



HRPLSC

E-BULLETIN

VOLUME-2

ISSUE-3

QUARTERLY -JUNE-AUG 2012

Participation of women in peace and reconciliation at local level



Training participants in Rolpa

Photo HRPLSC ,Rolpa

United Nations Security Council 1325 is a landmark international legal framework that addresses not only the inordinate impact of war on women, but also the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

Resolution 1325 calls for increased participation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in national, regional, and international institutions. Resolution 1325 has four "pillars" that support the goals of the Resolution, which are: Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery. Among them, Resolution aims for improving intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, including by prosecuting those responsible for violations of international law; strengthening women's rights under

national law; and supporting local women's peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes.

To conduct advocacy for the strengthening of women's rights under national law and supporting local women's peace initiatives is one of the strategy that have been adopting by Human Rights Protection and Legal Service Center (HRPLSC) in remote districts like Rukum and Rolpa of Rapti Zone, which is also described in Resolution 1325. As Women in our Nepalese Society are discriminated in various aspects of everyday life, right from cultural traditions to laws and policies. The situation of widows or in other word single women is even worse with constant marginalization from family and society. They lack income generation skills.

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Support to enabling security peoples for the protection of Human Rights



Group discussion Human Rights and Transitional Justice Training at Dang (Photo HRPLSC, Dang)

Human rights are political norms dealing mainly with how people should be treated by their State and institutions. The primary purpose of the state is to provide social stability. This can only be achieved, if the state fulfils its role in securing and reconciling individual and group rights within society. Among the state mechanism, security peoples provides security for the common peoples but still human rights violations have increased substantially since the escalation of conflict in Nepal. In the post conflict situation, the role of security has increased. It is important to build a human rights culture within the government and the security agencies during transition period of the Country. So to view the role of security peoples, HRPLSC organized 2 days Human Rights and Transitional Justice training to the 116 security peoples (15 were from Arm force, 5 were from Investigation Department , 49 were from Nepal Police and 57 were from Nepal Army) in Rukum, Rolpa, Pyuthan, Dang and Salyan districts. Among them 15 were females participants and 101 were males participants.

The training supported for playing the major role in the decisions making and implementation of the human rights protection activities in the Rapti districts and they are equally maintaining peace and order for the security of the general public. Public education on alternatives to violence is crucial to reducing risks to human security. The training was facilitated by the HRPLSC team and participants expressed that most of them have taken this type of training for the first time although few had received this concept while visiting UN peace mission. Mr. Dhan Bahadur KC, CDO of Rolpa expressed that it will support for the protection of human rights because these groups are the first and major responsible for the security and protection of individual human rights.

Participation of women in peace

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They have been facing a serious violations cases such as witchcraft accusation, domestic violence, dowry etc. Mostly Civil society organizations support in the areas of capacity building, awareness rising, reconciliation and support to access to justice for the victims to support for effectively implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

In the context of Rolpa and Rukum of Mid region of Nepal where the conflict has its flashpoint during the last 12 years, the capacity building trainings, legal awareness camps, exposures were organized for conflict victim single women by HRPLSC. Furthermore, "Single women empowerment project (SWEP)" was initiated in these districts and conflict affected single women groups and network were formed, provided Human Rights and Reconciliation trainings, income generation trainings, exposure visits. The women were supported in 3 VDCs of Rukum district and 6 Cs of Rolpa district partnership with the Mahila Sakti Bikas Kendra, (MSBKN) Kathmandu. In the programs the single women groups were not only organized but they are strengthened for the raising voice for their rights through advocacy, lobby, coordination meetings, and interactions programs. Their children were provided school stationary. The women coordinated with the district level service providers and DDC/VDC to tap the VDC level resources. It was analyzed by HRPLSC that in Rolpa and Rukum districts, the women had been residing as isolation and couldn't get the government facilities and no support from any agencies. So, to overcome this issue, 15 local single women Networks were formed and registered at District Administration Office. It was really a supporting process of Local women in peace initiatives. Now, the single women networks started receiving development budget from VDC offices and DDC offices. 60 single women were united into groups and started their meetings, organizing activities. The single women at Rolpa also received different income generation training such as bag knitting, vegetable farming and stool (MUDA) making training. HRPLSC also provided legal camps for 114 participants, organized psychosocial counseling services to 49 single women and 7 days TOT on Human Rights and Peace Promotions.

HRPLSC has been supporting for local women peace initiatives and conflict affected single women initiated for raising fund by coordination with district stakeholders and media. As a result, they received 1 lakh and 20 thousand Rupees from DDC Rukum. Moreover, the single women network mobilized various mass of people in street dramas. The network organized folk song competition and 135 peoples were aware. Rukumkot VDC allocated Rs.20 thousand for the single women.

In the district, Cottage and Small Industry committed to provide sewing knitting trainings, Agriculture office committed 50% concession to single women.



MUDA making training at Rolpa

For the promotion of peace and reconciliation process at village level, Single women organized street dramas and nearly 340 peoples appreciated the concept. The dramas raised the awareness of non discriminating attitude. For the motivation work, Single women groups were honored in Rukum. Some single women visited isolated village and formed VDC level conflict affected single women groups. In all these reconciliation and peace building process, HRPLSC played the role of a facilitator, catalyst and supported to conflict affected single women in Rolpa and Rukum districts.

Thus, Resolution 1325 is important because it impact on international law, women's empowerment, and global security. In the area of women's empowerment, women's roles are marginalized in the country like Nepal because they are not seen in terms of their leadership. The Resolution emphasis on women role as leaders, not victims and we must also view their participation not as a favor to women, but as essential to peace and security. In the same way, HRPLSC has learning that women can support their family and children if they were empowered and provided other supports. They can equally contribute to the family, society and nations. Through the Actions, it was learnt that women have been transforming into an active member in the society who can not only support their family but the community and nation also. It is a fact that women empowerment process is very necessary to support the conflict victim family because in most of the cases the women are the breadwinner of the family and guardian of the children. HRPLSC has been working as an social actor for the peace process and believes in no durable peace without meaningful participation, protection and empowerment of women.

Enhancing People's Participation for accountability



Addressing peoples concerned issue by Govt. of Nepal RSDP Representative (Photo HRPLSC, Salyan)

Nepal Government has just started Rapti High Way whose construction has begun under the Road Sector Development Project (RSDP). The road construction starts from Sitalpati of Salyan and ends at Musikot of Rukum. Started in April 2012, it is expected to be completed within the period of 30 months.

The 85.85 km High Way passes through a total of 15 VDCs of Salyan and Rukum and affects some 13,000 households with the population of 73,448. It may spoils cultivable land, may cause the source of ground water to dry or divert the course of a stream, may trigger landslide and affect indigenous irrigation canals. Like any other construction project, the Rapti High Way will sure to face many hurdles, such as pressure for donation, labor strike and lack of local peoples participation and so on. The participation of the people concerned enhances the ownership of the project and they will defend and protect. Once people are aware of the possible risks and gains of the construction, they will be prepared to rise to the challenge and difficulty that may result in from the project. Believing peoples close participation will fulfill the gap of local governments, which would otherwise oversee the construction, enhance the project's transparency and accountability, HRPLSC organized one day media mobile camp at Salyan district.

HRPLSC organized the media mobile camp for enhancement of accountability, transparency and ownership. For the promotion of accountability this issue was raised at the community level participation. HRPLSC believes that without people's active participation and support, the project may run risks of failure because of a particular context and issue.

Various development actors explained about their roles and responsibilities in a program ; RSDP Program Coordinator , supervision team leader, school teachers, FNCCI , Political leaders, civil society activists, NGO federation, Journalists, Human Rights Defenders Networks, youth groups and local peoples. The local peoples raised their concerned regarding the issues and the concerned authorities replied and informed about the RSDP project and working modalities. It was shared that for the supervision of the RSDP project various consultant were recruited in the targeted VDCs. The interactions was organized with the committees and the engineer shared about budget, different project stages, office management, joint venture activities,

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13 th International youth Day celebrated



The theme for International Youth Day 2012 is "*Building a Better World: Partnering with Youth*". International Youth Day is celebrated every year on 12 August and different organizations celebrate worldwide the Program on Youths in the day.

HRPLSC encourage youths on the fields to conduct their planned activities through media advocacy and other various ways concerning on issues.

In Rukum, youths organized live radio program with the participation of 52 youths at Musikot. It was a two way Interaction program in which the local youths asked questions to the political youth leaders . On the Next day, youth information center was inaugurated at the DDC office Rukum . In Salyan, youth day was jointly celebrated with Youth information center, Aastha Nepal and District Youth Network Salyan. The participants organized rally in Srinagar and after that they organized interaction program, planted tree at Laxmi secondary school. In Rolpa, Peace rally and essay competition was organized . Similarly, International youth day was also celebrated in Dang and Pyuthan districts .

Referred the victim for treatment

Although the conflict draws closer to a stable situation but still it has not been completely relief to the life of the Nepalese peoples. It has been hampering the general people's life even today. In the rural areas of Rapti zone, the general peoples have been suffering due to frequent bomb blast in nearby schools, Bus Park and public places. 8 years old Pinky BK suffered and injured in bomb blast in Pyuthan district since 8 years. Since than due to the lack of proper treatment, she had to suffer . Along with Pinky BK, some other children were injured in this bomb blast. Although, they were immediately taken into the nearby health post but received no treatment. When HRPLSC organized interaction program on the formation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission , some conflict victims participated and shared their stories. Pinky also expressed her grief to the CDO and other concerned at the program. As a result, her story was reported by HRPLSC staffs , and later on, this case was reported by RDIF/ESP and shared the case to others concerned through internet and Sushma Koirala Memorial Trust committed to support pinky BK in her treatment in September 2012.

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Enhancing Peoples participation

monitoring and supervision mechanism. This results information sharing at community and the concerned have a feeling of accountable towards the target groups . HRPLSC facilitated dialogue and create an environment of information sharing . A total of 75 participants participated in the program.

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