points in subsequent reviews are some of the aspects that make the sessions less useful. This guideline is intended to help make the review & reflection sessions more instrumental in generating learning and fostering critical thinking and analysis. In so doing, they will make the future programme more effective. The guide is intended to be used by Team leaders, Programme Officers, District Coordinators, and Programme Coordinators – all of whom are involved in planning and execution of the review reflection workshops.

Objectives of Review Reflection

The objectives of the review reflection are as follows:

- To review the progress of a Programme against the set plan for the specific period.
- To critically reflect on the strategies, trends, issues, achievements challenges and learning during the period; and compare to expectations for the overall performance of the Programme.
- To generate learning from diverse experience and make systematic documentation.
- To formulate strategies for more effective implementation of the Programme in the future.

Expected outcomes / information that can be generated

- Documentation of the progress, key issues, challenges, learning and way forward.
- Increased understanding of how the programme is functioning.
- Action plan prepared for the next period.

Methodology and tools for Review Reflection

A number of participatory methods and tools can be used for review reflection meetings. Some of the common ones include:

- Handouts with discussion questions
- Discussion – in plenary & small groups
- Individual experience sharing
- Visuals, e.g., power points, flip charts, photos
- Audio visuals, videos with dialogue after
- Presentations from external resource persons
- Checklists for discussion sessions
- Gallery presentation of information

Participants in Review Reflection, and frequency:

SAKCHAM is based on grassroots mobilization through community level groups known as - REFLECT groups or Popular Education Centres (PECs). For this kind of project, the review and reflection should be focused at community level, VDC level, district level and

programme level. It is desirable that the reflection process begins from the community level and subsequently other levels going up. The intensity of discussion, duration; number and type of participants will be influenced by the resources available. In general, Review Reflection workshops need to be organized quarterly to make them consistent with the planning process.

Time management

Often, there are lengthy discussions and the set time may not be enough for a good reflection. Long elaborations, interruptions during presentation and lack of focus are some of the reasons for taking more time. A good planning is required for tentative time taken for each session. Then, strict time keeping based on the set time for each session is required to complete the discussion on time.

Learning agenda

Core learning questions (linked to after action review processes):

- What were we trying to achieve?
- What were the actual results?
- What challenges did we meet and how should we overcome them in the future?
- How should we modify our thinking or practices in the future?
- What should we not repeat in the future? (Learning from mistakes/failures).
- What should we continue doing or do more of in the future? (Learning from successes).

Key learning questions by stakeholder level/group

| Community level | Critical issues/learning questions |
|--|---|
| PEC women group [meet at VDC level], group facilitators & Community Mobilizers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical issues of the group • What were the strengths & positive actions/changes in the group? • Which topics was the discussion focused on? • How was the facilitation? • Has the group initiated & social actions? • What are the concerns of different stakeholders? • What are their most pressing problems? |
| VDC level | Critical issues/learning questions |
| LRP/CF/PA & CM also occasionally DC/PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis of performance of different groups at VDC level • VD level issues social actions, movement • Functioning of VDC level structures, engagement with political leaders; other actions at VDC |
| District level | Critical issues/learning questions |
| CM, PO & board members of partner organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with different stakeholders including political leaders • District level plan & progress against DIP |
| Project level | Critical issues/learning questions |
| Project staff (program & program support) from CARE & partner organizations; senior staff from CARE CO, Board Members of partner organizations, representatives of projects working in the same area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic review of plan & progress against DIP • No. of beneficiaries benefitted during the reporting period • Critical issues, analysis of the issues • Are the strategies working? • What is the new context? Is the context analysed continuously • What are the new & emerging risks? • Are the assumptions working? (For example, PVSE women will take part in weekly discussion sessions & actively engage in advocacy work. Men will cooperate with women's groups.) • What changes have been observed in PVSE women, PVSE men, relationship between PVSE women & political leaders? • What are the best practices observed in this quarter? • How effective is the level of collaboration & building synergy among different projects working in the same area and/or same objective? • What kinds of activities have been conducted jointly with other partners of the same project? |

Documentation

A lot of information is generated during review reflection workshops. It is essential to capture all the key points of discussions and presentations made. The learning and actions plans prepared in one RR session will also be an important source of information for the next RR. However, the raw information from the session will not provide a way forward until it is synthesized and key conclusions are drawn from it. This needs time to be devoted by the concerned staff to summarise key findings while retaining details that may be useful on particular areas of interest.

Preparing action plan

At the end of the review reflection workshops, an action plan needs to be prepared to address key issues and concerns raised during the review. This should include the key areas that need a focus in the next quarter – with clear roles, responsibilities and a time frame for completing the actions. [See action planning table].

From:

- Bharatpur Cluster Office (2011) Guidelines for Review Reflection Workshops. CARE Nepal. February