

## “Firm determination with action can bring a change”

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Bhujunge Mahila Bakhrapalan Samuha (Bhujunge Women Goat Raising Group),  
Sahndhikharka Municipality ward no - 7, Bhujunge, Arghakhanchi District, Nepal

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Bhujunge Women Goat Raising Group is located in Sahndhikharka Municipality ward no - 7 Bhujunge, Arghakhanchi District, Nepal. In this village socially and economically deprived women spontaneously raised their voices to form a homogenous group. In this regard, they made a group of 46 women in 2056 BS. Since then, this group has been running anyhow with the expectation of getting support from District Livestock Service Office (DLSO), particularly in goat development. As time passed, Agriculture Perspective Plan- Support Project (APP-SP), one of the DFID supported programme, took over this group as one of its target groups in 2060 BS. This group was registered in 2061 BS in DLSO Arghakhanchi. The APP-SP continued for three years then phased over.



*MS Shubhaka with 50% cross Boer buck*

KUBK- PMO, as an approach to implement its programme through the existing farmers' group to achieve the desired goal, seeks proposals from qualified groups to grant the fund. In this regard, “Bhujunge Women Goat raising Group” was selected as one of the KUBK's grantees in February, 2016. The group had lost its pace following the phase over of the APP-SP. They used to have very limited activities that were not enough to boom their socio-economic status. The facilitation support by the technicians after KUBK intervention accelerated the pace of the group and has succeeded to make difference. This group has been reshuffled with 40 members, where 9 are from other (so called elite) cast.

As KUBK has prepared a profile of *SMART WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN KUBK Districts*, a case of the chairperson of this group, Ms. Shubhakala Nepali, as she can be regarded a Smart Women, has been taken in this story. She is deprived, financially and economically. The patriarchal society with its gender and cast based discrimination gave her hard time to live in her village. During the initial days, many times she committed to leave the group due to the satiric and wicked voices of surrounding. There used to be enormous mocking smiles towards her from the society. The male of elite casts, in some cases, forced her to resign the position. But her firm determination didn't let her to deviate from her path. She remembers a proverb ***“I will construct a building from the stones that you thrown to me”*** and she became even stronger. Ms. Shubhakala says “I am thankful to the DLSO, Arghakhanchi for their facilitation support in group registration. She further adds “I am really grateful to the technicians of KUBK for their un-tiring efforts to internalize the society about the myth of cast and gender based discrimination”. **KUBK has supported in organize our voices and increased our access to assets and services in addition to changing the deep rooted superstitious beliefs of the people in society through its programme.**

### Programme intervention and achievement:

For the first time, she heard about KUBK from the DLSO, Arghakhanchi. She says “the subsidy for goat shed improvement and many other technical assistance from the KUBK inspired me to involve in this sub-project. I have borne 50% of the total financial cost of this sub-project. In addition to this, I have contributed labour too, as other members did. Being the chairperson of this group, I spend most of time with the members in inspiring them in goat commercialization and animate them to live a dignified life.”

Further, Ms. Shubhakala has attended several capacity enhancement programme, such as; financial management training; goat management training; Gender Based violence etc. Beside these, she has been exposed to learn techniques of commercial livestock production, nursery management and improved grass cultivation. She says, “The skill and knowledge based training that I acquired from KUBK support have added my capacity for goat rearing in an improved way. She states, “Similarly, as a group leader, I am confident to deal the issues of my group”. Her involvement as a volunteer in ‘Hariyali Aama Samuha (*Greenery Mother Group*), in a ‘local Health Group’ and in ‘Nepal Mahila Dalit Utthan Sangh’ (*Nepal Women un-touchable cast Awakening Association*) has upgraded her position in society. “I earned more than 45 thousand rupees in this year from goat selling. The family members are quite happy from this return” she added. She says “the attitude and behavior of local elites and so called upper casts also have been changing over the time. I, along with my family members, are regarded as respected personality in the society. We are now living dignified lives in the same place where we used to be treated worse than animal”. She further adds “I believe, *a firm determination with action can bring a change in deep rooted superstitious beliefs in people*”.

#### **Sustainability and replication of this model:**

**‘Livestock is the base of livelihoods’**. She has dreamed ‘rearing *the livestock as base of livelihoods*’ The Family members are self-motivated to continue raising goats as they already experienced its benefits. She plans to take financial support from SKBBL (Sana Kisan Bikas Laghuubitta Bitya Sanstha Limited)/SFACL (Small farmer Agriculture Cooperative Ltd.) to increase the number of goat and the area of grass cultivation to properly feed the livestock. She states “A sort of multi-stakeholders mechanism DLSO, (DADO) District Agriculture Development Office, AEC (Agriculture Enterprise Center), and SFACL/SFDB) has been formed during this time, so I can use this forum for the commercialization of my livestock farming beyond the KUBK. We group members also have diverse knowledge and skills, so those also can be shared to promote our business.

At last, she still seeks technical and social mobilization supports from KUBK and DLSO, so that they can make their dream happen. Cooperatives should keep continue to flow loans to the interested groups in coming days. She could be an exemplary for all those women working in agriculture sector of Nepal and other developing countries.