



Gender Issues and Dalit Farmers in Surkhet
Effect of Vegetable Seed Project at Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet,
Mid-western Region of Nepal

A Research Project Submitted to:

Van Hall Larenstein, University of Applied Sciences

**(In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Management of
Development)**

Specialization: Rural Development and Gender

Pratibha Rijal Limbu,

September 2012

Wageningen, the Netherlands

© Copyright Pratibha Rijal Limbu, 2012. All rights reserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many people have contributed in this study, intellectually, materially and morally to the successful completion of this thesis. I am grateful to each of them. Although the journey to the Masters title was short and the course quite intensive, I now look forward to a professional career with pride.

Dr Marcel Put, my supervisor for your patience, constructive suggestions, intellectual insight and practical guidance during the entire period of my thesis, I am grateful.

I am thankful to my course coordinator, Ms Annemarie Westendorp for her encouragement, advices and guidance throughout the courses.

Special thanks, to Seed Producer Farmers, respondents who sacrificed some of their precious and productive time, leaving rice plantation aside to participate in the study and made possible to collect data and information on time. My sincere thanks go to Dr Hari Krishna Upadhaya, Executive Chairperson, and CEAPRED for acknowledging my knowledge to undertake the study and approving my study site. I am grateful to Mr Bharat Upadhyay for his suggestion, Project Director Mr Krishna Kumar Shrestha for his cooperation. I am very grateful to Mr Indra Raj Pandey, Team Leader, Vegetable Seed Project, his positive thinking, motivation and cooperation lead my study reach in its final destination. I would also like to thank VSP-Surkhet District Team for logistic support during my field work. Without this help, it would have been difficult to complete my field research on time.

I am indebted to Mr Pradip Maharjan, CEO, Agro Enterprise Centre/FNCCI for his continuous support to complete my studies. Mr Vishma Prasad Bhattarai, Mr Chiranjibi Rijal, Ms Surmila Shakya, for motivation and initiative for editing this thesis and helped me to be patient and complete my work. I am indeed thankful to the NUFFIC for offering fellowship. Without this support, it would not be possible to carry out my Master's degree in the Netherlands and Van Hall Larenstein administration, the on- time communication to ensure my eligibility. I am grateful to all the lecturers and staffs for their valuable support provided during my study and for immense contribution to knowledge, skills and change in attitude, giving a new professional life as Gender Specialist.

I am here with my humble gratitude to the known and unknown authors for their valuable references.

Lastly, I am indebted to my family for their patience and enduring the difficulties of looking after my son during my absences.

-Pratibha Rijal Limbu, September 2012

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my '*Ama*'-mother, who really wished to see me getting International Degree. Her desire for me to get degrees in higher university drew my inspiration and the reason for seeking higher knowledge. She never got privilege to go to school. She wished her daughter deserves that she never got.

I love you Ama, I made you feel proud.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.1.1 Country's Context.....	1
1.1.2 Vegetable Seed Project and Social Inclusion in Nepal	2
1.1.3 Social Exclusion and Dalits in Nepal	2
1.2 Research Problem	3
1.3 Objective and Rational of the Study.....	3
1.4 Research Main Question and Sub-questions	4
CHAPTER -2 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1 Theoretical Review:.....	5
2.1.1 Gender and Gender Triple Roles of Men and Women.....	5
2.1.2 Farmers Role in Nepalese Agriculture and Access & Control over Resources	7
2.1.3. Caste Based Discrimination and Cultural Norms & Practices.....	8
2.1.4 Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM)	9
2.2 Conceptual Framework.....	9
CHAPTER-3 METHODOLOGY	11
3.1 Research Design	11

3.2 Study Area	11
3.3 Data Collection Procedures	12
3.3.1 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	12
3.3.2 Observation.....	13
3.4 Methods of Data Analysis	13
3.5 Limitations of the Study.....	13
CHAPTER- 4 VEGETABLE SEED PROJECT IN SURKHET.....	15
4.1 About Surkhet	15
4.2 Characteristics of the Project	16
4.3 Selection Criteria of Programme Districts	17
CHAPTER-5 CASTE & GENDER ISSUES IN VSP PROJECT	18
5.1 About Mehelkuna VDC	18
5.1.1 Demographic characteristic of Mehelkuna VDC	18
5.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents	19
5.1.3 Household size of the respondent.....	20
5.1.4 Landholding and wealth status of the respondents.....	20
5.2 Status of Dalit Farmers in Vegetable Seed Production.....	21
5.2.1 Productive Roles.....	21
5.2.2 Reproductive Roles.....	25
5.2.3 Community Roles.....	27
5.3 Access to and Control over Resources.....	28
5.4 Caste based discrimination and Cultural Norms and Practices	32
5.5 Project Effect on Gender Roles of Dalit Farmers	36
CHAPTER-6 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS	38
5.1 Role of Dalit Farmers in Vegetable Seed Production.....	38

5.2 Division of Labour and Access to and Control over Resources	39
5.3 Caste based discrimination and Cultural Norms and Practices	40
CHAPTER-7 CONCLUSION & THE WAY FORWARD	42
7.1 Conclusion	42
7.1.1 Roles of Dalit farmers and Access & Control over Resources	42
7.1.2 Project Effect on Dalit farmers and Cultural norms and practices.....	43
7.2 Recommendations and the way forward.....	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY	47
ANNEX-I	50
Questionnaire for Vegetable Seed Producer Farmers	50
ANNEX-II	54
Respondent's Information	54
ANNEX-III	55
Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM-Matrix)	55
ANNEX-IV Field Photos	56

LIST OF TABLES

Table: 1 Respondents Access and Control over Resources	31
--	----

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework	10
Fig.2 Map of Study District, Surkhet	11
Fig. 3 Map of Surkhet showing Mehelkuna VDC (study area)	15
Fig. 4 Working Districts of VSP.....	17
Fig. 5 View of Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet	18
Fig. 6 Population Distribution by Caste & Sex	19
Fig. 7 Demographic Characteristics of respondents	19
Fig. 8 Household size of the respondent.....	20
Fig. 9 Landholding of the respondents.....	21
Fig. 10 Ploughing of cultivating land by respondents.....	22
Fig. 11 Weeding of cultivating land by respondents	23
Fig.12 Sowing by respondents	23
Fig. 13 Fertilizer application by respondents	24
Fig.14 Seed selling by respondents.....	25
Fig.15 Food preparation by respondents in peak season	26
Fig.16 Taking care of children and households by respondents.....	26
Fig.17 Respondents participation at meeting.....	27

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APP	Agriculture Perspective Plan
CEAPRED	Centre for Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development
DAGS	Disadvantaged Groups
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
GON	Government of Nepal
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
NGO	Non-government organization
NPC	National Planning Commission
PVSPR	Promotion of Vegetable Seed for Poverty Reduction
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
TYIP	Three-Year Interim Plan
TYP	Three-Year Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VDC	Village Development Committee
VSP	Vegetable Seed Production

ABSTRACT

This research entitled 'Gender issues and Dalit farmers in Surkhet: an effect of Vegetable Seed Project (VSP) at Mehelkuna Village Development Committee (VDC) aims to find out the effect of Vegetable Seed Project (VSP) on the gender issues and Dalit farmers engaged in vegetable seed farming in Mehelkuna VDC in Surkhet district of Mid-Western Development Region in Nepal. The main research problem of this endeavour was to find out the effect on the gender roles of Dalit women and men farmers, their accessibility and control management on resources as well as to analyse and to see the situation of gender issues and the effects of the Project on discrimination status in the Project areas.

The objective of the research was concerned to see the status of the Dalit women and men farmers and their roles in vegetable seed production and the process of social inclusion. The Centre for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) started the Vegetable Seed Project (VSP) in collaboration with Government of Nepal (GoN) and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) to create a gender sensitive environment in households and community for Dalit women and men. The specific objective of the research is to pave a way to review and to restructure the existing policy for CEAPRED/VSP Project for gender sensitivity issues through situational analysis.

The main research question of the research was to find out the effects of the Vegetable Seed Project (VSP-III) on Dalit farmers regarding gender issues before and after the Project intervention in Mehelkuna VDC. Researcher collected data through qualitative and quantitative approaches residing with Dalits in their respective communities. Based upon facts collected through the different tools such as survey questionnaires, personally recorded interviews, participating in farmers' focus group discussions to listen their views, informal interaction and observations, the researcher drew the conclusion and prescribed recommendations at the end of the thesis. The total population of the respondents were 30 selected randomly in which 15 men and 15 women of different age groups. All were the Dalits. The findings of the research are that the Project is supportive for the enhancement of the economic standard of the Dalit women and men farmers which in turn is helping Dalit to be assimilated into the community among the so-called high caste people. However, the food is taken/eaten in the working field without any inhibition; the high caste elderly people are still reluctant to take food with the same person in their respective homes. Before the Project was launched into the village, the Dalit were not permitted to use the tap to fetch the water if there is people from the so called high caste are fetching water. After the intervention of the Project, Dalit can also use the same tap and irrigation channels for water. Vegetables seed are taken as the cash crop hence, attracted men to join their women partners in seed farming. It is also helping to reduce the seasonal migration of male members in the families. Since the selected respondents have incredible small plot of the land, the vegetable seed crop gave them a handsome economic support. Hence, 21 men and women work together in sowing after the intervention of the Project which was just 16 before the Project.

However, involvement of Dalit women in seed cultivation is very high to meet the project criteria which are at least 60% for DAGs women. By this project is also getting negative effects like drudgery for women due to heavy work load made men free from agricultural work. Likewise study also revealed that violence and family insecurity is started increasing due to economic empowerment of women. To mitigate such errors, project can include equal per cent of men and women and conduct activities parallel for both to aware self-realization especially to men on the traditional beliefs, rigidity on customs and stereotyping and controlling resources under them. It would be effective if project also restructure trainings manuals and tools to make it gender sensitive so therefore women can be equally benefitted. Finally, for project the meaning of gender has to be translated for both men and women not only referring gender as women.

CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Country's Context

Nepal is an independent, sovereign, landlocked, mountainous, and agriculture dominant developing country which is situated on the southern ridge of Himalayas with the highest peak in the world- the Mount Everest (8848 m). It lies between 80° 12' and 88°12' east longitude and 26°12' and 30°27' north latitude with an elevation range South to North of 60m to 8848 m. Nepal is situated between two giant Asian countries- India (east, west and South) and China(North).

According to the population census 2011, the total population of Nepal is 26, 620,809. There are 12,927,431 male and 13,693,378 female. The average annual population growth rate from 2001-2011 is 1.40%. The population density is 181 persons/sq. km. Having the total area 1, 47,181 sq. km. and divided into three geographical divisions- Mountain region (15%), Hill region (68%) and *Terai* region (17%). Nepal has 3,915 village development committees (VDCs) and 58 municipalities as the lowest level of administrative and political units of the country which are governed, administered and supervised by 75 districts, 14 zones and 5 development regions respectively.

Majority of population in Nepal live in rural areas (85.8%) and are totally dependent on agriculture. The crop farming is the main agriculture activity which supports nearly 80 % of total population and 35% of total GDP of the country. So, agriculture is still a way of life and is supporting the growth of secondary and tertiary sector of the country. But still the Government of Nepal (GoN) is allocating only 12.79% of total development budget and not giving high priority to the development of the agriculture sectors. Nepalese agriculture is still very much traditional and subsistence in nature. In general, the method of cultivation is purely manual and labour-intensive and farm holdings are small. Nepalese agriculture is largely dependent on rainfall and agricultural production is mainly influenced by monsoon situation due to which still several districts of Nepal have been facing food deficit leading to the food crisis every year.

The Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP), 1995 – 2015, has been the guiding document for formulating subsequent periodic plans and sub-sectorial policies. The Plan emphasizes the need to diversify agricultural production by harnessing the comparative and competitive advantages of different sub-sectors. National Agricultural Policy, 2004 provides the macro-policy framework to develop and update subsequent sub-sectorial policies. Presently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives in technical cooperation of FAO is preparing a Pro-poor Agricultural Policy, which would have significant implication on the existing and upcoming sub-sectorial policies to make the programs more inclusive and equity-based. Among sub-sectorial policies, National Agri-business Policy, 2006 is worth mentioning particularly in the context commercialization of agricultural products. Similarly, Commerce Policy, 2008 of the Government prioritizes agricultural sub-sectors for export promotion which also include vegetable seeds.

Following declaration of Federal Democratic Republic by Constitutional Assembly, the Three-Year Interim Plan (TYIP), and 2007-2010 was launched. Recently, GoN has released the approach paper of the Three-Year Plan, 2010-2013. The recently released Three-Year Plan (TYP), 2010-2013 also envisions modernizing and commercializing the agriculture sector, as guided by the basic strategies set in APP and National Agriculture Policy, 2004. The overall goal of agriculture sector set in the TYP is to achieve broad -based, gender and socially inclusive sustainable growth (NPC, 2010).

1.1.2 Vegetable Seed Project and Social Inclusion in Nepal

During the 1980s, the Swiss Government in collaboration with Government of Nepal introduced a public private partnership in seed sector recognizing the importance of producing high quality seeds. Production of low volume and high value commodities such as vegetable seeds is one of the most important and promising strategies to promote economic growth in remote areas for poverty reduction (ASIA Brief: SDC, 2009). Moreover, availability of and supply of quality seeds is very important to improving the agriculture-based economy, food security and livelihoods of poor and small farmers. Since 2004, Swiss Development Cooperation–Nepal/the Government of Switzerland (SDC-Nepal) has been supporting the promotion of vegetable seed production through the specialized Nepalese Non-governmental organization namely Centre for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED).

CEAPRED's approach, since its establishment in 1990, is to reduce poverty through promotion of new and better economic and livelihood opportunities at the local level and linking these opportunities to markets. After the implementation of the projects for vegetable seed production and marketing namely "Promotion of Vegetable Seed for Poverty Reduction Phase-I" (PVSPR I) from 2004 to 2006 and Phase II from 2007 to 2010, CEAPRED is currently implementing the project, Phase-III with the revised name "Vegetable Seed Project (VSP III)" from 2011 till 2014. The overall goal of the Project, as stated in the project document of CEAPRED, are "Poor and Disadvantaged¹, Households in remote² areas of Nepal will have improved food security³ and income". The project has the primary criteria of identifying target beneficiaries is the inclusion of farmers, with priority to smallholders⁴.

The Project defined disadvantaged households (DAGs) as those who are economically poor suffering from caste, ethnic and gender discrimination. The Project has been designed in line with government assimilating the national set criteria in terms of targeted households integrating one of the major pillars "Social Inclusion" to mainstream poor and dis-advantaged caste such as *Dalits*⁵, *Janajatis*, *Madhese* and women in the programme. Not only that, this Project is duly emphasizing the gender and social inclusion to create a base for equitable growth for the sustainable seed production and supply system.

1.1.3 Social Exclusion and Dalits in Nepal

ILO (2005) defines 'Dalit' as the group of people who belong to the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy system who are vulnerable and poor, oppressed, suppressed and exploited. Given that inequality and discrimination have been one of the major factors of conflict in the country, it is imperative to address inequality through inclusive development and economic growth in order to prevent future conflicts and move towards sustainable peace. However, there are several constraints to inclusive growth and development in Nepal, for example, lack of productive employment opportunities in rural Nepal; unequal access to opportunities for education, skill development and productive assets; patriarchal social structures that continually marginalizes or discriminates against particular groups on the basis of gender, caste, ethnicity and religion. Inequality in Nepal is complex and multidimensional phenomena as it is linked not only to economic aspect but also to social and political aspects as well. For

¹ Group of poor families, those suffering from caste, gender and ethnicity based discrimination.

² Far flung areas at least 2 hours walk from all-weather road head or 10 km way from the road head.

³ Food security means people at all times have both physical and economical access to the basic food they need. Quantitatively 2124Kcal per day or 286 kg per capita per year,

⁴ Smallholders are those who have landholding size less than 0.5ha in the hills.(GoN criteria)

⁵ So-called lower caste people who are known as untouchable, discriminated by caste,

instance, Dalit and women earn respectively lesser than higher castes and men for the same work.

The social exclusion of the Dalit in Nepal can be analysed in terms of poverty as they are synonym of poor and in terms of caste (DFID, 2006). Referring to this, “Dalit are excluded from the society because they are poor as well as they are considered as the low caste. And being as excluded groups from caste and are poor, most Dalit reside in the hilly region of Nepal (DFID, 2006)”. Constituting some 20 % of the total population in Nepal, the so called untouchables, popularly known as Dalit, remained exploited for centuries.

Following the restoration of multi-party democracy in Nepal in 1990, voice was raised in favour of the subdued and oppressed sections of the society. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal in 1990 A.D. declared discrimination on the basis of caste as punishable. Subsequently, a Committee for the upliftment of the *Dalits* under the chairmanship of the Minister of Local Development was established. In addition, the Dalit Committee was formed at the national level in 2002 A.D. for the improvement of the conditions of the Dalits.

Despite the efforts made by the State, unequal distribution of resources and exploitative relations of production compelled most of the Dalit to live as paupers, landless and homeless. The problem of untouchability does not allow them to improve their economic conditions engaging them into the consumer services business sector, as many of them are not allowed to sell milk or engage themselves in tea stalls, hotels, restaurants, etc. As a result, their per capita income is almost lowest (US \$ 39.6) in the world.

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has incorporated social inclusion as one of the four pillars of the 2003, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) which is also Nepal's Tenth Plan (2007-2010) to provide opportunities for excluded caste groups such as Dalits. The Tenth Plan, PRSP recognises that the lack of voice, political representation and economic empowerment are the most important dimensions for poverty reduction.

1.2 Research Problem

Unlike in other projects, CEAPRED has an emphasis for women, poor and dis-advantaged groups: Dalits, Janajatis and women. The CEAPRED has been working to enable them through income generation activities by producing high quality vegetable seeds. Such vegetable seed are marketed through seed co-operatives. However, the women participation was only centred to fulfil the criteria set for the Project which states that 50 % women participation is a must and at least 60 % are from disadvantaged groups.

This Project lacks knowledge on the effect of the project on gender roles of Dalit women and men farmers, their accessibility and control management on resources as well as to analyse and to see the situation of gender issues, effect of the project on discrimination status in the project areas.

1.3 Objective and Rational of the Study

This research was duly concerned to see the status of Dalit farmers and their roles in vegetable seed production. The thesis emphasizes two dimensions: Gender Roles (productive, reproductive and community) and Access and Control over resources of Dalit men and women on seed production as well as the Project's effect on Dalit farmers, their cultural norms and practices.

The specific objective of this research is as follows; Paving a way to review and to restructure the existing policy for CEAPRED/VSP III Project by making recommendations to make gender sensitive backed up by doing situational analysis of gender roles of Dalit farmers, their access and control over resources and Project effect on their cultural values and norms in terms of caste based discrimination.

The main purpose of this research is to review and restructure the existing policy for CEAPRED/ VSP III Project to make gender sensitive though this study is only in Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet district, the recommendations will give indications to concerned stakeholders (implementing organization, donor agency and other implementing partners) for intensive monitoring on gender issues as well as activities extension to make the programme gender and social inclusion sensitive.

1.4 Research Main Question and Sub-questions

1.What is the effect of Vegetable Seed Production Project (VSP-III) on Dalit farmers regarding gender issues before and after the project intervention in Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet District, the Mid –Western Region in Nepal?

- a) What is the status of Dalits men and women's role in this Project?
- b) What is the existing status of access to and control over resources and benefit sharing between Dalit men and women?
- c) What is the effect of the Project on the cultural norms and practices of Dalits farmers?
- d) What impact of the Project has on men and women's labour, time, resources and their culture?
- e) What are the characteristics of the Project?

CHAPTER -2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review:

2.1.1 Gender and Gender Triple Roles of Men and Women

Kamla Bhasin, (2000:1) specifies the meaning of gender refers to “socio-cultural definition of man and woman, the way societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles” The socio-cultural roles of men and women vary because of their capabilities. Before understanding the word gender, people have misconception on it and mixing the meaning of gender with the word “sex”. The concept of gender is socially built but sex is biological. Sex is constant. It remains same everywhere but the meaning of gender is variable and it has been changing from time to time. Equally it is different from culture to culture. Bhasin also adds that “gender refers to masculine and feminine qualities, behaviour, patterns, roles and responsibilities. Gender, however does not refer to the biological differences but to the social and cultural structure that defines what is to be a “man” and what is to be a “woman” in a given society and cultural setting”. Gender and gender character are socially created through the processes of socialization whereby human beings become social persons. What men do and what women do, how they act and interact together with cultural ideas and understanding of gender differences found a gender system.

“Gender is about the roles, responsibilities, rights, relationships and identities of men and women, which are determined by social, political and economic context (Bhasin, 2000:7)”. Gender roles are socially resolute from birth and it stimulates the division of labour leading to gendered valuation of work that ultimately decide the access and control over resources and decision making (Groverman & Gurung, 2001:10).

Moser (1993:25-27) defines gender roles in relation to household and intra-family labour division between husband and wife; man and woman. She states that, “within the household there is a clear division of labour based on gender, The man of the family, as the ‘breadwinner’ is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman as the housewife and ‘homemaker’ takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organisation of the household (Moser,1993: 29-30).

Moser (1993:28-31) indicates the triple roles of women saying that the abstract stereotype model of society and the division of labour fails to see the triple roles of women. She argues that “the reproductive role comprises the childbearing /rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the workforce (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school-going children)”. Reproductive roles refer to these activities which are essential for the survival of the family. The women reproductive role was highlighted by Moser throughout her literature but she fails to distinguish the term biological reproduction from that of the social reproduction role of women says Mackintosh (Mackintosh 1981; cited by Moser, 1993:29).

Social reproductive role of women is to reproduce not only wage labour force but capital also. Rogers (Rogers, 1980, cited by Moser, 1993: 30) describes the result of domestication of women that the increasing importance of women’s reproductive role of women in western economy helped to the industrial revolution. Due to the popularity of cash economy increases the weak relation with subsistence economy therefore women lost economic

sovereignty in their own right as farmers, craft workers and traders which make them dependent on the wage of men.

Moser (1993:30) says, "Women's reproductive works is not seen 'real work' or 'invisible' with adding the fact that it is due to the lack of recognition of the economic cost under capitalism". She argues that the result of capitalism of the separation of paid work which is allocated an exchange value comparing to unpaid 'domestic work', allocated only for use value.

The productive role "comprises work done by both men and women for payment in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange value and subsistence/home production with an actual use-value, but also a potential exchange value (Moser, 1993:34)". Moser refers this role for 'women in agricultural production which includes work as independent farmers' wives and wage workers'. The work commenced with exchange value is perceived 'work' a men's work whereas 'reproductive work' known as women's work. Although there are clear differences between two roles of men and women, but women generally do dual productive roles and sometimes even three fold (Whitehead 1990, cited by Moser, 1993: 33). She says that if women have access to land then women work independently like men farmers to contribute at households being as "peasant wives" for weeding, hoeing, planting in the field of men. Women work at field together with men to supplement household income being as seasonal wage labourer. Productive roles also include market production with exchange value and subsistence production with actual use of value. For instance, the agriculture labour and decision-making are also a part of productive roles.

The community managing role of women as an extension of their reproductive role also comprises activities, the provision and maintenance of scarce resources for collective consumption, such as water, health care, and education. It is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in free-time. But the community political role in contrast comprises activities, mostly done by men at community level. It is a paid work either directly or indirectly through wages or increase status and power (Moser 1993:35). Moser presents the feminist arguments on the roles of women is that women work as a producer farmers but the value is undertaken as supplement income for households.

The role of men undertaken as a breadwinner in the households even they are unemployed. Men undertake the roles of a community leader, activities at community as a leader, organising the formal politics and achieve the power and status though women's role to manage the community and make the platform for men to be a leader. Moser emphasizes that social relationship includes not only that of household members but also neighbours. It includes collective organization of social events and services by the community members, such as celebrations, community improvement activities, groups and organizations. Moser (1993:35) found that especially in low income communities throughout the world, there is a consistent trend for political organizations to be run by men, with mainly male members and for collective consumption groups to be in the hands of women.

Gender roles are seen in the ascribed activities of men and women which differ according to the sensitivities and these roles strengthened through the gender division of labour. The division of work for men and women varies from societies to societies and culture to culture. Parker says that reproductive roles associated with the households usually perform by women. In some societies, men also do this task, for instance, house building for own shelter. Productive roles associated with cash or kind and this is usually done by both men and women. This includes home production/subsistence and market production with use of exchange value. The community managing roles are mostly done by women but also by men. This is a voluntary unpaid works and usually undertaken as an extension of reproductive roles. Constituency political roles are undertaken at community level, local,

national and international levels on behalf of constituencies at political level (Parker, R., 1995 et al: 63).

Traditionally, in a Nepalese family, man generates income and his wife involves in domestic activities. Traditionally, men are responsible to earn either through farming or through off-farm employment while women are responsible for child bearing/rearing, households' chores and tending animals. Women works are undertaken as non-productive whereas men's works are considered productive.

2.1.2 Farmers Role in Nepalese Agriculture and Access & Control over Resources

According to the Census of 2001, women comprise 50.04% of the total 23.1 million populations in Nepal. An overwhelming majority of them live in rural areas and depend upon agriculture for their livelihoods.

Women in Nepal work for longer hours than men and get far less wages than their male counterparts (Acharya Meena, 1991:17). Several researchers found that women do more agricultural work than men in the mid hills of Nepal even though culturally ploughing is men's job. The most time consuming activities which women do are post-harvest activities such as winnowing drying, cleaning, milling, storage, food processing, cooking, water and fuel fetching (Bajracharya, 1994:15).

Involvement in of women in agricultural production also depends on the wealth status of the households (Shrestha, 1999:34). She mentions that women from wealthy families do not participate in the actual cultivation tasks but provide support activities such as preparation of meals to feed the labourer in the fields, arranging exchange labour, supervising the fields during plantation and so on. But among the poor and marginalized families (lower caste) the women and female children are involved in the actual performance of the task. The reproductive activities that are related to the production, care and maintenance of family members are generally confined to the households and defined as women's tasks.

In fact, the activities like fuel fetching and water collection, food preparation, giving birth, childcare and washing clothes are valued seen as non-economic activities and are usually excluded from national income (Shrestha, 1999:39). All these activities are performed by women and sometimes assisted by female children. Men are involved in marketing activities and social gatherings. The division of labour in reproductive activities is related to wealth status. Lower the wealth status, higher the involvement of men in reproductive activities (Shrestha, 1999:36). In poor families' men feel no shame in undertaking household tasks. But in the rich families, men feel humiliating in helping their wives with households activities. "The overall division of labour, access to and control of inputs, resources and benefits from productive and reproductive labour are determined by custom, tradition and religious beliefs. All these place women at a disadvantage, making them submissive or subordinate" (Okali, 1995:93). Subedi et al. (2000:67) also reported that women have lower education levels, lower access to information sources and limited participation in training. However, women farmers are exclusively involved in seed selection, storage, and management and processing.

As per the gender need of women farmers, the involvement of them in agriculture is higher than of men's need. Women's involvement was found 73% in kitchen gardening (Neupane and Dhakal, 1990: 112), 59% in pea seed production and 76% in ginger production whereas women's participation in farming activities increased, time dedicated to food preparation and care taking decreased (Munakami and Gautam, 1990).

Access is freedom on permission to use resources whereas control is power to decide whether and how a resource is used. In fact decision making and control are synonymous to each other (Adhikary, 2010:30). In the context of Nepalese farmers; women are the primary agriculture workers in subsistence sector where men are primary worker for the cash crops. Moser (1993: 17) points out, "where women have separate access to land, it is common for them to work both as 'independent farmer' on their own plot but work as 'peasant wife', contributing to household production as unremunerated labour". But as Sanday (1981:86) points out, women are effectively indentured through for they have no control over the end products. Other researchers have noted that women who contribute cash earning to the households have greater voice in domestic affairs than women involved solely in subsistence agriculture. The major resources include land, cattle, capital, extension services and farm mercenaries and tools. Most of the women throughout the world do not have the right to property, land, capital or other resources (Adhikary, 2010:46). Land ownership and access and control over land and resources is crucial factor in agrarian society. In Nepalese rural societies, where land and cattle is the most important means of production, women's lack of control over land, cattle and capital are the major reason for their subordination to men.

Gender access and control over resources and benefit is also one of the most important key that need to be considered which contributes to family welfare, and agriculture productivity (Adhikary, 2010:51). She also explains that women are allowed to work on and take care of the land and cattle but selling of them are under men's control having influences of the patriarchy family system. Bashin, (2000:13) adds the gender relation between women and men are skewed because of the existence of 'Patriarchy'. Therefore the father, men control most economic resources. She adds "it is not only a gender division of labour but the gender relation of women and men who has a great influence of patriarchy-an ideology and social system whereby men are considered superior to women and control the most resources and social institutions".

2.1.3. Caste Based Discrimination and Cultural Norms & Practices

Nepalese culture is in caste based discriminations rooted on religion which has perpetuated both practices of 'untouchability' and exploitations from so called higher caste to Dalits (The World Bank & DFID, 2006:15).

Mostly, Dalits women participate with their male partner's work in the agricultural field of the upper caste people. More than 90% of Dalit women living in the village earn their livelihood by working as agricultural labours for the upper caste/class landlords. The Nepal Living Standard Survey II (2003/04) shows that the national average poverty rate is 31% but it is 47% for the Dalits (The World Bank & DFID, 2006:27).

Division of labour is discriminatory against Dalit. Both "high" and "low" caste/Dalits women work in family farms. They are engaged with domestic works as well, so they spend more time than their male counterparts (Cameron, 2005, cited by Bhattachan, 2007; 23). Also, Dalit women spend more time compared to their 'high' caste women counterparts as well as their male counterparts. Cameron's study reveals that 'low' caste people or Dalits do most of the agricultural works. Dalit women are mostly involved in weeding and digging the fields, carrying manures (fertilizers), and transplanting seedlings (Cameron, 2005, cited by Bhattachan, 2007; 24). Dalit men mostly do ploughing and sowing fields, and digging canals. The study done by Sharma et al ,(2001:72) shows that most Dalits suffer from discriminatory practices involving food and drink (38.9%) and prohibition of entry into houses, temples and other public places (28.3%). He further adds, this caste based discrimination is higher in the mid and the far western regions in Nepal than in the eastern region of the country.

Kamala Hemchuri, (2006:51) quotes, “although all Dalit are equally humiliated and victimized by the ‘high castes’ through the practice of untouchability, it is even the poor Dalit who suffer the most”. She mentions that the poor Dalits either have to wait for a long time to fetch water or are often beaten while fetching water from the public water sources by high caste people

Bhattachan (2007:14) adds, the denial to enter into houses, eating, drinking and sitting together with so called ‘higher caste’ is still rampant in rural Nepalese society. It is socially disproved and Dalit are mentally and physically abused if they venture to do so.

2.1.4 Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM)

The Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) is developed by Rani Parker in collaboration with development practitioners working for a Middle Eastern NGO. Gender Analysis is the systematic examination of the roles, relationships and processes between women and men in all societies focusing on imbalance in power, wealth and workload (EC, 1998). Gender analysis is a systematic way of exploring how gender affects our activities and our participations in our communities and our families. In development programmes, gender analysis involves taking a close look at the work that men and women do, the time in which they have to do their work, the amount of money, resources such as land, cattle etc. they have and their control over it. The Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) is a tool to identify how a particular development intervention affects women and men it is used to analyse the effect of gender on project design. It employs community based approach / techniques to elicit and analyse gender differences and to challenge a community’s assumption about gender. It can be used for planning, for making changes during a project and for monitoring and evaluation. Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) includes not only women but men as one of its four categories of analysis and can therefore be used for projects which target men. Gender analysis cannot promote transformation unless it is carried out by the people being analysed (Parker, 1993:2).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This research is based on the conceptual framework outlined in Fig.1. The framework follows the theory propounded by Moser, 1993 on Gender Triple Roles of men and women linked with Gender Analytical Matrix (GAM) of Rani Parker (1994). Gender triple roles of Dalit women and men who are involved in seed cultivation through Vegetable Seed Production Project (VSP) was linked with the framework. Access and Control situation was also tied up in the framework but the analysis on it using Harvard Analysis tool has not been done due to the time constraints and limitations. During the study, cultural norms and values of Dalit farmers were added on the cultural part of GAM tool. GAM tool was suitable and easy to use in the community level to analyse the impact of the project on related with men and women. Viewing the time constraints and scoping and limitation of the study, GAM tool was used to see and analyse the roles of women and women only rather than to see the households and communities in total.

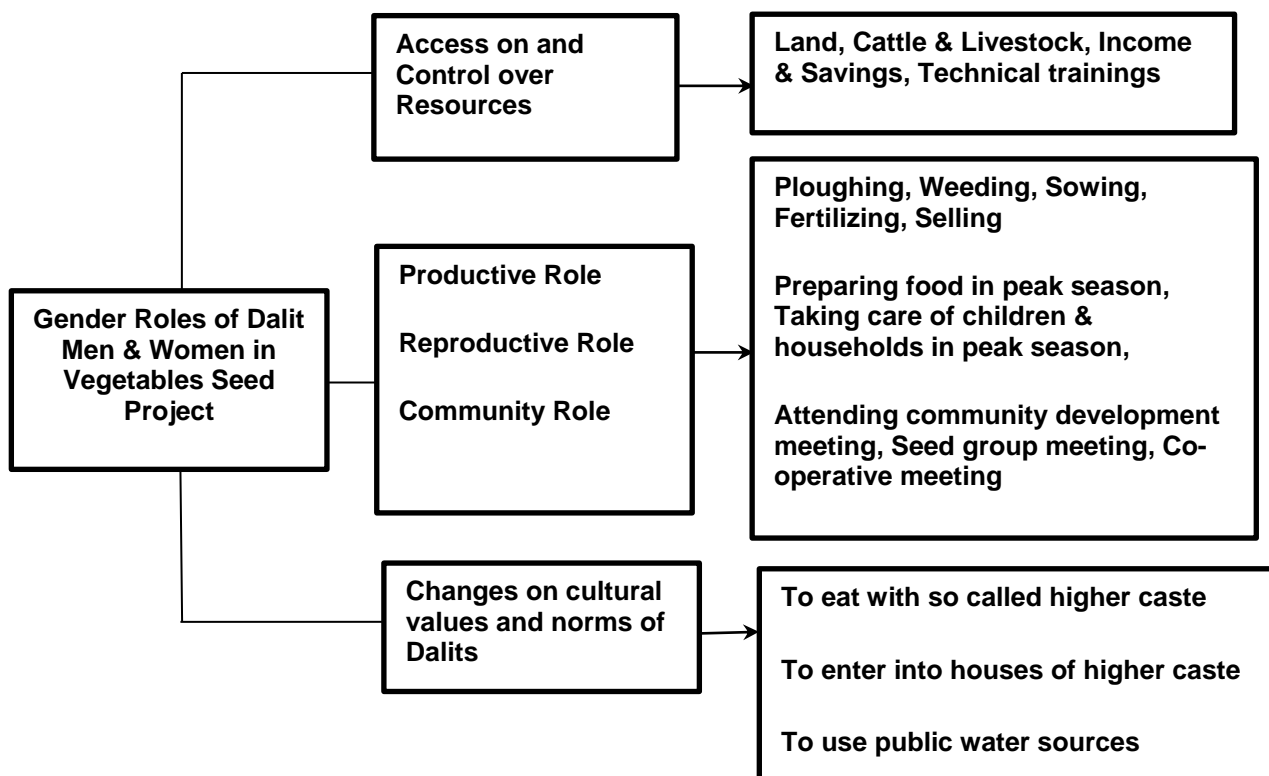


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Adapted from Moser, (1993) and Parker, (1994)

CHAPTER-3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This chapter deals with research approaches and methods adopted in this study. The main focus of this research is on participatory gender analysis. The study was basically quantitative however, it employs applied qualitative approach. The research has been linked with the qualitative data as per the relevance of the given case where qualitative data are supplemented as per the relevance giving cases. Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) is used to discuss at Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) about the role of women, men and the effect on households in terms of labour, time and resources. The study area is briefed in the beginning of the chapter below. The data collection procedure and data analysis techniques are also described at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Study Area

Surkhet district is one of the most potential districts for seed production as well as the district has huge population of Dalit compared to other districts of the Project (CEAPRED,2009). It is bordering with Jajarkot, Dailekh and Achham, which are more vulnerable in the context of food security due to rampant poverty compared to other working districts of the Project (CEAPRED, 2009). During frequent visit at the district as a field officer, the researcher found out those poor migrants from Rukum and Jajarkot district as well as from Karnali Zone (food deficit and very remote zone of Nepal) migrates for better option for their livelihoods.

The selected VDC namely “Mehelkuna” is also adjoining VDC with Jajarkot and Rukum (Origin points of Maoist Armed Conflict in Nepal, 1990s), Salyan districts. The ratio of Dalits migrants from Rukum and Jajarkot is higher in Mehelkuna VDC. The Dalit was migrated to Mehelkuna in 1970s due to the poverty and barren rocky land searching for better livelihood options in Surkhet (source: oral version of one of the elderly Dalit during field visit). Having this preliminary information, researcher gained further interest to select this area for the study.



Fig.2 Map of Study District, Surkhet

Source: Digital Himalaya, 2012

Out of 11 hilly districts of the project implemented, Surkhet is accessible to reach for short term study compared to other remote districts in Nepal due to geographical difficulty and the

transportation facility. Though, Surkhet also represents the remoteness due to its geographical structures to reach VDCs and from the big numbers of migrants' population from remote and conflict affected districts. Since 2004, Surkhet is one of the major districts for project implementation. Secondly, it is the regional headquarters of Mid-western region and affected by a decade long conflict. The population of Dalits are higher (District Profile, 2001) but it was reported by UNDP (UNDP, 2009) that the caste based discrimination is rampant in Surkhet. Therefore, researcher selected this district in terms of accessibility, higher population of Dalit, conflict affected, widespread caste discrimination as well as to know about migrants Dalit for this study.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher explained the overall objective and content of the study to Project Team Leader and the Executive Director to her organisation. After getting the support letter and the approval to stay at village among Dalit farmers, the researcher travelled to Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet District of Mid-Western Region.

Following the meeting and discussion with Surkhet District team of the Project, the researcher was provided a list of farmers of Mehelkuna VDC. The respondents' were chosen purposively (Annex-II) viewing those respondents must be Dalits only. In Mehelkuna VDC, the project selected 182 households of mixed caste (Brahmin, Chetri, Thakuri, Janajatis and Dalit) for seed production.³⁰ Dalits respondent were selected randomly out of 62 Dalit households in total and divided into two equal groups of men and women farmers who could represent as household heads, primary beneficiaries of the Vegetable Seed Project. The respondents constituted 50 % of the total households at the cluster of the Project.

With the help of the former social mobilizer, researcher collected the data through door to door visit in the village. One-to-One interview was taken and questionnaire was used to get primary data. The research questionnaire is presented in Annex-I. Questionnaire was filled by researcher herself and interview was taken using open ended questions so that the information could obstruct totally. Researcher posed the questions to the interviewee using the checklists (Annex-I) and answers were recorded using audio recorder with taking permission from the interviewees. Before using the voice recorder, consent was taken from the respondents to trace their voices in term of information collection which would be convenient to verify the answers. During the interview and filling up questionnaire, ethical considerations were taken so that the information given to the researcher along with their identities will be kept confidential.

Researcher stayed in Dalit farmers' house during the study. Therefore the objective of the research was explained very well to elderly and leader farmers of the settlements so that it could be conveyed to rest of family members and in neighbourhood. Secondary data such as beneficiaries' demographic figures, seed production details and base line study data were collected from the Project central and district offices. Likewise district profiles of study area were collected from District Development Committee (DDC), Surkhet. The main sources of secondary data were project reports, journals, agriculture text books, gender analytical reports and working papers.

3.3.1 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGD was one of the parts of data collection. The overall gender analysis of Dalit men and women as well as the time spent for seed production, who works harder (labour contribution) and for longer period (time spent), who has what and who controls etc. were the main points for group discussion. Therefore, women and men were gathered for Focus Group Discussion called orally by the former social mobiliser of the Project. Only two FGDs were

held due to the constraints of time of farmers. Because of the socio-cultural constraints and societal norms, women were gathered separately for group discussion and men were kept separate though both groups were not possible to gather at the same time and place. The discussion time were fixed as per the convenience of respondents and conducted using Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) and checklist included access and control over resources and benefit received from seed production. Discussions were held with the help of former social mobilizer. The flip-chart, marker pen, audio recorder and note book were used to write the discussion points and answer perceived from the respondents. Researcher was performing a role of the moderator while conducting FGD (Focus Group Discussion).

3.3.2 Observation

Observation was also the part of data collection. Researcher's employment as a former staff in the Project helped and provided her a chance to be a close observer to the life and activities of the farmers of the research study area as an insider. Observation was done while talking, sitting at the FGDs, walking around the study and also living at the same village. The prominence of caste discrimination, socio-cultural norms and values among Dalits and non-Dalits(higher castes), the social and economic activities, roles of men and women in households and in income generation, livestock, land etc. were observed. Researcher tried to triangulate the information by doing informal conversation with other member of households and neighbours adjoined to the respondents.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

The data gathered through interview, questionnaire survey, Focus Group Discussion (FDG) and observation was first tabulated using excel-sheet tables. The data was then summarised and aggregated according to the concept presented in the conceptual framework (Fig.1) using simple excel sheet for further analysis. The descriptive statistics like charts, tables and graphs has been used for analysis and meaningful presentation. The quantitative data were presented in a descriptive way using chart, graphs and table where qualitative data were analysed and interpreted based on the facts and findings gathered and presented in line with the words abstracted from the respondents own verbs and collected footages accordingly. GAM matrix (Annex-III) was used for analysing the overall roles between men and women in terms of their time spent for seed production, labour contribution and changes experienced in their culture.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

The researcher realized and faced some limitations during the study. During the pre-test of the survey questionnaire, it was found difficult to know about the gender needs which are not so relevant for the training purpose rather than to know the resources accessibility and control management.

Secondly, need assessment report and the base line data related to farmers were not available to check the previous conditions. Therefore researcher was forced to prioritize the concerned issue in survey questionnaire. The farmers/respondents were unavailable in the peak season of rice plantation in rural areas in a given time frame. Though the Dalit clusters were scattered and mixed with other caste groups, it was also a challenge to find Dalits households within a short walking distance. To overcome this problem, researcher stayed in the same cluster during data collection period where the study/research took place hence, it was easy for the researcher to have a door to door visit and one to one interview. Likewise, it

was also a difficult task to gather farmers for FGD due to the labour exchange system (*Perma*)⁶ from each households of the village for rice plantation. The other limitation was the time duration for data collection. It took more than it was expected because of respondent farmers were busy in rice plantation and it was necessary to wait for their convenience for further data collection.

This research thesis is prepared on the basis of data collected directly from the Project beneficiaries/respondents through questionnaire, interview and FGDs guided by checklists. Therefore, reliability of data depends on the respondents. To minimise the biases and error, the data were triangulated with other members of respondent households, neighbours and the district Project staff.

Researcher was also a former project staff and a field worker therefore farmers also have asked that the study was a part of project monitoring and they therefore farmers tried to exaggerate information. In the meantime, the study objective and purpose of the researcher for the study at the Dalits cluster were again briefed. It was not a cause for bias but a statement about environment of research cluster, the expected support from farmers on getting reliable information and their time even in a peak of plantation.

The used literature in the context of Nepalese Agriculture were developed in the decade of 1970s after the involvement of International non-governmental organization, national organization when then His Majesty Government of Nepal now the Government of Nepal declared the Fifth Year Plan (1975-1980) which states the major three objectives: modernization in Agriculture and increase production goods for people needs and for poverty reduction (Adhikary, 2011). Therefore many books and literatures were published during this period till 2000. Therefore, researcher used some of these literatures and books of that period though researcher also used the recent publication whereas possible.

Above all, it is a micro-level study and so it may not be generalized at macro-level.

⁶ Perma is an exchange of labor in rural community of Nepal. It is a system where each family shares one's labor without any remuneration with another family while they need it. In return, the second family comes to work for the first family in the same way that is without any remuneration to work.

CHAPTER- 4 VEGETABLE SEED PROJECT IN SURKHET

In this chapter, researcher explained the Project Implemented district selected as study area, Project's modality and its characteristics including selection criteria of a district adopted by the Project. The desk study was carried out by Project documents, reports and researcher's observation during study and her working experiences as an employee in the Project.

4.1 About Surkhet

The research was done in Surkhet district of Nepal which is situated in Bheri Zone in the Mid-Western Region of Nepal. Surkhet is also known as Regional Headquarter of Mid-Western Region of Nepal. The geographic location of the district is at 28°36'North latitude, 81°36'East longitude. Surkhet district has 51 VDCs and 1 municipality and 3 parliamentary constituencies. The total area of the district is 2451 sq.km and elevation range from 198 meters to 2367 meters from sea level. Birendranagar is the district headquarters. The total population of the district is 288,527; among them 142817 are men whereas 145710 are women.

Population⁷ of hilly Dalit is 56439; Dalit men are 22,466 and Dalit women are 28,972. The total households are 54,047. The major livelihoods option of the population is agriculture. The economically active population in agriculture are 58,331. The agriculture wage for men is NRS.125/day and for women is NRS. 75/ day. The secondary option is remittance earned by foreign employment in Gulf countries or seasonal labour in India. Surkhet district is fertile and suitable for seed cultivation average farm size of 0.54 ha, 24.26 % irrigated land and out of which 2395 ha is used for vegetable production with 29325 Metric Ton (MT) productions annually. Vegetable Seed Production Project is working for 14 VDCs out of 51 VDCs in Surkhet district.



Fig. 3 Map of Surkhet showing Mehelkuna VDC (study area)

Source: Digital Himalayas, 2012

⁷ Due to the decade long armed conflict (Janayudha: People's war 1996-2006), most of men and boys flew from their home. It is often seen that in case of some skirmishes, males of the local areas would be the yam between boulders in the hands of Maoist armed antigovernment forces and from the governmental forces. Therefore it seems an incredible ration of male female proportion of the population. At the same time the resident of the home did not inform the census enumerator that their male family members were out from the home in search of job and to be safe from Maoist rebels' and governmental forces.

4.2 Characteristics of the Project

Promotion of Vegetables Seed for Poverty Reduction Project (2004-2006) (PVSPR) implemented by CEAPRED involving 3200 households in five conflicts affected districts of Far, Mid-Western and Central development regions of Nepal respectively. The main objective of the project was to promote vegetables seed for poverty reduction in geographically excluded and conflict affected districts. Mainly the disadvantaged households from remote hilly areas were targeted to provide income opportunities through vegetable seed production and marketing. PVSPR-II (2007-2010) continued by extending in 6 hilly districts involving 6514 households from Disadvantaged Groups (DAGs) and Smallholder⁸ farmers. PVSVPRII was also aimed to increase the income to improve food security and livelihood status of the targeted households. Apart from income generation from vegetable seed production and food security the immediate impact of this Phase was measured in terms of local institution buildings by establishing seed producers group and cooperatives.

The current phase VSP-III has covered 16 districts, 128 VDCs and one municipality. It has set a target of producing 800 MT seeds, involving 567 groups comprised of 12431 households among which, 7709 (60.41%) households are poor and disadvantaged households and 7511 (60.42 %) households represented by women member's involvement in seed production and marketing. Socially, DAGs were involved to participate in seed cooperatives and seed groups to make the Project inclusive by caste and gender. Women were considered primary beneficiaries as well as Dalit were highly prioritized in the Project. Small irrigation plants like plastic ponds, sprinkle, treadles pumps were also introduced to support vegetable seed producing farmers. Likewise, vegetables seed subsidies and revolving funds were provided to those farmers who were identified as DAGs as well as having minimum vegetables production per seasons (<NRS 3000/per season; CEAPRED, 2010).

Besides seed production and marketing, the Project is conducting social mobilization activities to include the targeted household into seed groups as a part to form the seed cooperatives. The Project is emphasizing on DAG's representation and leadership at seed groups and cooperatives along with technical trainings for seed producers. Since 2004 till 2011, intervention through various activities like seed production technical trainings to farmers, cooperative establishment, linking value chain approach in marketing, providing coach and subsidies to community based seed growers (small house holders). However, the Project has mainly focused on socio-economic dimension of rural development, its emphasis lies on poverty reduction through the vegetable seed production and linking supply chain with seed cooperatives to the market is an example.

Other side of the Project is to create an environment to include the women and DAGs through social mobilization processes. The efforts to include women are manifested by forming the seed groups, giving trainings to the members of the seed groups and empowering the DAGs and women to take leadership in seed groups and cooperatives. During the study, it was observed that women and men both were participating in the trainings which show that the Project is providing equal opportunity to men and women. Due to this fact, researcher observed that opportunities for women were centred at the level of participation whereas inclusions of DAGs, especially for Dalit, the dimension of the socio-culture were still left behind. It was found during the study that the economic growths of the beneficiaries were highly emphasized by the Project as well as the Project staff in the field. The changes and impacts were measured by the total production of vegetables seed, sold

⁸ Smallholders are those who have land holding size less than 0.5ha in the hill(GoN Criteria)

CHAPTER-5 CASTE & GENDER ISSUES IN VSP PROJECT

5.1 About Mehelkuna VDC

Mehelkuna VDC has an area of 29sq.Km located at 4hrs walking distance from Birendranagar, the district headquarters of Surkhet. The village is a settlement with a majority of Dalit population, migrated from adjoining districts in 1970s and settled down mixing up with namely Brahmin, Chetri and Thakuri caste. The scattered and traditional houses, mostly made up of by wood, mud, and brick and thatched with two stories, adjoining with farm and field are seen in the village.



Fig. 5 View of Mehelkuna VDC, Surkhet

Adjoining with Jajarkot, Rukum (Food insecure districts called by UNDP/FAO in 1980s and the origin point of Maoist Armed

Source: Researcher, 2012

Conflict in Nepal, 1990s) and Salyan district, the ratio of Dalit migrants from these districts are higher. The literary rate of this VDC is 59% with male 69% and female 50%. However, most of the middle and old age people are illiterate. Almost all of the children go to school and many youth have passed school leaving certificate i.e. grade 10.

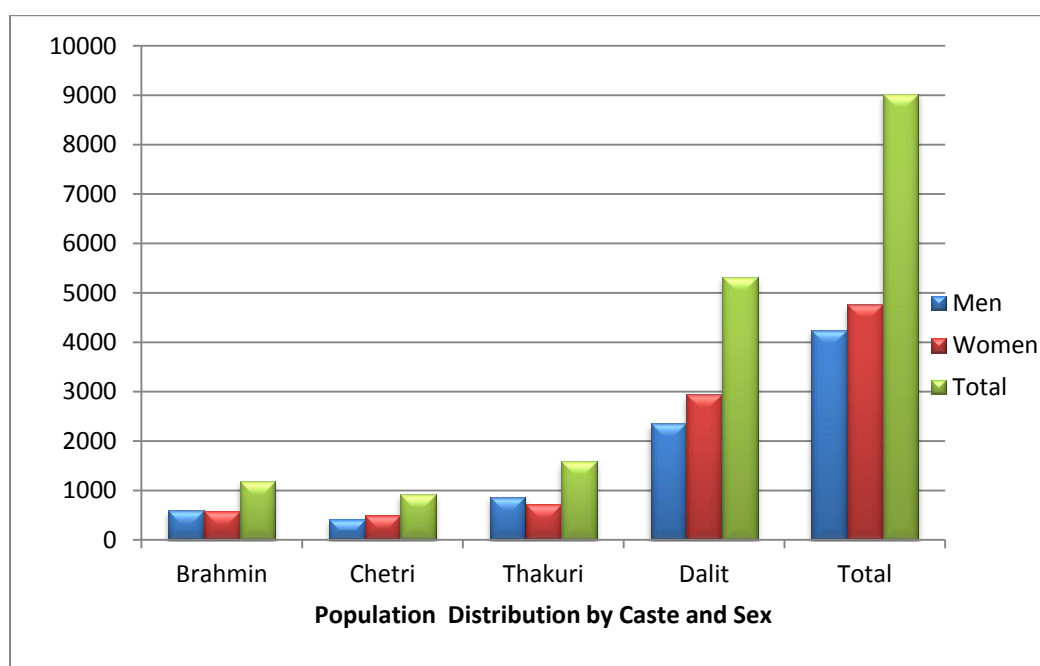
5.1.1 Demographic characteristic of Mehelkuna VDC

The demographic characteristics give the information about population density, family size, and population distribution employment pattern and wealth status.

Population

The population of the VDC according to the village profile (VDC Profile, 2001) is 9030, 4259 males and female 4771. Mehelkuna VDC has 9 wards (the smallest politico-administrative unit in Nepal). Among them 30 households were selected from 2, 6, and 9 ward numbers. Due to the majority of Dalit population, selected by the Project for launching its programme, the Project has identified 1795 households only for seed production in total for Surkhet district. 182 HHs are as beneficiary for the Project from Mehelkuna VDC and Out of 62 HHs of Dalits, 17 Dalit men and 45 Dalit women are now involved in seed production. The figure below (Fig.6) shows that Dalits were in majority in population compared to Thakuris who were also the second largest population than Brahmins and Chetris.

Fig. 6 Population Distribution by Caste & Sex

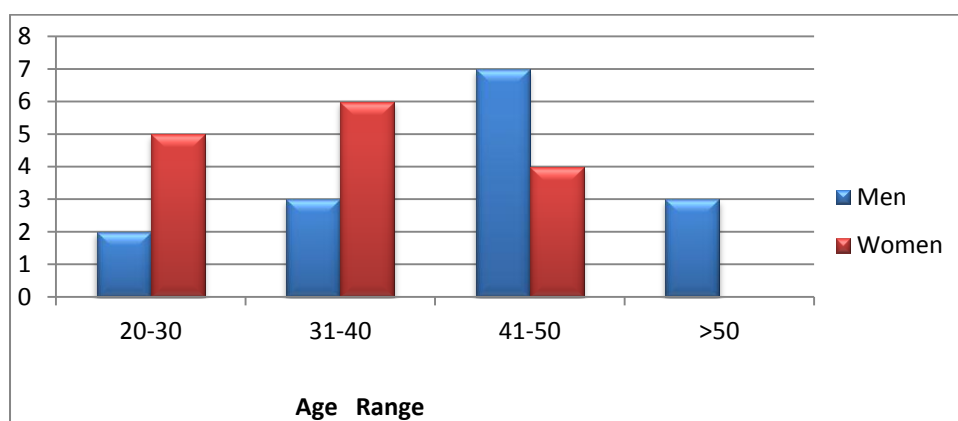


Source: VDC Profile, 2001

5.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Out of 30 Dalit respondents, 23 were from one sub caste namely *Kami*, also known as *Bishwokarma*, *B.K* in short. Likewise 7 respondents were from another sub-caste namely *Damai* known as *Pariyar*. 10 men and 13 women and 10 men were *Kami* whereas 2 women and 3 men were *Damai*. The age variations, figure below (Fig.7) of the respondents are ranging from 20-50 years. Due to the off farm job and labour migration to India or district headquarters, only 3 men were found age below 30 whereas 3 men were also involved in seed production, aged above 50. It was also seen in general that, most of the younger generation especially men aged below 30 has a trend to go for off-farm job rather do on farm like seed production in the study area. Comparing with this, women aged below 30 were found active in seed production.

Fig. 7 Demographic Characteristics of respondents

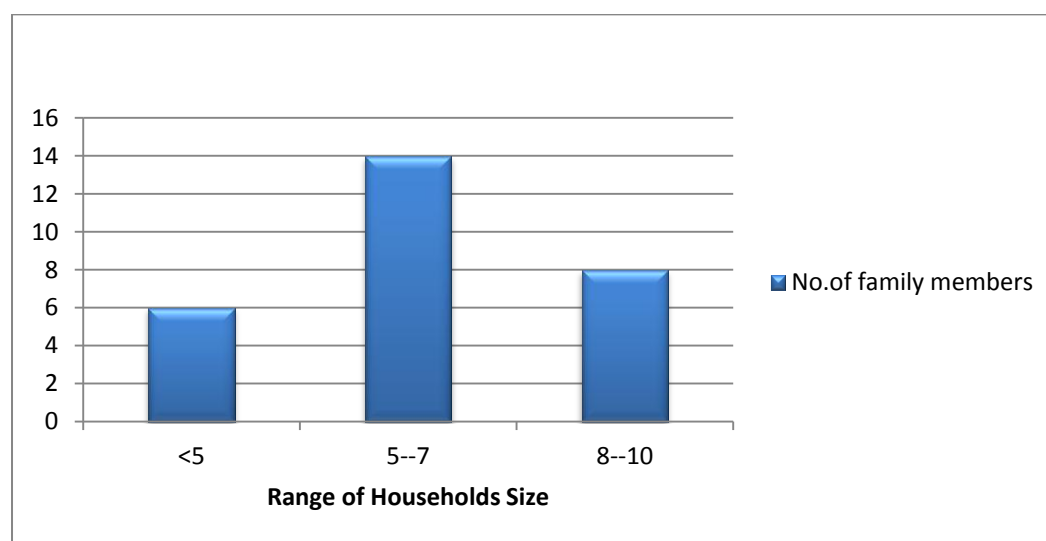


n=30, women=15, men=15

5.1.3 Household size of the respondent

Household sizes determine the availability of labour input in the agriculture farm family. The average household size is 7.75 (CEAPRED, 2009). However, the average household sizes of the respondents found 6. Even though the figure below (Fig.8) shows that, 14 respondents had 5-7 members in the family whereas 6 respondents consisted of small household size, i.e. members below 5.

Fig. 8 Household size of the respondent



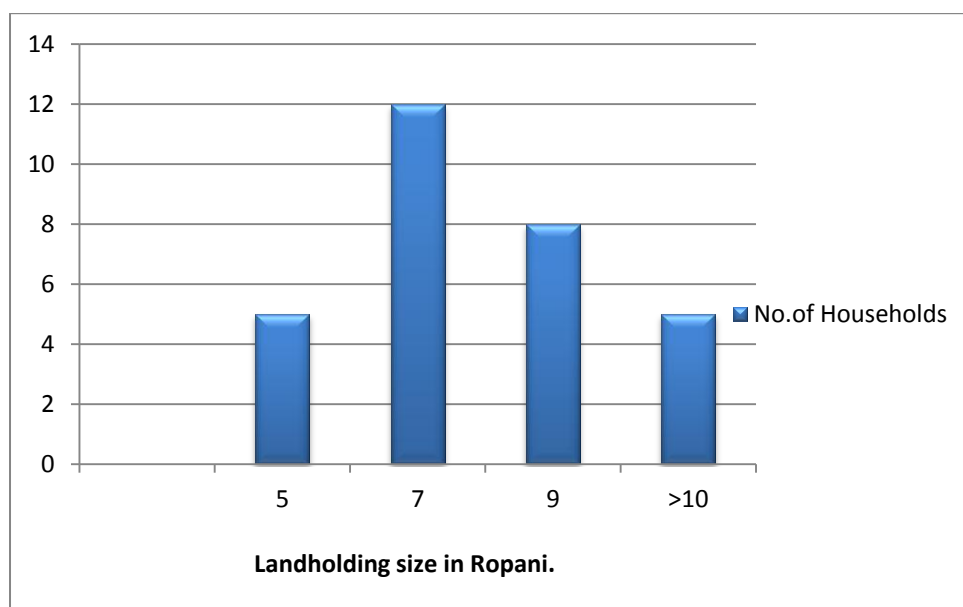
n=30

5.1.4 Landholding⁹ and wealth status of the respondents

The average farm size of the study area was 14 Ropani. In the survey, 5 families had 5 ropani. 12 families had 7 Ropani, 8 families have 9 Ropani land. 5 families have >10 Ropani land. The figure below (Fig.9) only showed the total land holdings size along with both **Khet** and **Bari**. “Bari” is semi irrigated upland where vegetables are cultivated. The low lands known as “khet” is fertile irrigated lands are used for paddy and wheat. The respondents are the primary targeted beneficiaries therefore they fall under the category of smallholders according to the project criteria due to less land holdings. Along with the landholdings, the 24 respondents also had bullocks for ploughing and for manure. 6 respondents had taken bullocks in lease from their neighbours for ploughing. 17 respondents were rearing chickens and goat whereas 7 respondents had only goats likewise 6 had chickens.

⁹ About 17% of the total land area of Nepal is agricultural land. The per capita from landholding is 0.14 ha. Almost half of the landholdings are of less than 0.5ha size and about 70% of land holdings are less than 1.0 ha in size. Hill covers 63% area in total and 40% are for agriculture (CBS, 2002). The “Ropani” is a unit of measurement of area of land commonly used in hills of Nepal. The measurement of about 1 Ropani=500 sq.m=0.05ha.

Fig. 9 Landholding of the respondents



n=30

5.2 Status of Dalit Farmers in Vegetable Seed Production

The major focus of this research is to see the status of women and men farmers who are involved in commercial vegetable seed farming. Vegetable seeds are giving three times more income compared to other crops (CEAPRED, 2010). Vegetable seeds are taken as cash crops. It was a difficulty to make a distinction between vegetable seed crops and other crops in practice though the research is only confined to study vegetable seed production and gender roles and issues on it. Therefore, the study undertook to see only vegetables seed (cash crops) plots compared with cereal crops.

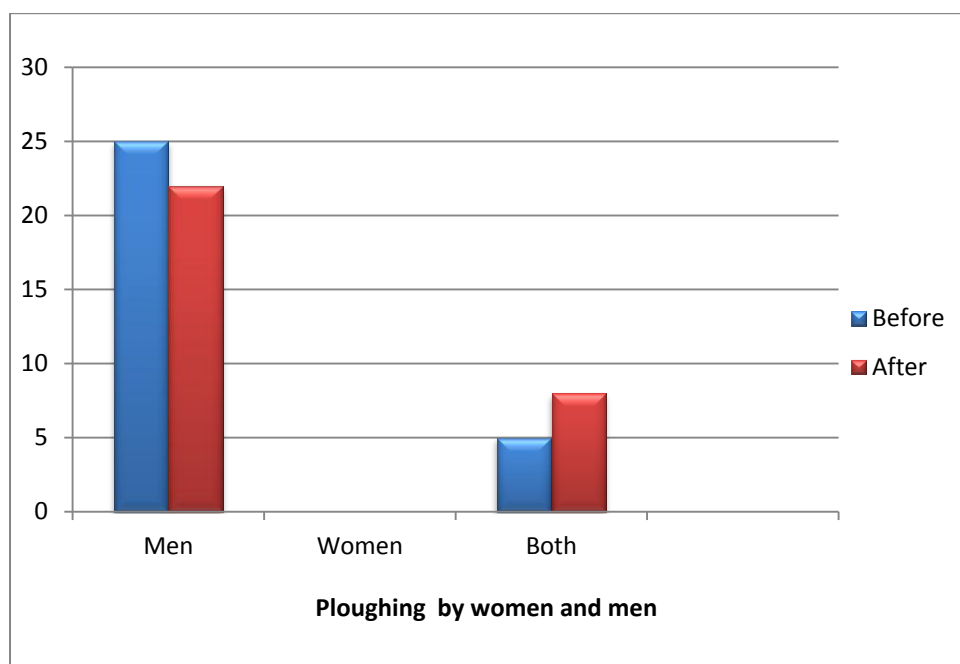
5.2.1 Productive Roles

Ploughing

Ploughing is the first step which demands the labour intensive work. Figure below (Fig.10), shows that the Project led to a small change in the ploughing: instead of 5 households where both the man and the women prepared the plot, after project intervention this has increased to 8.

25 men were involved in ploughing while 5 women helped their husbands using their hoe during ploughing before the commercial vegetable seed production. There were no households where women were solely responsible for the ploughing activities as it is believed that ploughing is the job of men. But under ploughing, hoeing and controlling bullock is the task of men while labelling the field using spade is generally done by women. But the data taken after the Project intervention showed that 22 men farmers are engaged in ploughing vegetable seed fields, while 8 HHs have shared task. However, the participation level of women in ploughing has been increase by helping their male counterparts and hoeing the field. It was observed that women whose men were out of the village use to hire labour for ploughing seed fields.

Fig. 10 Ploughing of cultivating land by respondents



n=30, women=15, men=15

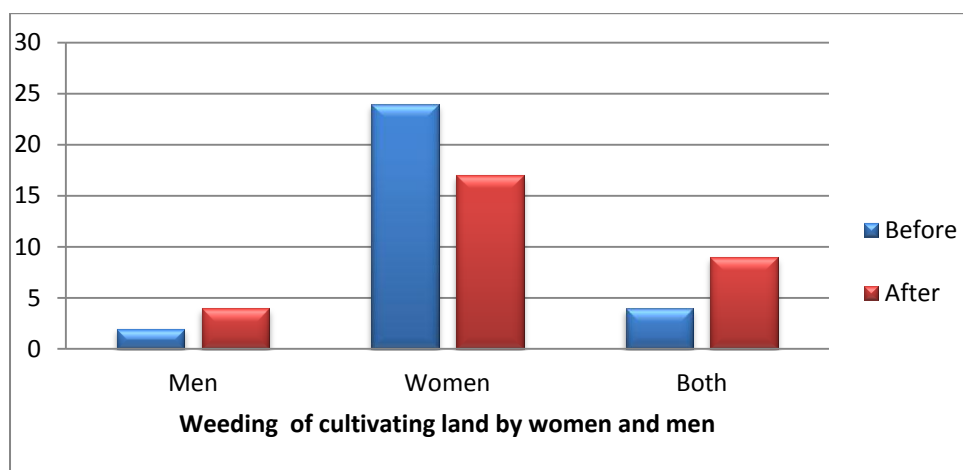
Box-1

Fulmaya Kami (pseudo name), age 29 is seed producer and treasurer of seed group, of the project residing in ward no. 9, Mehelkuna VDC. She is Hindu and is very much devoted to her culture, values and norms that she was grown up with. But against her tradition she is now ploughing her field. When asked why she is doing that, she replied, “After my husband came back from India, his health deteriorates and I need to help him to plough the field. We are using bullocks so if I won’t help who will support my husband? I can’t allow my 3 children and old mother-in-law suffers from hunger by just following the culture and listening the backbiting of neighbours. I know no one will come to help me when I am in problems. This project also encourages me to work as well.

Weeding

The research showed that 24 HHs have women solely involved in weeding and 4 HHs shared the task and 2 HHs have men solely involved in weeding. After the intervention of the Project, sharing of tasks among men and women has been increased to 9 realizing that vegetables seed crops need more care than cereal crops, 4 HHs have men solely doing weeding for seed plots and 17 HHs have both women and men’s participation. It was very clear to study that the involvement of men to weed seeds plots was not only for sharing jobs with their women counterparts but also putting their stake over the cash crops compared to other crops. Presence of men in weeding is very low for other crops rather than for cash crops shown in figure below (Fig.11).

Fig. 11 Weeding of cultivating land by respondents

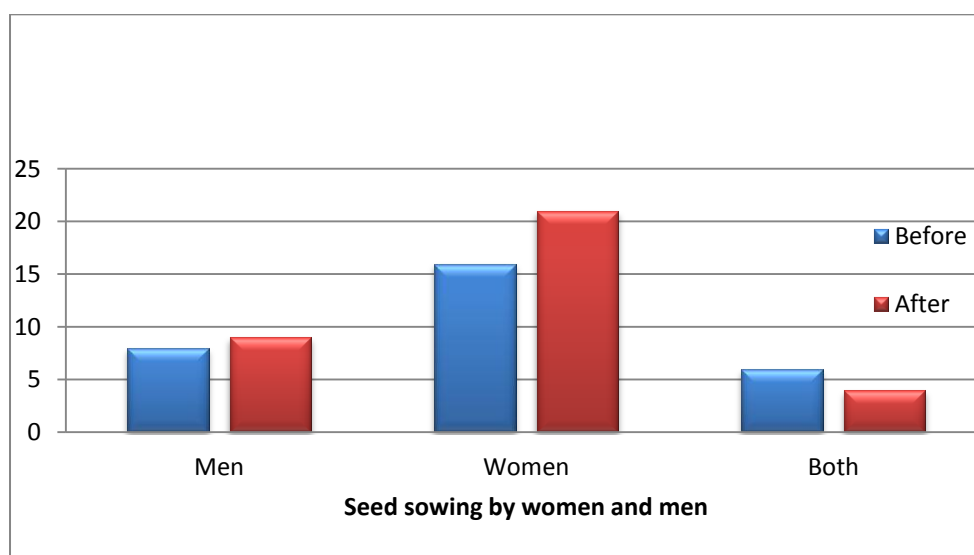


n=30, women=15, men=15

Sowing

Out of 30 selected HHs, 16 HHs have women fully responsible for sowing while 8 HHs have men and 6 HHs do sowing together for the cereal crops before. But after the intervention of the project where the farmers are taught on commercial seed production of vegetables, 21 women were involved in vegetable seed sowing practices where 9 HHs have shared tasks and in 4 HHs men do sowing by themselves. Men and women also shared their labour together. The least number of men, 4 are involving in vegetables seed sowing. Women are given high priority to get sowing training by the Project criteria to maximize the participation of women in seed production therefore men were excluded to get opportunity. In fact women respondents told researcher that their compulsory participation in sowing exposed them to unequal labour sharing to men. Due to the technical trainings, it became compulsion to women for sowing at vegetables plots (Fig.12)

Fig.12 Sowing by respondents

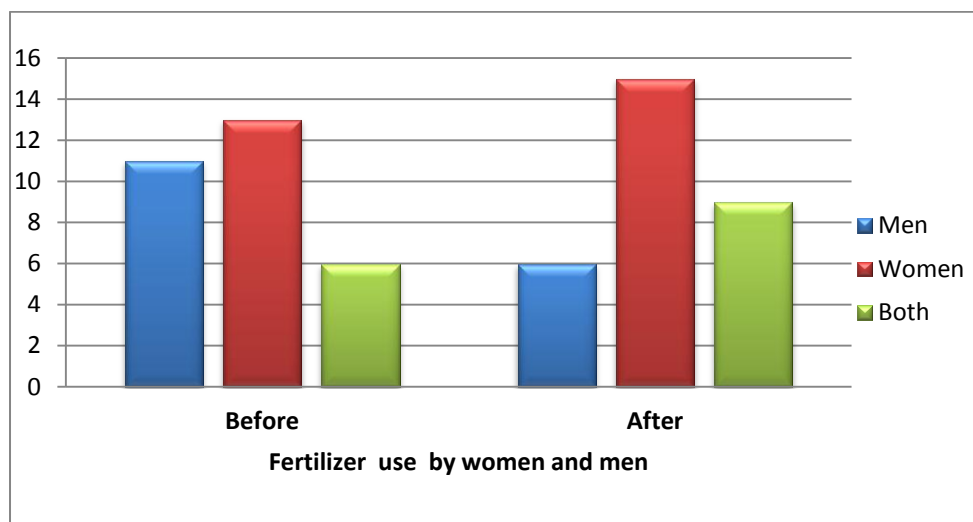


n=30, women=15, men=15

Fertilizer application

The total surveyed households, 13 HHs have women's involvement in fertilizer application while 11 HHs have men's involvement and 6 have shared division of work before for cereal crops. The research found that women's involvement in fertilizer application for vegetables seed plots has increased to 15 while male decreased to 6 and participation of men and women has been increased to 9 because the Project has targeted women for training on use of bio-pesticides and compost making and so their role has been increased in fertilizer application in vegetables seed production (Fig.13).

Fig. 13 Fertilizer application by respondents

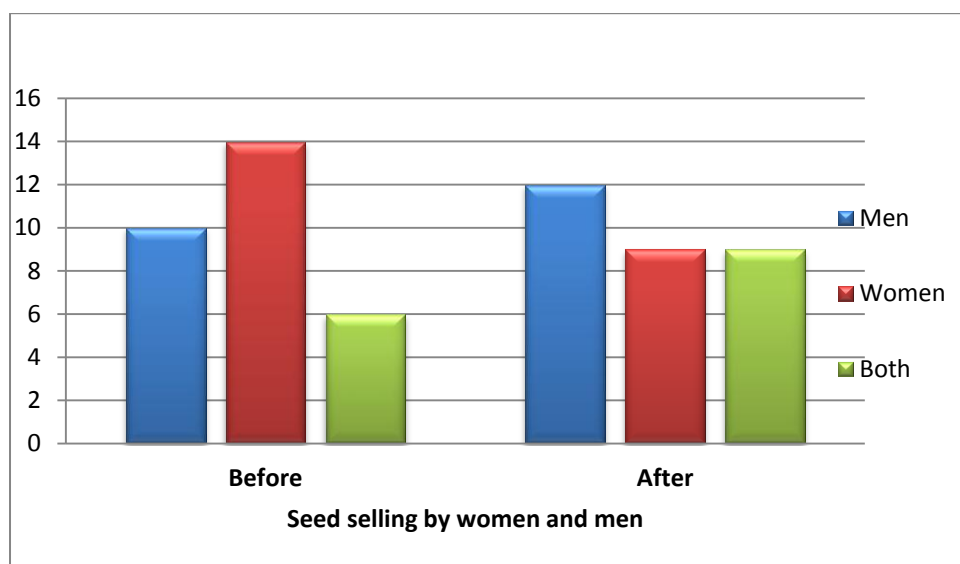


n=30, women=15, men=15

Selling

Seed cooperatives established by the farmers sell the seed produced for commercial as well as to household consumption. So, when men migrate in search of seasonal job, women take the responsibility of selling the seeds in cooperatives. The figure below (Fig.14) showed that 14 women and 10 men were involved in selling cereal crops and 6 are through both as per their time. But the study report showed that the involvement of men has been increased 12 with a decrease in women by 9 and work of both men and women has been again increased by 9 while selling commercial vegetables seed. It showed that the sole job of women selling crops, especially commercial crops is in declining stage as they are getting economically sustained but men's interest to involve in seed selling and getting income in hand by the vegetable seed increased.

Fig.14 Seed selling by respondents



n=30, women=15, men=15

Box- 2

Suresh Pariyar (pseudo name), age 35, Mehelkuna VDC

.....I was working in India as a migrant worker since 8 years. Last year, when I returned from India, I saw that my wife is participating in one of the seed production training. I didn't pay much attention on the detail of the training as there were always stuffs like this going in the village through NGOs. This year when I returned, I saw that my wife was producing vegetable seeds and surprisingly my parents were also supporting her. I was amazed to see the fresh and green vegetables in the field. I was surprised to hear that the cooperative was ready to pay the seeds at the earliest. I made up my mind to work with my wife than to work in India. Working in India was not a satisfactory and pleasant choice for me as we have to suffer from too many hurdles on the borders of India-Nepal. Not only that we have to stay far from our home, family, children with unsafe life, less wages, get prone to sexual diseases like HIV/AIDs. I am happy with my decision as I am getting good income from seed production and above all, I don't need the help of phone to hear my kids calling me BABA (father).

5.2.2 Reproductive Roles

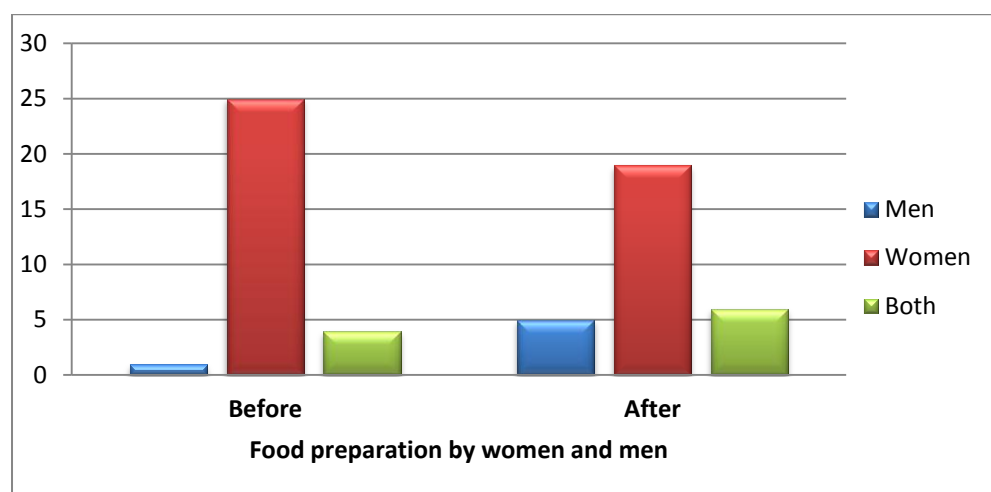
Cooking for household's members and provisional day time food for agricultural labourer was the common practice in the Nepalese community as well as in research area. Cooking and taking care of households and children in peak seasons work plantation and harvesting was mentioned as reproductive role.

Food Preparation

Out of 30 surveyed households, 25 HHs have women solely responsible for cooking foods during peak seasons while in 4 HHs men also took part and only in 1 HH men leads in cooking during peak season (Fig.15) below). Due to cultural norms, men hesitate to say openly that they support their wives in cooking during peak seasons. But men were engaged

extensively in side jobs like marketing the stuffs, fetching water etc. The participatory approach taken by the Project and the mutual interest of both men and women in vegetable seed production has influenced men/women to work together and helping each other. Now 5 HHs men are involved in food preparation and take care of children during peak season .19 women are still doing this job where as 6 HHs women and men both sharing this job.

Fig.15 Food preparation by respondents in peak season

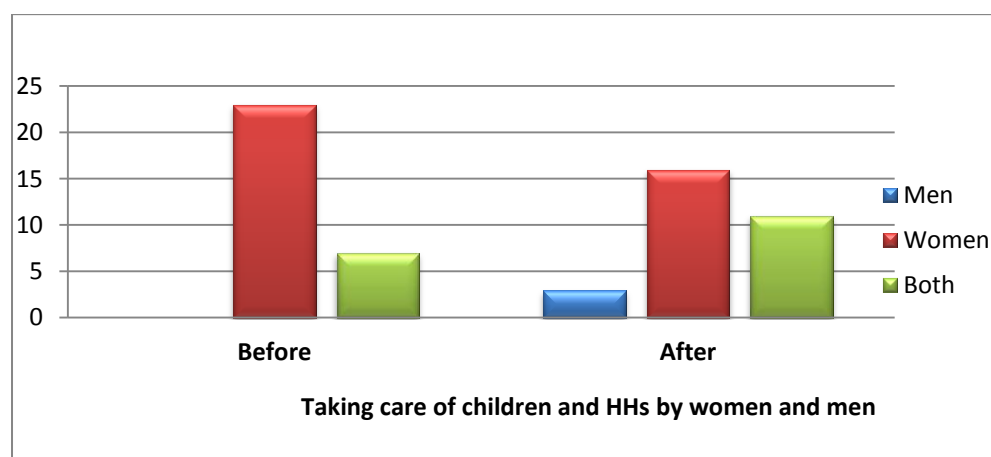


n=30, women=15, men=15

Taking care of children and households

23 HHs' women were involved for caring/rearing job. 7 HHs do this work together before. It is because, during the sowing and harvesting time, women have several roles to do and so those men who acknowledge women's job support them. It was found that men were reluctant to take care of children. The recent study has shown(Fig.16) some progress on this as only 16 women are solely involved in rearing/caring children and households, 11 were doing the task together and surprisingly 3 men has started doing this task solely. However, the changes on roles seen due to the women who are now more engaged in other activities of vegetables seed production and need to attend the group meetings as well.

Fig.16 Taking care of children and households by respondents



n=30, women=15, men=15

5.2.3 Community Roles

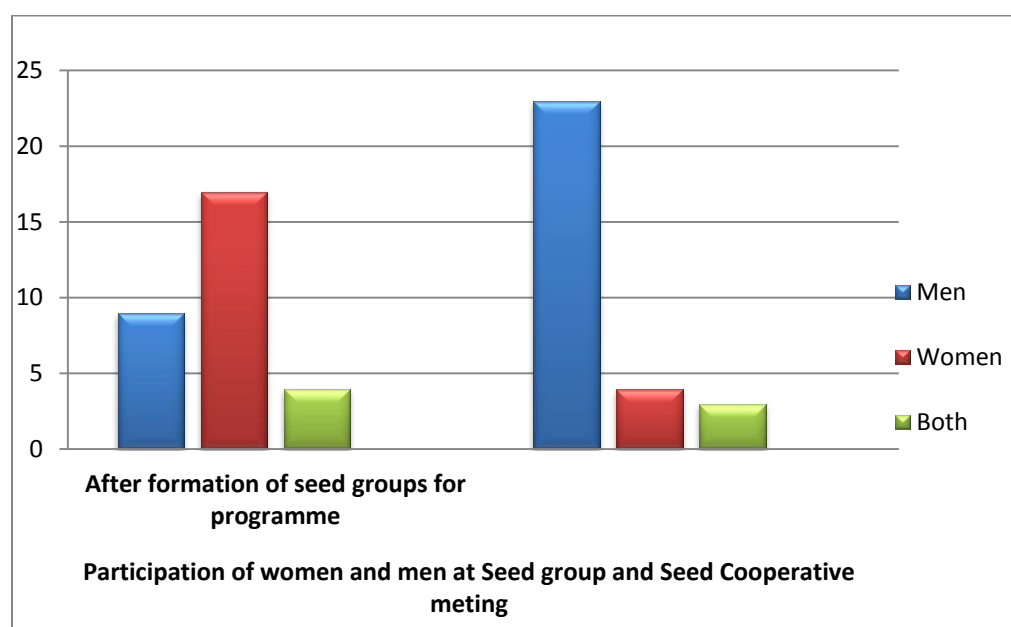
Participation at community, group and cooperative meeting by men and women

This research found that community roles include the meeting attended by Dalit men and women in Community Development at the cluster. Community Development referred as for rural reconstruction of school, bridge, market shed, and collection centre for vegetables.

It was also observed that the meeting is organized at seed producers group and seed cooperative. Seed producer's group meeting is held once a month at the beneficiary's house in rotation basis that are situated at the cluster. Sometimes it was held at public place like school, health-post in non-official days like Saturdays or at the open grass land if situation and weather condition favour them. Seed cooperative meetings were held at the cooperative office situated at the village market about 2 hours walk from the study cluster. 21 men and 9 women used to attend the community development meeting before. The participation of men was high as they have more leisure time to attend. Now, there are 17 women and 9 men in the seed producer's group established by the Project. Similarly, 23 men and 4 women are involved in the seed cooperative.

These seed producer's groups and cooperative are equally involved in the community development meetings as well. There are division of participation and consciousness on defining their roles and responsibilities at different level have been increased due to their involvement in different types of groups. However, the participation into meetings and decision are related with prestige in community for men. For women respondents, the participation at meeting is meant for the opportunity to take part (Fig.17)

Fig.17 Respondents participation at meeting



n=30, women=15, men=15

5.3 Access to and Control over Resources

Access is defined as freedom or permission to use resources and control is power to take decision how resources to be used for production and reproduction. During FGD, this issue has been widely discussed (Table 1 below). The time (working hours of women and men farmers in production, reproduction and community roles) was measured in numbers of working hours a day in the research area.

Out of 30 respondents, 9 men accepted that women work longer period of time in a day than men. They also added that seed crops need more fertilizers and weeding than rice and maize therefore women got less time to stay at home than before. Likewise, 7 women mentioned that the time for attending meetings, seed grading and processing before sale, fertilizing and weeding as well as taking trainings made them busier than before. In line with this argument, another 8 women added that commercial production of seeds requires more attention and regular work than cereal crops like rice and maize.

The observation during the research showed that women were not homogenous groups in the study area. They were engaged in various groups even in mixed groups. Not only that their roles are different according to their position. For instance, women were mothers, mother-in-laws, wives, daughters and daughter-in-laws etc. The most farmers' families were living together in joint family following the patriarchy family system. The access and control over resources were also dominated by so called patriarchy family system.

Box-3

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....We worked like a donkey but our position in the family is always low, we work more than a man does in a day but we have no value. We have given the justification to our husbands for being late. Women do all sorts of work nowadays so the tension of men has been reduced. They play cards, gossip at tea stall, drink alcohol and beat wives if they refused to give that money which we save from household expenses. We have learned new technology, new varieties and now we are able to buy varieties of seed crops and also we know how to keep records. It takes time to write but we learn from our sons who go to school and keep records. We do so to show all accounts to husband. Yes, we feel tired to go everywhere, in a meeting, market, buy seeds and sometimes even in children's school but also getting benefits to learn new things and we are earning more than before.

Agriculture Land

The results found in FGD and one to one interview, 30 farmers told that access and control over land for cultivating substantial crops used to be done by majority of men. Only 20 % women have access but no control on land. Women have to get permission from the males or elderly at home to choose seeds varieties, crops in each season even though women are primarily responsible to provide her labour for cultivation. Only 6 women have their control to use the benefits obtained by the sale of the products in the past but at present, the number has been increased to 10. Though women are getting access and control over land, they are still not free to take decision to choose seed variety and crops even when their male

counterparts are at village. It was observed and found that the majority of men are still controlling the decision of products cultivated in the land.

Likewise the FGD done with 15 men found that 12 of them have access and control on the land where as 3 have given equal access and authority to decide on selling the products to their female counterparts.

Cattle

Almost all of the surveyed households have one or other types of cattle in their house. Out of 30 farmers, 24 men had access and control over cattle to buy, use and sell them. They kept bullocks for ploughing fields as well as cow and buffalo for milk and manure. 6 women had access and control over cattle in the past. But it has been increased to 10. Fodder, shed cleaning and management are also considered as a primary responsibility of women though men are taking initiation only if the cattle need any veterinary assistance.

Box-4

Kanchi Pariyar (pseudo name), age-31, Seed producer farmer and member in Seed group, Mehelkuna VDC

.....I live with my five children and old father father-in-laws. My husband works as a carpenter therefore he stays most of the time in Surkhet. He had now other women and prefers to stay with her in the town. We are now staying in the village. When the group was formed, I showed my interest to be part of it and after getting the permission of my father in law to use the land, I started planting vegetables in the land. I sold seeds through cooperative and also started my small savings in group. I am happy to earn by my own so that I can pay my children's fees, household expenses and able to give some money to my father-in-laws. Now, I am not depending on my husband nor I need to quarrel with him and his second wife. I take care of the land; pay some money for this as well as I am benefitted to use the cattle which my father-in-laws has to take care. My children are happy to have buffalo milk and seasonal vegetables too. Now my neighbours say, "You have land and cattle both so you are earning well". Yes, she was right but I always think that in spite of taking the role of the son in the family, the land is not in my name and I still need to pay my father- in -law even though I am taking care of him.

Livestock

Livestock is known as women's property in the village from the past even though men also put their stake on it. During the research visit with 30 households, it was found that 21 women were getting access and control over livestock. They kept goat and chickens. 9 men farmers had access and control on them in the past. Men were free to cut chickens for feast or to sell if they are out of their personal expenses, like alcohol, cigarette or travel expenses to go to India for seasonal wage labour. But now, the majority of women farmers, 24 are getting access and control over livestock. Women buy chicken and goats by collecting the money and their children's money received as a gift from "*maiti*" (a maternal home of women) parents and brothers in festivals like *Dashain*, *Tihar*, *Teej*¹⁰. If they invest money

¹⁰ These are festivals celebrated specially by Hindu ladies. The parents and brothers use to give present to them in such occasions so it is believed such gifts in cash or property is the personal property of the women. Even the law of the land acknowledges such gifts are personal gifts to the women.

given by men members or other members at household then the whole family, for instance father-in-laws, brother-in-laws have stake on it.

Income

Out of 30 respondents, 22 respondents revealed that the major source of income is agriculture. The money is earned from the agricultural seasonal labour of women and off farm seasonal labour of men. Women work as a paid labourer during rice plantation and harvest season. After the rice plantation, men go to India for seasonal migration and come home after 3-4 months. During the whole year of production, women work at field where men work hardly 5-6 months in agriculture. 11 men farmers were found to have access and control over the money where as 12 women reported that they can use money with the permission of their male counterparts or elderly at households and only 2 widows were found to have control over money But after the seed project intervention, the participation of women in training has increased as most of the men were out for seasonal labour work. Now 10 women are using income earned/gained from both vegetable seeds and livestock for the welfare of family and children by their own. And 13 men have access and control over income gained by seeds, livestock and off-farm labour at district headquarters.

Box-5

Maite Kami (pseudo name), age 41, Seed Producer farmer, Mehelkuna VDC

.....We both are working equally but in comparison to me, she works more than me. She has more work at households than me but I always try to share her work so that she can get some leisure time to rest. When she cooks, I go for fetching water, for fodder and after we go together at field mostly so that we could better finish fertilizing, weeding and so on which helps us to get more production and good income. For seed selling, we both go to the cooperatives depending upon the seed quantity. If the amount of seed is more then I go to sell and if the quantity is few then my wife goes. We both have equal rights to spend the earned income. When go to sell the seeds, and then I brought clothes, sack of rice, oil, meat and few packets of cigarettes and sometimes a bottle of alcohol for festivals. If my wife goes to sell, then she comes with sugar, tea, salt, spices, stationaries for children and sometimes tika, chura, Pote (forehead sticker, bangles and beads-necklace, which is the cultural practices to be worn by Hindu married women).She keep the rest if she needs otherwise I keep in the savings at cooperative.

Savings at group/cooperative

The increment in income made farmers aware of saving the excess money in the cooperatives. It was seen that 26 men and 4 women had their own saving at cooperative. But at present, 9 women have started their savings at the group with 0.6 % interest per year whereas 21 men have their savings at cooperative. The group savings is started when the seed groups were formed and it was observed that women are the client of group savings. Group savings is the informal and locally handled by women in the neighbourhood. But, in the cooperative, savings procedures are lengthy and a formal process is needed to start savings. It was also observed that the interest rate of the cooperative is bit higher (12% per year) as compared to informal saving groups. The lengthy and formal procedures of savings also discourage women's access in savings at cooperatives.

Extension services and trainings

Out of 30 respondents, 8 women told researcher that the extension and trainings opportunities were controlled by men as the majority of men (22) were benefitted by the services provided by various NGOs in the past. After selection of seed producer's beneficiaries', technical trainings on sowing, harvesting, post-harvesting and seed marketing trainings were given to both men and women farmers. Therefore, 9 men and 11 women farmers are benefitted by the sowing, harvesting and marketing training conducted by the Project having equal access and control over the benefits provided. The majority of the women farmers were selected as beneficiaries for the project as per the criteria. The researcher found that 6 men sent their women members in family (daughter, wife or unmarried sister) to represent their households. These 6 men were at the cooperative executive's position. 4 women did not attend the trainings and instead of them, their male counterparts or other male (in-laws) member of the households attended the trainings.

Box-6

Sita B.K, age 36, Seed producer and Seed group member, Mehelkuna VDC,

.....NGO came to our door and they wrote my name for seed producer beneficiary since then I am doing seeds cultivation. They had taught us how to sow seeds, which fertilizers are good for crops, how to harvest and many more. Only once or twice I got an opportunity to attend training when my husband and his brother were out. My husband says that he will take trainings when he is at home then he will teach me. I always ask him to attend trainings so that I also can learn new things from new people. I feel very bad when he stops me. I am the member of the seed producers group but I never understand that why the members like me stay at home and their husbands take trainings and benefits?

Table: 1 Respondents Access and Control over Resources

Resources	Before		After	
	Access	Control	Access	Control
Agriculture land	M/W	M	W	M/W
Cattle(cow, bullock, buffalo)	M/W	M	M/W	M/W
Livestock(goat, chicken)	M/W	M/W	W	W
Income	M	M	M/W	M
Savings at group/Cooperative	M	M	M/W	M/W
Extension services & trainings	M	M	M/W	M/W

Note: Access is defined as freedom or permission to use resources and control is power to take decision how resource to be used. [M=Men, W=Women] [n=30, men=15, women=15]

Source: Adapted from Gender Analysis Framework, Oxfam, 2008

5.4 Caste based discrimination and Cultural Norms and Practices

Focus Group Discussion (FDG) and one to one interview was conducted to get the information regarding the caste based discrimination issues rooted to Hindu cultural values and norms. The findings presented below with the voices raised by the respondents during FGD and interview in separate boxes originally. The changes on cultural norms and practices were eventually started by the Maoist Conflict. Then after the peace process (2006 onwards) Project has started working for the targeted households. The inclusive approach for Dalits and poor higher caste people were merged in mixed groups for the seed project implementation. It was also found in the research area.

Box-7



If I knew, who am I , that day.....

.....I still remember that day as a nightmare. I got beaten just because I was a Dalit. It was then when I was in high school that my friend invited me to see his new toys, books in his house. I was in his room when his mother saw and started bursting and shouting at me. She even gathered the neighbours and started beating me and used vulgar language. My friend and I both were not able to understand what was going on and what the problem is actually. Later when she

started to sprinkle so called holy water in his son as well as his room that I realized I got all this abuse just because I am Dalit and I made her house impure.

Prem Bahadur BK, age-28, School Teacher & Seed Producer

Denial to enter into house of higher caste people

As 15 men respondents were asked, 9 men revealed that there is no discrimination left in the village now. They said that they go to their colleague, neighbour's houses time to time and their friend also come to them. Sometimes they organise seeds group meeting by turn to member's house then other casts people also come to attend the meeting. 5 men told that the new generation do not mind to call Dalit at home or go to Dalits home as well but the elderly of the both caste do not prefer to let Dalit come inside, they object to their young ones still today. Likewise, elderly of Dalit community still felt scared and hesitation to let their child go and get entered inside the upper caste peoples' houses however, the young children are good friends with each other's. They still have that psychological fear that they will be outcaste from the village if they broke the cultural norms and practices.

Similarly, 12 women out of 15 added that they also go to the house where the meeting is schedule but they never enter into other rooms of the house. 3 women explained that they were never permitted to sit even in the stairs of these houses before but now the NGOs activities encouraged them to go to higher caste houses to call for the trainings, meetings or deliver information regarding the seed business.

Box-8

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....Sometimes we keep meetings of seed group in our house; people come and sit for the meeting without hesitation now. Many NGOs and other development workers come and tell us that all human beings are equal and we should not feel lower than other people. When, sometime we keep meeting, we all decide to sit in Aangan or Peendi (a place adjoining with the main gate outside home-courtyard) of Bahun or Chettri-Thakuri's house and when our turn come to schedule meetings then we also do the same, but mostly we keep meetings on Saturday at village school.

Denial to eat and drink together with higher caste people

Out of 30 respondents, 15 women were asked about the food and drink practises among Dalit and other higher caste people, 6 women responded that the food culture has been changed. Now they offer food while they work together in the field or outside in the market for wage labour. Higher caste people accept to eat what they offered or sit together to eat the food which they brought by home. 4 women said that the higher caste people do not mind eating food and drinks while in work or sometimes in the meetings, in the market or even at the home of Dalits but the main course of food, such as rice they still hesitate to have together. 2 women added that only the grand parents' generation still avoid food offered by Dalits otherwise the young generation have changed their perception and started accepting and offering food now.

Box-9

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....When Bahun, Chettri-Thakuris come for Parma (labour exchange system in rural Nepal), we offer chiya-nasta (day time food and drink for agriculture labourer), and they eat. Elderly do not eat the food we give but their son and daughters eat. Actually, they do not eat dal-bhat (rice and pulses soup, staple food of Nepal) but chiya -nasta they do not mind to take from us.

15 Men respondents were also asked where 10 respondents replied that they go together with other higher caste people in the trainings or in the seed groups, cooperative's meeting. They drink tea, snacks and also eat lunch like rice and pulses together. 5 men added that it was not possible before but now they are in the commercial production group and many activities for income generation they do together with higher caste groups conducted by the project.

Box-10

We were kept outside while others were enjoying feast....

.....Once I was invited by one of my classmate for her wedding, I also went with one of my friend to give congratulations for her wedding though that was the first marriage ceremony among our classmate. My friends were enjoying their feast with other guests and given respects but me and one of my friends of my similar caste were said to sit a bit far from the food dishes so that I would not touch saying that it will be impure for other guests. Me and my friend were given food in tapari-a leaf-plate (a plate made by Sal leaf to eat and keep things temporarily in rural Nepal). Out of the whole classmates except the bride-groom, we were the two who could not enjoyed food together at that happiest moment because we were Dalit, lower caste, untouchables.



Gagan Pariyar, age-22, seed cooperative member, Mehelkuna VDC

Denial to use water sources

9 respondents of Dalit women said that they fetch drinking water from public well and natural springs next to village. They can fetch water without fear and hesitation nowadays. Other 6 women added that they were marginalised to use public tap and well before and used to go more than 2 hours walk to get drinking water. But now they have easy access to get water from the tap and well inside the village.

Box-11

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....We have a common irrigation channel in the village so that we all get access on it. We have set a routine to irrigate our rice field during the peak season of rice plantation but for seeds and vegetable crops we get water freely and equally as like Bahun, Chetri and Thakuris. Now we all are equal, our needs and rights are equal so why to follow unrealistic and inhuman order for using springs water.

From men respondents, 12 men said that before they have to follow the order from village head that belongs to the higher caste to irrigate their rice field and other crops only after them. But, now they have the set routine to get access on irrigation equally in the peak season of rice plantation and for other season, they are free to use water without any difficulty or order.

Box-12



.....then she poured the whole water on me

Once when I went to the spring to fill water, I saw that there was another *gagro*- (a traditional jar for keeping drinking water) in the spring but no one was there. As I saw that the *gagro* has already filled, I took out and started filling mine. Few minutes later, the women from high caste came and she showed an angry expression when she saw that I have removed her *gagro*. She then burst with abuse languages and then suddenly poured all the water in my body. I didn't get idea on what had happened and how I should react. All I did is keep quiet and took my filled *gagro* and returned filling guilty inside for touching her *gagro*.

Rati BK, age-23, seed group member and producer, Mahelkuna VDC

5.5 Project Effect on Gender Roles of Dalit Farmers

Researcher tend to see gender roles in terms of labour contribution, time spent, access and utilisation to resources and the changes brought by women and men at households from the Vegetables Seed Project. Researcher also analyses the gender role situation and the project effect on their culture at households.

Labour contribution

Women in Nepal work for longer hours than men and get far less wages than their male counterparts (Acharya, Meena 1991). Women's contribution on ploughing, weeding, fertilizer application, getting trained from various training associated with vegetable seed production still remained higher compared to men. Technical trainings strengthened women's capability which encourages them to participate in seed production and thus enhanced labour contribution. On the other side, the priority to women by the Project reduced men's active participation in seed production activities. However, men still takes a lead role in ploughing.

Time spent

Women were spending more time in seed sowing, weeding, and fertilizing vegetables seed more than in the past. Since vegetable seeds need more attention than cereal crops, women are spending more time in such jobs than before by virtue of the Project's priority hence, attending meetings in seed group, cooperatives along with their regular household chores reduced their leisure time compared to men. For men, they also spent time for trainings and meetings for seed production and selling. It has not seen any tangible differences on the role of men who spent more time for the production comparing to women.

Resources, access and utilisation

Women were accessing income earned from vegetable seeds or money given by their male counterparts to spend for households though they deserve that income for extra work. There were no tangible changes on resources like landholdings and cattle ownership but from the seed production perspective, women had little additional income left after purchasing necessary goods for households and input supplies. For men, they were receiving more income from selling and have greater cash flow. However, disagreement on changes in household income increased after women's income sharing. For women, taking parts at meetings and trainings are referred to the opportunity provided for the participation. They could involve seeing something new. Though, for men it is referred to the major role for taking decisions and achieves social prestige.

Changes in women/men culture at households

Women started ploughing/hoeing, to assist their male counterparts, selling vegetable seeds, participating trainings and meetings and more likely to increase income for the households. This showed the changing status of women, achieving greater confidence because of the new skill, sharing household chores with family members or with their male counterparts.

On the other hand, they are overloaded which hindered the social interaction and mobility with the relatives of women compared to men. Having more leisure and released from the tension of economic sustainability of their family, men are less worried about their family when they are away from home in search of job and remain engaged with friends and relatives, drinking and playing cards increased in the name of socialization. From the positive perspective, men started helping their female counterparts to care/rear cattle,

household chores and children. They felt that the new technology brought better life opportunities for women. However, some men have reservation about women attending technical trainings. Likewise, the risk of suspicion on women and the fear of family instability have increased. Due to production of vegetables and increase in income, the consumption of vegetables, balance and nutrient diet in the household has increased. The health status of women and children seemed improved as they have mentioned that the frequency of health check-up due to illness has decreased than before.

CHAPTER-6 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, researcher dealt results of the research. The points are discussed and analysed in terms of Gender division of labour, triple roles of women and men, access and control over benefits, cultural values and norms in terms of caste based discrimination to Dalit farmers and finally effect of the project on gender roles of women and men farmers and their households.

5.1 Role of Dalit Farmers in Vegetable Seed Production

According to Sweetman (2009:63), the gender based division of labour according to tasks is breaking down as women are increasingly undertaking tasks previously done by men. The research showed that the women's productive role was increased in ploughing, sowing and selling of vegetable seeds compared to men. However, the number of men has been increased in weeding seeds field assisting their female counterparts. Moser (1993:29) stated that, the man of the family, as the 'breadwinner' is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman as the housewife and 'homemaker' takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organization of the household. In contrary with this, women were sharing their task in productive work with the motive to generate income. This may be because women were given much more priority by the Project. On the other hand, it may be because most of the migrant men are seldom at home resulting in increase of women's role in productive activities.

Likewise, Mackintosh (1981), cited by Moser (1993:32) mentioned that women's reproductive roles is said as social reproductive role and is to reproduce not only labour force but capital also. Women labour contribution has increased on seed sowing, weeding, fertilizing, and ploughing along with men in vegetables seed production up to selling. Along with this, preparing food for family and taking care of households and children similarly even at the peak season of seed sowing and harvesting showed that their involvement in productive and reproductive roles are concentrated towards income generation and for the welfare of family. However the men as the 'breadwinner' found helping their female counterparts preparing food in the peak season of vegetable seed sowing and harvest. It is considered that women are responsible to prepare food and to rear children.

But the research showed that the small sized household's men were preparing food as well as taking care of children and households in the peak season. Women from the lower caste are more economically active than women from the higher caste (Adhikary, 2010:29). In line with this argument Dalit woman are more active to perform their roles in income generation even in the absence of their male counterparts at home. Besides these multiple roles of women, community managing roles are undertaken as an opportunity provided to women. As the study showed that the greater number of women farmer's involvement in the vegetables seed group meeting is considered and taken by the farmers as 'opportunity for participation'. Men's role in community politics is higher than the community managing role as compared to women. This is similar with Moser (1993:34) that community managing role, an unpaid voluntary work, undertaken in free time but the community politics role in contrast comprises activities mostly done by men. The study revealed that participation at community and seed cooperative meeting of men considered not only participation but the active participation at the level of decision making. Therefore, men as a decision maker ascribe the social status in the community.

5.2 Division of Labour and Access to and Control over Resources

Gartaula, et al, 2010:567 cited that an increased labour participation of women in agricultural activities in the absence of male members in the households. The participation of women farmers are higher in vegetables seed production because of the two main reasons: to meet the Project criteria and the ratio of men as labour migrants to India or within country is higher. The study revealed that women spent longer time and contributes labour harder in cultivating vegetables seed. In line with these points, participating at vegetables seed sowing, fertilizers application, harvesting, getting trainings, attending meetings at seed producer's group and seed co-operative, routine household chores etc. is the women's primarily job seen during research. The working hours and labour contribution of women farmers in vegetables seed production is higher compared to men. Besides that, women are capacitated and empowered to apply technical knowledge on vegetables seed production. Empowerment means that people especially poor people are enabled to take more control over their lives, and secure better livelihoods with ownership and control of productive assets as one key element (Chambers, 2003:91). Although women have the majority in productive and reproductive roles as it is also revealed in the study. According to Moser (1993:25), women have separate access to land, it is common for them to work both as 'independent farmer' on their own plot but work as 'peasant wife', contributing to household production as unremunerated labour. The patriarchy family system influences the societal norms on resource distribution to men and women. The majority of women who work more hours for production have neither land-ownership nor cattle. The research showed that the majority of women have access only to produce or contribute their labour in production and use the products. In comparison to men farmers, they do not have access and control over the land and the cattle. Men decide the crop variety to cultivate, sell the products and utilise the capital without anybody's permission. Women need permission to choose the crop, seed variety and also the money to be utilised for input supply and household expenses. Adhikary (2010:32) said that most of the women throughout the world do not have the right to property, land, capital or other resources. However, the women in the research are getting access to work on the land and are selling the seeds. They are getting income which they spend in family welfare. Sanday (1981:99) quoted that women are virtually indentured through for they have no control over the end products. However, study showed that selling of vegetable seeds by women has decreased because men had undertaken this job compared to the past. According to Hill (2003) cited in World Bank (2009:115), men rarely undertake women's tasks unless in cases where there is potential to gain control over the asset. But research also showed that livestock were for women domain however there is no legal documents to show their control.

On the other hand, the income generated by vegetable seeds selling or generated by wage labour or remittances are still in the men's domain. The right to spend is given to women somehow as she contributes. Women are not seen independent to spend the earned income without giving the detailed account to their male counterparts. In line with this, Adhikary (2010:52) said that women are allowed to work on and take care of land, cattle but selling of them is under men's control. According to Bashin (2000:14), father and husband, control most economic resources because of the influences of patriarchy. Women are getting access in income and savings when their male counterparts give them authority to use it. But in some cases where women are the head of houses, women are free to take decision to use the capital and income only for family welfare.

It was noted that women were prioritized as training beneficiary compared to men farmers by the project. Greater number of women was focused to provide extension services and trainings. According to Subedi et.al (2000:88), women who have lower education levels, lower access to information sources have limited participation in training. However, the willingness of men disrupted women's participation in some households.

5.3 Caste based discrimination and Cultural Norms and Practices

The Project has identified Dalit farmers as primary beneficiary, however, poor and disadvantaged women and men from higher caste is also considered equally. Study showed that, the discrimination based on caste is going down as respondents revealed. The labour force shortages in the agriculture sector also filled this gap between castes though women go to share labour within village and paid by cash and kind. Eating and drinking together in the public areas such as hotels, restaurants, meetings, gatherings and at fields is taken normal compared to decades till 2000. According to Bhattachan (2007:17), the denial to enter into houses, eating, drinking and sitting together with so called higher caste is still rampant in rural areas of Nepalese society. It is socially disapproved and Dalit are mentally and physically abused if they venture to do so. The research also revealed that due to the social mobilization processes conducted by the Project, discrimination in eating, and drinking, fetching water for public water sources, sitting together for the Project activities or meetings becoming wider in terms of equal accessibility and increased numbers of meeting and activities. Prohibition to entry into temples, public buildings and few numbers of private houses of higher caste is being stopped. But rooms of private houses of higher castes like kitchen, *puja-kotha* (room made for religious purpose, for worship), *bhandar* (room for food storage) except court yards and guest rooms are prohibited for Dalit. The study also revealed that the discrimination in such areas from higher castes to the lower castes is reducing the rigidity of traditions and broadening due to the 10 years armed conflicts and the Maoist movement (*Janayudha against social inclusion*). One of the elderly of the village said that the positive side of that conflict is to consider all human being into equal.

However, the positive side of the Maoist Conflict in terms of eliminating of casticism and racial discrimination can be take in transitional in Nepalese society but strengthening this transitional phase into action is doing by NGOs and projects like Vegetables Seed Project (CEAPRED,2009). Study showed that attending trainings and meetings by Dalit farmers with other disadvantaged groups from so called higher caste revealed the fact that the rigidity of untouchability is declining through the social mobilization processes and income generating activities. The respondents' voice in FGD given below also showed that economy also determines the level of discrimination between castes.

Box-13

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....During the meeting or training, we never think that they are Brahmin, Chetri and we are Dalit. We do not sit back and let them sit in front. Even, we get equal response from the extension officers and project staffs. They are also poor like us so there is no point of untouchability, after all we share labour during peak season and offer food. Their need to get paid in cash or in kind according to our village system never stopped them to eat what we offer. May be they also feel bad to get food from us but they never expressed. If we compare, we are similar in our economy.

The research on caste based discrimination regarding untouchability in houses and uses of water sources as well as food and drinking practices among Dalit and non-dalit casts, so called higher caste revealed the reality of common ground in some extent. Though the issue of being touched by Dalit and water sprinkling practises undergo with this, but the issues of inter-caste marriages between Dalit and higher caste was burning. Neither eating, nor entering houses but marrying with Dait are punishable and considered a sin, an unforgivable act. Besides that even in between Dalit castes it is taken very seriously rather opening wider sphere of untouchability.

Box-14

Anonymous, Mehelkuna VDC

.....I eloped with a Dalit man who was bit lower caste than us even within Dalit caste, he was Damai (Pariyar) and we are Kami (Bishwokarma).My parents are against my decision and we were forced to get separated. He was beaten worse by my brothers and he was forced to go to another village with his mother and sister. I am still unmarried. Nobody marry me because I spent nights with my previous husband though our marriage lasted only for 5 days.

CHAPTER-7 CONCLUSION & THE WAY FORWARD

7.1 Conclusion

Agriculture continues to constitute the mainstay of most people's livelihood activities as well as the Nepalese national economy. It is generally accepted that investments in agriculture and rural areas more broadly are needed to bring poverty reduction to the poorest members of Nepalese society and to improve the country's aggregate human development ranking. The government has enacted different agriculture related acts and regulations, formulated an Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP), began commercialization of agriculture, and deregulated fertilizers' trade. On the other hand, the debate among development agencies on how to tackle poverty in remote rural areas has resulted in the design and implementation of some promising initiatives in recent years. Many livelihood interventions funded by international donors/actors in Nepal have focused on social inclusion and empowerment, forestry, micro-finance, disaster preparedness, humanitarian assistance and agricultural productivity. The Vegetable Seed Project of CEAPRED implementation in Surkhet since 2004 has also succeeded to some extent in achieving outcomes in gender and social inclusion as well.

7.1.1 Roles of Dalit farmers and Access & Control over Resources

Division of labour and triple roles of women and men is more convincing though women are given more responsibility even for productive, reproductive and community role.

The project intervention has brought changes in the livelihoods of women as they now had to engage in more labour in the absence of men in village. Women's active engagement in economic activities has contributed to income generation in family, while also inducing change in the labour market and social structures within the family and community. On the other hand the involvement of men in production of vegetable seeds creates an opportunity to be with family and villagers and reducing violence, harassment and prone to HIV& AIDS and other sexual diseases that men used to get as migrant labour. Hence, incremental changes on role of women and men therefore increased shared labour and harmony in work and in households.

Men's compassion to work with their female counterparts, acknowledge the burden of work of women and involvement of men in reproductive role is the great impact. However, controlling assets like cattle, and freedom to go for trainings and meetings at community or at seed cooperative and giving women a limited control to use earned income is still rampant. The lack of recognition of work and women representation in a meaning full way is still prevalent. However, the study showed that the men's involvement is sharing labour with their female counterparts can be measured in two dimensions. Either to give recognition to women's work and acknowledge the drudgery or the second is to protect men's attitude of being, "Prestige Bias".

Women were trained with technical trainings and benefitted by extension services provided. Women empowerment in this regards is very effective and meaningful though most of the women involved in production but using primitive methods and skills. Women felt confident to use their new skill while sowing, fertilizing, using pesticides, choosing seed varieties and taking vegetable seeds for selling at cooperative. Apart from that, women became confident to take decision to work solely in the absence of their male counterparts. However, women are still marginalised to take a lead for the trainings as per their need and requirement. Still patriarchy system and stereotyping is the obstacle to take decision by them-selves is

lacking. Study showed that men take the decisions or give permission for participation or they go on behalf.

Leaving subsistence agriculture, vegetable seeds production is the new gateway for Dalit farmers to enter into commercial farming practices. But the study also revealed that although there has been an increase in the proportion of economically active women, their earned income is less than that earned by men. Additionally, women continue to have low access to property ownership, financial credit and political power. Besides these facts, study also showed that long working hours of women, economic empowerment and prioritization of women's participation in community and in programme has showed the changing attitude of men towards women within household level. Apart from all positive changes, family instability, insecurity and violence to women is now emerging since women became busy in income generation activities like commercial production of vegetables seed and selling, whereas men felt excluded in decision making, in income generation programme which resulted in disagreement between women and men's relationship. This is bad side of economic generative activities that family breaks down it is good side that women are also human being they need to break the shackles of servitude of men. In another point, economic sustainability of family and women in income generation made men's relax and free from tension and stress and can freely work away from home.

In another side, the harmony of family is increasing by working equally and sharing task in between women and men. But in another, women busy schedule for production, household chores, community managing, meetings and selling made them busier than men as compared. However, women get less time for socialization where as men have plenty to share with friends and neighbours.

7.1.2 Project Effect on Dalit farmers and Cultural norms and practices

Due to the culture, Dalit farmers were discriminated since very long. Dalit farmers were excluded from social, economic and political sphere. Giving the opportunity to enhance their livelihoods, vegetable seed production programme involved at least 60 % Dalit farmers in its domain.

Dalit farmers were involved and put them in a seed producer's groups prioritized them similar to other disadvantaged farmers from the higher castes. Various technical trainings for seed production and extension services provided. Putting in a same group of seed producers with other caste made Dalit feel to be equal as research findings revealed. Dalit farmers were treated equally as other farmers. Sitting and eating snacks together for the meeting at seed producer's group and seed cooperatives enhanced the social position of Dalit farmers. Because of this, Dalit farmers were included in the political domain where their presence never counted as participants before. Sharing the task and taking decision being as cooperative members or seed group members lead Dalit to get their honour and prestige. To eliminate stereotyping and rigid cultural norms followed by society from several years is still a challenge for the project. It seems also impossible too for the project to eliminate such norms and practices within a couple of years' awareness programme. Even though, project's achievement to make a gap between higher caste and Dalit wider in terms of discrimination is overcoming. However, there is still challenge for Dalit to get empowered due to their illiteracy, poverty and geography. It is also realised that only development programme activities with support from NGOs and local governments can bridge the community into together through massive awareness and internalization. The level of "excluded" and the term used in development sector "inclusion" is one of the bitter facts which is not expressed by Dalit that reminds them their "untouchability". In so far, it is also appreciable effort of the project to target smallholders Dalit as their primary beneficiary.

7.2 Recommendations and the way forward

The research found the increased participations of Dalit men and women in Vegetable Seed Project through various seed producers groups and cooperatives for marketing the vegetable seed have played a catalytic role to understand the gender issues and roles of Dalit women and men farmers in the community. Hence, the research recommends the following recommendations:

In the Project, there should be an orientation for the tangible and qualitative outcomes in terms of social inclusion lack of information about “what works”, in terms of its effective on gender roles and social inclusion. So, the Project activities should be oriented towards qualitative outcomes like its impacts on gender roles and social inclusion rather than its quantitative outputs like number of farmers trained. For this, the Project has to set certain result indicators based on gender roles and social inclusion as well.

The fruit of technological advancement in agricultural field should be shared and imparted with the Vegetable Seed Producers to boost up the production and marketing such as the suitable agricultural tool for ploughing, and digging, using tanks for spraying, fertilizing etc. Introducing gender friendly tools put effective results to reduce drudgery in one level.

Benefits of technology development have not been equally distributed among women and men though technology is found gender blind. The used training manuals and technology in the field has to be restructured so that it could be matched with the knowledge level of women and men. Women were put together for the technical trainings have added women the compulsion to work at field rather than to grasp the knowledge and apply them in field.

The intervention of Vegetable Seed Project provided the opportunities to increase the economic condition of the Dalit women and men farmers. It further paved the way to access and management the resources. Such opportunities helped the women to gain self-confidence and involvement in other social, business and other productive roles. Hence, they can also take suitable decision in relation to select the vegetable seed, or selling the product or the cattle too.

The schedule of the daily work of 24hrs made them aware that how much work they are doing and how much share of the family properties and participation in decision making level do they get the chance to enjoy the available resources. The Project intervention has some extent improve economic opportunities of the family especially women but more focus is needed to have equal access and rights to land and productive assets. This can be done through massive awareness campaign which will help to increase their self-confident, boost business skill and have greater influence within the households. Furthermore, conducting activities incorporating awareness campaign for instance making 24hrs calendar, showing who has what, who does what, who wins, who controls etc. at field level also be the tool for self-realization of roles especially to men. Awareness campaign will be only possible when there is a possibility to change attitude of men's stereotyping and open the hole for self-realization.

Although the existing Hindu based socio-cultural code of conduct is prevalent in Nepalese societies, the impact of the intervention of VSP is preparing a solid ground of knowledge and reason based humane society. The fundamental factor to create such society is the change and involvement of the Dalit women and men farmers' engagement in well planned and sustainable economic activities which the VSP is providing to these people. It is recommended that such opportunities should explore other cash crop cultivations strategies. They should have the advanced training opportunities compatible to the seed farming, pre and post harvesting technologies and for the better marketing opportunities. Well planned,

appropriate interventions have the potential to improve the living condition of disadvantaged farmers so a thorough understanding of the socio, economic and cultural context – and knowledge of what framework or interventions work –what will be its overall impact in the society is needed for the implementer to achieve successful and holistic results. For instance, gender need assessment of women and men farmers regarding the technical trainings, who needs what, who resists, what preferred etc., the level of knowledge of women and men and the designed package programme, understanding of gender sensitivity at field by the project staff (field monitoring and extension officers) has to be internalized and incorporated in the project.

Since the researcher found out that the Dalit women have got rare opportunity for recreations and nominal leisure time. Women work longer hours than men in the field and even in the household activities, they need to have opportunities for recreations and should enjoy the lives fully. The holistic structure of the family should have equal share of joy and sorrow, leisure and toil and satisfaction and contentment. The research recommends the fair share for the Dalit women what they deserve according to their labour. To improve the situation of over burden to women and more leisure time to men, they should be train together about gender role and gender mainstreaming. This will help to promote equal participation of men and women in development. Furthermore the possibility of getting negative impact such as family insecurity, alcoholism, violence over women and gambling should be minimizing.

Finally, for the project the meaning of gender has to translate for both men and women not referring gender only for women and their massive participation. And women participation is not only the solution to address issues of gender equality but need based activities as per the farmers requirement as well as to bring issues of women and men equally at the same sphere can help project to be gender sensitive.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acharya, Meena and Lynn Bennett, 1991. The Rural Women in Nepal, An Aggregate Analysis and Summary of 8 Village Studies, Kathmandu: CEDA, TU
- Adhikary, M., 2010. Integration of Gender in Agriculture; An analysis of Situation, FAO 2010
- APP, 1995. Agriculture Perspective Plan (1995-2015), Government of Nepal/National Planning Commission, NPC.
- Asian Development Bank, 1998. The Banker's Policy on Gender and Development, ADB, Manila
- Bajracharya, B. 1994. Gender Issues in Nepalese Agriculture: A Review Research Report. His majesty of Government, Ministry of Agriculture/Winrock International, Policy Analysis in Agriculture and related Resource Management Report Series No.25. Kathmandu, Nepal
- Bashin, K. 2000. Understanding Gender, Kali for Women: Kali Monograph, Primary Series 2000, University of Michigan.
- Bajracharya, N., 1991. Women Farmer's Involvement in Agricultural Research in Nepal: PAC occasional paper no.10, Dhankuta, Pakhribas Agricultural Center, Nepal.
- Bhattachan, K. B., 2007. Caste based Discrimination in Nepal, IIDS Working Paper 2007. [Online] Available at <<http://www.iids.org>> [Accessed 12 June, 2012]
- Bhattachan, K B., K. Hemchuri, Y. Gurung, and C. M. Viswakarma, 2003. Existing Practices of Caste-based Untouchability in Nepal and Strategy for a Campaign for Its Elimination, Kathmandu: Action Aid-Nepal.
- Bhattachan, Krishna B., 2001 Sociological Perspective on Gender Issues in Changing Nepalese Society; Gender and Democracy in Nepal, pp76-94, Central Department of Home Science, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
- Bishwokarma, P. 2004. Violence against Dalit Women in Nepal, Nepal News, May 21, 2004
- CBS, 2011. Living Standard Survey of Nepal, Central Bureau of Statistics/Government of Nepal.
- CEAPRED, 2009. Annual Report, Vegetable Seed Project, CEAPRED, Kathmandu
- CEAPRED, 2010. Annual Report, Vegetable Seed Project, CEAPRED, Kathmandu
- CEAPRED, 2009. Mid-term Review Report 2009, Vegetable Seed Project, CEAPRED, Kathmandu.
- CEAPRED, 2012. Outcome Monitoring Survey Report 2012, Vegetable Seed Project, CEAPRED, Kathmandu
- Chambers, R., (2003), Challenging the Professions: Frontiers for Rural Development,

Practical Action Publishing, Rugby.

District Development Profile of Nepal, 2012. A Socio-economic Development Database of Nepal. Mega Publications and Research Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

DFID, 2006. Unequal Citizens; Gender Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal, DFID 2006, Nepal,[online] Available at :<<http://www.worldbank.org/%2FINTNEPAL%2FResour>
[Accessed 18 June,2012]

EC, 1998. One Hundred Words for Equality: A glossary of terms on equality between women and men. Office for official publications of the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs., Luxembourg

Enabling State Programme (ESP)/DFID. 2001. Pro-Poor Governance Assessment Nepal. Kathmandu: Enabling State Programme

Gartaula, H.N., Niehof, A. and Visse, L. (2010). Feminization of Agriculture as an Effect of Male out-migration: Unexpected Outcomes from Jhapa District, eastern Nepal. The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, 5(2): Pp. 565-578.

Gurung, 2005. Dalits Context in Nepal. Occasional Paper Vol.9 2005; pp. 1-21, Tribhuvan University, TU Kathmandu

Moser, C. 1993. Gender Planning and Development: Theory and Training, Routledge London

Munankami, R.B and T. Gautam.1990 Economics of production of Vegetable Seeds in Nepal. Vol. X. Pea Seed, Dhankuta, No-Frills Consultants, Kathmandu, Nepal

Neupane and B.P. Dhakal 1990. Economics of production of Vegetable Seeds in Nepal. Vol. V Cress Seed, Terathum, No-Frills Consultants, Kathmandu, Nepal

NPC, 2009/10. Draft Three-Year Plan (2010-2014) Government of Nepal/National Planning Commission.

Okali, D.U.U and F.O.Amubode.1995 Resources Conservation in Oboto, Nigeria. In A.Sigot, L.A. Thrupp and J. Green. (Eds) Towards Common Ground: Gender and Natural Resources Management in Africa

Pandey IR & Thapa PK 1991. Review and Program Discussion on Vegetable and Vegetable Seed Production

Parker, R., 1993. Another Point of View: A Manual on Gender Analysis Training for Grassroots Workers, United Nations Development Fund for Women, New York.

Sanday, P.R. 1981. Female Power and Male Dominance: On the origin of Sexual Inequality. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Scoones, I. 1998. Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for Analysis. Working Paper No.72. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, and Brighton, U.K.

SDC, 2009. Asia Brief Report, [online], Available at
<http://www.deza.admin.ch/en/Home/.../Rural_development_Food_security
[Accessed 12 June, 2012]

- Sharma, S. 2054 B.S. Nepalma Dalit Jatiharuko Sankhya ra Arthik Samajik Sthiti (Numbers and economic status of Dalit castes in Nepal). In Dalit Samudayaka Samasya bisayek ratriya Paramarsha Gosthi Kathmandu: GRINSO. pp. 112-121 (Text in Nepali)
- Shrestha, G.P., 2009. Annual Report, 2009 Department of Agriculture/Vegetable Development Directorate.
- Shrestha, A.D. 1999. Case Study in Nuwakot District in Nepal. In J.D.Gurung (Ed) . Searching for Women's Voices in the HinduKush- Himalayas. ICIMOD, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Subedi, P.2000.Nepali Women Rising. Sahayogi Press, Kathmandu, Nepal
- Sweetman. ed., 2002. Gender, Development, and Poverty. Oxford OX27DZ, UK: Oxfam GB.
- The World Bank, 2006. The World Bank and DFID. 2006. Citizens without Rights: Nepal Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment, Kathmandu Nepal.
- The World Bank, 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. Washington DC
- UNDP, 2000. Learning and Information Pack on Gender Mainstreaming, UNDP, New York; South Asian Region, Nepal Country Office, Kathmandu 2000/2001
- UNDP, 2009. Human Development Report, 2009.Nepal Country Office, Kathmandu
- UNDP, 2010. Fact Sheets of Nepal, 2010.Nepal Country Office, Kathmandu[online]Available at < <http://www.unpei.org/PDF/nepal-country-sheet.pdf> [Accessed 21 August,2012]
- Verona, Groverman and Gurung, Jeannette D., 2001 Gender and Organizational Change Training Manual, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, ICIMOD, Kathmandu

ANNEX-I

Questionnaire for Vegetable Seed Producer Farmers

Section-A: Gender Roles

- 1 a) Who used to do ploughing field before seed production? Men Women Both
- b) Who plough seed field now? Men Women Both
- c) Who used to do weeding at field before? Men Women Both
- d) Who weeds seed field now? Men Women Both
- e) Who works longer time in field before seed production? Men Women Both
- f) Who works longer time in field now? Men Women Both
- g) Who had leisure time before seed production? Men Women Both
- h) Who has leisure time after doing seed production? Men Women Both
- i) Does the seed production reduced labour comparing to cereal crop production? Yes / No
- If yes then how.....If no then how.....
- 2 a) Who used to grow cereal crop before? Men Women Both
- b) Who grows vegetable seed now? Men Women Both
- 3 a) Who used to irrigate cereal crop before? Men Women Both
- b) Who irrigates vegetable seed now? Men Women Both
- 4 a) Who used to grade cereal crops before? Men Women Both
- b) Who does vegetable seed grading now? Men Women Both
- c) Who used to label (seed variety and production date) cereal seed before?
- d) Who does vegetable seed labelling now? Men Women Both
- e) Who does the vegetable seed selling/marketing in the household?
- f) Who fix the selling price for vegetable in the household? Men Women Both
- 5 a) Who used to cook for family during peak season (seed sowing and harvest) before?
- b) Who cooks for family during peak season (seed sowing and harvest) now?
- 6 a) Who used to cook for labourer during peak season (seed sowing and harvest) before?

- b) Who cooks for labourer during peak season (seed sowing and harvest) now?
- 7 Who used to care children during peak season (vegetable seed sowing and harvest) before?
- 8 Who takes care of children during peak season (vegetable seed sowing and harvest) now?
- 9 Who used to attend community development meeting before?
- 10 Who attends seed group meeting now? Men Women Both
- 11 Who attends seed cooperative meeting now? Men Women Both
- 12 Who used to entitle membership in community meeting before?
- 13 Who entitles membership in seed group now? Men Women Both
- 14 Who entitles membership in seed cooperative now? Men Women Both

Section B: Resources (Access & Control)

- 1 a) What is the size of the land holding?
- Before : Now.....
- b) Is the land your own or leasehold?
- c) If it is your own land then who had land right (ownership) before vegetable seed production?
- d) Who has land right (ownership) now? Men Women Both
- e) Who has access on it? Men Women Both
- f) Who can sell the products and use money? Men Women Both
- 2 a) Do you have cattle now? If yes, what and how many.....
- b) Did you have cattle before? If yes, what and how many.....
- c) Do you have livestock (goat/hen) now? If yes, what and how many.....
- d) Did you have livestock before? If yes, what and how many.....
- e) Who keeps the money after selling the cattle before (ownership)
- f) Who keeps the money after selling the cattle now (ownership)?
- g) Who keeps the money after selling the livestock before?
- h) Who keeps the money after selling the livestock now?

i) Who decides to sell cattle before?

j) Who decides to sell cattle now?

k) Who decides to sell livestock (goat/hen) before?

l) Who decides to sell livestock (goat/hen) now?

3 a) Who has ownership on earned income obtained by seed and animal in household before?

b) Who has the ownership earned income obtained by vegetable seed and animal now in family?

c) Who had the ownership on the savings in micro finance or group before? d) Who has the ownership on the savings in micro finance or group now?

4 a) Did you (farmer man/woman) have knowledge on commercial seed sowing before? Yes / No

c) Did you (farmer man/woman) have knowledge on commercial seed harvesting before? Yes / No

d) Did you (farmer man/woman) have knowledge on putting seed variety name on the pack/sack before? Yes / No

Section: C Cultural norms and practises

1 a) Do you (farmer man/woman) eat with other group/cooperative members who belong to different caste? (so called higher caste like Brahmin, Chetri, Thakuri and Newar)? Yes / No

b) Do you (farmer man/woman) drink with other group/cooperative members who belong to different caste?(so called higher caste like Brahmin, Chetri ,Thakuri and Newar)? Yes / No

c) Do you (farmer man/woman) offer food in the meeting?

d) Do you (farmer man/woman) offer drink in the meeting?

e) Do you (farmer man/woman) also offer food and drink to the people who belongs to different caste than you while they come to your house or outside in the market? If yes then where you offer and if no then what is the reaction

.....

f) Do you use community tap and well for irrigating field? If no then how do you irrigate your crops.....

g) Does anybody stop you to get water from the community well or tap?

h) Do you go to the house of the people who are from different caste than you for the meeting? j) Do you call meeting at your house? If yes, then all members from various castes come to attend?

If no then, why.....

Checklist

Checklists for interview (Men and Women Farmers)

1. What changes on your roles you have seen in your life after involving in the seed project?
2. What changes you have seen in your life after involving in the seed project?
3. What changes you have seen in your culture being as a member in seed group/cooperative?
4. What are the major changes you found before and after in your work(comparing to Dalit's previous professional work like tailoring, cleaning toilets of other caste, wage labourer with seed production now, if applicable)?
5. What is the situation of discrimination (caste and economy based discrimination) in community after involving in seed production?
6. How do you distinguish the socio-cultural situation of your own before and after being as a seed producer?

ANNEX-II

Respondent's Information

S.N	NAME	Caste	AGE	SEX	ADDRESS
1	Bhim Bahadur B.K	Kami	29	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
2	Naine Kami	Kami	41	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
3	Ashabir Pariyar	Damai	51	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
4	Maiti Kami	Kami	49	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
5	Chandra Agri	Damai	32	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
6	Harikala Sirpali	Damai	36	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.2,Surkhet
7	Pratap Kami	Kami	34	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
8	Bhim Bahadur Pariyar	Damai	35	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
9	Prem Pariyar	Damai	27	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
10	Suka Ram Pariyar	Damai	37	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
11	Budhe Kami	Kami	52	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
12	Gagan Singh B.K.	Kami	22	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
13	Mani B.K.	Kami	20	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
14	Kaumaya B.K	Kami	41	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
15	Jamuna B.K	Kami	29	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
16	Moti Ram B.K	Kami	41	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
17	Khale Kami	Kami	32	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
18	Sashi Ram Pariyar	Damai	51	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.6,Surkhet
19	Udaya Kami	Kami	48	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
20	Mohan Lal B.K	Kami	37	M	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
21	Rati Kami	Kami	23	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
22	Dhana B.K	Kami	27	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
23	Sita B.K	Kami	24	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
24	Dharmila B.K	Kami	33	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
25	Fulmaya B.K.	Kami	26	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
26	Dhanisara B.K	Kami	31	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
27	Bhadrakala B.K	Kami	41	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
28	Manisara B.K	Kami	24	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
29	Rita B.K	Kami	25	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet
30	Laxmi B.K	Kami	42	F	Mehelkuna VDC, ward no.9,Surkhet

[Damai=7, M-5, F-2] [Kami=23, M-10.F-13]

RESPONDENT'S AGE GROUP

20-30		31-40		41-50		>50	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
3	8	5	4	4	3	3	0

ANNEX-III

Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM-Matrix)

	LABOUR	TIME	RESOURCES	CULTURE
WOMEN				
MEN				
HOUSEHOLD				
COMMUNITY				

Source: Rani Parker (1994), Another Point of View; A manual on Gender Analysis Training for Grassroots Workers

ANNEX-IV Field Photos



Data collection with Women Seed Producers at Mahelkuna VDC, Ward no.6



Focus Group Discussion with Dalit farmers at Mahelkuna VDC, ward no.9



Dalit Farmers Interaction at Mahelkuna VDC, ward no.2



Focus Group Discussion at Mahelkuna VDC, ward no.6



Interaction & walk together with Dalit Women Farmers at Mahelkuna VDC



Interview with Dalit farmers at Mahelkuna VDC, ward no.2



Data collection with woman Seed Producer at Mahelkuna VDC, Ward no.9



Interview with Woman Seed Producer at Mahelkuna VDC, Ward no.9



Interaction meeting with Dalit women farmers at Mahelkuna VDC, ward no.6



Information Collection and meeting with VSP Staff, District Office, Surkhet



Fetching drinking water from the stream(mul), Mahelkuna VDC



Dalit farmers busy in rice plantation at Mahelkuna VDC during monsoon

