



2024 GOOD PRACTICE

Good Practice on Empowering Women Through Community Dialogues in Nepal



Introduction

Challenging traditional gender roles and engaging men and boys in conversations on gender equality is essential for fostering inclusive communities.

By addressing deeply rooted societal norms, these efforts contribute to a more supportive environment where women can fully participate in leadership, governance, and economic opportunities.

In Nepal, community dialogues have proven to be a powerful tool for shifting perspectives and inspiring commitments toward gender-equitable practices.

Community Dialogues on Gender Roles Transformation

In 2024, UN Women, in collaboration with DidiBahini under the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal (JP RWEE) phase II, facilitated **6 (six) Community Dialogues on Gender Roles Transformation** across Siraha and Saptari districts, engaging **163 men** from diverse backgrounds.

These dialogues enhanced participants' understanding of gender role transformation, with a specific focus on strengthening rural women's skills and capacities to participate in governance and decision-making processes.

By fostering discussions among influential leaders, the initiative catalyzed shifts in mindset, reinforcing commitments to dismantling harmful social norms and creating supportive environments for women's empowerment.

Key Objectives

- Challenge patriarchal norms and promote shared caregiving responsibilities;
- Support women's leadership in economic, social, and political spheres;
- Encourage male leaders to advocate for gender-equitable policies;
- Address the impact of unpaid care work on women and families;
- Promote inclusive decision-making processes at the community level.

Key Topics Discussed

- The distinction between biological and socially constructed gender roles;
- The impact of unpaid care work on women and families;
- The importance of men's involvement in supporting women's leadership;
- Strategies to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote gender-equitable mindsets;
- Case studies demonstrating the benefits of gender-equitable practices.

Who Was Engaged?

The dialogues brought together a diverse range of male stakeholders, including ward chairpersons, political party representatives, religious and caste leaders, school principals, teachers, private sector representatives, and other key decision-makers.

Participants engaged in brainstorming, group discussions, and open forums to explore gender roles and identify solutions for empowerment.

Key Outcomes

- **Mindset Shift:** Participants gained a deeper understanding of the societal impacts of unequal gender roles and the benefits of gender-equitable practices, leading to increased support for women's empowerment.
- **Commitments Made:** Participants committed to fostering equitable practices, linking women to income-generating opportunities, and challenging entrenched gender norms by advocating for shared caregiving responsibilities and gender-equitable policies.
- **Sustainable Impact:** The dialogues fostered a network of male allies championing women's participation, laying the groundwork for continued community discussions and institutional change. Ongoing efforts will ensure these commitments translate into real action, contributing to long-term shifts in gender norms.

Conclusion

By addressing harmful social norms and fostering gender-equitable mindsets, these dialogues have set the stage for long-term progress toward inclusive governance and community development.

The commitments made by participants—including promoting shared caregiving responsibilities, supporting women's participation in income-generating activities, and advocating for women's leadership—reflect a growing recognition of the need for collective action in achieving gender equality.

The success of these dialogues underscores the importance of continued engagement, collaboration, and advocacy to sustain the momentum toward lasting social change.

Participation across the six wards:

S. N	Local Level	Ward No.	Men	Women	Total
1	Sakhuwanankar-katti RM, Siraha	3	27	0	27
2	Laxmipur Patari RM, Siraha	1	25	1	26
3		2	26	3	29
4	TilathiKoiladi RM, Saptari	3	28	0	28
5		4	28	0	28
6	Chhinnamasta RM, Saptari	5	29	0	29
Total			163	4	167

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