Freed Haliyas Live with Dignity

The Stories of Change in the Lives of Freed Haliyas in Western Nepal

2018

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

RMHSF

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION NEPAL

A member of

CHSAlliance AZEECON actalliance

Freed Haliyas Live with Dignity

© 2018 The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal

LWF Nepal reserves all rights of ownership to the original material in this booklet. No part of this document can be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of LWF Nepal.

Readers are, however, free to use the material for non-commercial purposes in course of development and humanitarian work. LWF Nepal requests to properly acknowledge such use.

Disclaimer

The material and the geographical designations in this report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of LWF Nepal concerning the legal status of the nation, provinces, districts, municipalities, rural municipalities or areas concerning the delimitation of its boundaries.

Design and Print: Beeline Communications

Message from the Country Director

Dear readers,

It is my pleasure to share with you the 'The stories of change in the Lives of Freed Haliya Communities in Western Nepal' that captures some of the major positive changes we have brought into the lives of the poor and marginalized people.

We have been documenting success stories, good practices, and lessons learnt, and sharing them widely. We have presented the stories of the most marginalized communities specially Freed Haliyas in this collection.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal has been working with the Freed Haliyas who are one of the poorest communities and have long been marginalized. The Freed Haliyas belonging to Dalit Community have spent many decades trapped in agricultural debt bonded labour on another person's land.

This booklet also documents how the Freed Haliyas have overcome the social stigma and discrimination and have been able to live a dignified life. It also shows how women and disabled people of Freed Haliya families have also come so far.

We have been working for the Haliyas since 2003 before the Government's emancipation of haliya system. The Freed Haliyas are one of the most vulnerable people and LWF Nepal has been helping them rise by providing support to sustain their livelihood.

The stories of change, progress are only the representatives from the Western part of Nepal. The book also witnesses the changes brought in the lives of the Freed Haliyas. The case stories have been collected as a part of "Improving the Resilience of Rural Livelihood Options for IDPs - Freed Haliya Communities in Nepal- project' supported by Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

LWF Nepal works in close collaboration and coordination with local partners, the government agencies at the local and national levels. This success is the combined result of the cooperation among the communities, supporting partners, government agencies and the implementing partner organizations.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Keshav Prasad Poudel for his contribution and engagement for collection of the stories and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Federation Nepal (RMHFS-N), the implementing partner of LWF for their efforts and dedication.

Happy reading!

Dr Prabin Manandhar
Country Director
LWF Nepal

Contents

Foreword	i
The Lutheran World Federation Nepal	iii
Freed Haliyas: A snapshot	1
Success Stories from the Communities	11
Transformation Through TEP	11
Literacy Changed The Life of Panna Devi	13
Transformation of Haliya Through Advocacy Campaigns	16
Income Generation Through Tailoring	18
Modern Agriculture Increases Income	20
Freed Haliya Under Shadow of Past	22
Motor's Doctor of Far-western Hill	24
Women Power Turns Village as Alcohol Free	27
Elected Leader Calls To Work Together With Civil Society Organization	30
Government Supports Civil Society Organizations	32
From Haliya Activist To Elected Deputy Mayor	34
Discrimination Even After Elections	36
Eggs Fulfill Nutrients To Freed Haliyas Children	38
Cooperatives Institutionalizing Lending	40
Iron Cutters enhances efficiency of ironsmith	43
Tailoring For Livelihood	45
Tunnel Change the Mode of Production	47
Transforming Lives of Freed Haliyas	49
Freed Haliyas Love Poultry	51

The Lutheran World Federation Nepal

Founded in Lund, Sweden in 1947, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. LWF has 145 member churches in 98 countries all over the world, with a total membership of nearly 740 million. The World Service (WS) has field offices in more than 25 countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

It is the internationally recognized humanitarian and development arm of LWF that works to give assistance to those in need, irrespective of their race, sex, religion, nationality or political conviction. Its Secretariat is in Geneva.

Nepal Program

LWF has been working in Nepal since 1984. LWF Nepal has intervened with disaster relief and rehabilitation in response to a number of emergencies, and worked with the Bhutanese refugees since 1991. Its development program has evolved from service-oriented sectoral and community development approach towards empowerment and human rights-based approaches, increasingly working with the most disadvantaged groups. LWF has shifted its intervention modalities to work with local partners (CBOs, CBO Federations, NGOs) as well as with government and civil society groups and movements to influence policy and practice at national level.

Vision:

People in Nepal, living in a just society in peace and dignity, united in diversity and empowered to achieve their full potential, claim their universal rights, meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.

Mission:

Inspired by God's love for humanity, LWF Nepal responds to and challenges the causes and effects of human suffering and poverty.

Core Values

- Dignity and justice
- Compassion and commitment
- Inclusion and respect for diversity
- Transparency and accountability

Focus Group

LWF Nepal works with disaster-affected and marginalized and vulnerable people. While working with disaster-affected people, it focuses on communities that are most vulnerable to natural disaster including climate change effects; and communities and individuals who are victims of natural disaster or forcibly displaced (including refugees, internally

displaced, and host communities), especially the most vulnerable. Similarly, it also focuses its interventions on bonded labor and ex-bonded laborers of various types; disadvantaged indigenous and minority groups; Dalits and the landless. LWF Nepal accords priority to women, children and people with disabilities.

Core Commitments

a) Human rights:
Human rights are at the core of all that LWF Nepal stands for, its actions and operations.

b) Impartiality:
LWF Nepal assists disaster-affected people, irrespective of caste and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, race or political conviction. Assistance is provided in response and relative to need, without discrimination or favoritism.

c) Inclusion and participation:
LWF Nepal is committed to be inclusive, and to enable the full and equitable participation of women and men, people with disabilities, indigenous and minority communities and Dalits in all programs and decision-making processes.

d) Accountability:
As guided by the LWF/WS Accountability Framework, we are committed to maintaining high level of staff competence and professionalism, and continued affirmation and adherence to Core Humanitarian Standard, Sphere as well as being accountable to the populations and communities our programs assist for, maintaining the highest standards.

e) Gender justice:
LWF Nepal includes gender perspectives in all aspects of its work and undertakes specific advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives to change attitudes and practices as well as to institutionalize gender justice.

f) Climate justice and environmental sustainability:
We are committed to incorporating environmental concerns into all development decisions and operations aiming at behavioral change, increased resilience and reduced vulnerability and shall apply the Climate Adaptation Framework Tool across all programs.

Thematic Areas

- Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Sustainable Livelihood
- Community-led Actions for Governance and Justice
- Organizational Effectiveness

FREED HALIYAS: A SNAPSHOT

In Vicious Trap

Even after a decade, the rehabilitation of Freed Haliyas is yet to happen fully. Only 38 percent of Freed Haliyas have received the government's rehabilitation package till the period. It seems that the complete rehabilitation and integration of Freed Haliyas in the mainstream will likely to take another five to ten years.

As the process of receiving the government package is complicated, with so many administrative hassles, many registered Freed Haliyas are deprived from the government's rehabilitation package.

As the government is yet to begin the process of completing the remaining work related to Freed Haliya rehabilitation, including the process of issuing identity cards, constructing quake resistant houses, providing safe, arable land and employment opportunities, Freed Haliya of nine districts are lucky enough to get significant benefits from the projects implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and implementing partners Upekshit Samudaya Sashaktikaran Bikash Munch (USSBM) and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Federation Nepal (RMHSF-N).

USSBM is implementing the project in Doti and RMHSF-N is in remaining eight districts namely Dadeldhura, Baitadi, Darchula, Bashing, Bajura, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Accham.

Launched in February 2018 and to be concluded in January 2019, the 12 months long project improving the resilience of rural livelihood options for IDPs - Freed Haliya communities in Nepal has already set an example on how things can change in the lives of Freed Haliya communities.

Along with advocacy, the project has also promoted on and off farm productions like poultry, off-season vegetable, education for children, nutrition, WASH, entrepreneurship, new startup, upgrade of skills, the project also provides nutritious food to Freed Haliya families under its sustained livelihood program. Even with limited resource, the project has also been responding to the education and health needs of children of Freed Haliya. During the implementation, the project has adopted Human Rights Based and participatory approach in course of project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The LWF Nepal project has targeted 8,008 Freed Haliyas from 9 districts, Bajura, Doti, Baitadi, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Bajhang, Achham, Darchula and Kailali of Province no. 7 of Nepal.

Along with the formal group, the project has also indirectly targeted 19,059 Freed Haliya families/IDPs identified by government of Nepal. The project has also focused on those programs aiming to change policies on Freed Haliyas rehabilitations and their future programs.

A Freed Haliya Women Hopes for Dignified Life

Despite several efforts, the government has registered only 19,059 households in different categories like A, B, C and D category as per their economic status. However, the Freed Haliya representatives are claiming that more than 15,000 Freed Haliyas are yet to be registered.

LWF Nepal's project is noteworthy as it has been implemented during the time of the successful completion of the Local, Provincial and Federal government elections. "Freed Haliyas are facing triple discrimination based on being Freed Haliyas; they have been facing caste based violence

as they are Dalit and Freed Haliya women have been facing various types of Gender based violence. Thus, this is a very complex issue which requires a long term program for sustainable livelihood and advocacy," said Dr. Prabin Manandhar, country director of LWF Nepal. "There is the need to have strong advocacy to inform this reality."

Following the field interactions with Freed Haliya families in Doti, Dadeldhura and Baitadi districts, what one can realize is the need of strong advocacy for enlisting the left out Freed Haliyas, proper categorizing, and accessing full rehabilitation package from the government.

"As a group which lived under slavery for centuries, deprived of all rights and state's services, providing money to build house or purchase land is not enough to make them politically as well as economically free. The experience of last ten years has shown that emancipation of Freed Haliyas ended one cycle of slavery but pushed them in another form of economic and livelihood hardship. Unlike other groups, Haliays faced double digit oppression as a Dalit and Haliya for centuries placing them in the bottom of society," said Bal Krishna Chaudhary, Regional Program Coordinator West of The Lutheran World Federation Nepal.

The Freed Haliyas have become homeless after their release. Historically, they are subject to a wide range of human rights abuses, including severe thrashing, forced starvation and water deprivation as punishment and various forms of humiliation, Freed Haliyas are yet to find a respite.

Thousands of Freed Haliyas are still deprived of livelihood assets, market access as well as formal and technical education for their children. Traditional occupations of Freed Haliya are still not readily accepted as decent work in society which hindrances their livelihood opportunities in 9 districts.

Expanded in 9 districts of far western remote areas, the project aims to bring economic and social changes in Freed Haliyas. LWF Nepal's Project has shown that Freed Haliyas require advocacy and sustained livelihood programs, which can increase awareness level and economic progress.

As most of the Freed Haliyas live in subsistence agriculture with indigenous and traditional profession, they need a scheme for modernization and commercialization of agriculture through vegetable production, poultry and goat raring, small irrigation in on farm and upgrading of their traditional professional skills in iron workshop, tailoring, cobbler and carpenter and groceries in off farm. To make their economic growth and sustainable

livelihood, there is a need to establish the cooperatives of Freed Haliyas to maximize their economic activities.

As the literacy rate in Freed Haliya community is lower as the school enrolment, the project has also focused to increase enrolment of children and literacy among the elderly too. LWF Nepal has been launching a small project with the task to make Freed Haliyas self-reliant. With a better coordination among Freed Haliya community, civil society organizations, local, provincial and central government, the project is achieving the target to make Freed Haliyas self-sustainable.

Having a long experience of implementing the livelihood and advocacy related programs in the Haliya community with local partners, the civil society organizations like LWF Nepal with the government's big interventions, one can see far-reaching transformation in the livelihood of Freed Haliya communities in nine districts through a small intervention made by LWF Nepal.

Oppressed and exploited for centuries, majority of Freed Haliyas are still psychologically depressed and they are unable to deal politically with their masters. Due to illiteracy and under capacity, majority of Freed Haliyas are unable to catch the programs announced by the government. The advocacy program implemented through Transformational Education Program (TEP) has contributed immensely to raise the level of awareness among women. However, there is still need to extend the program. As majority of Freed Haliyas don't have sustained livelihood options, they are compelled to go to India for work or return to become a Haliya again.

Who are Haliyas?

Haliya is a system of agriculture bonded labor prevailed in 12 western hill districts of Province 6 and 7 of Nepal. Haliyas are mainly from the hill Dalit group. According to statistic, out of them 97% are Dalit and 3% from other castes.

Haliyas used to work at their landlords' place for generations to repay the debt taken by their forefathers. According to a study, Haliyas are socially and economically deprived community. After signing five points agreement with Haliya Organization, Nepal government abolished Haliya system in 2008 and freed them from debt bondage and Haliya system.

The Haliya system allowed a well-to-do family to keep a tenant as slave for life for a small sum of loaned money. The system was prevalent in western and far-western region of Nepal.

After emancipation of Haliyas, the government have had announced 4 categories A, B, C and D. According to classification, the person with no house and land are under A category. Those who have house but no land are category B and those who have land but no house are under category C. Those who have land and houses are under category D. Under the rehabilitation package, the government agreed to provide NPR. 325,000 for category A to purchase land, and NPR. 325,000 for construction of house for A and C in hill and NPR. 225,000 in Terai. For B and D, the government agreed to provide NPR. 125,000. However, Rehabilitation package is neither sufficient nor complete.

"The government has committed to settle Haliya rehabilitation program within a year. We are expecting the support from non-state actors like LWF Nepal and elected local levels," said Gopi Mainali, secretary of Ministry of Cooperative, Land Management and Poverty Alleviation.

LWF Nepal Project Interventions

Under the project, intensive programs have already been implemented in Doti, Bajura and Baitadi districts and advocacy related interventions were made in Bajura, Doti, Baitadi, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Bajhang, Achham, Darchula and Kailali districts. Launched in February 2018, the project will end in January 2019.

The project designed aiming to improving dignified life of the internally displaced people especially Freed Haliya communities through empowerment focused development and advocacy for their rights and access to sustainable livelihoods assets.

With an overall goal to improve dignified living conditions of the internally displaced peoples- especially Freed Haliyas communities through empowerment focused development and advocacy for their rights and access to sustainable livelihoods assets, the program achieved the target.

The program implemented in the last nine months have helped to improve diversified livelihood options and strengthened farm-to-market links of 610 Freed Haliya families.

Under the program, LWF helps to promote quality education of 350 Freed Haliya children for literacy, numeracy and transformative life skill. The project has completed programs to enhance advocacy capacity of 8,008 Freed Haliya families and their institutions for formulating and implementing Freed Haliya friendly local plans and policies to increase

access to public services and resources and timely and just rehabilitation.

Nearly 19,059 HHs of Haliya were Freed from bonded laborers and 97% of them belong to Dalits, so called untouchable caste and living as Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs). A survey report of LWF Nepal made in project areas revealed that above 60% of Haliya are landless; only 2% of Freed Haliya have year round access to food though 55% of them are involved in agriculture, 87% of them live in temporary shelters.

Similarly, 93% have inadequate access to safe water for household purpose and deaths from diarrheal diseases due to unsafe water and sanitation in the area occurs repeatedly. There is a minimal participation in decision making process. Likewise, caste-based discrimination and untouchability practices are creating barriers in every step of their breath in accessing rights to dignified lives.

The root causes of the problems regarding the socio-economic transformation of Freed Haliyas include exclusion of Freed Haliyas from the decision making process, lack of awareness on human rights (HR) provisions, caste based discrimination and untouchability, inadequate access to Freed Haliyas on public resource and services, lack of ownership on livelihood options, lack of functional policies and program of government regarding the rehabilitation of Freed Haliyas, poor operational capacity of Freed Haliyas and their networks/associations.

This project thus aims to address the root causes of poverty and injustice of IPDs especially Freed Haliyas communities by strengthening their federations and empowering and enhancing their capacities for improving the resilience of livelihoods options, integrated water resource management, link with elected local government and advocacy to claim their rights.

The local elected government body has autonomous rights to formulate the contextual laws and policies to uplift the socio-economic and political rights of people.

As rehabilitation package is not sufficient and complete, former landlords threaten and compel them to repay loans or remain as Haliya who have - limited skills and facing unequal labor wages.

“With large numbers left out, there is the need to advocate for re-verification and registration of unregistered Freed Haliyas. There is also the need to advocate for timely and comprehensive rehabilitation package; allocate resource for Freed Haliya and access to government services

and entitlements for pro Freed Haliya and Dalit policy formulation and implementation," said Hari Singh Bohara, Project Coordinator of Rashtriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Federation." There is a need to provide livelihood support to Freed Haliya families. The children of the Freed Haliyas need to be provided with technical education support. In addition there is a need of capacity building to Freed Haliya women department and strengthen Freed Haliya women led cooperatives," said Bohara who has been a part of Haliya Campaign for last 15 years.

What has been done by the Project?

To improve diversified livelihood options and strengthen farm-to-market links 610 Freed Haliya families, the project has already supported the programs to open market center. Awareness and demonstration of family nutrition through kitchen gardening was also carried out.

The project has also developed production pocket areas for vegetables, high value crops in Doti and Baitadi districts. In addition, it has also promoted leasehold and crop sharing farming for landless families. The project has also introduced micro-irrigation schemes, entrepreneurship skill development training package, technical and vocational skills for entrepreneurs, business start-up supports, and market collection centers. The project has strengthened Freed Haliya women-led pro-poor & inclusive cooperatives.

The project also launched sanitation campaigns for latrine construction, open defecation free (ODF) and posts ODF and established multiple water use scheme (MUS) and strengthened capacity of Water User Committees (WUCs). To promote the quality education of 350 Freed Haliya children for literacy, numeracy and transformative life skill, the project provided computers to Dadabagh Primary School of Basulinga village of Sunariya Rural Municipality Ward 2, Baitadi. The project also launched formal education enrolment campaign and also provided scholarship for Freed Haliya children. In addition, provided support for technical and vocational education, establishment of school library and learning center was supported by the project.

In the last eight months the project launched various programs to enhance advocacy capacity of 8,008 Freed Haliyas families and their institutions for formulating and implementing Freed Haliya friendly local plan and policies to increase access to services and resources.

The project also implemented evidence based advocacy at local, provincial and national level governments for efficient rehabilitation of Freed Haliya and increase access to land resources, including the Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) monitoring. The project has also facilitated Freed Haliyas organization to bring their issues at district and province level. After launching, Transformative Education Program for Freed Haliya women leaders, it enhanced the personal level of knowledge and skills. The project also launched program of financial literacy and supported cooperatives to manage their accounts.

What has been done by the project from the climate adaptive recovery responses?

The project linked their programs with various local and district level offices. The project also provided farmers necessary trainings regarding climate change. To prevent soil erosion, the project also encouraged farmers to go for multiple farming and provided multiple agro training and tunnel to adopt with weather fluctuations.

How has the funding instrument supported this concept?

The use of fund by the project is very effective as the project's small support motivated the Freed Haliyas. Most important part of funding is that it helped to develop the ownership on the project. Along with the support in livelihood programs by project, community has also contributed through loan or self-investment taking as a matching fund for way forward. Although the project provides NPR. 10,000 each support for off farm and on farm enterprises. What is important is the linkage established by the project between the government office, market and farmers.

Similarly, the fund provided to on farm and off farm, institutional building and Emergency Disaster Fund, they are matched by local farmers and local levels.

As the project was planned, designed and implemented in close coordination with Municipals and communities, other stakeholders also promoted decentralized model. The project also conducted training related to climate change and disaster. It supported local level to set up cooperatives. The project prepared the community and locally elected body to handle the scenario. The project trained elected local level leaders representing Haliyas to carry out their role.

What are the policy level changes that are required to promote Haliyas?

From central policy to local level, there is a need to have policy change. The project is supporting the local level and central level to make rules and regulations to expedite Freed Haliya rehabilitation process and reverification of the Freed Haliya for their proper categorization and enlist the missing Freed Haliyas in the government record.

What lessons have been learned?

The project has shown that capacity building of Freed Haliyas community and their involvement in the sustainable livelihood program is a key to success. There is a need to increase access of local community to the local, provincial and federal government for their dignified and sustainable rehabilitation.It is also learned that the capacity development of Freed Haliya organizations for systematic claim of their rights and entitlements.

On farm and off farm grocery training

Under off farm, the project provided training to selected individuals and supported them to start the business depending on their training. Trainings were provided in the areas of vocational and technical skills like wiring, sewing and carpenter and also for promoting their indigenous traditions.

Coordination with Local Level

The project is working in different sectors including livelihood, advocacy, wash and DRR. The project has strong coordination and collaboration with stakeholders, communities, local levels and government institutions.

Community people do not know what services this government unit provides to them and what kinds of support do they receive. Thanks to the effort of the Project, people are aware about the role of district and municipal level units. After establishment of linkage by LWF, District Agriculture Development Office (DADO), District Livestock Service Office (DLSO) paid inspection visit to the farmers and provided necessary advice and suggestion.

Institution Building

LWF Nepal supported Freed Haliyas to build Freed Haliya community based organizations and cooperatives at municipals for increasing their access to financial resources for entrepreneurship developments. The project is also supporting Freed Haliya organizations to develop their sustainability plans for their continue efforts for Freed Haliyas.

Success Stories from the Communities

Transformation Through TEP

The life of Durga Sarki, 65, a resident of Sela Village of Jorayal Rural Municipality, ward 2 of Doti District, 700 kilometer west from Kathmandu, Capital of Nepal, has transformed drastically in the last nine months. Sarki, a member of Freed Haliya Agriculture Group of Sela, has already sold a goat at the price of NPR. 10,000 (US$85) and vegetables worth of NPR. 40,000 (US$350) in the last eight months.

"Of course, the government Freed Haliyas in 2008 from masters. However, we felt free just in the last nine months following the implementation of the program by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in partnership with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and Upekshit Samudaya Sashaktikaran Bikash Munch (USSBM). Our income has increased along with the skills of understanding the markets, social maladies and finally literacy," said Sarki, whose husband died while plowing the land of the master.

Like most of the Haliyas, Sarki's family was also wrongly listed in D[1] category. "We don't have our own land and shelter but the government team listed us in D Category. It is unjust against us," said Sarki. "Had this kind of program been introduced just after the government's decision to free Haliyas, our positions would have been much better," said Sarki, a single woman, who is living with her son and grandchildren.

After completing five months long literacy class conducted under 'improving the resilience of rural livelihood options for IDPs - Freed Haliya communities in Doti like Sarki learned the skills for livelihood improvement and their rights.

The project has been launched with the overall objective to improve living conditions of the internally displaced peoples- especially Freed Haliya communities to the dignified level through empowerment focused development and advocacy for their rights and access to sustainable livelihoods assets. The program in shortest period of time has made substantial transformed livelihood conditions in the Haliya communities of Doti district.

Under this project, Sarki along with other 610 Freed Haliyas received support to improve diversified livelihood options and strengthened farm-to-market links.

"In the past, we used to harvest traditional crops in our small land and sustained livelihood through plowing land or migrating to India for labor," said Sarki. After the implementation of the project, along with modern technique for diversified agriculture products like vegetables and rearing goats, we also learned skills to integrate with market.

"As the market is just an hour walk from our house, we take our products there and sell them at the market price," said Sarki. One of her grandchildren also received grant support for admission in the higher secondary school for quality education. This is a part of the project to promote quality education of 350 Freed Haliya Children for literacy, numeracy and transformative life skill.

"I am grateful to LWF Nepal's program for supporting our communities. My husband died illiterate and my son is just literate. However, my granddaughter is now studying in private boarding school with the support from LWF Nepal," said Sarki. "As her education is secure my granddaughter neither has to go to India for job nor will she have to work as Haliyas in future. The education will make her competitive."

[1] Freed Haliyas those who have land and house are categorized under category D.

Literacy Changed The Life of Panna Devi

Although Panna Devi Nepali, a Freed Haliya, has already reached the age of 71, she feels neither nervous nor any uneasiness to take pencil, copy and book to join the class. Transformative Education Program (TEP) has brought major change in her life. Mother of two sons and four daughters and grandmother of eight grand-children, Panna Devi can read and put her written signature.

Along with literacy and social campaign, the project 'Improving the Resilience of Rural Livelihood Options for IDPs - Freed Haliya Communities in Nepal' came with the livelihood component as well. The project is being implemented by Upekshit Samudaya Sashaktikaran Bikash Munch, (USSBM) Doti a local partner with the supported of Lutheran

World Federation-Nepal, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) targeting women from Haliya families in the districts.

Under the livelihood support program, Nepali also received support to rear goat and producing vegetables. Through TEP, literacy, social campaigns and combined with livelihood options has changed Nepali's life, a resident Mukta Haliya, of Budar Village of Jorayal Rural Municipality ward 2 of Doti District, 700 kilometer west from Kathmandu capital.

"I put my written signature last month to receive monthly social protection allowances. I can do calculations on my own and transactions. Vendors cannot cheat me anymore," said Nepali. "Had my husband been literate, he would not have to sign an unknown lending document and spared his entire life for just a small amount of money."

Along with learning the skills of reading and writing in literacy class, Nepali, who is growing vegetables and rearing goat, has also learnt various other contemporary social and other issues in the classes. "Our teacher taught us about Chaupadi, disasters, market, agriculture, trafficking, domestic violence, anti-alcoholism and so on," said Nepali.

"The project also assigned a Junior Technical Assistant to teach us the way to grow vegetables, to reach market and to rear goats. I have two goats and I am planning to sell both after festival at the cost of Rs 20,000 (US$170)," said Nepali. "After selling vegetables, we were able to make Rs 50,000 (US$400) in this season."

For decades, like many others of her community, Nepali, member of Mukta Haliya, of Budar Village of Jorayal Rural Municipality 2, relied on upper classes of nearby village to read the letters sent by her sons from India. She uses thumb print to conduct the transactions and official work.

With just 8000 squares of land, it has been a tradition for Panadevi's family either to go India for work or to work as a Haliya of local master. Being an illiterate, Panadevi suffered a lot.

"My husband, who died ten years ago, worked his entire life as Haliya to repay unknown amount of debt taken by his father plowing the mater's land. My son also left to India to earn money so that he could repay the debt taken by his grandfather," said Nepali.

Although she and her family Freed a decade ago, they faced several constrains and difficulties to survive independently due to lack of alternative income generating arrangement. After the government declaration to free Haliyas, nobody wanted to provide them job in early days because of fair of claiming the rights of tiller land. " As my sons were unable to get work back in the village and small patch of land is not enough to even to feed family for two months, two sons left India for job leaving two daughters and daughter-in-law here," said Nepali.

As par the government classification criteria, Nepali's family is under a D category. With a small hut without their own land, the government data collector placed her family in D category haphazardly.

"The data collector visited and asked us about our home and land. Without verifying our documents, they placed us in D category unfairly," said Nepali. Had I been literate like now, I would have verified all the process and gotten justice," said Nepali. "My husband served his life time to master signing a document unknowingly. I also suffered from discrimination because I was unable to read the terms and conditions of the masters," said Nepali.

Being a Dalit and Haliya, they are facing double discriminations in society. With lethargic government delivery service and local levels with lack of resources, LWF's programs are only hope of Haliyas for survival.

"LWF Nepal's program not only prevents us from either to go to India for survival or to return to leave as Haliya but it also helps us learn skills literacy and numeracy. As the program helped us to feel free, I humbly request LWF Nepal to continue livelihood support for few more years so that we can stand on our own. If they leave us in this middle stage, it will have terrible implications," said Nepali.

Transformation of Haliya Through Advocacy Campaigns

For the last five months, Monday and Friday remain as significant days for the women of Freed Haliyas of Sela village of Joryal Rural Municipality Ward 2 of Doti district, 700 hundred kilometer west of capital Kathmandu. Giving up all their daily chores for four to five hours, twenty women of the community have been assembling at the local community house to take a course conducted by thirty five years old Jayaman BK, a resident of Jorayal Rural Municipality -4, who himself belongs to Haliya family.

BK, who has to walk three hours to reach Sela, says the time spent to enlighten women through interactions and lectures is very valuable.

He has already spent five months facilitating to a group of women associated with Sela Freed Haliya Agriculture Group of Doti District of Jorayal Rural Municipality Ward-2 Budar.

He has been taking the class twice a week in a community hall since April, 2018 for women aged from 21 to 72 of the Haliya Community. “It is a great privilege for me to teach members from my own community and make them knowledgeable,” said BK, who works with Upekshit Samudaya Saashaktikaran Bikas Munch (USSBM).

Supported by Lutheran World Federation (LWF)-Nepal and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), USSBM, Doti has launched the program targeting Haliya women as a local partner. For BK, a higher secondary passed member of Haliyas, it gives a matter of pride to launch

literacy class to help learn and write to more than half dozens of over 60 years old women.

Along with writing and reading letters, women group have also learned marketing skills, disasters, health, hygiene, WASH, Chaupadi and social maladies including domestic violence, fire, misuse of alcohol and other related issues.

"Being Haliya, I know the pain and suffering of Haliyas who were trapped for centuries in a cycle of modern forms of slavery due to illiteracy and backwardness. Had our forefathers knew the words, they would not have to remain as slaves for decades just taking small amount of loans from the landlord," said BK.

Under the program improving the resilience of rural livelihood options for IDPs - Freed Haliya communities in Nepal, teachers like BK have been conducting classes for over 19,000 women from Haliya Community in nine districts of far-western Province of Nepal under TEP.

This project also aims to enhance advocacy capacity of 8,008 Freed Haliya families and their institutions for formulating and implementing Freed Haliya friendly local plans and policies to increase access to public services and resources and timely and just rehabilitation.

Although Haliyas, bondage laborers from Dalit community, were freed in 2008 under a cabinet decision, they are yet to find respite from their centuries of exploitation. As overwhelming majority of Haliyas are illiterate, only a few have better understanding of what are the government's incentives for Freed Haliyas and what special packages they are given.

As the project aims at improving the resilience of rural livelihood options for IDPs - Freed Haliya communities in Nepal' has been designed aiming to improving dignified life of the internally displaced people especially Freed Haliya communities through empowerment focused development and advocacy for their rights and access to sustainable livelihoods assets.

Jointly implemented by LWF with support from ELCA with local implementing partners Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Federation Nepal and Federation of Community Based Organizations (CBOF) and USSBM Doti, the program is directly targeting 8,008 Freed Haliyas from 9 districts (Bajura, Doti, Baitadi, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Bajhang, Achham, Darchula and Kailali) of Province no-7 of Nepal. It will also indirectly target 19,059 Freed Haliya families/IDPs identified by government of Nepal focusing policy changes that will be shared among a total Freed Haliyas.

The project has adopted Human Rights Based and participatory approach in course of project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Income Generation Through Tailoring

Yasoda Sarki, 29, mother of three children, worked very hard to revive her family into normalcy from the verge of collapse. Her family had no land of its own and the five members shared a small room, including her drunkard husband. For her violence was like a daily chore; the trauma and torture of her husband still haunts her. Lack of food and everyday violence had worsened the condition of her three children. To avoid daily torture and to save some money to invest in the area of income generation, Sarki left her husband's house and went to her parents. However, this was not the solution to her existing problems.

While she was in a major dilemma on what to do with the situation, the project jointly implemented by the Lutheran World Federation Nepal with support from Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) supported her with a sewing machine to run her tailoring shop and training.

She received support under off farm in tailoring from LWF Nepal ELCA through USSBM, Doti under a Mukta Haliya Farmers' Group Sela. She was provided with basic sewing skill training, and was supported to open

a small shop. She has been very busy since the shop has opened. There is a rush of women to order new clothes. Sarki, also secured National Skill Testing Board Certificate passing the test conducted by Council for Technical Educational and Vocational Training.

Sarki, a daughter of Haliya who grew up in a rented land started earning almost NPR. 15,000 (US$140) a month through her tailoring and her husband gave up alcohol and come in a good relationship with her as well.

"My husband helped me to build small hut at a rented land in the roadside. After I have started generating income, my husband also resumed his carpentry work and currently has a monthly income of average NPR. 20,000 (US$160)," said Sarki who has admitted her two children in private boarding school.

"LWF Nepal's program is life changer for me. Had not they come at that time, I would have had no option other than to die," said Sarki. "Just announcing Haliya free cannot give salvation and freedom to victims. If such declaration is not backed by income generating and sustained livelihood activities, those families have to either return to slavery or to die. LWF Nepal and its partner saved the life of dozens of people of Freed Haliyas," she added.

"With the group of our own, people like me who desperately need loan to start a new work no more have to lend money in higher interest rate and fall in debt trap," said Sarki, whose father was pushed to slavery as he was unable to repay a loan of two thousand rupees to the master.

With two goats at home, Sarki opens her shop at 10 am and closes at 5. "After completing daily household chores, I send my children to school and finally start my income generating activities," said Sarki. "This is just a beginning. But we need this kind of program for additional few more years. Given the current situation, our rural municipality is reducing the budget in social sectors like Haliya's protection, organizations like LWF Nepal has to fulfill the gap to save us," said Sarki. "I am capable to stand on my own but there are many who still are living in a miserable condition and need help."

Modern Agriculture Increases Income

If there is a will, there is a way out. This is what Parbati Devi Nepali (Damai), 27, has shown in her village Sela Village of Joryal Rural Municipality Ward-2 of Doti district.

Under Sela Freed Haliya Agriculture Group of Doti District of Jorayal Rural Municipality Ward-2 Budar, Nepali, whose husband drives a jeep, has experimented various modern agriculture practices producing all kinds of vegetables.

With the technical advice of Junior Technical Assistant (JTA) Ganga Bista Saud, who is assigned by USSBM Doti to provide technical support to the marginalized and poor Haliyas of Sela, Nepali is farming vegetables through two tunnels, plastic mulching and drip irrigation. She also has 12 chickens, 11 goats, and couple of bee hives and a cow. Along with this, she also has a tank to prepare organic pesticide.

Although she used to grow different kinds of vegetables in her land, Nepali, a Freed Haliyas of Sela, is now a completely different farmer with annual income of over 200,000 (U$1500). “I have been growing vegetables in the past as well but the method shown by JTA has drastically increased the level of production,” she said.

With her good monthly income, Nepali is sending her kids to private boarding school. “As I see a good prospect in vegetable farming, I am planning to expand my tunnel to produce more vegetables. I will require more money to educate my children in future and for that I need to extend the land areas,” said Nepali, active member of the group who are in the process of turning their group into cooperative.

As upper class people are still discriminating against Haliyas in remote villages in far-west, enhancing livelihood programs and educating off springs of Freed Haliyas is the best way to end discrimination.

“With money at hand, my kids do not face any discrimination in the school. They are competing with the children of upper class,” said Nepali. “However, I need a sustainable way to support my children’s education. After learning from LWF Nepal’s program, I have realized that growing vegetable through modern agriculture technique is a way to sustain economic development,” said Nepali, who also led women group.

The in-kind support like sprinkle irrigation, water tanks, seeds and plastics with technical backing through JTA women farmers in Sela Village has brought the sustainable way of livelihood in the village.

“To sustain the current success, we require continuation of this support for certain period of time. “As you know, the discrimination against the Haliyas is two folds we are discriminated because we are Dalit and we are discriminated because we are Haliyas,” said Nepali. “With a little hope from local level, our future lies on the projects and programs implemented by the organizations like LWF Nepal.”

Freed Haliya Under Shadow of Past

Although Haliyas are legally Freed and discrimination against Dalits is a subject to punishment by law, fifty-two years old Ishwori Damai, who was freed ten years ago, is yet to feel free in interacting with people of other caste.

Resident of Sela village of Jorayal Rural Municipality Ward-2 Budar Doti hesitates to enter into the hotels and drink a tea with other upper caste people.

"Hotel and restaurant offer tea in a plastic glass to us and the owners feel

uneasy to welcome us," said Damai. Despite legal and constitutional guarantee, socio psychology of the people is yet to change. "Outsider doesn't mind to be with us but the local population of upper class treats us differently and we too feel their treatment with us is different."

Living for centuries in caste based discrimination Haliyas of Sela are yet to prepare psychologically different. Living 28 years as a Haliya, Damai complained that even the government is discriminating them in distributing the relief and issuing identity card.

"I don't have anything but the government officials placed me in category B[2] during the data collection. I told them I have home and they placed me in this category. If I don't own land, how can I build house?" said Damai.

Oppressed psychologically, Damai found LWF Nepal and its partner as a savor. LWF Nepal has been supporting us for long and it is the only organization to carryout program to liberate us from poverty as well.

Provided support from LWF Nepal and its partner ELCA, Damai is currently rearing goats. She received two goats as seed, Damai has now 6 goats. "I am planning to sell two male goats during Dashain. I can earn around NPR. 25,000 (US$450)," said Damai.

"We are freed from Haliyas but not freed from vicious cycle of poverty and psychological discrimination," said Damai. "Once we are out of poverty, only then we will free from Haliyas."

[2] Category B: Having house but no land

Motor's Doctor of Far-western Hill

If drivers, helper and vehicle owners ask number for help, they will easily spell the mobile number 9864983518 without any hesitation and pause. Owned by Ranjit Mahar, 45, a person with disability, a resident of Basulinga Gwani, Sundarpur of Surnaya Rural Municipality ward 2 Baitadi District, Ranjit Workshop is the only workshop to provide services to all kind of vehicles for maintenance round the clock.

As he handles maintenance work for the vehicle suffering from technical snags, Mahar has established himself as a motor doctor of far western road from Darchula to Baitadi and other roadsides.

At the hilly road of remote parts of far-western region, the incident of mechanical trouble is regular and Ranjit is the only mechanic to have wide experiences and know how about technical snags.

As only available established motor mechanic in between Baitadi, Darchula and Dadelhura, drivers and helpers have no options other than to call Ranjit to rescue them from trouble.

A son of Haliya, Ranjit, left for India at a young age to earn money for bread and to repay the loan his father borrowed from a landlord and to free his father. He travelled India extensively as a helper, driver and mechanic.

However, he lost his right leg in a tractor accident in Mahendranagar 10 years ago. After the accident, Ranjit Mahar decided to return his village with his wife, a native of Kolkata, India.

"As I decided to continue the work I knew much, I opened a small workshop at the roadside five years ago. With a very little money with me, I invested nominal money to establish a workshop. Although my colleagues and relatives suggested me to take loan from money lender, I declined to take penny knowing how they could trap me like they trapped my father for his life as a Haliya for the sake of few thousand rupees," said Ranjit.

With the project implemented by LWF- Nepal in partnership with ELCA and local implementing partners Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Federation Nepal and Federation of Community Based Organizations (CBOF), Ranjit finally has secured the money to upgrade his workshop. He received Rs 40,000 loan from Nayapaila Mukta Haliya Cooperatives Ltd.

"Had not the cooperative lent me money for the interest rate of 15 percent per year, it was impossible for me to expand my workshop. With Rs 40,000 loan, I bought air-compressor and other equipment. Even LWF provided some other equipment to me," said mechanic Mahar, who has already paid back the loan he received from cooperatives with all interest.

Although Mahara used to make NPR. 10,000 to 15,000 (US$250) a month before, the additional equipment nearly doubled his monthly income as compressor expanded his work and income. Mahar charges NPR. 2,000-3,000 for engine maintenance and NPR. 1,500 for other works. The charge depends on the part and portion of the engine.

Almost every day the compressor can alone generate up to NPR. 300 (US$2). "I am really thankful to LWF Nepal and its partner organizations supporting our cooperatives providing seed money. Had not the cooperative provided me with loan, it was impossible for me to expand my workshop. Who will give loan to a person of disability?" said mechanic Mahar.

With a good monthly income, Mahar is sending his three children in local boarding school. "If I invest on them, they will never have to go for any slavery to pay loan later like me," said Mahar, who also generously donated a piece of land to construct a permanent building to the cooperative.

"We need to sustain cooperative and expand its activities so that it can offer more money to the lenders. Cooperative saved us from going to any modern form of slavery," said Mahar, who saw his father plowing the land for decades having just a meal of corn and waste product.

"Of course, I have lost my leg and I cannot move fast now. I don't want to repeat the story of my families and my life to others," said Mahar hoping that LWF Nepal will continue to provide support for few more years to sustain their livelihood and income generation.

As his monthly income grows and there is growing pressure, Ranjit Mahar has recently hired another staff for his workshop. "As I find difficulty to travel from one place to other, I have recruited person from my own community as an assistant."

Women Power Turns Village as Alcohol Free

Literacy and generating awareness among the women is important for social transformation. Only by increasing awareness level and literacy, women start to assert their rights. This is what Freed Haliya women of Bashulinga village of, Surnayana Rural Municipality ward 2 have shown.

For the women of Bashulinga village domestic violence caused by use of over alcohol by male was normal. They faced humiliation, physical abuse and mental torture as no one was there to listen their individual voices.

After the implementation of community classes through Transformative Education Program (TEP) with the support from LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and local partner Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj, the situation has changed. Under TEP which has brought all the women of Freed Haliya in a single platform to learn knowledge and share their own grievances and good practices, women of villages started to question about bad ailment.

“Listening and sharing the experiences of each other in a closed room, we understand that almost all women were facing the physical violence due to over use of alcohol by their husband. Then, we decided to jointly launch a campaign to make the village alcohol free,” said Anita Mahar, 35, an elected member of ward 2 of Surnayana Rural Municipality.

They started their campaign to make village alcohol free immediately after joining TEP class and listening about the harmful effects of domestic violence in family and consumption of alcohol to human health. The Mukta Haliya Women Farmer Group finally made announcement in public to ban the use of alcohol in the village.

“Initially, we discussed the matter with male of the community and requested them for their support. After failure, we filed a complaint at Surnayana Rural Municipality demanding to shut down alcohol dealer from the village. We also filed a similar letter to police and district administration. However, all the efforts went in vain,” said thirty years old Bashanti Mahar. “With one voice of women, we finally issued ultimatum to our Rural Municipality to shut down the alcohol dealer. After our request alcohol shop shut down,” said Mahar.

This shows the five month TEP program aiming to literate women and increase the level of awareness of women is one of the most successful programs directed to women of Freed Haliya community.

"TEP is a game changer of my life. In the last five months, I have learnt not only to read and write, I can also do math of deduction and induction and handle mobile phone," said Mahar. "I also learned the skill of arguing and discussion. I don't hesitate to raise any issue with any person. This is open of the reason women of the community finally raised the voices against the use of alcohol."

Along with banning use of alcohol, the women also announced the rule to fine those who consume alcohol violating the announcement. "If our male enters the village by consuming alcohol outside, they will be fined NPR. 5,000 (US$45)and NPR. 3,500 (US$30) for the person involved in violence against woman," said Mahar.

Since the banning of alcohol with zero tolerance, the incidents related to violence against woman also come down to zero. "Our village is now like heaven for woman."

The announcement of alcohol free zone turned the village peaceful and drastically reduced the incidents related to domestic violence. "Since last two months our village has become complete tranquility and women are sleeping in peace," said Mahar.

After the introduction of TEP, the woman group has launched several campaigns like campaign against un-touchability, awareness campaign on climate change, disaster, teacher's campaign, sanitation and drinking water, health and so on.

TEP implemented in Bashulinga village has shown that women awareness is important to bring down the domestic violence as well as to ban the use of alcohol in the villages.

Similarly, Bimala Bisht, 30, Head Teacher of Danda Bagh Primary school of Basulinga, has different experiences. "This program also taught us to link our product with the market and explore the market products for agriculture products like vegetables and other produces," said Bishta.

Elected Leader Calls to Work Together With Civil Society Organization

With its model based on participatory, coordinated and collaborative approach, locally elected leader spares no time to admire the modality of programs currently implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and local partner Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh.

"Given their nature of work and modality of implementation, we don't have any hesitation to incorporate programs proposed and implemented by LWF Nepal and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh to uplift the life of Haliyas living in our municipality," said Keshab Bahadur Chand, mayor of Patan Municipality, Baitadi. At a time when large portion of the budget of Patan Municipality has allocated to expand infrastructures like road, there is very nominal budget allocated to human and social agenda like Haliya.

"Out of 350 million budgets, Municipality allocated NPR. 300,000 to launch the programs for Dalits, Haliya and women. At a time when there is a growing demand for improvement of infrastructures within municipality, we have decided to welcome the fund of NGOs and INGOs in social development sector," said Chand.

Chand holds the view that collaboration and coordination between local government and civil society organization like NGOs and INGOs will also help to reduce the duplication in the program implementation.

"After learning that INGOs like LWF and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh has invested resources in vegetable farming, Patan Municipality has allocated the budget to other sectors to avoid duplication," said Mayor Chand. "Visiting various wards within the municipality particularly the settlement of Freed Haliya, I find the programs are running in transparent and coordinated manner with our ward offices. Looking at the performance and modality of LWF Nepal and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh, Municipality is ready to work with them in collaborative and coordinated matter" he added.

"Announcing Haliya free is not alone enough to end the exploitation of Dalits and Haliyas. What is required is the program for livelihood, education and sanitation directing to these communities. Having worked for such a long time with their own network at the community level, LWF Nepal and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh can effectively work with them than any other agencies," said Mayor Chand.

"Looking at their livelihood and other programs implemented in Patan Municipality, LWF Nepal and its partner organizations need to focus in the current areas for few more years till municipality generates its permanent resources to fund them. I can defend their program as most accountable and transparent," he further added.

With a largest Municipality of Baitadi district, Patan Municipality has a formidable numbers of populations of Haliyas and Dalits who can generate a lot of pressure to allocate the budget in the sector.

As mayor Chand said, only through coordination and collaboration between civil society organizations and elected representatives of local level can bring transformation in the life of Haliyas.

Government Supports Civil Society Organizations

Even after a decade of emancipation of Haliyas, large numbers of Freed Haliyas are yet to get the rehabilitation packages committed by the government. Even those who were rehabilitated are facing the crisis to live with dignity and decency.

As the government has announced a new package to settle rehabilitation of Freed Haliyas, Gopi Mainali, Secretary of Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation, has called LWF Nepal and other organizations like Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh to support the government with their expertise and experiences. He revealed that the government is planning to complete rehabilitation of Freed Haliya within the fiscal year. Given a long experiences of working in different sectors of Freed Haliyas with its local partners, Secretary Mainali is hoping to see LWF Nepal continuing its livelihood programs for some time to come.

"We want to work in collaborative and coordinated manner with civil society organizations like LWF Nepal having long experiences in working in the areas of livelihood improvement of Freed Haliyas," said secretary Mainali. "Those, who want to support the government's policies and programs, are welcome to work in their respective specialized field."

Haliya's rehabilitation is one of the major priorities of the ministry. We

have been working in the process of rehabilitation of 16,953 Freed Haliya living in 12 districts. There is a high level committee under convenorship of Minister for Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation to rehabilitate Freed Haliyas.

The government has divided Haliyas into four categories. The Category involves those who do not have land and house in category A, having land no house in B, having house but no land in C, having house and land in category D. The Ministry is allocating money for these categories of people for the rehabilitation. To complete all these work, the government has allocated 3.85 billion rupees. This amount will be used for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the houses of Haliyas.

However, money for another important component livelihood is also required. We are discussing for the involvement of INGOs and NGOs. With their long involvement in rehabilitation, the expertise of INGOs will greatly help in implementing livelihood programs. INGOs like LWF Nepal which has been implementing livelihood program directing to Freed Haliyas have also shown interest. With our policies, the government is ready to work with non-state actors and use their expertise and experiences. One of the major challenges before the ministry to implement the program is the lack of technical manpower and experts.

We are searching the experts to arrange land and technicians for construction of houses. In this sector, Ministry is ready to work with INGOs and NGOs having experiences of working in this sector. Ministry is considering to invite INGOs and NGOs for their involvement and support in this process. Along with the government's committee, non-state actor, the involvement of local level is also very important in rehabilitation of Haliyas. There are four stakeholders including center, local level, Haliyas and non-state actors like INGOs. We have already requested non-state actors to send us proposal where do they want to work and how can they support Freed Haliyas in livelihood sector avoiding duplications of the program. We need support from non-state actors in education, health hygiene, livelihood and micro-credit sectors.

LWF Nepal has been implementing the program directing Haliyas. We want to complete this work as soon as possible. The amount of money is small to purchase the land. We want to complete rehabilitation work in this fiscal year. However, there is a need to have livelihood projects for some year to come. If we don't provide best livelihood options, there is risk that they can return back to Haliyas again. Mainali holds the view that together with central government, local level and non-state actors, the settlement of Freed Haliays is possible.

From Haliya Activist To Elected Deputy Mayor

One can become politically empowered if s/he spends all his/her carriers in the social campaigns. This is what Saraswati Koli, Deputy Mayor of Patan Municipality Baitadi district, has achieved. Involving actively in free Haliya movement for almost a decade, thirty two years old Koli established herself as a leading Haliya activist in the region. Her popularity gained through the movement paved her to become an elected member of the newly formed municipality where she can exercise her authority to protect and promote in favor of Haliyas.

"My victory as deputy mayor is the victory of all the Haliyas and recognition of the cause I have been raising in politics," said deputy mayor Koli who was also executive member of Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh. "As per the expectations of Freed Haliyas, I am unable to fulfill all their aspiration. However, my election as a deputy mayor will make difference in the lives of Freed Haliyas," said Koli.

Working in different programs supported by LWF Nepal, Koli has also learned different skills of leadership, community mobilizations and understanding the issues related to oppressed and marginalized communities. "I still remember early days of my carrier when I joined women's program targeted for Freed Haliya family. After participating in the program launched by Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh with the support from LWF Nepal, my confidence level has gone up and I have realized that I could bring change no matter whether I am dalit or

Haliya or any marginalized communities," said Koli. Koli's husband, also a Freed Haliya activist backed her and sided with her mission. She said, "I am really grateful to my husband who sided with me all the time during my political and social campaign."

She went door to door convincing the women folk of Freed Haliyas and Dalits to assert their rights. "My first few years' involvement in community discussion taught me how rampant violence made life of women of marginalized communities miserable. I learnt about the legal provisions related to Freed Haliyas, women rights and Dalit rights. The program conducted with the support from LWF Nepal has enhanced my self-confidence and also showed me the way to unite women for the cause," said Koli.

"Even during my carrier as activist, I learnt the budget allocations for women and how the budget can be effectively used for the protection and promotion of woman of Dalit and Haliya Community," said Koli.

In the district where literacy of women is low and political participation is very nominal, Koli's elections as a deputy mayor of Baitadi's largest municipality is booster for all Dalits and Haliyas. "I have to accept the fact that my journey to politics and now the deputy mayor would not have possible, had not there come LWF Nepal with community development program. I learnt techniques and strategies about leadership from the courses conducted by LWF Nepal," said Koli. Despite Koli's elections as a deputy mayor of Patan Municipality, there is yet to see local level allocating enough budgets for Dalits, Haliyas and other marginalized groups.

"Of course, municipality is unable to allocate adequate budget in social reform sector this year. I will make more efforts next year to allocate more budgets for Dalit and Haliyas," said Koli.

Launching various programs including advocacy and livelihood at community level for long time with its local partners, LWF Nepal's programs are now delivering the results.

"Having a long experience and specialization working in Freed Haliyas and Dalits, LWF Nepal's support is necessary for the improvement of livelihood of Freed Haliyas. As a deputy mayor of Patan Municipality, what I see is more space and areas for LWF Nepal and municipality to work together to uplift the life of Freed Haliyas," said Koli who is also chairperson of legal committee. "LWF Nepal can contribute by organizing workshops to enhance the capacity of elected representatives of Dalits and Haliyas. "

As LWF Nepal has launched valuable programs to make Freed Haliyas economically independent and socially aware, it needs to stay with us for some more time to come. I will do my best to keep LWF Nepal with us," said Koli.

Discrimination Even After Elections

Political power and elections do not alone guarantee to transform the status of Freed Haliya, Dalits and other marginalized community. The experience of Kausilya Damai, 34, who is currently the vice president of Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh, is an elected member of Nawadurga Rural Municipality Ward No 2 is a testimony.

Elected in the last local level elections on a Dalit category, rural municipality officials are yet to treat her equally. “Although I am an elected member at the local level as all others, other high caste members of rural municipality treat me as a Dalit. Even there is discrimination in the order of name in official function at ward level where my name is usually placed latter. There is absolute discrimination against me,” said Damai.

Taking several advocacy classes run by LWF Nepal and its local partners in different period of time, Damai is very sensitive regarding her legal rights and responsibility.

"I held several bitter discussions with executive chair of the ward and argued to develop criteria for the ranking of names in official functions. My question is why my name is mentioned at last?" said Damai.

She is an elected member of the ward. However, she has been given roles to look at Dalit and Haliyas only. "If other member can look at the comprehensive areas, I don't understand reason behind limiting my role to only two sectors. Of course, I feel proud to work for my community but the motive behind my assignment is discrimination."

Even before the elections, Damai travelled extensively in the districts of far west and interacted with several groups, learnt about the discriminations against Dalit and Haliyas, violence against women, legal provisions against such discriminations.

"Taking classes conducted by LWF Nepal with support from Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh is the reason behind my high level of personal confidence to speak before any one against discriminatory behavior," said Damai. "The advocacy campaign launched by LWF Nepal has increased my self-confidence."

She feels that the TEP has united the Haliyas and Dalit women. The Haliya women now have become more aware about equality and they have understood that Dalit and Haliya women must work towards their own development. I am very much concerned about the budget allocation to the Haliyas and Dalits for their development. She has ensured that such budget will be utilized to Haliyas women development in true sense.

"We need to go for a long struggle to establish our equal rights in society and I am prepared for this. Given the present scenario, LWF Nepal needs to continue its advocacy and livelihood program focusing on Haliyas," said Damai. "Suffering from triple discrimination and exploitation, Haliyas are most disadvantaged group of far west."

Eggs Fulfill Nutrients To Freed Haliyas Children

With 10 broilers and 10 layers chicken, the family of Janaki Mahar, 40, a resident of Bashulinga, Sunarya Rural Municipality Ward -2 of Baitadi district has a reason to upbeat. As layer chickens produce 7 eggs daily, Mahar's four grandchildren two boys and two girls secure high nutrient foods.

Bought with support from LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and its local partner Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh, Janaki Mahar's grandchildren are growing with adequate nutrition by consuming eggs.

"Since last five months, I have been feeding one egg to my four grandchildren. Sometimes we also eat egg," said Janaki, who sells 3 to 4 eggs daily to her neighbors for the price of NPR. 15 each. "In an average, I am also making NPR. 2000 selling eggs to pay my grand children's school fees."

As other ten broilers are in final stage to sell, Janaki Mahar is expecting to make over NPR. 10,000 by selling the broiler during Dashain. Although the scale is small, the poultry is transforming the life of Mahar.

"After taking TEP classes, I have realized that poultry is the best option to provide nutritional food to children and generate income. We have been rearing chicken in the small garden in front of our house," said Mahar. "After eating eggs, I find my small grandchildren are getting stronger."

Eating egg each day is rare in the rural parts of far western Nepal where lack of nutrition is a major problem causing stunting and slow mental growth. The project implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and its local partner Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh will help to change nutritional status of Haliya community.

"With a little saving from vegetable production and loan from the local saving and Loan Cooperatives, I am planning to bring additional 50 chickens including 25 layers for coming session," said Mahar. After this, I would not have to worry for children's fees for school.

Cooperatives Institutionalizing Lending

For decades, people relied on local feudal of the village for credit. With monopoly in market, they used to charge high interest rates. In traditional system, creditor has two choices either to go India for earning or plowing the land as Haliyas in case of failing to refund money and interest in stipulated period.

As LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and local partner Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh launched several livelihood programs both on farm and off farm activities like vegetables, goat rearing and poultry and tailoring, furniture and upgrade of workshops, grocery shops, wiring.

With bitter experience of the past, Freed Haliyas have difficulty to start a new venture for livelihood. Long woes of Freed Haliyas of Bashulinga Village of Sunarya Rural Municipality Ward-2 of Baitadi District came to an end following the establishment of Naya Paila Freed Haliyas Saving and Credit Cooperatives Ltd in the village.

“Establishment of saving and credit cooperative is a major milestone to end poverty and support sustained livelihood programs,” said Jayaram Lohar, 42, chairman of the cooperative. “In the village even for petty loan many complications were involved before,” he added.

For Freed Haliyas of Bashulinga village, establishment of cooperative give many respites ending century’s long tradition of loan trap. Many of Freed Haliyas were forced to work as bonded labor for the sake of minimum credit.

Many people have secured small loan to scale up traditional works and started a new livelihood ventures like vegetables, poultry, groceries and tailoring. Along with offering loan in reasonable credit, the cooperative also helps Freed Mukta Haliyas to deposit saving.

Intially, LWF-Neal provided NPR.150,000 as a seed money for the establishment of cooperative. Later, District Cooperative Division and Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh invested NPR.15,000 each for the cooperative. Total of ninety-nine shareholders invested NPR.135,000 as their share capital. Cooperative has now NPR. 315,000 as of paid of capital.

The cooperative is now offering minimum of NPR. 5,000 maximum NPR.20,000 with an annual interest rate of 15 percent. "Our members come to us for credit and pay back as soon as they start earning money. Our pay back rate is really high and there is no risk of losing money," said Lohar. "The loan given by cooperative is a lifeline to the farmers who want to do some ventures."

Along with providing loan to improve diversified livelihood options, the cooperative is also supporting to strengthen farm-to-market links. "The cooperative also helps farmers to link up with market bringing the vendors at the door step. We are also helping Freed Haliya farmers about the demand of supply situation of various products," said Lohar.

With the proper information about the production and market's demand, Haliya farmers produce the product which has high demand. "We have been informing farmers about the state of market and its demand. We are also requesting our farmer's the need to diversify of cash crops and vegetables so the market prices can be maintained," said Lohar. "As a cooperative in their own door step, Freed Haliyas family also come to deposit saving."

"Our cooperatives have shown that there is a need of a strong and effective credit and saving cooperative for sustained livelihood program," said Lohar. "From livelihood to medicine and education and social function, our cooperative is savior to free Haliya Community."

Iron Cutters Enhances Efficiency of Ironsmith

For decades, Mandhoj Lohar, 55, a resident of Bashulinga Village of Baitadi district, used the same old equipment in his traditional iron workshop and followed the same tradition making and maintaining the agriculture tools on the barter system of work for grain.

However, his livelihood was in trouble because of working under a traditional practice of barter system work for grain. As it involved risk changing the profession, fifty-five years old Lohar was considering of going to India for work.

With a fading hope for his traditional iron workshop Lohar, shut down his workshop and waited to move to India. As Lohar was in dilemma, LWF Nepal in partnership with ELCA and local partner, Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh came with a scheme to modernize his workshop making it viable for livelihood.

Considering the trouble of a person of Freed Haliya community, LWF Nepal agreed to support Lohar with an equipment cost up to NPR.10,000. Lohar was handed over an iron cutter machine.

After receiving the iron cutter, Lohar upgraded his workshop from his old house to the roadside on the way to Darchula and Baitadai and informed his traditional clients that they will have to pay cash for work.

Received five months ago, the iron cutter helped him to make more Khukuris and sharp knives. Now he has 20 different kinds of Khukuris and 15 varieties of knives ranging from NPR. 2,000 to 3,000 in stock.

After switching from his traditional work, Lohar is now earning NPR. 15,000 a month. "I have stock of almost NPR. 50,000 now. I will sell all these Khukuris during Dashain festival when there are high demands of Khukuris and knives," said Lohar. "Had I continued to follow the traditional practice of work for grain, I would have been nowhere. As I have electric iron cutter, now I can make many other things to sell in the market," said Lohar.

He narrates that traditionally he received the grain for his work which was not even enough to feed his family even for two months. After giving up traditional pattern of livelihood, he is making sufficient money to feed his family of four.

Tailoring For Livelihood

As a new sewing machine added to his tailoring shop, the income of twenty-nine years old Dasharath Lohar and his wife of Mushyachaur of Dasharath Municipality ward 1 Baitadi District has nearly doubled.

They started the shop with one sewing machine, but they are unable to deliver the cloths in time. “Even if a small technical error occurred in the machine, we were unable to deliver the cloth in time” Dasharath said.

Knowing that a startup business of Lohar, a Freed Haliya from the village, is in trouble, LWF Nepal in a partnership with ELCA and local partner, Rastriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh decided to provide a new machine with the cost of NPR.10,000.

“Having second sewing machine meant an alternative for us. When both husband and wife started sewing in two machines, our capacity has grown drastically” he said.

With the monthly income of NPR. 20,000 a month, Lohar is now planning to add another sewing machine so that he can begin sewing training as well. “In the last school session, I had declined many offers to make school dress. Now, I am waiting for new school session,” said Lohar who charged NPR. 2,000 monthly for new trainee. “Currently, I have two trainees and a huge order for blouses and other clothes of woman. During the last Gaura Festival, I made almost NPR. 30, 000,” said Lohar.

Although readymade garments are gradually penetrating in the market, large numbers of local people still prefer to go to tailor to make the dress of their choice and color. Lohar believes that the start-up people need certain level of investment and support. I am very happy to receive the support.

Tunnel Change the Mode of Production

Relying on century old tradition to grow crops like maize, barely, potato, rice and soybean the agriculture gave nothing but poverty for the Haliya community of Jhakali Village of Dasarath Chand Municipality Ward No 1, Baitadi. Thus, most of the Freed Haliyas moved to India for work.

However, the fate of the people living in the village has changed as they jointly decided to use tunnel to grow vegetable. Earning NPR. 70,000 to NPR. 80,000 equivalent worth of vegetable in a month, free Haliyas of Jhakali found sustained livelihood options.

“As we have produced enough vegetables and earned money, almost none of the villagers left the village this year to India for work, we produce tomato, cauliflower, Bengal and mustard leave,” said Shyam Bhul, a Freed Haliya.

With a perennial river flowing from the village, Haliyas of Jhakali have enough potential to produce vegetables. Connected to the highway connecting to Dadeldhura, Darchula and Baitadi, the village is well connected to the market.

“There is a huge demand of vegetables. For small and marginalized farmers of small land holding, producing vegetables is best option for sustainable livelihood,” said Bhul.

With a training provided by different organizations, Freed Haliyas of the Jhakali have already developed their areas as pocket area. Various agencies supported them to build tunnel, a small irrigation to divert the water, everything has changed now.

Although people used to grow vegetables during monsoon season in the past, now we can grow the vegetables all the season due to tunnel and water for irrigation.

Transforming Lives of Freed Haliyas

Although they were Freed about a decade ago, Anga Chadwa and his spouse Khima Chadwa, residents of Kapkot, Ward 5 of Budhinanda Municipality, some 10 kilometers north of the capital of Bajura district, have only now tasted Freedom in the real sense. They had landed in miserable states to sustain their family. With a small patch of land and subsistence based agriculture, Chadwa family survived for years barely meeting their hand to mouth problem. However, the support and skill provided under a project launched by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in collaboration with the District Freed Haliya Mahasangh, has given them a great relief.

They have started to grow commercial vegetables. "We are now making NPR. 5,000 monthly by just selling the vegetables," said Anga Chadwa, 45. "I don't have to worry now for the tuition fees and medical costs of my children."

The couple is not an exception to benefit from vegetable farming. Thirteen other families of the village are also reaping similar benefits, earning between NPR. 5,000 and 6,000 a month. The lack of savings was one of the problems faced by the Freed Haliays, which often forced them either to

flee to India for work or return again as Haliyas. Learning from their bitter experiences of the past, they are depositing NPR. 100 a month in Mukta Haliya Savings and Credit Cooperative in the district headquarter Kolti.

"Vegetable farming is comparatively easier than other vocations. As the demand of vegetables is growing, we can sell our produce easily. Given the current experience of commercial vegetable farming, I can say that we need not go to India or other places for work. When we were facing a big trouble, the project launched by LWFF-Nepal ELCA and Rashtriya Freed Haliya Sangh showed us the way out," said Nandbir Chadwa. "Vegetable farming is our main source of income in Kapkot now."

Under the project, Freed Haliyas receive technical support, including JTA, modern technology like tunnels, using cow dung and house made pesticide and manure. The project also provides water tank, plastics and pipes for sprinkle irrigation. "We now have knowledge and capacity to produce vegetable using the newly learned skills," said Chadwa, chairperson of Kapkot Freed Haliya Community. "This is a future for us."

Freed Haliyas of Chapkot have shown that change is possible with timely and locally applicable interventions. "Freed Haliyas have established Chapkot as the main vegetable pocket of Kolti. This is a matter of pride for all of us," said Krishna Raj Padhya, ward chair of Budhinda Municipality, Ward No 5.

Bajura has the lowest Human Development Index, one of the poorest districts out of 77, and the district has the highest number of Freed Haliyas. The economic condition of the Freed Haliyas of Bulindra Municipality has been very bleak. Although the government emancipated them as Mukta Haliyas a decade ago, the health, education and access to government service of Freed Haliyas has not changed much. At a time when Freed Haliyas were searching for a way out, the project implemented by LWF Nepal, ELCA in partnership with Rashtriya Haliya Samaj Mahasangh Nepal to provide sustained livelihood option to displace and Freed Haliyas have shown a way.

In just a matter of eleven months, the project has shown that commercialization of agriculture is the key to sustained livelihood of Haliyas. The intervention is small, worth NPR. 70,000, but the outcome is much bigger. The project provided improved seeds of vegetables, support for plastic tunnels, garden pipe, pesticide drum and auto sprinkle. With the support, Freed Haliyas of Kapkot switched from subsistence traditional production like corn, millet to vegetables.

Freed Haliyas Love Poultry

After taking four days of micro business skill training, 35-year-old Sunkali Kami has started poultry in Birsaina of Budhinand Municipality of Bajura District. With a small patch of barren land, Kami, a Freed Haliya, had a very hard time to feed seven family members. Although her family is registered, with a card, as Freed Haliyas, they are unable to receive any compensation from the government's rehabilitation package.

Selected on the basis of her economic condition with the recommendation of a community of local Freed Haliyas, the training and support provided by LWF Nepal, ELCA to start poultry is changing the life of Kami, who also received NPR. 10,000 in support to purchase chick and feed. She

constructed the shed on her own. The poultry is now generating money to support education of Kami's four children and money to purchase the foodstuff. "The support provided by LWF Nepal and ELCA saved me and my family from starvation. I have been generating good income from poultry enough to run my family," said Kami.

With a good market available locally for egg and meat, Kami does not have to worry about her production. He is selling egg for NPR. 20 each and NPR.550for per KG for meat. Earning NPR. 5,000 a month, Kami also has a saving account in Mukta Haliya Saving and Credit Cooperatives in Kolti, where she deposits NPR. 100 on a monthly basis.

"Although we were Freed a decade ago, we were not given skills and the way out for an alternative livelihood. Thanks to LWF Nepal, ELCA and Rashtriya Mukta Haliya Samaj Mahasangh, I have learned skill to survive as a free citizen," said Kami. "As I grew in a family with starvation with no egg, I am also feeding my children eggs to make them stronger," said Kami.

So far as market for Kami's products is concerned, people come to her home to buy eggs and chicken. "I don't have any stock of eggs and chicken since people come to my home to buy them."

"During the training, I learned many things including the market chain, saving in local cooperatives and business plan as well. I do maintain all the expenditures and income," said Kami, who has also built a toilet following the training.

"My experiences are that this kind of small scale intervention requires providing sustained livelihood options for Freed Haliyas. I don't know when the government provides us rehabilitation package. My poultry is now my life."

After success of Kami, Poultry is gaining popularity among other Freed Haliyas of the village.

The Lutheran World Federation Nepal
World Service

Country Office

GPO Box: 3330 House No.217 Chundevi Marga-4

Maharajgunj, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: +977-1-4720217, 4720152

Fax: +977-1-4720225

Email: mail@lwf.org.np

Web: nepal.lutheranworld.org

LWF Nepal Regional Offices

Regional Office East
Damak, Jhapa
Tel: +977-23-584015,584016
Fax: +977-23-580025
Email: roe@lwf.org.np

Regional Office Central
Kathmandu
Tel: +977-1-4720217 4720152
Fax: +977-1-4720225
Email: mail@lwf.org.np

Regional Office West
Dhangadhi, Kailali
Tel: +977-91-526384
Fax: +977-91-525341
Email: row@lwf.org.np

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION NEPAL

A member of

CHSAlliance AZEECON actalliance