

KNOWLEDGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME



INDIA-NEPAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE VISIT

26 January 2014 – 2 February 2014

Submitted to



KPP Management Team



I. INTRODUCTION

The **Knowledge Partnership Programme (KPP)** was launched in 2012 as a vehicle to promote evidence generation and uptake on global and national policy issues in India and from India to other Low Income Countries (LICs). KPP seeks to enhance collaboration on ideas, knowledge, technology, innovation etc. to expedite learning and policy influence between India and LICs for improved development outcomes. It does this through partnering with institutions for studies and initiatives which a) gather and promote uptake of evidence on issues central to India's impact on global poverty and b) share Indian evidence, best practice and expertise with LICs.

The support is provided towards the learning exchange between India and Nepal on reducing the violence against women through government initiatives and community led interventions, under the Women and Girls Workstream of the Knowledge Partnership Programme.

Prevention, awareness and effective referral response to the incidence of violence against women and girls is a key priority of government of Nepal. A three-year National Plan of Action developed under the leadership of Office of Prime Minister/Council of Ministers with engagement of multiple line ministries and civil society organization is in place and currently under implementation.

Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MOWCSW), is implementing a nation-wide 'Integrated Women's Development Program' (IWDP), with focus on women's economic empowerment through women's cooperatives and federations. Building on the successes of Women's Paralegal project, a component of prevention of violence against women and girls is integrated into the IWDP with financial support from DFID and technical assistance from UNICEF. The Women and Children Office (WCO) of all 75 districts is responsible for the overall implementation and quality monitoring of the project. WCO maintains all district level coordination with a range of government line ministries and civil society organization. In 15 districts, WCO also provides support and guidance to the safe houses, where women survivors of violence can stay up to 45 days free of cost. DWC office from the central level is responsible to provide overall leadership to the IWDP and coordinate with other government line ministries i.e. Ministry of Home Affairs/Department of Police/Women and Children Service Centre, Ministry of Law and Justice, National Women's Commission and Office of Prime-Minister among others.

Department of Police through its Women and Children service centres provides support to those that report of violence incidences. The district police office has good coordination with WCO and one-stop crisis management centres¹. Through the NPTF and ESP, DFID-Nepal is supporting the police office construction.

Given that the social context in India is similar to that of Nepal, it was thought that it would be useful for the government officials from Nepal to visit the programs in India that work on empowering women, strengthening the capacity of the government service providers aiming to respond to those experiencing gender based violence. Interactions with the government officials of India would help the government officials of Nepal to understand the policy provisions of Indian government in Bihar and Kerala States,

¹One stop crisis management centres are operational in 15 districts and is overseen by the Ministry of health and Population. Through health sector support program, DFID supports this centre.

understand the challenges and ways that are used to overcome them. The Nepal team is expected to put together a joint report on how they will use the learning into their on-going program. A sharing session on the learning experience will be organized by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare as a follow up.

II. TEAM

The team comprised of the following:

- Purna Bhakta Tandukar, Joint Secretary Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MOWCSW);
- Under Secretary Chandra Siwakoti from Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MOWCSW);
- Shanta Bhattarai, Under Secretary from the Department of Women and Children (DWS);
- Madhav Gartaula, Under Secretary from the Department of Women and Children (DWS);
- Pratima Mishra, Women Development Officers from Makwanpur district;
- Manju Lohani, Women Development Officers from Taplejung district;
- Manohar Rimal, Senior Superintendent – Nepal Police and;
- Krishna Gautam, Superintendent – Nepal Police.
- Karuna Onta, Social Development Adviser- DFID Nepal
- Jaydeep Biswas, Social Development Adviser- DFID Nepal

III. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the visit were to:

- a) Understand the policy provisions of Government of India in support of empowering women and attaining gender equality;
- b) Understand the functional modalities of women's groups, cooperatives and women's federation. Role of government of India in strengthening women's group and linking it with gender-based violence prevention and response programs; and women's rights movement, in general;
- c) Understand the role and coordination mechanisms between multiple ministries in prevention awareness, referral and response services to victims/survivors of gender based violence at the state and district level;
- d) Comprehend the investment in police trainings; public police partnership programs if any; linkages of women's groups with police office at the districts (and below) level; record keeping procedure and mechanisms of the police; Interact with Police officers (women police, if any) at the district and state level and learn about the nature of incidence, reporting mechanisms and their linkages with justice system.
- e) Learn about partnership modality of the government and civil society organizations and private sector, if any

- f) Observe shelter homes and understand support provisions provided by the government and its relation with police.
- g) Understand coordination mechanisms within multiple stakeholders in achieving broader empowerment goals and reduction of gender-based violence; national level guidance etc

IV. BIHAR

A half day consultation meeting on women empowerment interventions undertaken by the organisations under DFID supported programmes in Bihar was organised at Hotel Chanakya by BTAST. The basic objective of the meeting was to discuss the schemes being implemented by these organisations. The participating organisations included representatives from Women Development Corporation, Bihar (WDC), Jeevika-Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS), Bihar Mahila Samakhya Society (BMSS) and Bihar Police Building Construction Corporation/Deloitte. During the session presentations were made by following organisation on following aspects enlisted below:

A. Jeevika - Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS): The government of Bihar has initiated a project on rural livelihood promotion with support from the World Bank. This has been initiated and implemented through a Society registered with Government of Bihar by the name of Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS). BRLPS through the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Project (BRLP) aims to improve rural livelihood options and works towards social and economic empowerment of the rural poor and women. The BRLP intervenes with the community through the following four themes or programmes: institution and capacity building, social development, microfinance and livelihood. The intervention includes 38 district of Bihar.

Thereafter, representatives from Jeevika also highlighted on followings:

- a. Poverty alleviation programmes under BRLPS with its objectives.
 - Targeting the poorest amongst the poor for special assistance
 - Building groups/institutions of the poor and their federation structure, linkage with banks
 - Promoting economic mobility for rural poor
 - Promoting decentralised governance
 - Enhancing social protection by reducing vulnerability of poor
- b. Key achievements so far
 - Credit leveraging from banks
 - Skills and placement
 - MoU with WDC
- c. Project achievement under followings
 - SHG formation
 - VO formation
 - Credit linkage
 - Amount loaned by bank
 - No. Of SHG members linked with insurance
 - No. of VOs involved in Universal program

B. The Women Development Corporation, Bihar came into existence under the Society Registration Act –1860 on November 28, 1991 with the objective of implementing programme for empowerment of women in the state and to formulate, promote and implement any scheme aimed at the

development of women in Bihar. It works under the aegis of Dept. of Social Welfare; Govt. of Bihar .Its vision is to ensure overall survival, development, protection and participation of women and adolescent girls in the state. The WDC has evolved in its vision and is currently implementing plans of action, programmes and schemes for advancement of women and adolescent girls with the support of Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations and professional and technical Agencies for achieving its mandate.

Key Initiatives implemented by WDC

MNSY	2007-ongoing	38 districts(Social Empowerment) 69 Blocks in 19 districts(Economic Empowerment)	State Govt	Economic empowerment through (1) savings, (2) formation of institutions and through the institutions promoting entrepreneurship among women Social empowerment through – (a) setting up of helplines to help victims of violence, (b) setting up of protection homes, short stay homes, working women’s hostels
MKSY	2008-ongoing	38 districts	State Govt	Scheme designed for the protection of girl child; under which Rs 2000 as bond in the name of the girl child is given to girl’s parents until the girl reaches 18 years of age.
SWASTH	2010-2016	38 districts	DFID-UK	Working in 3 departments, health, social welfare and water and sanitation; within social welfare, works through the SHG platform and on issues such as domestic violence and other VAW issues.
SRCW	2013-ongoing	38 Districts	Gol	State Resource Centre for Women is formed to assist and liaise with the existing institutions/structures to monitor and review of flagship and other schemes related to women empowerment.
Poorna Shakti Kendra	2013	03 districts	Gol	Govt. services to women at grass root level would be facilitated. These centres are providing a platform for women to address their issues as well as act as an interface for women to approach the government for availing their entitlements.
One Stop Crisis Centre	Under process	03 district	Gol	Based on the concept of integrated and coordinated teamwork of multi sectoral and inter agency at one place for the rehabilitation of survivors of violence against women, with public health system as the focal point.
Integrated Handloom Development Scheme	2013-Ongoing	Banka district	Gol	Integrated Handloom Development Scheme is a scheme related with the development of Handloom cluster at Dhoriya Block in Banka district with the

				support of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.
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Specific mention of the key interventions under SWASTH-DFID supported programme was made-

1. Gram Varta

- PLA through SHGs: Gram Varta(GV) is a process of 20 meeting cycles which are delivered to SHGs on issues related to malnutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene practices.
- Nutritional Corpus: Nutritional Corpus is a component under GV which is extended to SHGs in those blocks where GV is being implemented. The objective is to supplement the nutritional requirement among the pregnant and lactating women who are members of SHGs.

2. Violence Against Women (VAW)

In the area of Violence against Women WDC has made a pioneering effort to address this issue through the following strategies. The strategies including key set of activities are listed below:

- Strengthening Women Help lines and Short Stay Homes in all districts
- Police Intervention in blocks of Patna district
- Health sector intervention - 3 districts Madhepura, Kishanganj, Sitamarhi
- School based intervention through GEMS - 4 Districts Banka, Gaya, Jehanabad & Purnea
- Gender Resource Centre-
- District Gender Resource Centre in Gaya
- Creation of referral units at block level 63 block level federations
- Community mobilization to address domestic violence- a partnership between WDC and Bihar Mahila Samakhya in 5 districts

3. Institutional Strengthening

- Plan for WDC office renovation
- Plan for new WDC restructuring (schemes and programmes)
- Interim support to WDC
- Supplementary honorarium as incentives provided to WDC team for supporting SWASTH programme.

C. Bihar Mahila Samakhya Society (BMSS)

Mahila Samakhya Programme was initiated in 1992 as part of the GOI initiative to empower women through education, as a component of Bihar Education Project (BEP). It became an autonomous body since 2006; since then it came to be known as Bihar Mahila Samakhya Society. Women empowerment-both at the individual and collective level-is the ultimate aim of the Mahila Samakhya programme. The specific characteristic of BMSS strategy is a participatory approach to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation incorporating stakeholders at all levels. Its primary focus is on education but it has also diversified into areas of health, and awareness generation through legal literacy, such as on issues of female foeticide and domestic violence. The foremost task of the BMSS programme is to form and strengthen Samoohs (Groups) at the village and cluster levels.

Bihar Mahila Samakhya Society is currently active in 21 districts across the state and reaching out to rural populace through 9921 groups having around 1,90,000 women members (March 2013). Since SHGs or samoohs are the core unit of functioning at village level, the formation of SHGs are usually process-oriented. A committee is established at the Federation level comprising of 6 core components -health, economic empowerment, violence, education etc. 10 villages form a cluster. Sahayogini/Cluster Resource Person is responsible for overseeing the activities of 20-25 SHGs within their cluster. 50 villages form a unit. The Committee at the District level to oversee the activities right down to the village is a registered Committee, the Board chaired by a Chairman.

At the end of the consultation meeting **Ms. Madhuri Das**, Gender and Social inclusion expert, BTAST expressed her gratitude to all participants from WDC, Jeevika-BRLPS, Bihar Mahila Samakhya Society and Bihar Police Building Construction Corporation/Deloitte towards their presence and participation and also for their continued support in implementation of various activities. She also thanked the visiting DFID Nepal team for actively participating in the consultative meeting and raising various issues.

D. FIELD VISITS

i. Mahila Thana Visit, Gandhi Maidan, Patna

The Nepal delegates visited the Mahila Thana; the station in-charge shared about various women related issues that get registered in the Mahila thana. Key issues that are pertinent to the state are domestic violence, trafficking and eve teasing. Some of the key programmes on women empowerment that the state is implementing were discussed. She mentioned that the helplines and short stay homes being run by the state have provided effective relief to the women who have been turned away from home by their husband's and their family members. Liaisoning between police and judiciary in dealing with cases has helped in speedy redressal of cases, added the station in-charge. The team wanted to understand the role of media in violence against women cases to which the officer said that of late the media has started to be more responsive. In fact, she discussed some specific cases wherein the media intervention led to speedy relief being meted out by the court. The visiting team was palpably satisfied with the interaction with the lady officer and thanked her for the time and valuable discussion.

ii. Interaction with the SHG Federation members, Bihar Mahila Samakhya, Dobhi block, Gaya district (January 29th, 2014)

The team reached Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Dobhi block. A group of SHG women (about 30 in number) greeted the visitors with the typical Mahila Samakhya welcome clap. The group started with a brief interaction with each other. The visitors wanted to understand from the group how they have individually and as a group benefitted from being associated with Self Help Groups. Each of the members had their own journey to share but as a team, they said that in the earlier times, coming out for personal errands was an absolute no no....the husbands got suspicious of their ways and subjected them to violence and abuse. The women then started to collectivize, met and convinced family members of those women (sakhis) who faced severe restrictions from their husbands in coming out of their households. The change that was seen now was that all women were vocal and talked about how their SHGs have been able to work for women's issues in their villages and blocks.

The women also talked about the village level grievance redressal systems termed as Nari Adalats that has been formed in selected blocks of Mahila Samakhya intervention districts. The SHG women also have done credible job in acting as pressure groups for making functional some schools in the neighbourhood, Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) and also have facilitated construction of toilets.

The visiting team shared that the SHGs in Nepal are also engaged in similar process but the success is yet to come. The team was impressed with the work being done by the groups and wished them good luck.

Following the SHG interaction, the team visited the residential school (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya) for Mahadalit girls in Bihar. Since most of the girls were in school at that time, the team could not interact with girls but they did go around the school to see the facilities offered the rooms in which the girls stayed the entertainment room in which the girls spent their free time etc. The team was happy to see that the marginalised tribal girls were being provided a home away from home through the residential school.

iii. Interaction with the SHG Federation Members from Jeevika-BRLPs in Dobhi block, Gaya district

The team reached the Jeevika supported Federation office. After exchange of pleasantries, the visiting team asked the process of Federating of SHGs, how have the Village Organisations being formed, livelihood options being provided to women who are part of the process and sustainability measures of the Federations once the external aid is withdrawn. Turn by turn, women members present addressed each of their questions. They shared that the benefits drawn from their membership as part of the Village Organisations has resulted in women taking full control over their own and their children's lives and future. Women have been exposed to various alternate livelihood options and they have all been able to make substantial savings for their children's education, daughter's marriage and also respond to the family's health needs. Women also have been able to make independent decisions as far as their own health (reproductive health needs) are concerned. Interestingly, they have also managed to get support from their husbands which were earlier not the case.

The team also wanted to understand the challenges around sustainability to which the women members felt that whether there is any financial backing or not, they will continue to meet as groups and stand to support each other in times of needs as well as crisis.

The visiting team was very satisfied with the team's unique response and demonstrated solidarity. They left by thanking the team and wishing them well for their future.

iv. Visit to the District Women Helpline support by SWASTH -BTAST

The team visited the District Collectorate from where the Women Helpline functions. The helpline in Gaya has been set up in 2004 and is being managed by the Women Development Corporation. However, since 2011, SWASTH-DFID has been providing series of training and capacity building support for all the staff (Project Managers and counsellors) as well as development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The team talked to the Project Manager to understand the types of cases that come to the helpline and get registered. They also asked whether the staff feel well equipped to deal with the type of cases and what is the support they receive from the District Administration. How has the police and judiciary responded to the needs of the project staff in dealing with such cases? The project manager very deftly addressed their questions. According to her, majority of cases were redressed through counselling and internal redressal and resolution. In

cases where the clients did not appear on their respective hearing dates, police help needed to be taken. The Project managers have also been enabled to connect the cases to the courts for filing under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Cases, 2005 following rounds of training on specific Act and procedures.

The visiting team also wanted to see records and maintenance of registers in helplines, diary entry, MIS systems in place, understand mechanism for follow up and security issues of Project Managers themselves in difficult cases. They exchanged some experiences from Nepal where Panchayats/local governance structures have been crucial in dealing with cases but systems such as helplines do not exist in Nepal. They applauded the efforts of the helpline staff and left for the airport for transit to Delhi.

V. DELHI

In Delhi, key institutions related to women's empowerment were visited:

- a. The team met the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) Chair Ms Padmaja and Executive Director Rashmi Singh and learnt about the NMEW structure and a number of government schemes, for example Ujwala, Jeevika, Mahila Samakhya that support women's social and economic empowerment. The NMEW was launched in 2010 and the National Mission Authority is headed by the Prime Minister of India. State Ministers are responsible for state level convergence of women's empowerment program.
- b. The team met Alok De of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). This program was launched in 2010 and is partly funded by the World Bank. This program is known to be the largest poverty alleviation fund with 40 billion rupees allocation per year. This program is women-centred and works with self-help groups. The self-help groups are becoming bankable institution. Private banks provide loans to women. The bank interest rate, in general, is 12 percent. But the bank provides loans to women's self-help groups only on 7 percent interest. Five percent interest gap is met by the government.
- c. DFID India shared about the 'safety pin' initiative. This a free telephone application used for safety audits of public places which has been promoted in partnership with Hindustan Times – a media group. Partnerships with Public Works and District police are established in support of the program. This App can be downloaded for free and used in many cities in India.
- d. Centre for Social Research, an NGO based in Delhi was running gender sensitization training for police, judiciary and corporate sector since 1999. Through Gender Training Institute, CSR has been organizing short and long term trainings on gender for students union, women in politics and police. The program for police named 'do kadam'² was jointly initiated by Kiran Bedi and Ranjana Kumari. The idea is to train 'one team'³ from one police station such that there is a common understanding of gender responsive services. CSR runs Crisis Intervention Centres with legal and counselling services in place. Men have been trained as paralegal workers to be able to provide

² Do-kadam is a four days training package for police to become gender sensitive while performing their job.

³ All police personnel of one duty station.

immediate services to women. In partnership with the Asia Foundation, CSR is engaged in training Nepal government officials on gender issues.

- e. Women Power Connect (WPC) founder member Gauri Chaudhary shared about the efforts of this member based network. This network was established in 2005 to bring all organizations working on women's rights and gender equality issues. WPC has been able to bridge gap between the grass-roots and national organizations.
- f. Gender resource centre, run by government certified NGOs are providing information to general public on schemes from one centre. The women get to know how they can access government schemes. GRC supports women not only with information but helps them access schemes that they are eligible for.

Learning from Delhi interactions:

- g. The team felt that the women staff members of government and civil society organizations at the national level are extremely competent. Their engagement with high level authorities of various ministries in rolling out government schemes is much stronger in India as compared to Nepal.
- h. As a result of strong government leadership at the centre, the State Minister's effort on women's empowerment is also noteworthy.
- i. There seems to be police collaboration between the Nepal and India governments. A Development Partnership Authority (DPA), India's foreign Aid unit has been set up. It would be useful for DFID India and Nepal to understand what this DPA consists of and how it can be used to provide safety security to women and men from poor and excluded communities who face violence.
- j. NGOs in Nepal commonly run independent programs on prevention awareness with funding support from various donors. They put more weight on awareness-raising. Support to the government officials to deliver services is often not a core part of NGO work.

VI. KERALA

The Nepal delegation post the field visit in Bihar and a series of meeting the Government Of India officials left for Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on 30th January 2014. The following were the meetings that the Nepal Delegations had in Kerala.

A. Dr. B Sandhya, IPS, Additional Director General of Kerala Police

Dr. B. Sandhya through her interaction focussed her discussions on Violence against women in Kerala and women in the Police services. She appraised the group on various initiatives the Kerala Police had taken to reduce VAW in the state of Kerala which has 100% literacy rate.

- i. **24 by 7 Women 's helpline:** this service aims at assisting women in real time with reference to women who are victims of domestic violence and public violence.
- ii. **Janamaithri Suraksha Project:** he term Community Police does not refer to either a new police group or a local community group that undertakes policing work themselves. On the other hand, it envisages a method of policing by members of the police organization quite distinct from the traditional style; that seeks the cooperation of the community, understands the needs of the "community", gives priority to the security of the "community", and, taking into account the

resources available within the “community”, attempts to streamline the activities of police personnel at local police stations to address the special problems of each community to increase their efficiency and productivity.

Government of Kerala launched Janamaithri Suraksha Project in 20 selected Police Stations in March, 2008. As on today Janamaithri Suraksha Project is implemented in 248 Selected Police Stations (20 Police Stations in 2008, 23 Police Stations in 2009, 105 Police Stations in 2010 and 100 Police Stations in 2012) The project has made tremendous impact on Kerala Society. Further a number of initiatives such as establishment of Coastal Vigilance Committees, Road Safety Programmes, etc. are being implemented in the State. These programmes also are based on the philosophy, principles and practices of Community Policing. Since Community Policing involves a philosophy of policing which is distinct from the traditional approach to policing, it is of crucial importance that appropriate training inputs are given for developing the right attitude and for imparting the relevant knowledge and skills.

Appropriate training is being given to the Beat Officers, Assistant Beat Officers, and Community Liaison Groups etc. Janamaithri Suraksha Samithi members have an important role in implementing the project. Selected persons have to be effectively trained. 1361 persons got training in Police Training College for Janamaithri Suraksha Project.

- iii. **Sakhi:** Under the gender flagship program, every year the police staff gets gender training. Short stay homes of the districts are linked with police office.

Dr. Sandhya during her interactions highlighted that key reasons that formed the root cause for GBV in Kerala were trafficking of women and girls and illicit brewing of liquor among others.



- B. **Ms. Asha, State Coordinator, Kerala Mahila Samakhya & Ms. Arya – Social Psychologist, Sneetha (shelter home), NGO :**

The State Coordinator for Mahila Samakhya briefed the delegation about the various aspects of Kerala Mahila Samakhya and their focus of translating the goals of National policy on Education and Empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalised groups.

The Mahila Samakhya programme was initiated in 1987-1989 covers 11 states including Kerala. Education in Mahila Samakhya is understood not merely as acquiring basic literacy skills, but as a process of learning to question, critically analyzing issues and problems and seeking solution. It endeavours to create an environment for women to learn at their own pace, set their own priorities, seek knowledge and information facilitating informed choices. It seeks to bring about a change in women's perception about themselves and of society in regard to women's "traditional roles". Mahila Samakhya works to garner women energies to collectively solve their problems and empower them to address issues themselves through Mahila Sanghas at the grassroot level. Kerala Mahila Samakhya works in the following manner:

- i. **Vanitha Sabha** is the basic unit around which the programme focuses. Process-oriented, it reaches out to the marginalised communities and assists in realization of their issues as women and deprived, enables political and women centered intervention and working towards solution collectively. **Sevini has the pivotal role of activating the programme and realizing the objectives. The assistance and resource support is extended from district and state level offices.**
- ii. **Formation of Issue Groups:** The major areas of focus are violence intervention, health issues, legal literacy, decentralisation and integrating gender, education, economic empowerment programmes and vocational training. Resource centre at panchayat level, district and state level are used as safe spaces for women to interact, learn, and share their joys and sorrows.
- iii. **Adolescent Groups:** Strengthening adolescent groups with information and life-skills is a major area of focus.
- iv. **Adult Learning Centres (ALC):** Adult Learning Centres (ALC) extend learning to women from a woman centred perspective.
- v. **Mahila Shikshan Kendra (MSK):** Mahila Shikshan Kendras in 4 blocks at provide residential and educational facility for girl children and adolescents who have been pushed out of the educational system and are in abusive situations at home.

Snehitha an NGO operates shelter homes (safe haven) for women who were victims of domestic violence and other gender based violence. The delegation has an opportunity to visit one such shelter home in Thiruvananthapuram. The Psychologist – Ms. Arya also explained and narrated incident of women who were victims of battery, trafficking, sexual abuse having sought their help and actions they take. They also explained how they worked closely with the Kerala Police and the justice system.



Both speakers also appraised of the various schemes the state government and the Central government had brought about with reference to short stay homes for girls who were victims of trafficking for women who victims of domestic violence and also children who have physically or mentally abused in their families.

Representatives of the Nepal Police shared their contact details and requested them to contact them if they came across a case where a Nepalese National was a victim of human trafficking.

C. Dr. Valsala Kumari, Executive Director & Ms. Priya, Programme Manager- Livelihood Programme – Kudumbashree, Kerala State Eradication Programme

The delegates met with Dr. Valsala Kumari at the Kerala State Poverty Eradication Programme/ Kudumbashree headquarters. Dr. Valsala Kumari and Ms. Priya briefed the delegates on the various aspects of Kudumbashree, its progress so far and the various ways in which they have converged with other government programmes. The following are the highlights of the meeting:

- Launched by the Government of Kerala in 1998 for wiping out absolute poverty from the State through concerted community action under the leadership of Local Self Governments, Kudumbashree is today one of the largest women-empowering projects in the country.
- The programme has 40.54 lakh members and covers more than 50% of the households in Kerala. Built around three critical components, micro credit, entrepreneurship and empowerment, the Kudumbashree initiative has today succeeded in addressing the basic needs of the less privileged women, thus providing them a more dignified life and a better future.
- Literal meaning of Kudumbashree is prosperity (shree) of family (Kudumbam). "To eradicate absolute poverty in ten years through concerted community action under the leadership of local governments, by facilitating organization of the poor for combining self-help with demand-led convergence of available services and resources to tackle the multiple dimensions and manifestations of poverty, holistically."

There are two distinguishing characteristics to Kudumbashree which set it apart from the usual SHG model of empowerment. These are

- i. The universality of reach – from its very inception Kudumbashree has attempted to bring every poor woman in the state within its fold, as a consequence of which today Kudumbashree is present in every village panchayat and municipality, and in nearly every ward, colony and hamlet. The sheer spread is mind boggling, and it is only because the local community of women drive the system that it has managed to persevere.
- ii. The scope of community interface in local governance – the functioning of Kudumbashree is tied up to the development initiatives of the local government be it for social infrastructure, welfare or right based interventions or for employment generation. From food security to health insurance, from housing to enterprise development, from the national wage employment programme to the jagratha samiti, every development experience depends on Kudumbashree to provide the community interface.
- iii. It is using these opportunities that Kudumbashree strives to convert a microfinance led financial security model into a more comprehensive model of local economic development.

The delegation expressed the importance of economic empowerment that is key to the development of women; hence linking economic empowerment program with social development needs to be systematically carried out in Nepal. The delegation commended the Kudumbashree effort and felt one could further explore the potential of replication.

The delegation expressed interest in the **Gender Self Help Learning group** that was spoken about and the work in reference to social development and gender equity (www.sreeshakhti.org) in relation to employment, health and mobility.



Another convergence model that Nepal Police expressed interest the **Nirbahya – the free legal advocacy** that focuses on tracking where violence against women is being committed and addressing the reasons with regards to the same. Kudumbashree is also working closely with the Kerala Police in their **Janmaitri Community Policing Programme** and assists the Police in crime mapping with special focus on gender based violence and violence related to children. This Community Policing Initiative was aimed on taking steps

to prevent thefts and harassment of women; prevention of ill-treatment of children and drug abuse and improving relationship between the police and the public. The motto of the initiative was that if the relation between police and citizens were good it will naturally reflect on the quality of vigilance. Public will be more comfortable in visiting Police Stations, lodging FIRs etc., especially women.

It was suggested by the delegation that some learning from Janmaitri community policing could be brought to Nepal. The number of women police officers is very limited yet the police have been able to build trust at the community level. The Nepal police are also working on public police partnership. And further learning's between Nepal and India police could be further facilitated.

D. FIELD VISIT

Micro – enterprise: Dreams Paper – Carry Bag Unit, Kudumbashree

In the wake of the plastic ban, the Kudumbashree has set up paper carry bag manufacturing units among the various kinds of microenterprises that have set up in the state of Kerala. The delegation visited one such unit called the “*Dreams paper carry bag unit*”. The unit comprises on 24 women members who work 0930 hours to 1730 hours and make various handmade paper and cloth bags. These units have been supported by the Government of Kerala supply such bags to Kerala Tourism Department among other departments. The profits of the sales thereafter are equally divided among all 24 women members. Upon interaction with them it was learnt that each member of this micro enterprise unit took home a minimum of INR 11000/- per month.

VII. WAY FORWARD

A. Possible Areas for further knowledge exchange

i. Gender Based Violence

- a. Active Learning Solutions, DFID – India and IPE Global Pvt. Ltd. spoke about the ‘**safetipin**’ application which is a part of the larger safe cities initiative. This a free telephone application used for safety audits of public places which has been promoted in partnership with Hindustan Times – a media group. Partnerships with Public Works and District police are established in support of the program.
- b. Centre for Social Research, an NGO based in Delhi was running gender sensitization training for police, judiciary and corporate sector since 1999. Through Gender Training Institute, CSR

has been organizing short and long term trainings on gender for students union, women in politics and police. The program for police named 'do kadam'⁴ was jointly initiated by Kiran Bedi and Ranjana Kumari. The idea is to train 'one team'⁵ from one police station such that there is a common understanding of gender responsive services. CSR runs Crisis Intervention Centres with legal and counselling services in place. Men have been trained as paralegal workers to be able to provide immediate services to women. In partnership with the Asia Foundation, CSR is engaged in training Nepal government officials on gender issues.

- c. It was suggested by the delegation that some learning from **Janmaitri community policing** could be brought to Nepal. The number of women police officers is very limited yet the police have been able to build trust at the community level. The Nepal police are also working on public police partnership. And further learning's between Nepal and India police could be further facilitated.

ii. Economic Empowerment of Women

- a. Structures like Mahila Samakhya and Jeevika do not exist in Nepal. These are government funded institutions situated in the Ministry of Education. Central level oversight and convergence of women's empowerment program at the country and state level was carried out by National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW). NMEW mission in India was launched by Honourable President of India on March 8, 2010, with the aim of strengthening inter-sectoral convergence efforts for empowerment of women. Nepal does not have such an institution. Missions like the NMEW would do well in the Nepal scenario.
- b. The delegation expressed the importance of economic empowerment that is key to the development of women; hence linking economic empowerment program with social development needs to be systematically carried out in Nepal. The delegation commended the Kudumbashree effort and felt one could further explore the potential of replication.

iii. Public Private Partnerships

- a. Government of India partnership with NGOs are very strategic. The Government of India collaborates with various NGOs in order to implement various government schemes and programmes. These NGOs have the capacity and ability to reach the difficult target groups and link them with all government development schemes. In Nepal, partnership between the government and NGO is not always structured and formal. The delegation felt that this was an area that could be discussed with Nepali officials how collaboration with NGOs can be forged and improved for the empowerment of women.

B. Possible Mode of Engagement

- a. Engaging with the Department of Police, Nepal - gauging the linkages with the application to reduce VAW - Safetipin.

⁴ Do-kadam is a four days training package for police to become gender sensitive while performing their job.

⁵ All police personnel of one duty station.

- b. Regular & consistent sharing of research materials and stories of change such as Brief Write-up on Safetipin and the features of application. (Success and concept of Chaupals to be included)
- c. Explore ways to work in collaboration with Stakeholders from both the countries - Develop Action Plan with DFID-Nepal on how the Safetipin application can be taken to Nepal.
- d. Technical Assistance and Training - Both Mahila Samakhya and Women Empowerment through SHG model can be explored in the coming months. Training material on Mahila Samakhya to be developed.

A team of four recently visited Nepal as a follow up to the Learning Exchange Visit by the Nepal Delegates in India (from 26th Jan to 3rd Feb'14), where the objective of the knowledge exchange visit to Nepal was to advocate with key stakeholders in Government and CSOs the use of **Safetipin** and **181 Women Helpline** to address women safety issues in an attempt to make cities safer.

C. Follow up Actions and next steps

- ✓ There was acceptance among concerned stakeholders in taking up technical support from Indian CSOs in reducing violence against women in public spaces. **A draft action plan** in response to be developed with the help of DFID – Nepal.
- ✓ **Adapting and Adopting the Safetipin Application** in Nepal and advocating for a change. Pilot in Kathmandu :
 - i. Safetipin could be taken forward in the Kathmandu in a phased manner. A proposal needs to be submitted by ALS to DFID Nepal for support. The timelines are tentatively around six months to kick off the project in a specified area of Kathmandu.
 - ii. Resources for training NGOs (like Antenna Foundation and Alliance for Peace etc. who are already working with DFID Nepal) in using *Safetipin* are available and these could be done around November/December.
 - iii. Suggestions will be taken by DFID-Nepal from DIG Shah on where (which geographical wards) to begin the *Safetipin* audits.
 - iv. Concept note documenting experiences from India (Dwarka Police) and how effectively Safetipin is used by them.
- ✓ **Exploring Possibility of implementing Women Safety Helpline** similar to the 181 concept.
 - v. The preliminary discussions held at the PMO on 5th Aug will be carried forward by DFID- Nepal to see how the capacity building of the Gender Based Violence cell and callers handling women in distress calls at Hello Sarkar (1111) could be done. Also explore other ways to strengthen Hello Sarkar helpline.

- vi. The possibility of developing a best practice compendium for women safety helplines in India could be explored under the KPP.
 - vii. The National Commission of Women has been approached by World Bank regarding providing them with technical assistance to develop a women safety helpline and is in the process of discussion since last six months. As the helpline is in its inception phase possibilities of technical and capacity building inputs from the 181 Delhi Helpline could be explored.
- ✓ The KPP research team will provide any **further research** in the area to enhance better understanding of Indian systems/policies in responding to Women's empowerment and their safety.