

8th Annual Social Audit

Community Self Reliance Centre conducted its 8th Social Audit on 2nd October 2015. As an organization that believes in maintaining transparency and accountability, CSRC organizes Social Audit of its activities, achievements and financial status every year. This year too, CSRC invited community members, activists from the Land and Agrarian Rights campaign, partner agencies and stakeholders in the government and private sector to participate in its Social Audit and review its activities. A total of 153 people participated in the program. Organizing Social Audit has helped CSRC to grow as an organization, allowing it to improve performance and incorporate feedbacks and suggestion into programme and projects.

Kalpana Karki, Campaign Coordinator of CSRC, conducted the event. This year's Social Audit fell in the International Day of Non-Violence and it was also an occasion to celebrate the organization's commitment to non-violence in leading the Land and Agrarian Rights campaign. A short photo presentation was shown at the beginning of the program with highlights of important activities from the year.



The program started with remarks from Jagat Deuja, Executive Director of CSRC who presented the Annual Progress Report outlining major achievements and activities of the year. Geeta Pandit, Senior Finance and Administration Officer from CSRC presented financial details. Copies of Financial Report, Annual Progress Report and other organizational publications were distributed to the participants as well.

The second phase of the program comprised of comments from reviewers. Reviewers included Chartered Accountant Nawaraj Thapalia who carried out independent audit of the organization, Associate Professor Dr Sagar Raj Sharma from Kathmandu University and Professor Dr Laya Prasad Uprety from Tribhuvan University.

Thapalia made some useful suggestions to improve the financial health of the organization and commended the organization for maintaining high degree of financial discipline and transparency. Dr Sharma lauded CSRC for being one of the few organizations in Nepal to conduct regular Social Audit and

said that was an achievement in itself. "The provisions included in the new constitution are testament to CSRC's successful policy advocacy. Land related policies in the new statute address the issues that CSRC has raised over eight years in exact terms," Dr Uprety said.

Speakers also praised the organization for successfully using non-violent methods and approaches to spearhead a social movement. Enterprise Development Programme Advisor from Oxfam, Sudha Khadka noted that CSRC's program design which integrates right-based approach is one of the strongest features of the organization. Ganesh Prasad Bhatta, Deputy Director General of Survey Department emphasized the importance of using evidence based policy advocacy to promote inclusive land governance policies.

Speakers also gave concrete suggestions on how to further develop CSRC as an effective, impactful and innovative organization by improving upon weaknesses and limitations.

Following key suggestions were made by reviewers and speakers during the Social Audit:

Suggestions	Commitments
Increase internal funds. Currently internal fund forms 3-10% of total funds which is minimal and not enough to ensure organizational sustainability and self-reliance.	A Sustainability Strategy will be developed within six months based on review of efforts till date.
Restructure organization and the movement according to the new federal set-up of the country, in view of the changed system wherein new provinces will be able to interpret and form their own laws and policies on land.	A team will be formed to study and prepare a new format for restructuring the organization.
Limit administration expenses and strengthen financial monitoring at field level.	CSRC has always ensured that the administration expenses do not exceed 20% of the total expenditure and will continue this practice in the future.
Increase work productivity and sense of ownership among employers and prioritize staff retention.	CSRC will increase number of regular staffs and prioritize capacity-building of staff.
Enhance and strengthen knowledge and expertise of people involved in the movement and the organization.	A detailed and concrete plan will be prepared and implemented for capacity building based on consultations with reviewers and integrate it with yearly plan.
Increase research activities for evidence based policy advocacy and involve people in academia and land administration for the purpose.	Efforts have been made for this in the past too and the organization will strongly prioritize this concern in upcoming plans.
Support organizational strengthening of cooperatives and develop them as model for advocacy and social movements that can be replicated in other countries.	District level reviews will be conducted to strengthen cooperatives of land rights deprived people. Training for cooperative members has also been included in the Yearly Program for this purpose.

<p>Develop the organization as a learning centre and support organizational development of other organizations to implement programs.</p>	<p>CSRC has focussed on capacity building of National Land Right Forum and other supporting organizations and will work further to empower these organizations to do valuable work.</p>
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Community leaders from District and Village Land Right Forums spoke on the program as well. Badri Sada, chairperson of Saraswati VLRG, Udaypur said that the Mushars don't have the ownership of land that they have tilled for generations and that the community is fighting for their rights with VLRG's support. The floor was opened for discussion during which participants from various sectors put forward their questions and suggestions.

The program ended with concluding remarks from CSRC's chairperson Dr Suresh Dhakal who thanked partner agencies, members of Village, District and National Land Right Forums, organizational staff and working committee members and the media for their support and contribution.

A Social Audit report was published and distributed to participants within a week after the program and financial and progress reports were also published online on the organizational website.