

Community Development Projects in Sarnamti (Jhapa) and Tilhar VDC (Parbat) in Nepal

- I. Tube Well Construction
- II. Adult Literacy Class



Sponsored by
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1. Background:

Nepal is a small Himalayan country. The cultural, religious and environmental diversity is very high in Nepal. There are 60 ethnic and lower caste groups. Many of the ethnic and lower caste groups are still considered as untouchable by so called aristocratic and dominating castes. Although the constitution of Nepal (1991) has clearly mentioned that no ethnic group or caste is untouchable, Nepalese societies ridden with traditional values still consider them as untouchable castes.

The *Santhal* are the ethnic minority and so-called untouchable caste group inhabiting in Jhapa and Morang Districts. For the last two years, ICA- Nepal has been carrying out saving and credit, adult literacy, awareness campaign on environmental, sustainable agriculture etc. for this community in Jhapa district.

The *Santhal* community is economically very poor and are compelled to live in an unhygienic condition because of ignorance of sanitation and not enough of drinking water supply. However, *Santhal* are hard working people and still live in clan groups. They elect their own head that guides the whole group. They mostly inhabit forest areas.

The women belonging to *Santhal* community always have to line up behind at a water point / tap even other caste women come later. Before they did not have their own taps even in-groups they could not get sufficient drinking water.

Similar situation is in Parbat where ICA Nepal has been working for last three years with dalits (low caste people), focusing on women literacy, environmental awareness, micro credit programme etc. In this area literacy rate of dalits women was nominal. After participating in the programme, they are gradually encouraged to do some thing for the family and themselves.

The project has been undertaken in Sarnamati (Jhapa) and Tilhar (Parbat) VDCs of Nepal. In Sarnamati tubewells were established while in Tilhar an evening literacy class was carried out for women.

2. Objectives:

The objectives of this support are as follows:

- to carry on adult literacy class for 25 dalit women in Tilahar, and
- to provide facility of drinking water for about 500 people in Sarnamati VDC.

3. Activities:

3.1. Adult Literacy Class:

With this support, ICA has been carrying out a literacy class in Parbat, Western Nepal that has been attended by 25 dalit (*Sarki, Kami, and Dama*) women and some girl children at Tilahar VDC. The course will be run for a period of 9 months. At present it is going on for six months. Before the course, the facilitator was selected from the community and sent for training. The course is being run by following REFLECT methods developed by Paulo Frerie. Occasional supervision is carried from the head office. The participants are already feeling a change in their own life.

3.2. Establishment of Tubewells

Similarly, another activity has been carried out in Jhapa District. 15 tube wells were established in Sarnamati, Jhapa to provide drinking water for about 500 *Santhal* people.

For the selection of site for tube wells, community meetings were organised in the village which were attended by the field staffs, the local community and Village Development Committees. They prepared a map of the area showing clusters of houses where there is lack of water. For each tubewell, two or three households were identified to take care of it. In February, 15 tube wells were established. Local people volunteered labour and provided stones and carried water necessary for the construction. They also paid a small amount, which will go into a maintenance fund for large repairs. The tube wells are at least 20 feet deep, 5 feet of iron pipes, 15 feet of plastic pipe. Now the *Santhal* women are happy and their houses are much cleaner and have time to do other extra work for their income.

Munsi Tudu, a resident of Sarnamati VDC is proud to have a tubewell near his house. He says that now he saves his time which he can use for other activities. Similarly, Maya B. K. who has been attending the literacy course conducted at Tilahar, Parbat is now able to read and write. She says she had never thought that one day she would be able to read and write like other literate person.

In this site we have a field office where one field coordinator and two assistants are appointed for last two years. They belong to so called lower caste.

The local people are very happy and thank heartily to Danny and Jean Glenn, and also to ICA Nepal for coordination.

4. Funding Support:

The total cost of the project is US \$ 2 000. Danny and Jean Glenn from Greensboro, USA supported US \$ 1 000 to carry on this task. We spent US \$ 500 to this project received from Nelson and Elaine Stover. ICA Nepal itself contributed US \$ 500. ICA Nepal raised this amount through book sale written by F. Nelson Stover.

5. Acknowledgement:

ICA Nepal would like to express sincere gratitude to Danny and Jean Glenn for their contribution to carry on the community development activities in Parbat and Jhapa. We would also like to acknowledge Nelson and Elaine Stover from Greensboro, USA who have been regularly supporting morally as well as financially to carry on community development activities since the inception of ICA Nepal. We would also like to thank all the local people who contributed their labour sincerely to change their own area.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs-Nepal

The Institute of Cultural Affairs-Nepal (ICA-Nepal) was established in March, 1998 in Kathmandu, Nepal. It is an autonomous, non-profitable, non-political and non governmental organisation registered at His Majesty's Government, Social Welfare Council and NGO Federation of Nepal. It is a member organisation of the Institute of Cultural Affairs International, headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. ICA-Nepal is one of the thirty-three national ICAs established around the world.

ICA-Nepal is autonomous and self-reliant, just as all other ICAs within the ICA-Network world-wide, but does profit from the exchange of knowledge and experience, the international meetings and conferences organised by ICA-International Office. ICA-Nepal has its head office in Kathmandu with the necessary office and communication facilities.

As a national member of ICA International, ICA-Nepal aims to introduce the experiences of various ICAs, including ICA International in the Nepalese context. The three major areas of activities of the ICAs are sustainable development, life-long education and organisational transformation. Central to all activities of ICA-Nepal is that they are based on participation of the people who are connected in one way or the other to the activity. Participation is a vital element in the aims of ICA-Nepal.

A. Achievement (2000)

1. Research

1. ICA Nepal carried out about 6 months long research work on 'NGO Selection' in far western part of Nepal. It also carried out impact evaluation of the Nepal Trust and research on Biodiversity in Khanigaun area, Parbat district.

2. Training

ICA Nepal organises training and facilitation programmes for general public. It is one of the main ways of fundraising locally. It is ICA Nepal's policy that at least 30 percent of the income from the training/facilitation should be spent on community development activities in Nepal.

For the last three years, since its inception, ICA Nepal's staff have attended several national and international training. It helps the group to carry on the tasks effectively.

3. Human Development Projects

Various community development works are ongoing with the financial support of some donor organisations and generous individuals. The projects are 8 months to three years long.

Major work carried out so far:

1. Adult literacy classes of 6 to 9 months long in 30 sites
2. Micro credit and saving for about 500 women
3. Strategic planning sessions - 15
4. Based on the need of the area various training programme on sewing, beekeeping, income generation, paper work, leadership development, REFLECT, participatory tools, environmental management and sanitation, improved cookstoves construction, low cost toilet construction, literacy teacher training, sustainable agriculture, group facilitation and strategic planning etc. were organized on several occasions for the project beneficiaries and staff.
5. Construction of 150 improved cookstoves, 27 low cost toilet in different places
6. Street drama in 15 sites on different occasion
7. Formation of 5 eco-clubs in different schools in the project area
8. Preparation of eco museum in a school
6. Preparation of nursery of 10 000 plants

7. Plantation of 8 000 plants
8. Exposure visit of one day to 4 days in four times for about 90 participants from the community
9. Construction of soak pits in 9 VDCs.
10. Installation of 15 tube wells.
11. Health camps.

B. Problems:

ICA Nepal did not face much problems in 2000. Although, there are about 35 staff in ICA Nepal, we were too busy during the year. We were able to get some support from outside. We were also quite successful to raise funding through training in Nepal.

ICA Nepal does not have its own building and it has to move from one to another. It does not have its own training center so sometimes managing training venue is quite difficult.

We do not have sufficient training materials such as slide projector, multi media etc. We are also unable to send our staff for further training because of financial weakness. We also lack enough funding to carry on the task set for the coming years.

C. Plan (2001):

In 2001, we are planning to continue most of the works. Some of the projects will be continued while some will be just in the phase of follow-up. Some of the major activities that we are planning for 2001 are as follows:

1. Organising training courses:

15 training courses from a duration of 3 days to 11 days will be organised for general public in 2001. About 6 in-house courses are expected in this year. About same number of facilitation contracts are expected in 2001. We are planning only that number of training and facilitation activities because of the limited number of trainers/facilitators with us.

2. Making community training and development centre:

This year we are planning to construct three community training and development center in three different areas in Nepal. They will be located in Changu Narayan (Bhaktapur), Khanigaun (Parbat) and Mahespur VDC (Jhapa). Each of these building will have a training hall and space for offices. Based on the needs of the local community, ICA Nepal will conduct various training courses from the centre. We are also planning to manage land for ICA Nepal's head office in Kathmandu.

3. Establishing Human Ecology and Development Centre in Jhapa

ICA Nepal has been establishing an agri farm in Jhapa district covering about 2 hectares of land. The preliminary work of designing and basic construction activities have been finished. The farm will apply sustainable agricultural practices and will have its own fund generating mechanism. It is expected that within three years the centre will be able to support local level development activities and will become a self-sustained centre.

4. New Projects:

This year apart from the follow-up activities some new community development activities are expected. New projects will be implemented in the same districts in which ICA is working at present.

5. Volunteer Support Programme

ICA Nepal will be supporting foreign individuals who would like to volunteer in Nepal. Some of them will be involved in ICA's work and others in other partner organizations of ICA Nepal.

6. Rural NGO Strengthening Project

ICA Nepal is working closely with some local level NGOs. They will be supported to strengthen their institutional capacity. We will be helping about 5 NGOs in preparing their own strategic plan and implement the plan.

7. Staff Capacity Building

In 2001, ICA Nepal staff will be attending various national and international training and facilitation courses.

D. Request for Support:

We kindly request individuals and organisations for support so that we could carry on development activities in much needy areas of Nepal.

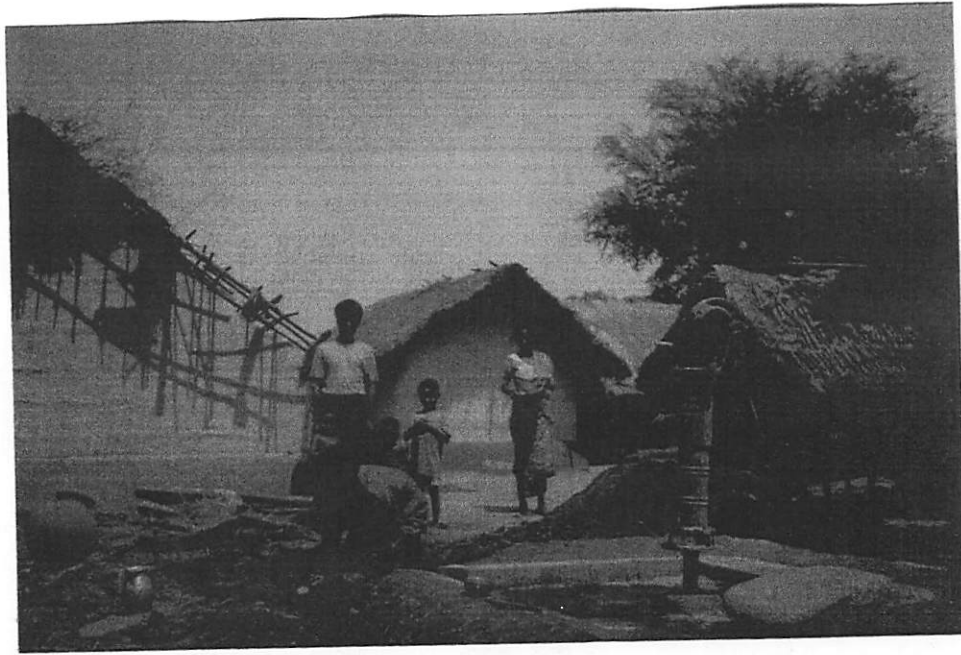
List of Photographs:



Local facilitators from Parbat and Jhapa, after a training session



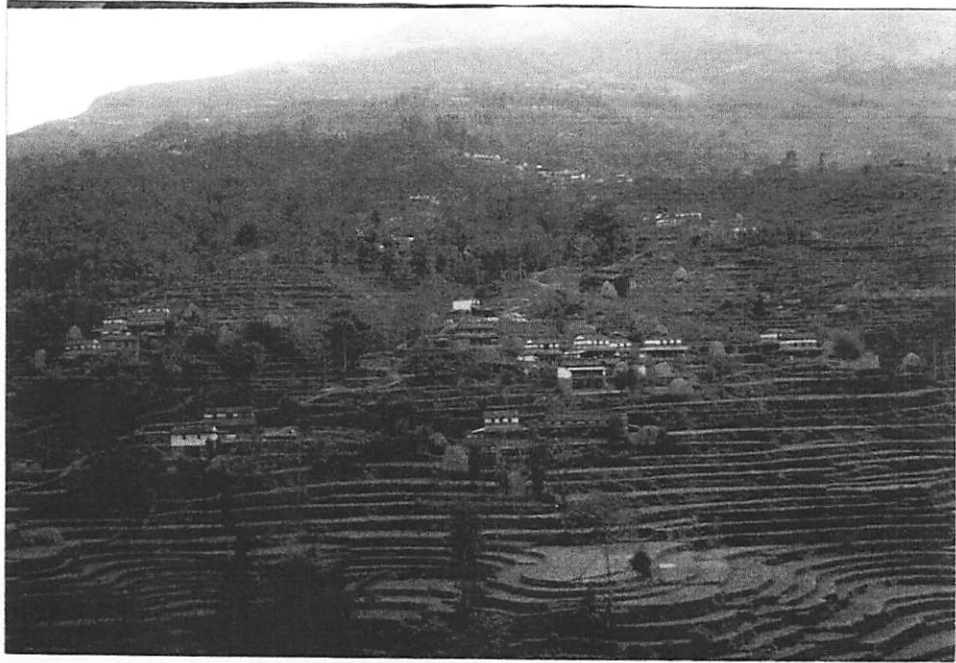
Santahl in Sarnamati VDC has a rich cultural tradition. Dancing in a festival time



A model tubewell established in Sarnamati VDC



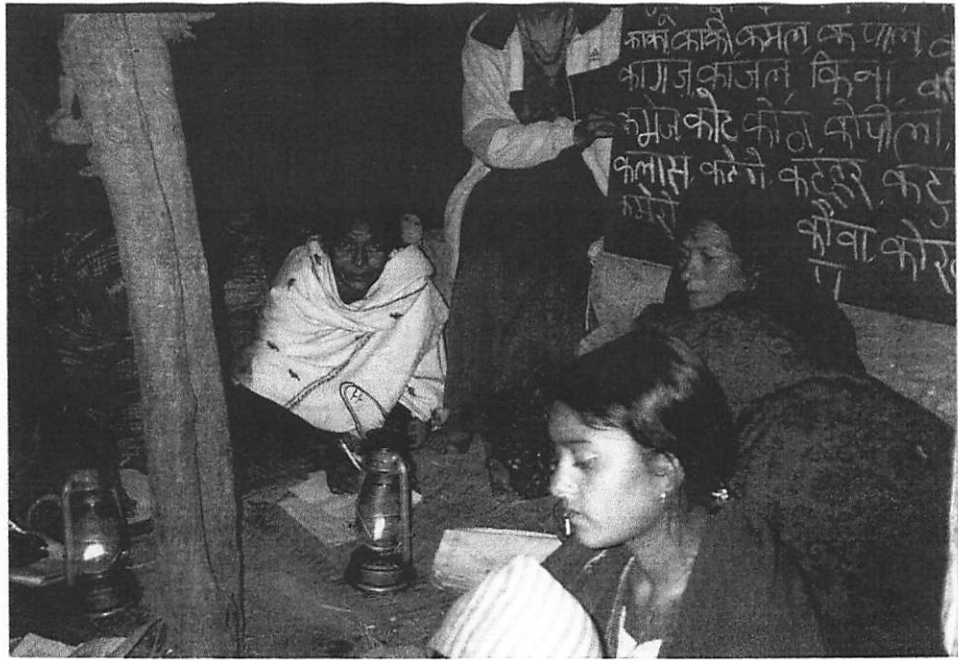
Establishment of tubewell has eased the life in Sarnamti VDC for Santhal community



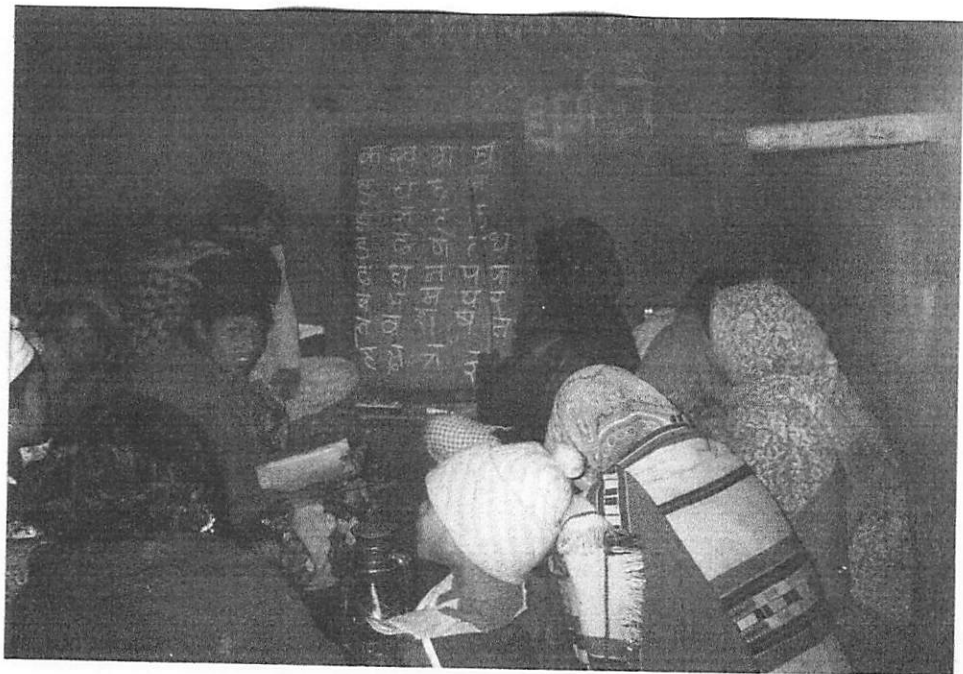
A scene of Tilahaar VDC, Parbat



Facilitator and the literacy participants



A scene of literacy class



A scene of literacy class