

# Travelling Seminar: Action for Strengthening Elected Women's Leadership in Local Government for Scaling-Up Climate Smart Activities of CDAFN in Nepal



**9 June, 2018**

## **Introduction:**

With the objective of the scaling up the successful model of climate smart structure, travelling seminar was organized jointly by Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) and a local NGO partner- Community Development and Advocacy Forum Nepal (CDAFN) - in Mahottari and Dhanusa district, Nepal in 9 June 2018. The main goal of this seminar is to enhance awareness, knowledge and capacity of newly elected leaders, especially women leaders, on gender, agriculture and climate change, so that they are better informed and able to actively advocate for climate and gender sensitive agriculture policies, programmes and plans in their constituencies. A total of 33 participants representing the federal, provincial and local government participated in the travelling seminar. These included, one woman member of the House of Representatives (representing Province 2), four women members of Provincial Assembly, five women Deputy Mayors of Dhanusa and Mahottari districts, women and men Ward Chairs and members of the municipality and rural municipalities, representatives from DCC, NGO Federation, media house and National Farmers Group Federation (NFGF) of Nepal.

## **Objectives**

The overarching objective of the travelling seminar was to enhance awareness and knowledge of newly elected women leaders about the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on the livelihoods of predominantly agrarian population in Mahottari and Dhanusa district, Province 2, Nepal by providing them an opportunity to directly observe and learn from climate smart actions undertaken in pilot CSV sites, so that they are able to apply learning to make informed decisions in public policy making in their constituencies.

The specific objectives included the following:

- Provide an overview of global and national climate change scenario and gender dimensions in agriculture; and
- Introduce the CSV approach by showcasing various approaches and models, including climate smart technologies and practices that are successfully tested and adapted by farmers for replication in other parts of Province 2 and beyond.

## Activities in Travelling Seminar

The seminar consisted of three-step process, event or sessions: the orientation of the participants; field visit; and reflections.

**Opening and orientation session** The participants gathered in the early morning hour in Bardibas. Balaram Thapa, Executive Director of LIBIRD welcomed all the participants. He facilitated the introduction of the participants and highlighted the objectives of the travelling seminar. Nagdev Yadav, President of CDAFN provided the overview of the field visit programme, including what the participants can expect to see and learn from the travelling seminar

In Rajabas, in the bank of Ratu River, participants observed raising underground seepage water irrigation canal technology, where underground seepage water has been meticulously harvested using indigenous knowledge for irrigating 45.3 ha of land directly benefitting 64 households. Farmers shared their experience on how raising underground seepage water irrigation canal has transformed their cropping pattern by increasing cropping intensity by almost 200%. Beneficiaries of the irrigation canal grow vegetables and some of them have graduated to commercial vegetable farming.

Further walk to upland areas of Rajabas saw the intervention where local knowledge was blended with climate science. Community pond is a local practice for water conservation and recharge. There, the participants observed a community pond integrated with solar power (300 Watt) to uplift 213,000 litre water in 24 hours.

Following Rajabas visit, the participants headed to Bahunmara, Dhanusa district to see various activities implemented and managed by local communities in Bahunmara pilot CSV site. Participants observed ferrocement water reservoir tank with a capacity of 78,000 liters that supplies clean drinking water for 117 households that has reduced incidence of water borne diseases in the village.



## Verdict of Policy Member

**“This is a place for everyone to visit who wants to conserve Chure and protect Terai/Madesh and those who are involved in the formulation of Chure conservation policy.”**

**-Ms. Sharada Devi Thapa, Provincial Assembly Member, Province 2.**



**“This travelling seminar was fruitful indeed. The field observation has boosted my knowledge on climate smart technologies and practices suitable for plain areas like ours. I will advocate and contribute to integrate climate change and environment in local development policy and programme in my constituency.”**

**-Ms. Manju Yadav, Provincial Assembly Member Province 2.**

**“I am delighted to participate in this programme organized by LI-BIRD and CDAFN. I did not know such a good work is going on in the Chure region with active participation of local community. It is very important to support and scale up climate friendly programmes that are favorable for Chure conservation and improving livelihoods of local people. To expand similar kind of activities in other parts of the country, I will discuss with relevant sectors and try to do my best at the policy making level.”**

**-Ms. Indu Kumari Sharma, Member of House of Representative.**



### **Reflections and excerpts of some of the participants are as follows:**

**Ms. Mina Yadav, Deputy Mayor, Ganesh Charnath Municipality, Dhanusa** - “This is the first time that I have visited Chure region. I found local people hardworking and I found the climate change related activity implemented very useful and replicable in Godar area of my municipality. I will soon discuss in municipality to initiate similar kind of activities in my Charnath Municipality.”

**Ms. Asha Lama, Deputy Mayor, Gaushala Municipality, Mahottari**- “Despite the ecologically fragile geography, local people in Rajabas and Bahunmara has worked hard to conserve the environment. It is important to provide continuity to such interventions for the benefit of women in Chure and Terai/Madesh. In short, there is no welfare of Madhes without conserving Chure.”

**Mr. Suresh Singh, Chief, District Coordination Committee, Mahottari** – “I found this travelling seminar very interactive. Though I am from this district, I was not aware of Chure conservation and climate change related activities that are conducted in the district. These activities must be continued and scaled up in other part of the district. The District Coordination Committee will support and contribute wherever possible.”

**Mr. Indires Dahal, Local Development Officer, Dhanusa** - “I really like how transparently the resources leveraged from different partners is presented publicly. It seemed that women in particular have benefitted the most from this pilot CSV programme activities.”

### **CONCLUSION AND WHAT’S NEXT**

- The travelling seminar was designed to provide hands on practical demonstration and as capacity building event for elected women leaders and local government representatives on a range of climate smart technologies and climate smart village approaches. Reflection from the participants indicated that this objective was met with satisfaction.
- The extent to which these elected women leaders are able to advocate for and apply learning from the travelling seminar in their constituencies (e.g., development of gender and climate sensitive policies and programmes, mobilization of local resources and institutions etc.) is yet to be seen. It is recommended that a follow-on workshop should be organized in December 2018 to assess the extent to which these elected women leaders were able to influence local government policy making process, including what worked well for them, what did not, and what support is needed for them to do their job better.
- Participants strongly recommended that a follow-on workshop should be organized before the local governments annual planning and budgeting process, so that climate, gender issues and climate smart village approach can be discussed and incorporated into local government annual work plan and budget.

## List of Participnts

- Indu Kumari Sharma :Member House of Representatives
- 2 .Sarada Thapa: Member Provincial Assembly , Mahottari
- 3 .Manju Yadav :Member Provincial Assembly , Mahottari
- 4 .Anita Yadav :Member Provincial Assembly, Dhanusa
- 5 .Saraswati Chaudhari: Member Provincial Assembly, Dhanusa
- 6 .Suresh Singh :Chief DCC ,Mahottari
- 7 .Ganga Singh Danuwar: Deputy Mayor Bhangaha Municipality, Mahottari
- 8 .Aasha Lama: Deputy Mayor Gaushala Municipality, Mahottari
- 9 .Mina Kumari Yadav: Deputy Mayor Ganeshman Charnath Municipality, Dhanusa
10. Tara Lama Deputy :Mayor Mithila Municipality, Dhanusa
11. Mahjabi Khatun :Deputy Mayor Ekdara Rural Municipality, Mahottari
- 12 .Anita Pariyar: Executive Dalit Female Representative Mithila Municipality, Dhanusa
- 13 .Chudamani Pokharel: Ward Chairman Bardibas Municipality-1, Mahottari
- 14 .Rajan Dhungana: Ward Chairman Bardibas Municipality-3 , Mahottari
- 15 .Mukti Narayan Yadav: NFGF ,Siraha
- 16 .Narad Niraula NFGF - Male Udayapur
- 17 .Bechan Prasad Yadav: Chair Bhagwanpur Municipality ,Siraha
- 18 .Dhirendra Bahadur Singh: Chair NGO Federation ,Mahottari
- 19 .Indresh Dahal: Local Development Officer DCC , Dhanusa
- 20 .Lal Babu Yadav: Chair DCC, Mahottari
- 21 .Ganesh Basnet :Ward member Bardibas Municipality , Bardibas
- 22 .Umesh Thapa :Ward member Mithila Municipality ,Dhanusa
- 23 .Chitra Kumar Subedi: Assistant of Deputy Mayor Ganeshman Charnath Municipality
- 24 .Indra Bahadur B.K.: Programme Coordinator Caritas Nepal , Sindhuli
- 25 .Swikcha Dahal: Protection Officer Caritas Nepal ,Sindhuli
- 26 .Ram Prasad Dhungana: Regional Coordinator Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)
- 27 .Nikesh Khanal :Reporter Janakpur Today Patrika , Dhanusa
- 28 .Sushil Kunsing :Advisor of Deputy Mayor Bhangha Municipality ,Mahottari
- 29 .Kedar Koirala :Shree Deurali Secondary School ,Bardibas

- 30 .Rita Bahadur Basnet: Ward Member Bardibas Municipality-3, Mahottari
- 31 .Toya Nath Gautam: Media Specialist
- 32 .Gaurav Dhwoj Khadka: Photographer/ Videographer
- 33 .Yam Bahadur Malla, PhD PAC member
- 34 .Balaram Thapa, PhD; Executive Director LI-BIRD
- 35 .Bikash Paudel, PhD ;Program Development Director LI-BIRD
- 36 .Priyanjali Joshi ;Compliance Officer LI-BIRD
37. Lakpa Sherpa ;Team Leader LI-BIRD
- 38 .Aastha Bhusal ;Programme Officer LI-BIRD
- 39 .Shambhu Basnet; Programme officer LI-BIRD
- 40 .Nagdev Yadav; President CDAFN
- 41 .Menuka Shrestha; Accountant CDAFN
- 42 .Niraj Mishra ;Project Officer CDAFN