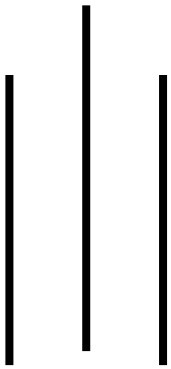
An explorative study on self-empowered women in remoted village Khori, Bajhang District of Nepal

How women leadership succeed in controlling alcohol and gambling and if this strategy can be replicated in other new villages



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STUDY TEAM MEMBERS

STUDY TEAM

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ABBREVIATIONS

INGO	: International Non-Governmental Organization
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
HEAR-Nepal	: Health Education Awareness and Right
KII	: Key Informant Information
FGD	: Focus Group Discussion

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inspired by the success story of self-empowered women of the Khori village, Bajhang, who succeeded in bringing positive changes in their village by controlling alcohol-drinking activities and uplifting women's daily life, this study was carried out with the aim of exploring firsthand evidence about the success story and their approaches in khori village which may inspire and work as road map for the women in other villages. Our team believes that the novel work done by women in Khori is a role model for other women and a rewarding example of women's self-empowerment. If it is true then why not replicate the same type of program in other villages which may uplift their lives too. Thus, this study was carried out to explore more detail about the context and possibility of replicating similar activities in other villages.

A qualitative approach was applied to collect information from the different group of people in Khori village, Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality Ward No. 7, a role model village and 10 other potential new villages in ward No 2, 3, 4 and 7. Information from 3 Focus group discussion (FGD) with the women, 7 Interaction program with women group, one stakeholder meeting at rural municipality, and 12 Key Informant Information (KII) were analyzed after grouping the information into major theme and presented in result section.

Overall findings revealed that women in khori village were enthusiastic, happy, and fully empowered. Their confidence during sharing experiences clearly reflected their leadership quality. Without any hesitation each of them excited to share the story, how they succeeded in their mission in controlling alcohol and gambling, and how it impacted their lives.

Earlier alcohol drinking, gambling, fighting, conflict and trauma were the daily routine in Khori village. Women were beaten by drunkard husbands and they spent all their money on purchasing alcohol. Women and children suffered badly and their life was just like hell. *T*o get rid of this day today's tortures and frustrations, women in the village came together, to stop all hassles. They understood, they have to solve their problem themselves. No one is there to help them. This mission was started from last 7 years (Asoj, 2074 BS (Sept, 2017 AD) with the group name of "Khori Jad Raksi Nivaran Mahila Samuha" (*Khori Alcohol Eradication Women Group*). The aim of mission was to stop brewing alcohol, drinking alcohol, selling alcohol, and playing card/ carrom.

In the beginning these women did not receive any support instead they were harassed and insulted. No one believe that these women can change the disorganized and damaged village

but women did not stop. They endured and continued their work. They made rule and set certain amount of fine to those who gamble, sell alcohol, and drink alcohol. Initially it was a difficult task but gradually they accepted and if they caught by the women group in alcoholic state, they immediately pay the fine. From the fine this group has collected enough money to invest in loan and income generating work.

Currently, this group has support from all, including police administration, local government, shop keepers, community and family members. There is no alcohol and gambling related problem in the village. People are constructive and helpful, started small vegetable farming, no expenditure in alcohol, school is in good condition and living separately in chhau during menstruation is no more in practice. Everyone appreciates women by saying **"What a good job"**, and **"You have done a very good job.** Women were delighted of doing good work and receiving respect and value as reward in the community. *"This campaign has changed the lives of all villagers.*

The main key to success was a clear target, tolerance, perseverance, hard work, motivation and unity. This group had strong leadership too.

Regarding, new 10 villages, all women in these villages were well aware of the "alcohol control campaign" in khori village and their success story. They were eager and interested to do the same types of the program in their village. Since the alcohol and gambling is highly prevalent in these villages, women and children were the victim of domestic violence and the socio-economic crisis. During the interaction meeting, women and young school girls, clearly stated that they are looking for the way by which they get rid of alcohol drinking, brewing and selling in their village. Of the 3 major problems in village, alcohol was the topmost as listed by the schoolgirls. Even in the women's network meeting, when we raised the issue of alcoholism, they were desperately looking forward to start the similar program as did by the women group in Khori village. They welcome and were happy to learn from them.

Finally, "Alcohol control campaign" implemented by the women group in Khori village was a successful venture and a role model for the women self-empowerment and their ability to change the society toward prosperity. However, a clear goal, strong motivation/ desire, persistence, tolerance, unity and hard work were the major key for success. Along with the alcohol related problem, low socio-economic status was another major problem of these

villages. Because of inadequate income from the local resources (farming, animal husbandry, small jobs), they have to go to India to earn for living for 8-9 months in a year. In many cases whole family migrate which is adversely impacting on child education, health, family and social relation, confidence and self-identity. To stop this tradition education and skill-based training should be provided to the community whole. They also stated that they need training in farmer's group management, marketing, preservation, planning and even proposal writing for fund.

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

"Give Me Good Mothers and I will Give You a Great Nation" (Napoleon Bonaparte). "If we are going to see real development in the world then our best investment is WOMEN". Desmond TUTU. These both statements reflect how important are women for development. Thus, they must be strong, educated, and valued. Women's empowerment equips and allows them to make life-determining decisions through the different societal problems. Women empowerment is "a fundamental human right of the women that is also key to achieving a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Nepal with a patriarchal society where women's rights are not up to the acceptable level in many contexts. If the women are not educated and not earning the situation is worse. In a patriarchal society, men are the ones who control society and if they are not in discipline then the whole community and their family suffer the consequences. It is interesting that even in such an odd scenario, women in the remote village Khori have done exemplary work and become a role model for women in other parts of the world. A report entitled **"How women leadership changed the face of this rural village in Bajhang**" was published in the daily newspaper Kathmandu Post, 29.11.2021 provoked our interest to explore the context in more detail. According to the report, because of the daily problem related to alcohol consumption by male partners, women were distressed and hopeless thus they decided to control this practice and formed a women's group. This group was succeeded in controlling alcohol consumption and selling in their village which ultimately upgraded the overall livelihood of Khori village under the women's leadership in Bajhang (Ref. Kathmandu Post, 29.11.2021).

The Khori village lies at an altitude of 2,650 meters in a remote location in Chhabis Pathibhera Municipality of Bajhang district of the Far Western Province, which is one of the poorest of the 77 districts in Nepal. HEAR-Nepal, a local NGO that has been working in the field of education and health in Bajhang since 2011. The news inspired our leader Sten Linnander, International Coordinator of HEAR Nepal, to know more about the context of how these women made it possible. If it is true then why not replicate the same type of program in other

villages which may uplift their lives too. Thus, this study was carried out to explore more detail about the context and possibility of replicating similar activities in other villages.

The first meeting was held in Kathmandu on 9th November, 2023. We discussed that the Khori project is mainly for women's empowerment and the name given for the project was "ENOUGH". The ultimate goal of the project was to empower women in remote villages of Bajhang district by learning the success story of Khori women and replicating a similar type of program in new villages. The idea was generated by the success story of women who were self-empowered in KHORI.

1.2 Project Objectives

1. To explore and document the success story of women empowerment in controlling alcohol consumption and gambling in Khori village of Bajhang district.
2. To identify the possibility and ways of implementing a similar project as Khori women, in other 10 new villages nearby Khori village.

This study was divided into major two sections.

Section 1.

To fulfill objective number one, the study was conducted in Khori village where the women group already succeeded in controlling alcohol drinking/selling and gambling in their village. This village was taken as a sample village or as a role model to replicate the applicable strategies in other villages for the same purpose (women empowerment and alcohol control). Information was collected through interaction programs, meetings, KII, and sharing stories. Women were asked about their status in the family/community (before and after), how they initiated the alcohol control campaign, the approach and challenges they experienced, the possibility of applying for similar programs in other villages, and their willingness to help women in new villages.

Section 2.

Section 2 comprises of need assessment of the women in 10 selected new villages nearby Khori and exploring the possibility of replicating the similar program as women did in Khori village. A baseline information was collected on the current situation of the women-empowerment in these villages including alcohol drinking/ selling problems, income generation activities,

education and training of the women, major social problems, and acceptance /readiness to replicate the same program as in Khori village.

1.3 Study Objectives (Section 1)

(Section 1, Khori Village as role model)

1. To assess the current situation of the Khori regarding women empowerment, and their involvement/activities to improve the overall socio-economic condition of the community
2. To explore how did these women get idea and inspiration (from where and whom) for the change? What were the key motivators?

   What were the changes they made? Activities they did (alcohol control, income generation etc) ?? Who were the helping hands or contributors – community, local government, NGOs, INGOs?
3. To identify how did they start the campaign and what were the approaches.
4. To find out the challenges faced by the women during the process and how did they overcome.
5. To know the current situation of the menstrual stigma and practice in Khori village.
6. To identify the areas to be improved in the village from a women's perspective.
7. To receive feedback and suggestions from the experience of the women in Khori to replicate similar in other villages.

Chapter II
METHOD AND MATERIALS

To fulfill the objectives of the program, a qualitative approach was utilized to collect required information from the women of Khori village, and a similar approach was applied in 10 other new villages.

SECTION 1 (Model village- Khori)

2.1 Study area: Khori village, Wad 7, Chhabisa Pathivera Rural Municipality, Bajhang.

2.2 Study population and data collection.

Information was collected through various methods with different study population such as 1 Interaction programs with women groups, 1 Focus Groups Discussion with women groups, 5 KII, and Field Observation. One stakeholder meeting was organized in rural municipality, chhabis pathivara, ward 7.

1. **Women Group:** One focus group discussion and one interaction meeting was conducted with the women group in Khori village. The meeting was organized on the school's premises. A total of 18 women from the "**alcohol control women group"** attended the meeting. Since the vice president of the rural municipality was from the same village, he was also attended the meeting.

   They share their 7 years' story about the alcohol control campaign, their experience, challenges, approach to dealing with the situation, the current situation of alcohol consumption/selling/production, and women's status before and after. They further discussed and looked for the possibility of the programs that educate them for earning technique and to upgrade their socio-economic status in the community.

2. **Meeting with stakeholders:** Our team visited Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality office in the morning and had a meeting with the Rural Municipality vice-chairman and his team. The team comprised of Chief Administrative Officer, Head of Education, Youth and Sports Section, and Head of the Public Health Unit. They were aware of the good work of women in the Khori village and appreciated their work. Head of the Education, Youth, and Sports section was saying the school and the children in Khori village are more updated and cleaner than those of others around.

   All members were positive about our idea of replicating a similar program in other villages with the help of women in Khori. We made clear that we just stand behind as igniter but they will be responsible for the project. All members were supportive and ready to make the program successful. We selected the new villages together for the implementation. They know alcoholic and nonalcoholic villages but according to them no one is an exception but some are severe and others mild.

   Provided an estimate, they were ready to support some amount for the construction of a meeting hall for the women in Khori, which was a long-awaited request from Khori women. In the municipality, they have the budget for women empowerment-related activities and they recently formed a "women network group" representing all villages within the Rural Municipality. This group has just activated and conducted a meeting for the plan and programs. According to the vice-chairman, the rural municipality is organizing meetings and providing vocational training to the women to raise their livelihood and status. They are building a cold storage room to facilitate villagers to keep their agricultural products until they reach to the market.

3. **KII (Key Informant Information):** Information regarding the success story of the alcohol campaign in Khori was collected informally from the local shopkeepers, senior members of the village, teachers, young boys and girls, and elected political members. The main focus was on the current scenario of alcohol consumption and alcohol selling in Khori and other villages around. Almost all participants appreciated about untiring effort of women in Khori to materialize the positive outcome. They also like to replicate the same things in other villages too. However, in exception, some of the men from Khori goes to other villages to buy alcohol but don't know where they go to drink.

4. **Field observation:** The study team spent one night in Khori village. We observed and informally talked to the local people. We didn't find anyone drunk and alcohol in the shop. The meeting hall of the Khori women's group was near to demolished condition thus they were requesting support to build this hall.
5. **Interaction program in Majh-Khori:** The ward chair and other members organized the meeting/ interaction program with the women of different villages of Ward 7. A total of 35 women and 7 girls from the 5 villages participated in the program including four representatives from the "alcohol control women group" of Khori village. Women in these villages were aware of the alcohol control program initiated by the women in Khori and they also wanted to do the same. They know each other and are ready to share their experiences and help. Ward chair a young man, was enthusiastic to support the women's group for any positive aspect of village development work in his area.

The team of five members including 2 experts, 3 from HEAR-Nepal visited the village for data collection.

SECTION 2. (New Villages for the Exploration Purpose)

2.3 Study objectives (Section 2)

Section 2 comprised the need assessment of the women in 10 selected new villages near Khori and exploring the feasibility and acceptability of replicating the similar program as women did in Khori village. A baseline information was collected on the current situation of the women-empowerment in these villages including alcohol drinking/ selling problems, income generation activities, education and training of the women, major social problems, and acceptance/readiness to replicate the same program as in Khori village. In addition, women from the Khori village were introduced to the women from new villages to make work easy. These women will help new groups by sharing their experiences throughout the campaign.

2.4 Study area:

A total of 10 villages from 4 wards (wards 2, 3, 4, and ward 7) of Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, were selected as new areas for the program. The study villages were selected with the help of local government representatives, officials, and key people. These are the remote and economically backward communities and according to them alcohol consumption and production is also a common problem of these villages.

Name of the selected villages

Ward No	Name of village
7	Majhkhori; Budhkhori-1; Budhkhori-2; Naura; Ghatte;
4	Jhuteda Mallagaun; and Jhuteda Tallagaun (Joshi gaun)
3	Bannikot village; Patagaun and Kadelgaun
2	Motai Village;

2.5 Study population and data collection.

For the collection of firsthand information study team visited the study areas including Rural Municipality, wards, and new prospective villages. Information was explored through different techniques such as 2 FGD with women group, 6 interaction programs with the women, 7 KII, and field visits.

1. Interaction program in MakhKhori: The first interaction meeting was organized in the office premises of ward no 7, Majhkhori, Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality on 9th December 2023. A total of 42 participants attended the meeting from 5 villages including 7 students and 4 representatives from "Alcohol Control Women Group" of Khori village, meeting went for more than 3 hours. The ward chair and local women organized the meeting and invited the women representing women in targeted villages. The meeting was interesting and productive, women discussed openly their problems, their status in the family and the community, social problems of alcohol drinking, quarreling/ violence of male partners and poverty, etc. They are enthusiastic to start any work that increases their income and the status in the society. Some were even brought lemons to sell in the meeting (self-employment).

Girl students were provided paper slips to write about major problems in their family and the community. Surprisingly, they all want to *stop alcohol drinking, brewing, and selling as they consider it as the seeds of all problems in their life.* Women and the ward chair were aware of the success story of Khori women and thus were keen to follow the same.

Similarly, on the same day another meeting was held in Jhutera Joshi /Malla Gaun by the same study team. In the other remaining 4 villages, the meeting was organized by the field coordinator and team by using the same data collection tool (Questionnaire guide) and methods.

2. KII and Field visit: Information was collected informally with the local shopkeepers, tea portals, and local people men and women randomly.

2.6 Data analysis and report writing

Information was collected in the Nepali language. The Nepali written discussion transcripts and tape-recorded information were rechecked and listened to by data collectors and were further scrutinized by experts. Tape-recoded data were transcribed from tape to paper in the same dialect. All transcripts were translated into English language and categorized under different themes and domains according to the objective of the study. Findings are separated into two sections as : Model Village Khori and the New Villages.

Chapter III
FINDINGS

3.1 SECTION 1. Khori village as Role Model

Inspired by the success story of self-empowered women of the Khori village who succeeded in bringing positive changes in their village by controlling alcohol-drinking activities and uplifting women's daily life, our team from HEAR-Nepal visited the women in their village to explore more about the approach of success.

A meeting was organized with the women's group in the premises of a secondary school which was in Khori village, Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality Ward No. 7. In addition, 5 KII was conducted with different people in the same village but outside the group. The main aim of this study was to collect necessary information on how the women of Khori village succeeded in implementing alcohol controlling campaign and how this good practice can be replicated in the neighboring villages. Our team believes that the novel work done by women in Khori is a role model for other women in similar settings and a rewarding example of women's self-empowerment in the current situation.

1) What is the current situation of women in this village regarding women's empowerment?

Women in Khori were found to be happy and empowered. There were altogether 25-30 women who participated meeting. During the discussion, each of them was excited to share the story, how they succeeded in their mission in controlling alcohol and gambling, and how it impacted their lives. Earlier there was conflict, noises, and fighting due to alcohol but the context is different now.

This mission was started in the last 7 years (Asoj, 2074 BS) with the name of "Khori Jad Raksi Nivaran Mahila Samuha" (*Khori Alcohol Eradication Women Group*). The main aim was to stop brewing alcohol, drinking alcohol, selling alcohol, and playing card/ carrom, and are no more now.

Almost all men in the village have stopped drinking and shops/stores in the village have stopped selling alcohol after the alcohol control campaign. These days people from the village and surrounding appreciate us by saying **"What a good job"**, and **"You have done a very good job.** Women were delighted of doing good work and receiving respect and value in the community. *"This campaign of ours has changed the lives of all of us. There has been reconciliation in the village. There are no quarrels. There is uniformity of thoughts and behaviors in the village"* Women group leader.

However, literacy and skill-based training was lacking and they were looking for some self-sustaining type of programs. Because of inadequate income from the local resources (farming, animal husbandry, small jobs) villagers have to go to India in search of work. To stop this temporary labour migration to India, women and men need some income generation plans and

activities. After controlling alcohol consumption, there is peace, harmony, and unity in the village, no quarreling or fighting but the impact on economic growth is almost none.

2) What kind of problems existed in Khori village before the alcohol control campaign? How did women organize and started an alcohol control campaign? What was the motivation factor?

Before the campaign started, almost all men in Khori were drinking alcohol the whole day. When they returned home at night, there is always a risk to life. Because of the cliffy topography of this village, there is a high probability of falling from the cliffs even in the daytime. There are many incidences of serious injuries due to falls from cliffs and we heard a few years ago one young man died of this incident" A woman of 30 years.
Those days, there was no peace in the village. Women were beaten by drunkard husbands and they spent all their money on purchasing alcohol. It was not possible to sit together with brothers and sisters in the house as the drunkard people uttered vulgar words and showed bad-mannered gestures. Women and our children suffered badly and their life was just like hell. *"Our position was lower than anything in the family and nobody listen to us (all women agreed)."* To get rid of this day today's frustrations, women in the village came together to stop alcohol drinking. They realized, that they had to solve their problem themselves.
"We have started a campaign thinking that we could stop this alcoholism together." The campaign started with a general agreement of all women to "stop drinking and selling alcohol together." Now a lot has changed in the village due to this campaign. There is no such disturbance and no uproar in the village. Even if they come from other villages drinking alcohol, they come in silence when they enter our village. They drink in a small quantity. No one knows what is drunk secretly in the home. Our mission is that the society should not be disturbed and destroyed. People who drink little have stopped drinking because they have to go to another village to buy alcohol. Alcohol is available at the Bisauna bazaar, it is available at Khateda. Even if it is not available in this village, it is available in the surrounding villages.

3) Who helped to start the campaign? How did life change after this good work?

"We started the campaign ourselves as a women's group alone. Even men did not support the campaign in the beginning. There was the belief that women were unable to do anything in society. We continued our efforts even though society told us incapable and useless."
In the beginning, women were not supported by their husbands, family, and the villagers. No one believes that these women can change the disorganized and damaged village. "Villagers said that you will not be able to fight or convince the alcoholic people in the village, therefore, do not start such a campaign". But women did not stop. *"When we stood up and when we made a decision to control the use of alcohol, we decided not to back down. We were convinced that we should start the campaign and continue it". President of women's group.* Although there was no support and belief, women continued their efforts, and did not give up the campaign.
The local shopkeepers also helped women in the campaign. They assured them not to keep/sell alcohol if they started a campaign and within three months of the campaign, they stopped selling liquor.

Although there was no such support in the beginning, women acknowledged some of the youths and the local leader for their pivotal role in initiating the program and for continuous encouragement on difficult days. Bohora L., the current vice-chaireman of the Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, gave special support to the women's group. In the beginning, he said *"If you are committed to doing it, go ahead and I will also support the campaign".* President of women's group.

We started the program ourselves without any external help but later on, we received some training and support which indirectly helped us to continue the program. As NGO called "Dalit Sewa Samaj" has provided orientation and training on women's right, mahila hinsa and chhaupadi system; and the government portal ("Gramin Jalshrot", "rural municipality"), and Seven Star Youth Club helped us in other ways.

Witnessing positive results of determined women's efforts, their husbands started supporting them and later on the local government, police administration, and all the men in the village were with them in the campaign. Almost all people in the village have stopped drinking and gambling. These days people in the village appreciate them by saying **"what a good job"**, **"You have done a very good job"**.

Even in the women's network meeting, when we raised the issue of the alcohol campaign and the success story of the Khori village, other women in Majkhori, Naura, Ghattye, and Budkhori were well aware of this campaign and they were highly interested to do the same in their village. They were proud of the women's group in Khori and they appreciated them.

After the success of this campaign, women were empowered, their families and whole community believed them, respected them and they were involved in decision-making in the family and even in the community. Women and children are happy and living a respectful and peaceful life. It was possible because of the women's group in the village from the beginning and they still working on the welfare of the village.

4) Approach of campaign conducted. What problems did they face while conducting this campaign? When you started banning alcohol, what was the reaction of the people who drink and sell alcohol? How did women solve the problems that appeared during the campaign

In the beginning, women gather together and discuss how to stop the alcohol drinking of their husbands and other men in the village. They formed "Alcohol Control Women Group" then made a rule and decided to fine those who drink and sell alcohol in the village. Initially, if a person consumed alcohol, they fine them Rs 4000, which was increased to Rs.5000 in later years. Similarly, the fine was Rs.3000 for selling liquor. Gambling was also another problem thus women's group decided to fine them too. For the gambling, they fined Rs 1500 and Rs 1500 to those who play carrom board. Further, women set a rule that if any of the women's husband drank alcohol, the wife would be responsible for it. In many cases the wife of the one whose husband drank alcohol was told to inform the women's group then all the members of the women's group went there and fined that person.

After setting the rule, the women's group worked on finding out who had consumed the alcohol in the village. If they found a person in alcohol, they told him "We came to punish you because

you had drunk alcohol and made noise in the village". The person also accepts his mistake. In the early days, most of them did not accept the mistake and tried to ignore or avoid but after some time they accepted it. Now if they are caught by the women group in an alcoholic state, they immediately pay the fine. From the fine, we have collected Rs.3-4 lakhs (three to four hundred thousand) in the account of the women's group. The save loan on 5% debenture, earlier man take loan for the alcohol drinking which is now stopped.

Challenge

At first, there was a fight when the women's group charged a fine for consuming the alcohol. Some of the users refused to give the fine. Later, after raising the fine amount from 4000 to 5000 and making arrangements to charge those who did not pay with interest, they started to pay the fine amount immediately. If it was not paid, the debt was kept as the due amount and interest was added to it. Some users paid a fine amount of up to 30,000.

Shopkeepers were never fined. We gave them three months to clear their stock of alcohol in the shop. Those who could sell it cleared the stock and those who could not sell it returned to the dealers or producers but did not sell it in the village. In our village, there were no dealers or producers of alcohol. It was not made in the village. Most of the alcohol was sold in the village brought from the nearest market. Shopkeepers didn't bring it after our campaign to control the use of alcohol. One shop had a stock of alcohol in his shop but didn't sell it in the village. We sent it back to the dealers/producers.

On a personal basis, women had to struggle/ and tolerate many things. Villagers, mostly the man said a lot of negative things about the campaign and the women involved. They scolded and insulted the women in the group but the women did not stop. They endured everything and continued their work. According to them these days, the drunkards are afraid to come in front of them. When they see a member of a women's group, they run away. *"If they enter the village drunk from outside are also fined equally thus the fear of paying a fine for coming drunk from other villages, and the risk of falling and dying on the mountain road at night made them afraid of drinking alcohol. Many people in this village died by falling from the nearby cliffs. These reasons also helped us to control the use of alcohol. All male members of this village also started supporting us in this campaign"* All women were agreed.

In the beginning it was difficult but after some time, everyone supported us including the police, local government, community people, shop keepers, etc. If needed we take help from them too.

The main key to success was tolerance, perseverance, hard work, motivation and unity. This group had strong leadership too.

Approach -major steps: Gathered women group; Group formation and register; Seek help from supportive groups such as youth and local leader (man); Prepared list of activities and rule: how to fine?; Start spying alcohol drinkers in the village……. Women group also discussed with men in the village about the controlling strategy of alcohol drinking.

5) **What is about the Chhaupadi system in Khori? Impact of women empowerment?**

Regarding Chhaupadi, there were lots of restrictions and taboos due to a strong superstitious belief in tradition and Chhipiladevi (local belief in the goddess Durga), in the past but nowadays the restrictions are minimal. Earlier the banning was said to be the custom of God. But, after receiving training from "The Dalit Support Society" on menstrual related facts, women believe that menstruation is a law of nature/ normal phenomenon. Women keep them clean and warm during menstruation and do everything except worshiping, going to the temple, entering kitchen, and touching dhami/jhakri (saman). Elderly are not accepting this practice happily but there is no way, the new generation are not in their footstep. Gradually they are also changing and will accept the reality one day. *"Anyway, we feel that, after the success of the alcohol campaign, the elderly and key people of the community also started to listen to our ideas and suggestions". A* 25 years old woman from the group.

The women's group leader said that although we accept that menstruation is a natural process, we change to some extent but cannot force ourselves to do everything against our tradition. *"We don't do too much in the name of freedom as we have to protect our culture/religion too which is harmless. We do not touch the priest, even if they are in the same room during the meetings, it is not necessary to touch each other".* Earlier, women did not go near the house. They were banned from the house and were made to live in cattle shed or chhaupadi house. But things have changed, there are no such practices now. They stay at home. *"While going to the shrine, they maintain distance from the priest and Dhami/Jhakri (Shaman).*

"We believe that touching the priest and entering the worship room is not ethical during menstruation. We should also respect our religious practices. However, maintaining cleanliness, staying in the same house, and eating milk and curd are normal during menstruation. It is not necessary to go to the temple to touch priests and people during the period." A woman of 32 years reiterates the context.

6) What are the areas that need further improvement in this village? Have you started any new income-generating activities in your village?

<u>Education and training:</u> In our observation, women in Khori were active and enthusiastic to learn new things but they were worrying about their literacy knowledge. They were interested in attending any kind of education or training. *"It would have been good if adult education and various kinds of skills training were arranged for the illiterate women in the village like us.* 35 years, women from the group. Women requested some skill-based vocational training programs that may be useful for their livelihood such as sewing, weaving, preparation of traditional baskets, rope weaving skills, and training to make materials from bamboo such as a wide variety of baskets (doko, dalo, dali, thunse, and kharpan, etc.), mats, trays, etc.

The local leader added *"It would be great if materials and machines such as sewing machines, and spinning wheels were provided along with the training. It would be better if the program is set for hosiery training, training in making cotton clothes from marijuana fiber, etc."*

Some of the women had training on sewing clothes through an NGO, but after some months they forgot thus they were suggesting follow-up and refresher training are important after any kind of training.

Construction of meeting hall: According to the women they do not have a safe place to sit for the meeting. Currently, they use an old community building which is in dilapidated condition. The women were requesting support to build a new meeting hall with a toilet and water supply with HEAR Nepal. When we visited the place, the women were right that the building was almost damaged and useless. Women do not have a meeting hall which was a genuine problem to be addressed promptly. They said "We are ready to take care of the community building. We are committed to taking responsibility for the building. The security of the building will be done by the women's group."

Income-generating training, support, and marketing: Currently they do not have any specific income-generation activities, except labor migration and farming. The landscape of this village is hilly and rock mountain. However, some areas are fertile though small in size. Clean and calm weather, continuously running spring water, some rocky and other green hills, and fresh green vegetable farming are the attractions of this village but unfortunately, even though they grow some vegetables and crops lack of market and monkey problems make them frustrated. When the crop is about to grow and ripen, monkeys come to destroy it.

The income generated from local resources is not adequate for a year, thus they have a tradition of going to India to earn for living. They do a variety of jobs in India including household work, agricultural work, and labor work but the majority of them go to hilly parts of India to work in rosin and turpentine industries to collect the rosin from pine trees. They go there for eight to nine months, usually from February to September, and stay in the village only for 3-4 months from October to January. In the majority of cases, the whole family including spouse and children go there hanging padlocks at the entrance of their homes. *"The work is hard but we need money for living. There is no employment in the village thus we are compelled to go there even though we don't like to tolerate all hassles and domination from the locals but there is no choice. We are suffering being not educated."* A woman in the group stated. Women were worrying about their children's fate whether they would be also compelled to follow the same tradition.

According to the women and local leaders, earlier there were many areas from where they generated income such as senior people were weaving clothes (Bhangra) from marijuana plant's stem, and sisno plant (stinging nettle) and handicrafts from the bamboo plants but this practice has vanished. Lack of training, lack of market, lack of resources (marijuana is considered illegal), and lack of support system have made people jobless.

7) **Have you received support from any organizations in women empowerment activities conducted in this village?**

Some of the women in the village had attended various training and awareness programs conducted by NGOs and the Rural Municipality. A local NGO "Dalit Sewa Samaj" has provided an awareness program on menstrual health and women's issues. Some of the women attended the program as well as this NGO provided support to the alcohol control women group.

8) **In your opinion, can similar women's empowerment activities be carried out in other villages or not, if possible, how to do it? Are you ready to help?**

Women in Khori were highly motivated and ready to support other women in nearby villages. Since alcohol drinking and selling is banned in Khori, seldom some man goes to nearby villages for the drink, they thought without controlling the accessibility of alcohol nearby, it is not possible to have 100% results. On top of that, they were happy to help the women who are going through similar problems that they were in the past. *"We can give our time to encourage and support the women in those settlements but we need regular support and time from your side too. We are ready to go to other villages to share success stories of alcohol and gambling control in Khori and help them to organize the campaign."* Women group leader.

Even in the women's network meeting in Majhkhori, when we raised the issue of alcoholism, women (from Majkhori, Naura, Ghattye, and Budkhori), were desperately ready to start similar program in their villages as did in Khori village by the women group. They are happy to learn from them.

SECTION II. (New Villages for the Exploration Purpose)

The result in section II, comprised of the findings from 2 FGD, 6 Interaction meeting and 7 KII in newly selected 10 villages of Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality. A baseline information was collected on the current situation of the women-empowerment in these villages including alcohol drinking/ selling problems, income generation activities, education and training of the women, major social problems, and acceptance /readiness to replicate the same program as in Khori village. The findings are presented on the basis of study objectives.

1. Socio-economic and Educational Status

The economic condition of most of the settlements was found poor. The people have taken low-salary local employment, subsistence agriculture, labor wages, and foreign employment as their main sources of income. Old age allowance from the government has also been taken as a means of sustaining life.

It was found that most of the women of the older generation were illiterate as there were no opportunities for education for women in the past. Nowadays, all women have the opportunity to acquire an education, thus all women of the new generation are literate and educated. All the school-age children were enrolled in the schools.

People in the community were living in social harmony though they in poverty condition. And because of the low economic condition, majority youths migrated to Tarai, India, and Gulf countries in search of employment. One of the respondents said, “Only fifteen or sixteen people are remaining in this village. The rest of them migrated for work as laborers in nearby villages or different cities of India along with their spouses and children”.

2. Employment status of Men and Women

The majority of the respondents stated that their main work was household chores and agriculture. They cared for livestock, collected fodders for cattle, collected firewood for household use, and worked in agricultural fields. The women do wage work. Some women do hosiery work like knitting sweaters, weaving carpets, and weaving scarves.

Most of the men go to India for employment. Some men have also gone to the Gulf countries for employment. Some have been working as wage earners in the village as masons, gravel

crushers, and unskilled laborers. Some men in the village are unemployed and spend their days in playing ludo, board games, cards, and drinking alcohol.

3. Specific Skills of Women

Women in remote villages lack the proper knowledge and skills in their field of work. Some women have skills in sewing and cutting, but no one has utilized the skills for business purposes. In the past, they used to make hemp cloths in the village. Now, the traditional skills and occupations of preparing hemp cloths, and preparing various kinds of baskets (Doko, Dalo, and Patho) from bamboo in the village have disappeared. They stated that if there are arrangements for training on those skills in the village, such traditional skills can be learned and the occupation can be continued. It would have been possible to cultivate cannabis commercially, but it cannot be cultivated because it is not legal in the country. In addition, the respondents responded that if they get training, they can do everything to make their livelihood better. If they get training in hosiery or weaving, they can create a market and do business on their own.

The main source of income of this village is wage work and foreign employment. This village has a lot of potential for vegetable cultivation, but there is a lack of leadership, knowledge, and skills and the market. They mentioned that produced agricultural products are not sold in time and go to waste.

4. Source of Income

The majority of the respondents identified agriculture as their main occupation followed by daily wage labor. A few were involved in seasonal jobs, small businesses, government services, and migrant labor. In most of the surveyed settlements, people went to different parts of India in search of employment opportunities. All the rest of the people are working as laborers in nearby villages. Most people are living their daily lives by crushing gravel and doing labor. There are no people who are engaged in self-employment and no one is doing agricultural activities by establishing an agricultural firm.

In some settlements, people also make money from collecting Yarsagumba (Cordyceps sinensis or Ophiocordyceps sinensis), cattle rearing, poultry, fruit cultivation, preparing stinging nettle powder, and vegetable farming. One of the respondents stated that only three or four women are employed in Government Services, others are just doing their household work.

5. Men's Behavior toward Women and Children

The respondents stated that in the past, men felt contempt for women and they were not treated with respect. Women were harassed, scolded, and insulted for no reason. But the situation in the village has changed a lot. Nowadays there is substantial change in the behavior of men. Women are respected and valued by the men. There were no negative behaviors or abuse toward women and children. The men behave positively with children and women. They do not beat, scold, or hurt the children. Sometimes, drunkard people behave negatively towards women and children, but there are rare cases of scolding and beating by drunkard men. But sometimes the drunkard men used to quarrel in public spheres with each other after drinking alcohol which often created a distressed situation in the community.

Nowadays, when women start to do something new in the village, they get support from the men. When there is a training, seminar, or meeting in the village, men seem willing to send women to participate. Women are encouraged in every aspect of their empowerment. Now the village has improved a lot.

6. Decision-making Process

Gender disparity in household decision-making is common in the settlements. It is influenced by ethnicity, caste, culture, religion, and geographical location. In the study area, men's role was found vital in the decision-making process in households and the village. It was found that the majority of the decisions were made by men. However, there are practices of discussions and consultations at home regarding decision-making issues. If there is to decide on money transactions or other vital household issues, they also consider the suggestions from women. The decisions are implemented jointly. Sometimes, decisions made by the women are also considered and implemented. Sometimes, men decide secretly if they think the decision is more important and beneficial to a certain group of people in the community.

7. Economic and Social Problems

It was found that each village has maintained the ideal level of social harmony. There are no issues that destabilize social values and norms. Sometimes there are noises, disturbances, and wrangles due to drunkenness, but there are no other social disputes.

In the sample settlements, it was found that there are some social problems such as Chhaupadi custom, child marriage, misuse of mobile phones and the internet, seasonal migration, unemployment, excess consumption of alcohol, and terror of monkeys.

8. **Chhaupadi System:** The respondents stated that although there are significant changes, people are still following some of the practices of Chhaupadi. Since the Chhaupadi custom has been carried out for centuries and is intimately linked with local belief systems and ways of life, women of older generations feel difficulties in adopting new practices during Chhaupadi. In the majority of the households or settlements, there are no separate Chhaupadi huts in the village, women/girls have started staying in the same house, and there are no restrictions on supplies, menstrual protections, and washing facilities. However, the water brought by mensural women is generally used after five days. In some households/settlements, people used to live in separate houses or separate rooms. A separate stream is assigned for Chhaupadi for cleaning and washing. They are not allowed to use the public or private taps/streams that are used by other people in the community. During menstruation, women use nearby rivers and open streams away from the house or village for cleaning and washing. There are no separate toilets for menstruating women.s in Chhaupadi restrictionv

   Menstrual hygiene was found to be very poor in the sample settlements. Gender inequality, discriminatory social norms, cultural taboos, poverty, and lack of basic services and sanitary products are some of the causes of poor menstrual hygiene. Most of the women from the older generation took a bath once every three or four days. But women of today's new generation take baths daily. Today's girls pay attention to regular cleaning and mensural hygiene.
9. **Child Marriage:** Child marriage was found as one of the problems in the sample settlements. Although there are nominal cases of child marriage in this village in comparison to previous days, it has not been stopped completely. It was found that the settlements need further awareness programs to educate people on child marriage as it is a human rights violation, restricting children’s choices, changing their course in life, and putting them at significant risk of abuse and violence.
10. **Misuse of Mobile Phones and the Internet:** Nowadays the use of mobile phones and the Internet among young people has increased considerably. There are mobile phones in every household. The youngster's access to mobile phones and the Internet has impacted their

social and psychological behaviors. In remote settlements, people have limited knowledge and information about the advantages and disadvantages of using mobile phones and the Internet. On one hand, household expenses have increased substantially as they spend around 300 to 400 hundred rupees per month on purchasing mobile data packages. On the other, underage children are getting in touch with strangers through mobile communication and social networks such as Facebook/Instagram. Due to the misuse of such communications and social networks, cases of early marriage in the village occurred. That causes trouble in the lives of youngsters.

11. **Migration/Seasonal Migration:** Since there is a high level of poverty, food insecurity, and limited opportunities for employment in these remote villages, people migrate in search of employment opportunities. In sample settlements, the majority of people go to India, and Gulf countries for employment. Migration has direct and indirect impacts on the lives of people. It positively impacts the increment of household income to spend on education, healthcare, and other goods and services. However, there are negative impacts to migration including demographic imbalances, effects on families left behind, health and welfare, land use, environment, and so on.

    As the number of people going abroad to earn a living has increased, the village has started to be empty. The respondents stated that there are no people in the village to do social work as well as hard work. They said, "Now the entire village is ready to be empty. People who do hard work are not in the village. Villages are full of old age people, women and children. Even when a person dies in the village, it has reached a situation where we do not get people for a funeral procession."

    To prevent a devastating condition the villages, there is an urgent need to create employment opportunities in the village utilizing the resources available. In addition, support from the Local Government, Non-government Organizations, and community-based organizations on small-scale investments, and start-ups as well as in the commercialization of agriculture is necessary.

12. **Unemployment:** There are limited opportunities of employment in the remote villages. People in the villages are involved in subsistence agriculture and small-scale business, which is not sufficient for their livelihood. Therefore, people migrated to Tarai, India, and Gulf countries in search of employment where they engaged in dirty, difficult, and dangerous jobs. Due to lower levels of education, knowledge, and skills, people strive for employment opportunities. It was found that even people are taking loans from money

lenders, banks, and cooperatives to cover their household expenses. This practice forced them to remain always poor. They never overcame the debt trap. It might have been because of the lack of opportunities for regular income, financial literacy, and lack of capital and credit.

Women in the study villages were willing to improve the situation of unemployment in the villages by starting modern ways of agriculture, and new businesses in the village. For that they need various types of training such as pickle making, making stinging nettle powder, vegetable farming, poultry, hosiery, weaving, knitting, fruit cultivation, and reinstating traditional skills and occupations of preparing hemp clothes. In addition, they are expecting support to assess the market, to expand the market networks, and to explore the places for selling the products.

13. **Alcohol Consumption:** Production, sale, and consumption of alcohol are ever on the increase in the remote villages where there are no other means of business or work for their engagement in financial activities. Alcohol abuse is one of the serious problems in sampled villages. There are various consequences of alcohol abuse which they mentioned during the survey, such as deaths due to overdose, fallen accidents, and fighting each other in the public sphere and homes. The drunkard people abuse and spread conflict in the village.

    In villages, some of the households produce alcohol for domestic purposes, whereas others produce it for commercial use. Most of the houses in this village produce alcohol for their personal use. The shopkeepers are selling alcohol by bringing it from nearby villages and markets.

    Usually, people drink alcohol in the evening, but sometimes addicted people drink alcohol in early morning. In some villages, every household has at least one member who consume alcohol such as father, son, uncles etc. According to them women do not drink alcohol in the village. One modern young lady said, she drinks beer in party only. Some women brew alcohol at home for their husband.

    Although effort was made to stop alcohol selling, brewing and consumption by community and local government, they it was not success. People bring alcohol from nearby market and sell it secretly. There were mixed responses from the community people on banning alcohol. Some people helped them to ban alcohol while other opposed the campaign. Many people undermined the efforts of women saying that women can do nothing. In some

settlements, the respondents found it difficult to ban the consumption and sale of alcohol as the Local Government issued a license to the shopkeepers to sell and distribute alcohol.

Almost all respondents were found positive toward banning alcohol production, consumption, and sale in the villages. They are encouraged by alcohol-banning campaigns in nearby villages. The people in the sample villages are expecting substantial support from the Local Government, INGOs, and CBOs for running such campaigns. They are willing to launch awareness programs and community-based interventions to ban alcohol consumption so that they can uplift the socio-economic status of the households as well as the village.

14. **Terror of Monkeys:** In some settlements, there is the problem of terror from the monkeys. Monkeys destroy crops, vegetables, and fruits almost every year. People are unable to protect their hard-earned harvest from the monkeys. They said, "We want to cultivate fruits, and other crops in the village, but monkeys have stood in the way to achieve that goal." They stated that this human-animal conflict should be mitigated.

15. Income-generating activities and Prospects

Income-generating activities play a vital role in improving the livelihood of rural people. It is important to transform subsistence farming into commercial agriculture to enhance the well-being of community people. In the surveyed settlements it was found that people are heavily engaged in subsistence farming with limited choices of alternative income-generating activities. In addition, due to the limited opportunities for employment in the villages, people migrate to nearby settlements, India, and other foreign countries in search of employment. That has badly affected the traditional practices of agriculture as well as the transformation process of agriculture.

People in the sample settlements were curious to transform subsistence farming into commercial agriculture. They also want to reinstate traditional occupations such as preparing hemp clothing and bamboo crafting. They are also interested in establishing small-scale businesses such as pickle making, hosiery, knitting, and sewing. The people in the sample villages are looking for opportunities and support for skills development training in those areas. In addition, they are expecting training on analyzing the market situation, expanding market networks, and exploring the places for selling the products. They are also expecting guidance

and support from the Local Government and Non-governmental Organizations to ensure the market for their products.

Some households/communities of the sample villages have already started vegetable farming such as potato, ginger, cabbage, and cauliflower, and fruit cultivation such as lemon, orange, and apple to make income for their livelihood. In some settlements, people are engaged in sheep rearing, and cow/buffalo rearing to produce wool and dairy products. However, they are not confident to succeed in those areas as they lack the knowledge and skills to benefit from the initiation. They suggested that they need sufficient opportunities for training and guidance to transform traditional agricultural practices and start modern commercial agriculture. They need training in micro irrigation systems, high-value vegetables, cereal crop production, non-timber forest products, goat rearing, and pig and poultry farming. They also stated that they need training in farmers' group management, marketing, and planning.

The majority of the respondents indicated that the agriculture sector is the main sector in which they can further prosper their economy and livelihood. In addition, reviving traditional occupations such as weaving clothes from cannabis fiber, making baskets from bamboo, and preparing stinging nettle powder could be the potential area for income-generating activities.

16. Community-Based Organizations

Although community organizations are vital for human life and rural development, in most of the villages, there are no formal community-based organizations in place. In one or two sample settlements they formed a women's group. One of the respondents said that the mother group is not active now. Even a single meeting of the mother's group has not been held in the village. In the other, they have formed a mother's group and created a fund. The regular meeting of which is held on the 25th of each month. In one of the sample villages, they have formed a women's group named Shwabhimani Women Farmer's Group. In which they have also created a fund by collecting levies from the members. Fundraising is also being done by flowing loans to needy villagers.

In one settlement, they have formed a group but they have not been able to do any social as well as development-related work. The group has established a fund by collecting levies from the members. They provide financial support to the needy person on interest.

Although grassroots-level organizations are the only most effective platform where people exchange their ideas, identify their problems, and means to solve the problems, remote villages are facing difficulties in the formation of such groups or organizations due to the lack of the

presence of active youths in the villages and the lack of leadership capacities. It was found that the people in those remote villages need support for organizing self-governed community-based organizations to speed up economic and social development activities in the settlements.

17. External Support from Organizations

External support for improving the socio-economic status of the households and empowering women is seen important factor in the development process. Through such kinds of support, women have been able to raise social issues and advocate for women's rights, decision-making access, control, and meaningful participation.

In the surveyed settlements, no organizations are working to support women in the community. The Local Governments have no programs to capacitate women at the local level. The respondents mentioned that although there is no such special program for women from the local municipality and ward office, financial support has been provided when they request to provide for women's festivals like Teej and other similar programs. The municipality or ward office does not allocate the budget for women-related activities itself. The budget is made available only if women demand it. Even the ward office does not encourage women's groups to do certain activities in the village to improve the socio-economic status of the community people. The women's groups haven't detailed information about the facilities for women in the annual program of the local government.

One of the respondents stated "We have not been able to get any support from the Rural Municipality for the welfare of the women. We always propose various activities for women in the village to the Local Government, but they have never addressed the demands of women in the village. "

Currently, no programs are run by any organizations. Earlier, programs were implemented by a couple of organizations, and some women have received training from them. There are no programs for women related to income generation. A participant in the discussion said that even when some organizations conduct training in the village, only certain groups of women get the chance to participate. Only the relatives of decision-makers and women from powerful groups get the opportunity. The involvement of women from disadvantaged groups is not considered. They mentioned that one organization conducted the training for making potato chips and Namkin in Ward No. 5 but didn't conduct it in other settlements.

In sample villages, women are often compelled to work in the household, regardless of their capacity and education status. The cultural tradition is that women are in second position in

both the house and community. Therefore, interventions are needed to promote women's empowerment through local government and external organizations by supporting various capacity-building-related activities and encouraging women to participate in development activities taking the leading role in the community.

18. Possibility of Women's Empowerment Campaign

Women empowerment is considered a process that capacitates women to control resources and make strategic life choices. In the sampled settlements, women have been given a secondary status which can be seen in the economic, social, and political spheres. Therefore, they are willing to change the power dynamics and improve the socio-economic status of the women in the community. They are focused on eradicating social problems such as excessive alcohol consumption, child marriage, unemployment, and Chhaupadi practices.

The respondents stated that they had heard about the women's empowerment campaign in Khori village by banning the sale and consumption of alcohol in the village. The women's groups in Khori village have banned the consumption and sale of alcohol. As a result, the village becomes peaceful and there are no disturbances and uproars in the village. Respondents of some settlements mentioned that they don't have information about the campaign initiated by the women of Khori village. If they get information about their work and experiences, they are also ready to lead such a campaign. They are ready to improve the village by taking leadership but they need the support of the Local Government, various non-governmental organizations, police administration, and the local men of the community. But it is impossible to be successful with the efforts of the villagers alone.

In another settlement, respondents told their stories saying that they tried to stop alcoholism in their village. However, some people in the community tried to stop others' business by hiding their alcoholism. They said that this work can only be done by working together honestly. Otherwise, the campaign cannot be successful. One of the respondents said that even when it is closed in Khori, the men of Khori still come to their village and drink alcohol. Therefore, everyone should work together to stop the use and sale of alcohol. On the issue of banning alcohol, all the men and women of the village need to be gathered in one place for discussion and decide on it unanimously. It can be successful only when a decision is reached through consultations and consensus. They mentioned that there are no benefits from consuming and selling alcohol. There are only noises, disputes, and quarrels in the village. Even if one or two people are benefitted, it does not benefit the society as a whole. Therefore, "we promise to stop

drinking alcohol together, we should discuss with all men and women and start the initiative to ban the production, use, and sale of alcohol in the village."

One participant of Budhkhori said that they did a lot to ban alcohol in the village but they could not succeed. They initiated that campaign two or three years back. They withdrew the initiative after seeing that groups were formed for and against the campaign. The internal conflict started between the two groups. Therefore, they stopped the campaign of banning alcohol. Such a campaign can only be successful if men are also involved in the process. It is not possible to run a campaign by women alone. Directly or indirectly, the Ward office also has to support this initiative. A participant exposed the intensity of the alcohol abuse by saying that if men are given the option either to give up alcohol or give up their wives, some of them may be able to give up alcohol for a few days, but the majority of the people prefer to give up their wives. Therefore, there might be a possibility of conflict at home. It was also seen that there is a possibility of increasing family conflict and causing problems at home when conducting such a campaign.

The respondents expressed that the condition of the villages can be improved if women are responsible for their mission. The minimum requirement for such kind of campaign is the bearing of the responsibility honestly. The efforts of one or two people in the village are worthless for this multifaceted campaign. There is nothing that cannot be achieved if all the women of the community work together. The village can be improved. However, it takes some time.

It was found that many settlements in the sample villages tried to ban the sale and consumption of alcohol. They seized alcohol from the shops and fined the drinkers. They did a lot to ban the alcohol. However, they did not succeed in the campaign as local governments provided permission to the shopkeepers to sell the alcohol. The local level said that they would control it themselves. The step of the local government discouraged the people in those settlements from continuing the campaign. If they get support from the Local Government and other organizations, they can again run the campaign to ban the consumption and sale of alcohol.

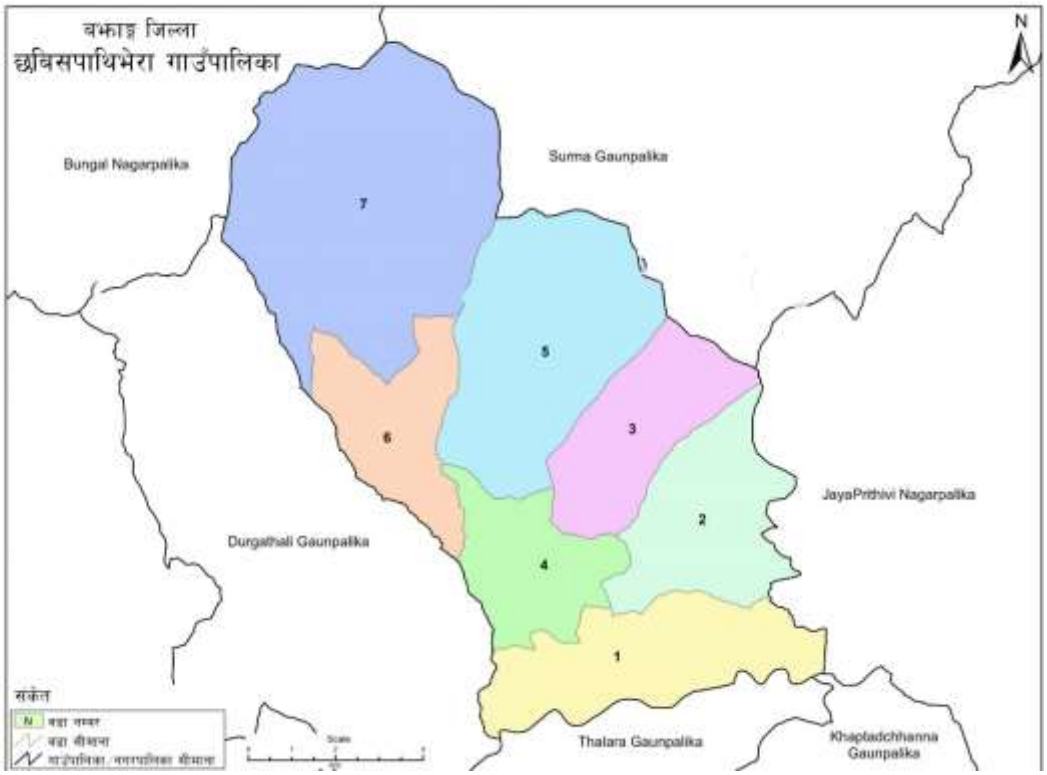
Women can play leadership roles in the village to some extent. However, they have not been able to demonstrate their abilities as they haven't had the opportunity to lead. They can do it if they get the opportunity. In this village, there are a few women who can take a leadership role. They have limited knowledge and understanding to deal with societal issues and problems and are not willing to lead the women in the village. One of the respondents said, "We are all ready

to work for the improvement of the village if any woman in the village takes the lead toward transformative initiations." If everyone in the village agrees they can ban the consumption and sale of alcohol in their village. For that, the wife of the alcoholic man should first inform the women's group and help them to penalize. Otherwise, we cannot stop the habit of drinking alcohol of another's husband when her husband does not support her.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

<u>Map of study Area – Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, Bajhang</u>



APPENDIX II

A// Study team

1. Prof. Narbada Thapa (Epidemiologist), Team leader
2. Mr. Dhan Singh Dhami, Education Specialist
3. Mr. Madhav Subedi, President HEAR-Nepal
4. Ms. Puja Shahi, Project Coordinator, HEAR-Nepal
5. Mr. Narayan Prasad Subedi, Program Coordinator, HEAR-Nepal

B// Participants in Stakeholders Meeting (8th Dec, 2023)

Meeting place: Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, Bajhang

Date: 8th Dec, 2023

Participants in the meeting,

1. Mr. Laximan Bohara, Vice-Chairman, Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, Bajhang
2. Mr. Gagan Bahadur Aidi, Chief Administrative Officer
3. Mr. Ammar Bahadur Thapa, Health Coordinator
4. Mr. Harischandra Kathayat, Head of Education, Youth and Sports Section,
5. Mr. Lokesh Thapa, Member Rural Municipality Council
6. Ms. Junu Bohara, Member Rural Municipality Council
7. Mr. Madhav Subedi, President, HEAR Nepal
8. Dr. Narbada Thapa, Epidemiologist, HEAR Nepal
9. Mr. Dhan Singh Dhami, Education expert, HEAR Nepal
10. Ms. Puja Shahi, Project coordinator, HEAR Nepal
11. Mr. Naraya Prasad Subedi, Program coordinator, HEAR Nepal

APPENDIX III

A// Study tools (questionnaire)

Women Empowerment Project
Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality Ward No. 7, Bajhang

QUESTIONS IN KHORI VILLAGE AS ROLE MODEL

This survey was conducted to collect necessary information on how the women of Khori village succeeded in conducting this campaign and how the good practices of women empowerment they started can be replicated in the neighboring villages.

Questions

9) What is the current situation of women in this village regarding women's empowerment? What activities are you busy with now? (Areas of Work such as vegetable farming, weaving, knitting, agriculture, animal farming, dairy, pickle-making, making stinging nettle powder, etc.). Are you happy with the work you are doing? Do you feel more honored than before?
10) What kind of problems existed in this village before the women's empowerment campaign?
11) How did the idea of women's empowerment campaign come from and how did it evolve? Who started it? Where did it come from? What is the main source or cause of motivation?
12) How did you start this campaign? Please tell us the process step by step. Who helped your campaign? Such as Rural Municipality or Non-governmental Organizations. What are the main changes in the village? (Income generation, improvement in Chaupadi practices, improvement in women's literacy, control in consumption and sale of alcohol)
13) What problems did you face while conducting this campaign?
14) How did men react to what you did? Did men hinder or help you in your work?
15) When you started banning the production of alcohol, what was the reaction of the people who produce and sell alcohol?
16) What was the reaction of the elderly women when you got rid of the Chhaupadi system?
17) How did your life change after you got your rights?
18) How did you solve the problems that appeared during the campaign?
19) What do you think are the areas that need further improvement in this village?
20) What kind of income-generating activities have you started in this village?
21) Have you received support from any organizations in women empowerment activities conducted in this village?
22) In your opinion, can similar women's empowerment activities be carried out in other villages or not, if possible, how to do it? Are you ready to help?

B// Study tools (questionnaire NEW VILLAGES))

Women Empowerment Project
Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality Ward No. 7, Bajhang

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NEW VILLAGES

To fulfill the objectives of the study, the interaction meeting and discussion were conducted based on the following listed questions.

1) What is women's economic, social, and educational conditions in this village? (Income generation, profession, leadership role, decision-making power, literacy, children's education)
2) What kind of work do women do in the daytime?
3) What work do men do and what do they do in their free time?
4) What are the specific skills of women and which works are they more interested in?
5) What is your main source of income? What do women and men do to earn money?
6) What is the practice of alcohol production and consumption in your village? Do men and women drink alcohol?
7) Who produces alcohol in the village? If alcohol is produced, what is the purpose of alcohol production?
8) How do the men of this village treat women and children? (Do they beat, scold, or hurt women and children regularly?)
9) Who makes the necessary decisions at home or in the village?
10) What economic and social problems do you feel exist in this village?
11) What are the income-generating activities in this village? What are the prospects of income generation?
12) Have you received any help from any organization in this village?
13) Do you know about the women's campaign initiated by the women of Khori? Do you want to lead the development of this village in the same way? If you want to run the campaign, how can it be started?

APPENDIX IV

Photo tour

A// Picture of village



Figure 1 Khori village

B// Picture of Discussion meeting in municipality office



Figure 2 Participants and Survey Team at Chhabis Pathivera Rural Municipality, Bajhang

C// Interaction meeting with women in Khori, Majh Khori, Joshi Gaun



Figure 3 Discussion with women of Majhkhori, Ghatte, Naura, and Budhkhori village



Figure 4 Group Photo with participants of the discussion at Majhkhori, Ghatte, Naura and Budgkhori

D// Interaction meeting with women in Motai, Patagaun and Bannikot



Figure 5 Discussion at Motai Village



Figure 6 Discussion at Bannikot Village

E// Picture Study team



Figure 7 Study Team Members with Ward Chair and Women Leader at Majhkhori