

INGO funded program 2000-2009

Institutional Capacity Building for Advocacy and Regional Networking 2000

Background

In 1998 KYC and MS Nepal formalised the partnership with the request from KYC for an MS Development Worker to support KYC in the area of institutional and community development. On MS Nepal's part it was arranged for a long term Development Worker with organizational development background to be recruited and seconded to KYC.

The Development Worker has been assisting KYC both at the district and central levels in programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The Development Worker is also responsible for developing coordination mechanisms between central and local levels of KYC as well as networking and liaison with other organisations of future planning and institutional development.

The principles and objectives of KYC are in line party with the MS Nepal development focus A: serving to focus on developing self reliant communities, whereby priority is given to assist those groups of the community which are disadvantaged economically or socially and development focus B: focusing on demarginalising the marginalised which focuses on assisting the indigenous minorities and disadvantaged communities who are marginalized with respect to socio-cultural, economic and educational conditions to reclaim their access to resources, security and influence.

Description of target group

Social economic projects implemented by KYC are aimed at benefiting all interested communities. However, regarding cultural and Limbu language promotion and preservations activities are specifically meant of Limbu communities in the 9 districts of Koshi and Mechi zones.

Common vision for the partnership

MS Nepal's vision is to hope for development and change processes in Nepal which is both participatory and aiming at, mainly for and by people, by mobilising their potentials. MS Nepal also hoes to increase the ability of, especially disadvantaged people to cope with the national and international political and market turbulence.

MS also hoes for a situation where the high cultural diversity of Nepal is maintained and valued by all, and where there is mutual respect, empathy among cultures, ethnic groups, castes and communities.

KYC works to uplift the Limbu indigenous community, specifically and other ethnic community in general, by empowering them through self-organisation, building up institutional capacity at the grass-root level. They strive to create awareness in their community through their own language in order to facilitate clearer understanding of the concepts, as the many Limbus are unable to understand Nepali, as well as to preserve their language and culture. The support to capacity building will allow KYC grass root level committees to significantly improve their abilities in understanding and managing their own development socially, economically and culturally. Hence, both MS Nepal and KYC share a common vision of partnership.

Common development objectives

The common development objective of KYC and MS Nepal is to promote political pluralism to help in the integration of disadvantaged groups including indigenous and ethnic minorities. Build institutional capacity of KYC. Increase community self reliance by promoting socio-cultural and linguistic awareness and income generation.

Expected results

KYC will have sufficient management level manpower both at the central as and local level. This will result in effective and efficient implementation of planned programs and increased sustainability of the organisation. Planned activities. Awareness raising. Capacity building training. Public relation development. Social service

Legal Literacy in Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights 2004

Background

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multienthnic country. Limbu (Yakthung) indigenous peoples is one of the ethnic groups of Nepal with their own language, script, culture, religion(kirat) and oral history as well as territory where they have been residing since time immemorial. Once they ruled over the country and were rich in their cultural heritage. They had their own traditional system of land holding and socio-economic system. Their cultural heritage and traditional socio-economic

system have been destroyed, especially during the last 300 years of so-called development. As a result, their cultural richness has vanished and they are becoming poorer and poorer each day. For instance, according to UNDP, 71 per cent of Limbus lives below the absolute poverty line (Human Development Report, 1998).

Now Limbus through their organization Kirat Yakthung Chumlung (KYC) are struggling to get the fundamental rights as human beings. Even that His Majesty's Government of Nepal has recognized the Limbus as one of the indigenous communities in the communities in the country; it is not working sincerely for the benefit of the ethnic communities. Thus KYC believes that some efforts should be put to make the Limbus aware of their rights as indigenous people and on general human rights.

Motives for proposing the project

His Majesty Government (HAG) of Nepal is co-signatory to most of the Human Rights conventions. Some of these rights are acknowledged in the constitution of Nepal 1991. But in the last 11 years, since the re-establishment of democracy, the HMG of Nepal has failed to provide the people with the basic human rights. For instance the constitution provides equal rights to all Nepali citizens, but in practice very few people from the indigenous communities have equal access to education, scholarship, jobs in the public sector etc. These facilities and services the available mainly for the high caste.

Many people do not know about the existence of such rights. Another example is the issue of mother tongue: But the indigenous people are unaware of the fact that for instance they can demand teaching in their mother tongue as a subject in the public schools. Without having the knowledge to demand one's rights, the government is very much reluctant to provide them. The same unawareness prevails and obligations towards local government institutions like Village Development committee (VDC) and District Development committee (DDC). For instance the DDC and VDC laws provide a certain portion of the budgets to be allocated to the indigenous people. But very few Limbi are aware of this fact. As result the authorities do not feel the necessary pressure to use the resources for the indigenous people. To address such problems, Kirat Yakthung Chumlung wants to conduct wants to conduct Legal literacy course on indigenous and human right issues among the Limbus.

Main objectives of the project

To make the Limbu Indigenous peoples aware of their basic rights. To empower Limbus to maintain the human rights provided to them in the constitution and to demand their rights as indigenous people of Nepal.

Project Activities

Development of materials on indigenous peoples and human rights in Limbu and Nepali languages to be used in the legal literacy course. Organising a training of trainers (ToT) workshop for the legal literacy course facilitators. Organizing legal literacy courses in 11 districts of eastern Nepal to educate the Limbu indigenous peoples and human rights. Supervision and final evaluation of the project.

Output/expected results

After the completion of the courses we expect that the Limbus would know more on their rights as human beings and as indigenous people of Nepal. They would not be afraid to hide or feel shame of their mother tongue, religion and culture. They would also dare to demand their rights from local, district and central level authorities of the government. They would no longer keep quite in case of social or economic injustice towards them.

A Study on Limbus Indigenous Knowledge of Healing Practices in Limbuwan, Nepal 2006

Background

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) define different kind of rights, namely, patent, trade mark, plant breeder's rights etc , given that person or institution who invented or hold ownership of that right . Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) later adopted supplementary language farmers' right against plan breeder's right. But IPR by indigenous sense does not advocate the exclusive right rather believe in free access to and share of the knowledge. Indigenous perception of IPR might deviates from fundamental issues that the indigenous knowledge is a community ownership based on certain customary norms and values and should come in the way of compensation, upgrading their knowledge, protection, incentive to the community. Thus this would require continuous building up and strengthening the capacity of the indigenous people and their institutions.

Indigenous peoples see themselves as the legitimate claimants to their territories and natural resources and consider control over local economy, social planning to their existence. For that they are seeking greater degrees of autonomy.

Rationale of the Study

Nepal is a country composed of different ecological zones. This ecological diversity leads to biodiversity, and Nepal comes in as the 11th richest country in the world as regards biodiversity. There are an estimated two hundred fifty thousand flowering plants in the world of which five thousand eight hundred plants are available in Nepal. Moreover, two hundred forty six plants are available in Nepal only. In Nepal, more than seven hundred flowering and non-flowering plants are being used as medicine on the basis of traditional knowledge to cure different types of illnesses. In the case of Limbu indigenous people, this knowledge has been practiced by the Limbu shamans ' phedangma' samba' 'Yeba' Yema and 'Baidang'. At present, there is a great risk that the knowledge and use of plants as medicine will be extinct, among other factors due to the belief system of Limbu shamans. They believe that if they transfer their knowledge to non-shamans, the medicine will lose its efficiency. Another factor adding to the risk of losing traditional Limbu indigenous knowledge on medicinal plants is the general modernization of society, which tends to undermine the use of such traditional medical practices. While not all traditional practices as such are recommendable to maintain, a major concern is of course that some of the knowledge related to the use of plants as medicine may still be important for combating diseases also in a modern world. Furthermore the Limbus fear bio-piracy on case they fail to document and claim the rights over their traditional knowledge.

At the fifth WTO ministerial meeting held in Cancun, Mexico, in September, Nepal succeeded in acceding to the international trade organization. As a member state, Nepal should comply with the rules and regulations of WTO. However, in the preparation phase of Nepal's accession to the WTO, sufficient attention has not been paid to the indigenous knowledge. Nepal has an immense diversity in terms of ethnic groups and ecological setting. The indigenous peoples have been living in their territories and they are the main source of indigenous knowledge of Nepal's particular regions. However, their knowledge regarding biodiversity in general and use of plants as medicine in particular has not been considered during the preparation phase. It is therefore urgent to start researching and documenting indigenous knowledge now, as there would otherwise be a risk that new laws and

regulations do not pay duly attention to this issue and do not give the preservation, protection and development of indigenous knowledge a high priority.

As of now, the government has not informed, consulted or involved indigenous peoples in making the rules and regulations of Nepal, which is needed to fulfill the provisions of WTO. The study we wish to undertake provides the opportunity for the Limbu indigenous peoples to document their indigenous knowledge on use of plants as medicine and to make Limbus aware of the rights they have in this regard, making them capable to constructively contribute to the field of well being of humans.

Overall objectives

The overall objectives of the study are to map and get detailed indigenous knowledge of Limbus of Limbuwan (traditional homeland of Limbus) about healing practices including the use of medicinal plants and to protect and secure the Limbu indigenous knowledge system by increasing Limbu people's own awareness of their knowledge and to make a claim for community ownership in this regard.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study are: to document the indigenous knowledge of plants used for medicine. To create awareness among the Limbu and other indigenous peoples in the region about the rights of natural resources. To advocate before the government to make it protect indigenous knowledge of Limbus about medicinal plants as their intellectual property while drafting laws and when complying with Nepal's obligations towards international treaties and agreements.

Approach and Methodology

A systematic approach needs to be followed by the research team in order to carry out the study in line with the outlined presented in the Grant. The choice of appropriate methodology and tools for problem analysis and the evaluation of the result will be crucial. The methodology adopted for the study has been presented in the followings. (a) Formation of research team. (b) Literature review. (c) Data collection. (d) Data analysis. (e) Report writing.

Anticipated output

After the completion of the study, an inventory of indigenous knowledge of Limbus about healing practices with special reference to medicinal herbs/plants will be

prepared. This will be a unique document to make a claim with government for Limbus for the protection of their traditional knowledge by formulating appropriate laws, rules and regulations. Increased awareness among Limbus of their indigenous knowledge on medicinal plants, which would among other things help them preserve the natural habitat as well as help them preserve and develop their knowledge. Published report of the study. A sharing of the findings of the study with other indigenous peoples and ethnic groups of Nepal.

Promotion of Indigenous Peoples Rights in Constitution Making Process (PIPR) 2009

Background

Promotion of Indigenous Peoples Rights in constitution making process was another important project completed by Kirat Yakthung Chumlung Nepal in assistance from International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) specialized agency of the UN Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF).

Kirat Yakthung Chumlung (KYC) central secretariat will be responsible for implementing the project with its chairperson and general secretary as main responsible persons. A project coordinator is appointed to manage the day to day running of the project under the KYC's central secretariat. The project coordinator will be responsible for the overall execution of project activities and day to day management. A admin/finance officer will support the project coordinator. The project coordinator should have the skills of managing, implementing, monitoring, identifying experts, facilitating coordination among different organization and report writing of the project. Likewise, the admin finance officer must have the skills of keeping account, preparing financial report, maintaining personnel files and administrative knowledge for supporting to the project coordinator.

Project Result

As a result of the project, Limbu indigenous peoples have developed their knowledge on autonomy while making the common understanding of Limbuwan autonomy. All section of societies Limbu indigenous peoples, non Limbus, political parties, constituent assembly members will be involved in the project activities which lead to strengthen the communal harmony in Limbuwan region. This also increases the mutual respect of each others culture and identity.

Moreover, Limbu indigenous peoples will achieve their outstanding demands for establishing Limbuwan autonomy and other indigenous peoples rights through a new constitution. In the autonomy, they will have the rights: to use their language as an official language, to access and control over the land and resources and to preserve and promote their culture and identity. More importantly, they will have the meaningful participation in each and every decision making level in state autonomous government and central government.

Democracy and Inclusion Project (DIP) 2009

Introduction

Attracted by the announcement of the UNDP for proposals, an alliance of Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) and Dalit organization working in the far eastern region of Nepal has been formed with a view to better cover the diverse ethnic and disadvantaged communities. The alliance has been named as Constitution Building Support Alliance (CBSA). The members of the alliance are: Kirat Yakthung Chumlung (KYC), Walung Uththan Samaj, Tokpegola Social Welfare Committee, Athpahria Kirat Rai Samaj, and Downtrodden Awareness Society (Dalit NOG). All of the IPOs and the Dalit NGO are nonpartisan, nonprofit making organizations.

The alliance wishes to work in those districts where historically marginalized people dwell and where the alliance members are active and the network system is smooth. The Support for Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal (SPCBN) program of UNDP seems quite interesting and relevant to the scope of the alliance. In view of the subject and scope of the SPCBN program the Constitution Building Support Alliance (CBSA) wishes to propose a project named Democracy and Inclusion Project (DIP), which gives reflection of the program's ultimate purpose. The alliance proposes nine districts for DIP activities. The proposed districts are Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, Jhapa, Sankhuwasabha, Terhthum, Dhankutta, Morang and Sunsari.

Project context

The total population of the nine project districts is 3160248. Six hill districts have the population of 1058353 while three Terai districts have the population of 2101895. Limbu is the largest component of the population of Taplejung, Panchthar, Terhthum; Rais slightly outnumber Limbus in Ilam and Dhankuta

districts. Other indigenous peoples in the hill districts are Gurung, Tamang, Magar, Sherpa, Bhote, Newar, Manjhi, Bhujel, Gharti, etc. Compared to other districts Dalits make a significant number in Sankhuwasabha.

Brahmin, Chhetri, Sanyasi and Dalits have significant population in hill as well as Terai districts. Along with Tharus and other indigenous peoples Muslim and Yadav are the main components of Sunsari's population. Jhapa and Morang have mixed population of indigenous people, Dalits, Brahman and Chhetris.

The target communities for the DIP program activities are marginalized indigenous Limbu, Walung, Topkegola, Athpaharia Rai, Yakkha, Dalits, Manjhi, Lepcha, in hill districts. In Terai districts Dhimal, Meche, Santhal, Urau, Rajbansi, Tajpuriya and Muslim are the target communities of the project. The target communities are historically marginalized because they are deprived of opportunities and have no access to and control over resources. No concrete and objectively planned mainstreaming programs for them have been formulated and/or implemented by the state. Those peoples have no idea of constitution making process. They are not capable of communicating and presenting their expectation and aspiration to the constituent assembly. They have also low level of knowledge and understanding on constitution building business.

Goal and Objectives

The overall goal of the Project is to ensure active participation of historically marginalized communities in the making of new constitution. Specific Objectives : Impart and increase knowledge of target communities on the process of constitution making, Constituent Assembly (committees). Develop knowledge and skills of campaigners on alliance building and advocacy actions. Identify the burning issues of marginalized communities. Prepare recommendations to address the identified issues. Submit the recommendations to Constituent Assembly, its committees, CA members and the political parties.

Strategy

Capacity building : The overall project approach will be to provide Field Coordinators (FCs) and Community Campaigners (CCs) with knowledge and understanding of constitution-making business. The strategy of ongoing Education-Information-Communication will be applied to ensure meaningful participation of marginalized community people in the process of constitution-making. Focus will

be given to helping communities identify their burning issues and make recommendations to address the issues in the new constitution. The FCs and CCs will also be provided with ideas on tools and techniques of advocacy.

Gender and Diversity : Gender and diversity concerns will be an integral part of project implementation. A gender balanced hiring of FCs and CCs will be made. Also, they will be selected from different target communities and then trained to enable them to effectively carry out their job. The alliance member organizations and FCs and CCs will make effort to build women's and marginalized peoples' confidence to speak out.

Network mobilization: The Constitution Building Support Alliance (CBSA) has its network at district and VDC level. Ongoing communications between centre, districts and VDCs to ensure common understanding and to synchronize the activities are maintained by using the network. District level and VDC level alliance member organizations will act in a coordinated manner to effectively meet the objectives.

Media mobilization: Community FM will be one of the major tools and means to air the views of people and to share information. Hence, special focus will be given on this. Building relationship with journalists will be another area of focus.

Activities

The VDCs to be covered in each district will be identified by Constitution Building Support Alliance (CBSA). One Field Coordinator (FC) will be hired for each of the project districts. Organize training aids and materials for the training of FCs and CCs. Conduct training of FCs and CCs. Conduct and facilitate interaction activities at VDC level. Develop and implement community radio program at district level. Conduct and facilitate interaction activities at district level. Conduct dialogue program with political parties and their sister organizations. Collect information, suggestions and recommendations from different sources. Ensure the validity of the collected information. Meet with leaders of district political parties and present the recommendations. Meet with leaders of central level political parties and present the recommendations. Meet with members of CA committees and present the recommendations.