

## **Project Update: June 2009**

We would like to update some project activities which have just been accomplished under the project entitled "Improving the Ergonomics of Blacksmiths for Conserving Environment and Promoting the Sustainable Livelihoods". At the initial, selection of beneficiaries / household survey using PRA/RRA tools was carried out in the project area in order to find out the actual need assessment and implications of the project. As per the need assessment survey, we have imposed to work for blacksmiths who have been residing in Bhalayakhara VDC that had not been focused in the proposal. Nevertheless, we covered the both of clusters named Bhandikharka (Chakratirtha VDC) and Kamidanda (Bhalayakharka VDC) in order to provide the opportunity for such marginalized and disadvantaged blacksmith communities.

After selecting the beneficiaries, various trainings (Training for bio briquette production, Training on Charcoal making using pit kiln, training on Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS) were organized and conducted in both of the VDCs. The main aim of such trainings was to build the capacity of the blacksmiths so that they could improve their ergonomics and promote their sustainable livelihoods. Up to now, we were able to get the following achievements:

1. Constructed 200 Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS) for kitchen management: in ICS, we provided the technical and material support whereas local people contributed their labour support in both of the VDCs;
2. Improved charcoal making by Pit Kiln (20 numbers in Dhandakharka and Kamigaun forests);
3. Improved Anvil Smithy working place (20 numbers);
4. Conducted participatory resource mapping (2 VDCs);
5. Conducted awareness raising program especially on environmental conservation (in both of the VDCs in 4 times);
6. Organized and conducted community plantation program (5030 plants in the banks of Regmi Khola Banks, open land of Kansipairo, private land of Badambari, government managed forest of Dhandakharka and public land of Kamigaun);
7. Created income generation activities for employment and livelihood opportunities (organic seed distribution for 200 families, one day orientation program on NTFP management for knowing basic health services using their nearby plant resources, home garden management of 200 numbers and promoted multipurpose tree species for sustainable livelihoods including soil and water conservation).

In a nutshell, we are proudly said that small contributions may make many differences in the society. Our guidance and mobilization has become a model in the society. Blacksmith communities have obviously upgraded their lifestyle including much more consensus on environmental conservation. We will be disseminating our community based activities through leaflet preparation, brochures, books and small documentary video in the near future. These activities are the remaining parts of our project. Therefore, these will be presented in our final report for Rufford Small Grants foundation.



Blacksmith`s family in Kamidanda

Briquete production by Blacksmiths



Cluster-wise beneficiaries in the project area

Old blacksmith women, making food using Improved Cooking Stoves

