

## **Access to land resources**

### Livelihood strategy of Ex-Kamaiya of Kailali District

#### **Summary**

Slavery System has been a global problem, immersed with agricultural labour. Kamaiya is also an agricultural based bonded labour system, practiced in the Terai belt of Nepal. Kamaiya means a hard worker, or a good farmer. They had to work from dawn to dusk on landlord's farm.

This study entitled " Access to Land Resources: Livelihood Strategy of Ex-Kamaiya of Kailali District" is an outcome of the survey of 71 household of Ex-Kamaiya camp (Srilanka) of Kailali district conducted during December 2007 to understand the livelihood status and strategies, their vulnerability and coping strategies. Livelihood strategy was analyzed on the basis of present human, social, financial, natural and physical assets of the study site. It also explained that the role of different I/NGOs and government have invested their time, money and efforts to enhance livelihood strategy through various means and mediums.

Kamaiyas, when they were suppressed by their landlords, they had no options to make decision except just to obey the landlords orders. Now they are free and are the centre point on all the I/NGOs' concerns. The study attempted to find out the present income generating and livelihood opportunities based on their existing skills, knowledge and resources availability.

The general objective was to examine livelihood strategy of Ex-Kamaiya with focus on their land resources. They used to have no other means of livelihood options other than working in farm land of the landlord but now many organizations supporting them in different ways for their betterment. So what are the livelihood strategies adopted by them after being freed is the main concern of this study.

Primarily, the descriptive research design was carried out in order to fulfill the specific objectives of the study. This design gave a clear cut glance of demographic, socioeconomic, existing livelihood assets, livelihood strategies adopted, vulnerability and coping strategy and other facts and figures of particular study area. The analysis was mainly based upon primary data.

Study area was the Srilanka Camp of Srilanka VDC-7 in Kailali district, Seti zone, situated in the Far-Western Development Region. There were of total of 156 settled households of 71 HH. In the sample size there were 25 females and 46 males respondents interviewed.

The analysis and interpretation of the collected information followed the sustainable livelihood

framework (SLF). As livelihood is a means of gaining a living, it is directly related to the availability of resources, services, facilities and institutions. In country like Nepal having both social and physical diversity, different scenario of livelihood exists. All of the respondents were Tharu and aged group ranged minimum 16 to maximum 75. Where 59.2 percent were the male respondents and 40.8 percent were female. Among the 71 respondents 97.18 had a marital status and 2.82 were unmarried. As per the livelihood main strategy and out come in the study area it was reported that 67.61percent of the respondents were non-farm based agriculture labour with some fraction working in India as well. They were in terms of skilled and non- skilled labour, doing carpentry work, construction of houses, pulling rickshaw and so on.15.49 percent of respondents used to wok in their own farm for rearing livestock for livelihood as their principal occupation, 12.68 percent used both farming during season and non farming during off season as apiary occupation. Similarly, 2.82 percent of respondents had their own business like opening saloon or small grocery shop. Remaining 1.41 percent was working in school and hospitals as a primary source of livelihood.

Among the surveyed households after they were freed from the Kamaiya, none respondents reported human rights violations in terms of death, assault to unauthorized 81 arrest, abduction and detention. But few respondents reported that had a forced donation in the name of labour upliftment. In the research area none household members had any kind of mental disabilities, mental retarded, malnutrition or physical disabilities but the cases of chronically ill were reported. Chronically ill in terms of eyesight, stomach problem were noticed among old aged people. Similarly, in the study area none respondents were found using their indigenous knowledge skill for livelihood.

Agriculture crop framing is also one of the main livelihoods in the area, but 0.1700 hectare of land could produce food produced was sufficient only for 3 months. Only, 20 percent of respondents had just sufficient food produced from their land because they had less family members to be fed while remaining 80 percent had no food sufficiency. Natural calamities were not reported but some time loss of crops due to hailstorm threat of jackal and wild cat from the near by community forestry was mentioned while doing focus group discussion.

Among coping mechanisms at the time of stress and shocks going to wage laborer, obtaining loan as well as selling those livestock, selling of jewellery and going by India to for labour work was adopted by mostly all respondents. Accordingly, multiple livelihood options as well as change of occupation are also the livelihood strategies of the respondents.