



MONTHLY COMMUNIQUE

January 2025



LAND AND
AGRARIAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
IN NEPAL

January at CSRC, in Brief

The first month of 2025 was an exciting period for CSRC, filled with new and impactful initiatives. CSRC initiated a culture of philanthropy aimed at supporting the solidarity movement against evictions throughout Nepal. We also introduced a culture of learning and sharing during our weekly meetings. Each week, a staff member presents something creative, providing a platform for collective learning and inspiration.

Our campaign against evictions has gained further momentum with additional orientations across districts and a massive assembly protesting evictions. The ongoing programs continue to thrive with enthusiastic trainings and impactful activities throughout the month.

Strengthening the Campaign

A two-day orientation was held in Banke and Surkhet to strengthen the land rights campaign. The event covered topics such as campaign progress, challenges, policy changes, and the new status of land-related progress since the formation of the Land Issues Resolving Commission. A total of 95 campaigners participated (50 women and 48 men). The priorities for the coming year include increasing youth participation, engaging more frontline leaders, and organizing additional training sessions and land camps. These activities are expected to further strengthen the movement.



Land rights orientation at Banke

Impactful Media Coverage of the Birta Issue

Last month, the Birta issue in Rasuwa and Nuwakot garnered extensive and impactful media coverage. The headlines on front pages captured national attention, including that of Federal Government Ministers. In an interview with the national daily newspaper Kantipur, the Minister of Land Management, Cooperatives, and Poverty Alleviation, Honorable Balram Adhikari, acknowledged the seriousness of the matter.



In the past month alone in the national daily Kantipur, the Birta issue was featured as the main news three times. Additionally, a feature interview with CSRC’s Executive Director Jagat Deuja was published, 13 letters from readers were featured, and five short video stories were made. This effort has given new hope to Birta farmers and made policymakers realize that this issue needs an urgent solution, as the farmers are suffering. (*Links for the featured news on January 2025*):

<https://ekantipur.com/en/Interview/2025/01/26/it-should-be-given-to-farmers-who-have-been-plowing-for-generations-not-to-birtawals-who-do-not-know-the-land-49-38.html>

<https://ekantipur.com/en/news/2025/01/18/the-tireless-women-of-the-land-movement-who-are-on-the-streets-25-18.html>

Accelerating Land Allocation Process at Banggadhi Municipality, Bardiya

Banggadhi Municipality Council has approved the data of landless and informal settlers by implementing the IVR process, ensuring accuracy and completeness in the land allocation system. Initially, incomplete data entries and miscategorized landless categories were identified and corrected. Errors in categorizing landless Dalit and Sukumbasi applicants were corrected, and inaccurate Nissa documents were replaced. Verified applications were categorized and displayed on ward notice boards for public review. Post-verification, ward-validated lists were submitted to the Municipality Facilitation Committee (MFC) for further processing. On January 28, 2025, LIRC committee members visited and interacted with the MFC, energizing the municipality and stakeholders involved in land allocation. Land use



Triangulation of image survey at Gairi village



CSRC facilitating LSC officials in IVR process

maps and LIDAR images were collected and generated for all wards with the assistance of CSRC. Hands-on support was provided to survey amins in conducting LIDAR/image-based surveys, identifying areas, interpreting images, and locating field books for land parcels. The survey of Gairi village in Ward 2 was successfully completed using LIDAR imaging, with results accurately aligned with the cadastral image. These concerted efforts have significantly enhanced the accuracy, transparency, and efficiency of the land allocation process in Bansgadhi Municipality.

Land Rights Assembly Against Eviction Threats

The District Land Rights Forum (DLRF) issued a press release urging to stop eviction of landless families of Sagarnath Forest Area and submitted a memorandum to the Land Issues Resolving Commission, Division Forest Office, and District Administration Office. On February 4th, 2025, a Land Rights Assembly was held at Bagmati-4, Jirayat, organized by the District Land Rights Forum, Sarlahi. Around 800 people attended, including the District Chairperson of the Land Problem Resolution Commission, the Former Chairperson of the National Land Commission, the General Secretary of the NLRF, and representatives from the Land Rights Forums of Mahottari, Rautahat, Bara, and Parsa. Frontline leaders of Sarlahi, people affected by eviction, civil society members, and media also participated in the meeting. The affected individuals shared their experiences of suffering, while other stakeholders and forum leaders urged the government to prohibit eviction and warned that they would retaliate if necessary. This assembly has given power to community members who are in threats of eviction.



A Mass Gathering at the Land Rights Assembly brought around 800 people

Interaction Program on the Written Agreement on Sharecropping and Contract Farming

Two interaction programs were held in Gadhwara RM ward no. 5 and Rapti Rural Municipality, ward no. 6 regarding the written agreement on Sharecropping and Contract Farming as well as completing the STDM survey form. The landowners and the farmers interacted in this program. A local resident, Harichandra Chaudhary stated, “ I have been farming as a contract farmer by signing a five year agreement, this helps in taking care of the land well. Had the agreement been short term, I might have used chemicals, but since its long term I can farm with bio- fertilizers with relief. The land is preserved, the production increases. This makes us work with relief and freedom, thus signing a written agreement is very important.” A total of 109 STDM survey forms have been filled out.



Participants in STDM, Gadhwara-5

Land Rights and Conflict in Bardiya and Chitwan Buffer Zones



The Case study authors meet with the local representatives of Betini, Thakur Baba Municipality

A case study titled ‘Conservation vs. Conflict: Land Struggles in Buffer Zones in Nepal’ is currently ongoing in the buffer zone areas of Bardiya and Chitwan. This study aims to provide an overview of the national buffer zones in Nepal, with a focus on advocating for the communities residing in the buffer zones of Chitwan and Bardiya National Parks. Specifically, its objectives are :

- To map and analyze land related conflicts in the buffer zones of Chitwan and Bardiya National Parks of Nepal
- To assess the environmental and socio-economic impacts of land rights violations on buffer zone communities, examining how restricted access to land resources influences conservation efforts and community well-being

- To gather recommendations and strategy on best solutions for the buffer zone communities.

A field visit was carried out as part of this case study in the buffer zone areas of Bharatpur municipality-ward no. 24 and Ayodhyapuri Rural Municipality Chitwan and Thakur baba Municipality and Barbardiya Municipality, Bardiya.



The community members expressed their voice in solidarity, *“We are all living in harmony, some of us are former Kamaiyas, some of us are informal settlers, whereas some of us are Sukumbaasi. We all hope to receive the land ownership certificate through proper survey.”* Barbardiya-7, Rambapur

Training to WHRDs on access to Land and Right to Adequate Housing

Amnesty International Nepal (AI Nepal), Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC), Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj (NMES), and the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders (NAWHRD) jointly organized a training session on land access and the right to adequate housing on January 27th and 28th, 2025, in Rajabas, Udayapur. This event was aimed at Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs). The training’s main goal was to deepen WHRDs’ understanding of land access, ownership and adequate housing rights while discussing effective collective advocacy strategies at the local level to prevent the landless and those in informal settlements from



Group work during the training

preventing the landless and those in informal settlements from



Participants of the Program

becoming homeless due to interventions by the state or other entities. The event saw the participation of 34 WHRDs representing NAWHRD, NMES, AI Nepal members, and the National Land Rights Forum (NLRF) from 11 districts across Koshi and Madhesh provinces. CSRC's Executive Director Jagat Deuja mentioned the connection between humans and land, discussing its economic, social, and cultural importance. He mentioned that land is closely tied to job

security, identity, and status, but noted that ownership is still a significant challenge, particularly for women. He stressed the importance of equitable land distribution and legal recognition to ensure comprehensive land rights for all.

An Initiative for Eco-Friendly Management of Crop Insect Pests: Climate-Smart Agriculture Training

A series of farm-level training sessions on the preparation of botanical pesticides, were conducted for landless and smallholder farmers in four local governments of the Deukhuri Valley, Dang district: Gadhawa, Rapti, Rajpur Rural Municipality, and Lamahi Municipality. The training focused on orienting farmers to preparation methods for three types of Jholmal: Jholmal-1 as a biofertilizer, and Jholmal-2 and Jholmal-3 as biopesticides. Eleven one-day training events were organized, with a total of 242 farmers participating. The training focused on promoting the use of botanical pesticides in the farmers' kitchen gardens, ensuring that the vegetables grown for family consumption are free from harmful chemicals, thus promoting both health and environmental sustainability.



Participants preparing botanical pesticide preparation in Gadhawa-05 Khajurauta



I was unaware of botanical pesticides before the training and was compelled to use chemical pesticides, which eventually caused various health problems. Now, I am happy that I can substitute chemical pesticides with botanical ones.

- Rajmati Raidas, Chairperson of the Pragati Farmers Group in Gadhawa-05, shared,

Perennial Fruit Plantation for Sustainable Livelihoods

As part of an ongoing commitment to promoting sustainable agriculture, 759 high-value perennial fruit saplings—kiwi, walnut, apricot, pear, persimmon, and peach—were successfully planted by 66 farmers in Panchpokhari Thangpal Rural Municipality (Ward No. 2: Salme, Dale, Bolgaon; Ward No. 1: Pujaritol). To ensure the successful plantation of these saplings, pre-distribution field monitoring was conducted. Farmers were assessed for planting readiness, including pit preparation, tree spacing, and soil quality. Best practices such as compost application, soil sterilization using dry organic matter, and proper irrigation techniques were introduced to optimize growth. Additionally, farmers received hands-on training in mulching to improve moisture retention and soil health.



Phurpa Sherpa in his Kiwi Farm at Shalme | Photo: CSRC

Farmers from Panchpokhari Thangpal Ward No. 2, Shalme, following a series of technical support interventions, the farmers significantly increased their kiwi production this year. Last year, their total kiwi yield was 1,200 kg, whereas this year, they produced over 20,000 kg and generated an income of NPR

200,000 from kiwi sales. This remarkable achievement was made possible with the support of CSRC, which facilitated better market linkages, provided microenterprise training, and introduced smart agricultural techniques such as the use of biofertilizers, grafting, pruning, and mulching.

Resource Generation

CSRC has introduced a culture of philanthropy within the organization. One box for the collection of funds is permanently installed in the meeting hall of CSRC, while another is placed near the reception area and can be moved outside the premises as needed, particularly during national events such as Social Audits, Review Meetings, Annual Day celebrations, and Workshops organized by CSRC. The funds collected will support the solidarity movement against evictions.

The Executive Director of CSRC, Mr. Jagat Deuja, inaugurating the initiative



Disaster Management Response

In January, six separate three-day First Aid trainings were conducted in Kedarsyu RM, Thalara RM, Mandavi RM, Sarumarani RM, Barekot RM, and Nalgad M.

The main objective of these trainings was to equip community members in high landslide risk areas with essential first aid skills to enhance their emergency preparedness and response capabilities. The participants included members of Ward Disaster Management Committees (WDMC), Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMC), and other high-risk community members.

The training included a theoretical presentation on basic first aid, focusing on how to protect oneself and assist community members during emergencies, followed by group discussions and hands-on

practical sessions. A total of 148 participants attended the training, consisting of 76 men and 72 women, all aged between 18 and 49.

As part of the Pratibaddha II initiative, a First Aid training session was also conducted for high landslide risk community members in Sindupalchowk and Rasuwa. One of the trained participants, Sujan Poudel, a 32-year-old CDMC member from Uttargaya RM, Lamchedhunga, shared his experience: *"On January 15, after a minor accident, I lost my toenail. I cleaned it with Betadine, applied ointment, and covered it with a bandage for 2 to 4 days until it dried and healed. I have also been providing first aid to my neighbors."*

Building a Safe and Secure Workplace Together

A safe workplace begins with collective understanding and action. On January 10th, 23 CSRC staff (12 women, 11 men) participated in a session titled "Earthquake and Fire Drill at the Workplace: Safety Plan Discussion and Drill" held at Bhumighar premises. Representatives from People in Need Nepal and CSRC provided an extensive orientation on earthquake and fire safety in the workplace.

CSRC is adopting Disaster Emergency and Evacuation Plans to prepare for potential hazards. This proactive approach ensures our workplaces are ready to respond effectively, keeping employees safe and confident in emergencies. Let's continue to prioritize safety and security—because together, we can make our workplace safer for everyone.



Drill of Fire Extinguisher