

**Educate the Children  
Dolakha Review Seminar (January 2008 – December 2008)**

**20 January 2009**

**Context**

Educate the Children (ETC) in collaboration with the local Thami organization called Faselung Samajik Sewa (FSS) Nepal has started its Integrated Community Development (ICD) programs in the three VDCs of Dolakha viz. Suspa, Sundrawati and Sunkhani since January 2008. At the outset of the program last year, ETC organized a start-up seminar in which we presented the ETC's ICD cycle to the participants. We have just completed our one year of ICD implementation in the said area and it was necessary for us to review our work to see how our work has been perceived by the community, other stakeholders and collect their feedback from them for our future work. Thus, ETC and FSS organized a one day seminar to review the first year of ICD implementation in Dolakha at Charikot, the headquarters of Dolakha district, on 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2009.

**Participants**

The participants of the seminars were the representatives of:

- District level government organizations based in Dolakha,
- Local NGOs and CBOs,
- Women Groups from Suspa, Sundrawati and Sunkhani
- Agriculture Resource Persons (ARP)
- Leader Farmers
- Head-teachers
- Media persons
- Community Leaders
- Nepal Thami Samaj
- Faselung Samajik Sewa Nepal
- Educate the Children Nepal

A total of 109 persons participated in the seminar.



*Participants of  
the seminar*

## Review of the Progress

1. Ruku Thami, Chair of Jyoti Women Group, presided over the seminar. Breaking the tradition of having someone from the district (normally a 'big shot') as the Chair of the event, ETC honored the local community and its beneficiary by making Ruku Thami the chair of the program. This is a breakthrough that ETC made in the district and the participants highly appreciated this move.
2. Mira Maiya Singh Rana, Director of ETC Nepal, welcomed the participants in the seminar with her remarks saying that ETC has been very pleased to have been able to work in Dolakha and with the support of all the stakeholders the first year of ICD implementation has been successfully completed. She said that ETC has FSS have been committed to make changes in the life of the people at the grassroots level and any suggestions and feedback to improve the program in the future will be highly appreciated.



*Mira Rana welcoming the participants*

3. Mr. Chandi Prasad Shrestha, Program Coordinator of ICD Dolakha presented the progress of one year work to the participants. In his presentation, Chandi highlighted major achievements of the project i.e. formation of 30 women groups, the training they have attended, their group activities, saving/credit status and their participation in different local bodies such as School Management Committee (SMC) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA). Similarly, he mentioned the work that has been carried out in different schools and the training programs organized for the teachers. Also, he mentioned the role played by kitchen garden in the family nutrition and their income through the surplus.

Also, he mentioned the coordination efforts made by ETC/FSS with various organizations including the JANSEEP (Care Nepal) project and Tevel Be Zedek (the Israeli organization) that is helping with the volunteers and fruit trees to all the WG members.



*Chandi Shrestha presenting the program*

4. From the beneficiary side, representatives of women groups, head-teachers, ARP and Lead Farmers expressed their experiences of working with the ETC and FSS.



*Beneficiaries presenting their experiences of working with ETC*

The speakers said that ETC/FSS have worked very hard to make change in the community and the real development work has started in their place after the ICD implementation.

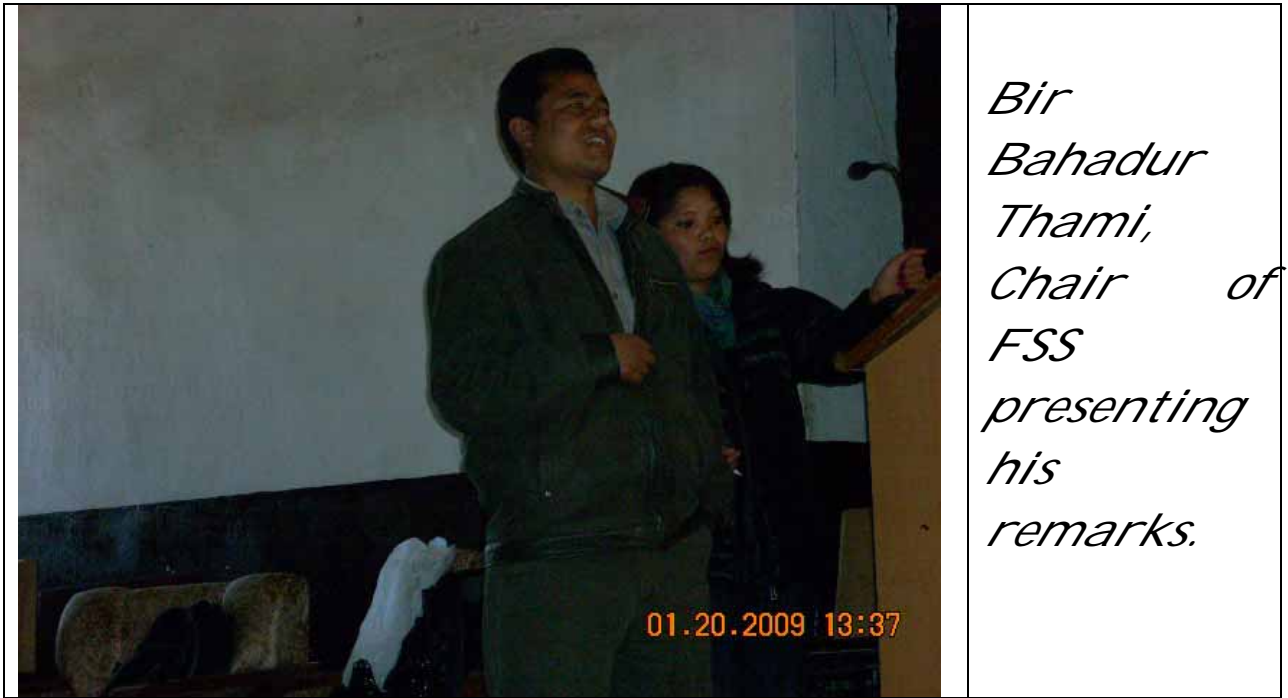
*'Some women group members have quit smoking and the money they used to spend on smoking is now save in group funds. This awareness came as a result of our partnership with ETC'*

Sunita Thami, Lead Farmer of a Group.

*'Regular follow-up and community participations are the key features of ETC's work which are instrumental for a change'*

Krishna Siwakoti, Head-teachers of Manedanda Primary School, Suspa.

5. Bir Bahadur Thami shared his observation of working with ETC as a local partner. He said that the capacity of the FSS members has been developed while working with the ETC and they have learned a lot in the last one year.



*Bir Bahadur Thami, Chair of FSS presenting his remarks.*

*"ETC is like our parents and together with ETC FSS has always been committed to support our community. We will try our best to bring to you (community) all possible supports available in the district"*

Bir Bahadur Thami, Chair, FSS Nepal.

6. The participants were asked to make their observations on the presentations and provide their feedback for future work. Ganga Gautam facilitated the questions answer session and he responded to the questions asked by the participants.



*Participants asking questions and presenting their observations*

**Some of the observations that came from the participants are as follows:**

- a) *This program came as a hope to change our lives because it addresses the issues holistically. Very often the organizations come with one particular program and that alone does not cater the needs of the community.*
- b) *The kitchen gardens have been extremely useful not only to eat the fresh vegetables from the garden but also they give us an opportunity to sell the surplus in the local market so that we can buy pencils and exercise books for our children.*
- c) *Due to the regular WG meetings, we have now realized our potentials and we have developed confident to engage ourselves in community development work such as contributing to the building of schools, temples, taps and other establishments in the community.*

**Some of the questions raised by the participants**

- a) *When we produce vegetables in bigger quantities, where is the market?*
- b) *How about the women from other castes such as Brahmin and Chhetri who also need support but are excluded from this program as they do not belong to Dalit and Janajati?*

**Some suggestions given by the participants**

- a) *More coordination with the other organizations is necessary.*
- b) *ETC/FSS need to publicize its programs to the wider community because the work they are doing is very good for rural Nepal.*
- c) *Irrigation is problem in some communities and micro irrigation projects are needed.*

7. District Agriculture Officer and an Officer from District Education office also made their remarks on the occasion.



*"I have closely observed ETC's work and I have facilitated their training in the community. There are different types of NGOs such as paper NGO (those who do a lot of paper work but do very little in the community) family NGOs (NGO run by a family for their own benefit rather*

*than community benefit) and so on. ETC is a working NGO that is really dedicated to the real community development. We have a very good working relation with them and I am committed to support them in whatever way I can. For micro-irrigation, we can be of some help and please do come to my office with a proposal I will try my best to help you out".*

District Agriculture Development Officer

8. Laxmi Basukala presented vote of thanks to the participants.
  
9. Ruku Thami, the chair of the event, concluded the seminar with her remarks. She said that ETC/FSS are like our parents and they should not leave us until we are confident. The unique thing about ETC is their continuous presence in the community and regular support to the WG members whenever there is a need.