



Monthly Communique, Vol III
December 2024
Community Self Reliance Centre

December Highlights:

In December, CSRC's campaigns were in full swing, tackling a range of issues. The Birta issues were brought into the policy discussion. To further strengthen the land rights movement, a land camp was held in Rasuwa, offering support and resources to those involved in the movement.

In addition to this, learning visits for disaster management programs were conducted, providing participants with hands-on learning experiences and the opportunity to observe best practices in disaster preparedness and response.

Meanwhile, in Dang, the verification process for Landless Dalits and Landless Sukumbaasis began. This crucial step aims to identify and officially recognize these groups, enabling them to access government benefits and support for securing land rights and improving their living conditions.

These efforts have continued CSRC's commitment to addressing land rights issues, enhancing disaster management capabilities, and supporting marginalized communities in Nepal.

Consultation on the Integrated Land Act of Lumbini Province

The Ministry of Agriculture, Land Management, and Cooperatives of Lumbini Province organized a one-day consultation on December 3, 2024, at the provincial headquarter Deukhuri, Dang. Mr. Anil Marasini, Chief of the Land Division, presented the draft Integrated Land Act and incorporated expert insights from various distinguished personalities.

Key contributors included Mr. Janak Raj Joshi, Executive Director of the Land Management Training Center; Mr. Madhusudan Adhikari, Former Secretary of the Nepal Government and Director General of the Survey Department; Mr. Padmanidhi Soti, Former Director General of the Land Management and Archive Department; Dr. Jagat Basnet, Expert Member of the Land Issues Resolving Commission; and Mr. Jagat Deuja, Member of the Federal Land Use Council and Executive Director of CSRC. These experts provided detailed feedback and recommendations on the draft bill.

The consultation also provided ample opportunities for participants to share their views and propose changes to the draft. Hon. Dinesh Panthi, Minister of Agriculture, Land Management, and Cooperatives, committed to submitting the bill to the Provincial Parliament during its inter-session.

The draft bill addresses a comprehensive range of land-related issues, including tenure reform, land use management, and improvements in land governance. CSRC supported logistically inviting experts for this consultation.

Empowering Communities: Early Actions and Sustainable Infrastructure highlighted

From December 18th to 20th, 2024, a two-day exposure visit was conducted with the participation of 24 representatives. The learning visit targeted the Chairperson, DRR focal person, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) from the working areas of Pratibaddha.

The main objective of this event was to share best practices and challenges in landslide risk management, reconstruction, and relocation grants for monsoon-affected households. Additionally, it aimed to showcase disaster mitigation and early action activities so that the Rural Municipality of the western province could learn and replicate these practices at the local level.

During the exposure visit, a field-based interaction program took place in Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality, focusing on Ward No. 3, Larcha. This activity targeted Category-III households that had been relocated to a safer area. Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) members shared valuable insights and experiences regarding early action taken by the community after receiving Impact-Based Forecasts from the Municipal level through Viber group communication and disaster mitigation activities.

Additionally, in Ward No. 4, Khakundol, participants observed and understood rural road construction practices based on the Rural Road Construction Guideline endorsed by Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality. The observation and interaction highlighted critical aspects such as the integration of bioengineering techniques, water management, and slope reduction measures to ensure sustainable and resilient infrastructure during road construction.

Dipak Tamang CDMC member, Ward No.3 Larch stated "At our community level, we avoid using the dozer haphazardly for construction of roads. Instead, we construct roads manually. If required, we use the excavator wisely and always consult with the engineers from the Rural Municipality."

Ganesh Bahadur Bohora, Kedarsyu RM, Chairperson stated " The loss of lives and property caused by various disasters highlights the critical need for effective disaster risk management policies in Kedarsyu. Unfortunately, the lack of such policies has exacerbated the impact. This learning visit provides a valuable opportunity to develop and strengthen disaster-related policies. Additionally, I aim to implement Early Warning System, with the support of the Pratibaddha Project."

Bir Bahadur Giri. Barekot RM, Chairperson stated "Developing and implementing disaster risk management policies in Barekot is essential. These efforts will extend beyond policy formulation to practical actions, such as constructing roads with proper drainage systems, employing bio-engineering techniques, and ensuring slope stabilization".

During the discussion with the Local Government officials, Manju Tamang, Deputy Mayor of Barhabise Municipality stated, "*After the implementation of Pratibaddha project in our municipality, we were able to initiate early actions during the heavy rainfall, for example despite the heavy rainfall in 2024 August we were able to prevent human casualties despite significant infrastructural damage*".



Community level interaction in Ward no. 3 Larcha, Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality

From Saplings to Sales: Tibetan Tea Production

Local farmers in Panchpokhari Thangpal RM have started produced traditional Tibetan tea. Budhan Tamang, a local resident shared, *"Once we planted the tea saplings, we never had to go to the market to buy tea. The locally produced tea tastes and smells good."*

The Tamang, Lama, and Sherpa communities consume Tibetan butter tea daily, and it is essential for cultural programs. Rekpa Tamang added, *"We produced enough for ourselves and now we are able to sell to others nearby."*

This success is attributed to a three-day training on tea pruning and various tea-making techniques, including green tea and Tibetan tea, held in Panchpokhari Thangpal RM – 1, Banshkharka from December 25-27, 2024. Twenty-one farmers, including six women, actively participated and were trained in the tea-making process. The community has gained the knowledge and skills to make Tibetan tea.

CSRC has been supporting tea farming in Panchpokhari Thangpal RM – 1, Banshkharka under the Climate Resilient Land Agri Initiative. This initiative enhances community resilience and livelihoods by equipping locals with tea production and making skills.

Glimpses of the training



Tea harvesting in Pachpokhari Thangpal Rural Municipality –I Newartole. PC- Deepika Aryal



Varieties of tea making process being practiced by the farmer of Pachpokhari Thangpal Rural Municipality-I Newartole.

Orientation for Organization and Campaign

This month, orientations were conducted in Rasuwa and Sindhupalchowk districts to strengthen organizations and campaigns. The sessions included mapping organizational achievements, challenges, and learnings. Similarly, there were discussions on land policies and the Land Issue Resolving Commission's (LIRC) formation order, and participatory discussions on local land issues.

A total of 74 participants, including 38 women, gained a deeper understanding of the campaign, organization, and relevant policies. Through participatory mapping of organizational achievements (of previous milestones), leaders were motivated to strengthen their organizations and campaigns by developing action plans. These plans include increasing membership, mobilizing leaders, and conducting issue-based campaigns.

Discussions on land policies and the land commission's procedures further increased the leaders' self-esteem and equipped them with the necessary knowledge to strengthen their organizations and campaigns. Participants from both districts developed specific organizational strengthening and campaign plans.



Step Towards Resolving the Birta Issue

There has been a discussion with Bishnu Rimal, chief political advisor of the prime minister, regarding the Birta issue and its resolution. The main objective of the meeting was to request necessary legal to address the Birta issues in Rasuwa and Nuwakot. The meeting also discussed the issues of Guthi land and displaced people (Khaldebasi) in Rasuwa.

Following the discussion, Rimal assured that the process of amending the Birta Act and regulations would be initiated. He committed to discussing the resolution of Birta, Guthi, and displaced people's issues with the Minister of Land Management, Cooperatives, and Poverty Alleviation, and the Prime Minister, and to moving forward with the legal process. The meeting was attended by Bhawani Prasad Neupane, the Chairperson of the Rasuwa District Land Rights Forum; Madhab Prasad Aryal, the municipal chair of Uttargaya Rural Municipality; former Constituent Assembly member Prem Tamang; and Jagat Deuja, the Executive Director of CSRC, and Bishwash Nepali, program coordinator.



Strengthening Movement Through Land Camp

The District Land Rights Forum (DLRF), Rasuwa, has conducted two land camps to discuss the Birta campaign and strengthen the organization. The DLRF representatives visited two Village Land Rights Forums (VLRf): Chanbhume Village Land Rights Forum of Bhorle village in Naukunda RM-5 and Pahirebeshi Village Land Rights Forum in Uttargaya-4 to inform them about the ongoing efforts under the Birta campaign. They also urged the villagers to be prepared for a movement if necessary and to remain continuously mobilized.

VLRf members shared their issues, grievances, the organization's efforts, organizational details, and the movement fund. They pledged to be more committed to the campaign. A total of 66 people participated in the two camps, including 38 women, 28 men, 3 Dalits, 48 indigenous, and 15 Brahmin and Chhetri.

Annual PRRP held

The Annual Participatory Review and Reflection Program of CSRC took place from 22-23 December 2024 at the Rapti Tharu Community Homestay's Community Hall in Rapti-6, Bagarapur, Dang. Participants included representatives from the National Land Rights Forum, 13 District Land Rights Forums, Mukta Kamaiya Samaaj, Mukta Kamlari Bikas Manch, Guthi tenant farmers and the CSRC staff.

A total of 70 participants (38 men, 32 women) were present in the event. The L4ACT team from Dang facilitated the program.

Jagat Deuja, Executive Director of CSRC addressed the event by saying, "It is a participatory program, so we must learn and share knowledge between the experienced and new participants in the field of land-agriculture movements. He also emphasized that 'everyone should be eager to learn new things while simultaneously building on past experiences.'"

The program also highlighted the rich and vibrant culture of the Tharu community, featuring their preparation of local delicacies and captivating cultural dance performances."



Annual PRRP held at Dang



The main achievements of last year included the expansion of Land Rights Forum activities beyond land issues, with involvement in organizing Agriculture Farmer Groups to help uplift landless people. Common challenges highlighted were the lack of financial resources within the Land Rights Forum and delays in forming the District Land Commission.

This event allowed land rights campaigners from different districts facing similar issues to unite, exchange achievements, and share lessons and challenges. This collaboration is seen as a source of motivation for their future work.

Empowering Farmers

The training on Climate Smart Agriculture was conducted in four Palikas of the Deukhuri valley, Dang: Rapti Rural Municipality (8-9th Dec), Gadhawa Rural Municipality (12-13th Dec), Lamahi Municipality (16-17th Dec), and Rajpur Rural Municipality (18-19th Dec). The main objective was to increase understanding among farmers and stakeholders about the importance of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and its technologies.

A total of 115 participants attended the training: 36 from Rapti, 30 from Gadhawa, 22 from Lamahi, and 27 from Rajpur. These participants included leader farmers from the Land Right Forum and Agriculture Technicians from the respective Palikas. They were educated on climate change, its causes and effects, as well as the importance of climate-smart technologies. Demonstrations highlighted key practices such as mulching, soil sterilization, and nursery bed preparation.

During the discussion, Mr. Harish Chandra Chaudhary, a farmer from Rapti-6, emphasized the vital role farmers play in controlling climate change and expressed his commitment to focusing on compost manure preparation and Farmacyard Manure management. Sarita Chaudhary, a farmer from Parnahwa, Gadhawa-5, shared her realization about the dangers of excessive pesticide use and the importance of minimizing it by following safety measures. Participants from Rajpur Municipality mentioned that this was their first agriculture training and expressed their satisfaction with the CSA program carried out in their respective municipalities.



Demonstration on nursery bed preparation in Parnahwa, Gadhawa-05

Verification process begins

Lamahi Municipality Ward No. 3, 9 and Rajpur Rural Municipality Ward No. 2, in collaboration with the Land Agriculture Program, held the first phase of the ward-level facilitation committee meeting in accordance with the Work Procedure of land commission and published a seven-day title claim notice for identification and verification of landless Dalits and landless *sukumbasi* who have filled the application at the ward level.

