



# WHR E-Newsletter

Issue 6

July, 2009

## 5<sup>th</sup> International Widows' Day

"Single women's rights is our collective concern"

International Widows' Day is celebrated every year on 23rd June. To commemorate the day, WHR has been organizing events every year to highlight the issues of single women. This year too, WHR celebrated the day in the heart of Kathmandu at Hanuman Dhoka, Shiva Parbati Dabali from 3:00 to 6:00 PM. Sahana Pradhan, Former Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chitra lekha Yadav, Former Vice Speaker were the distinguished guests for the ceremony.



On this special day, 30 elderly single women of above 60 years of age from 8 different working districts of WHR were honored for their active engagement in their respective districts for single women movement. The single women were from Banke, Bardiya, Dang, Dhading, Kailali, Kaski, Lamjung and Ramechhap districts. WHR also provided educational support materials to 50 conflict affected children.

WHR also honored three different organizations namely "Citizens Bank International Ltd.", "President Travels and Tours Pvt. Ltd." and "Yeti Airlines" for their support to WHR by empowering single women for active engagement in income generation, enhancement of livelihoods capacity and supporting opportunity fund of WHR. Old aged single women from districts shared their experiences during the program. One single woman from Jhapa shared her motivating song to end all sorts of violence against single women and make Nepal peaceful nation.

The event was accompanied by a musical performance by "KUTUMBA", one of the renowned musical bands of Nepal. WHR also honored "KUTUMBA" for its support to WHR.

## Expanding the work arena

WHR central office conducted 2 days capacity building training for single women members of three newly formed single women groups in different VDCs namely Dharmasthali, Kavresthali and Jitpur dated 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2009. There was participation of almost 70 single women.



The objective of the training was to build the capacity of single women members through the training on gender, saving credit and roles and responsibilities of social mobilisers.



A film related to single women was also screened during the training session. The single women members also shared the importance of joining the single women groups and the opportunities and the support one can gain and contribute. During the session, the participants were also briefed about the Single Women Entrepreneur Group (SWEG) and were encouraged to form one in their respective VDCs for economic empowerment of single women.

## Towards Dhading

It was at Dhading where film based on single women was shot. 2<sup>nd</sup> April was the day when WHR team could screen the film and entertain the single women members of Dhading in the presence of local stakeholders and representatives of government officials.

In the interaction program, LDO of Dhading committed to support single women groups of the district to carry on the single women movement for justice and empowerment. In the program representatives of the WHR central office also briefed about the different issues of single women and encouraged single women members to continue their movement in the district.



## Public Hearing and Sharing of Best Practices with Local Stakeholders

The trainings on UNSCR 1325, Gender and issues of single women along with public hearing and experience sharing workshop was conducted at Kailali and Doti dated 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May with the support of European Union. The total numbers of participants at Kailali and Doti programs were 46 and 54 respectively. The participants of the training were representatives from Governmental and non-governmental organizations, single women members from the different single women groups in Kailali, Doti and Bajura.



The program included the training to stakeholders on UNSCR 1325 and gender equality. It also included the public hearing of the analysis of the data collected to the local stakeholders along with the best practices sharing from single women members from different single women groups.

The program was well coordinated by the Single Women District Committee of the respective district. The trainings were widely appreciated by the stakeholders while the training sessions, public hearing on statistics were widely interactive with positive feedback.

## Danish Ambassador's Visit to Sindhupalchowk

Danish Embassy supported WHR for the micro credit program at Kavrepalanchowk for a year. The micro credit program proved to be of great support for the income generating activities of the needy and vulnerable single women at Kavreplanchowk.

After the successful implementation of the project at Kavrepalanchowk, the same project is targeted to replicate in Sindhupalchowk. Danish Embassy is supporting single women groups of Sindhupalchowk through loan provision for micro entrepreneur and income generating activities as livestock rearing, vegetable farming and other income generating sources this year.

The team of His Excellency Finn Thinsled, Danish Ambassador to Nepal along with Sadhana Shrestha, Chandrika Bhattarai from WHR and Mira Ghale Gurung and Bandana Sharma from Danish Embassy visited single women group of Sindhupalchowk on 11<sup>th</sup> June. Sindhupalchowk single women group had organized need identification workshop on 10<sup>th</sup> June with the participation of 26 single women members from different single women groups. The findings and the conclusion of the workshop was shared with the team on 11<sup>th</sup> June. The number of participants reached 60 during the sharing session while the interaction lasted for almost 2 hours.



*WHR heartily thanks Danish Ambassador, Dorothy Just and whole team of Danish Embassy for supporting the noble cause of the issues of single women*

## Sharing the Pain and Relief

Lars Peter Christensen, Program Coordinator of Danida HUGOU visited Single Women District Committee of Sindhupalchowk accompanied by Melissa, his wife and Sadhana Shrestha, board member of WHR and Jagat Basnet of CSRC. Due to the strike the team could not reach the designated place for the gathering on time. After overcoming the difficulties and hurdles, the team finally had meeting with single women members of Sindhupalchowk single women group at Andheri, Sindhupalchowk. There were altogether 19 single women members present in the meeting.

The participants shared their feelings and trauma they faced as single woman and the change and confidence among themselves after joining the single women group. They also shared the different activities conducted by single women group as part of their livelihood, rights of single women and their empowerment. The visit helped a lot in to comprehend the intensity of discrimination and ostracization faced by single women along with the single women movement in grassroots level.

## Addressing the Issues of Violence and Injustice to Conflict Affected Women

Due to the 10 years long armed conflict in the country, the country suffered a lot. It is known and observed that women are worst victim of human rights violation and injustice. WHR with the support of Open Society Institute (OSI) organized a "Legal Awareness Training Focusing on Transitional Justice in Nepal" from 10th to 13th May, 2009. The training aimed at providing fundamental understanding on basic Human Rights and Transitional Justice, as well as to equip single women to collect data to provide justice for conflict affected women. Total 40 single women representing all the five development regions of the country participated in the training.

During the training session, the participants received training on gender and gender based violence, reproductive health rights, legal instruments and processes for justice, human rights (HR) and HR Instruments.



Currently these trained single women are engaged in their local community of respective districts to survey and address the issues of violence and injustice to conflict affected women.

## A Step Towards Economic Empowerment

Single Women Entrepreneur Group (SWEG) team of WHR travelled to Lamjung to provide skill and income generating skill to single women members of Lamjung district. The training was held on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May. The trainers of the skill trainings were Poonam Rokka and Prava Basnet, the SWEG trainers.

The trainers gave the training of making incense and candle to 60 participants for two days. SWEG also provided candle making machine to three single women groups of Lamjung to carry on their learnt skill.

## Single Women Entrepreneur Group Providing Service

Single Women Entrepreneur Group (SWEG) of WHR central office has started catering service in the offices, banks, agencies in the form of lunch package. Currently SWEG is providing its lunch service to few offices and organizations. SWEG also provides the training center in rent to organizations and agencies for seminars, trainings, meetings and other purpose. SWEG also takes the catering order for maximum 100 people in different official and family occasions.

*"10 single women are getting employment from SWEG for this purpose."*

**Contact us for fresh delicious lunch package, catering and hospitable service**



## Support for the Scholarship to the Children

Sneha Shrestha, sophomore student of Swarthmore College, Philadelphia, USA co-ordinated "Peace Week" in her college. One of the highlights of the week long event was a stall selling products of SWEG, Nepal. Posters highlighting the plight of single women (widows) in Nepal, the conditions, discrimination and ostracization they faced along with the work of WHR and its SWG were displayed. The money raised was donated to the Opportunity Fund of WHR. In total \$ 580.00 was raised and WHR warmly appreciates the effort of Sneha Shrestha and is thankful to the Swarthmore Community in supporting the education of children of Single Women.

## Fundraising for the Noble Cause

Saptaha, a seven days religious program was conducted by Single Women District Committee (SWDC) of Sunsari at Naya Bazaar, Sunsari.

The event was organized with the objective to raise funds for the construction of Chhahari in Sunsari. The seven days event was well organized and hundreds of devotees participated in the function. Chhahari will provide temporary living space to vulnerable and needy single women suffering from family, conflict and community with different services like counseling, legal aid, medical services and empowerment trainings.

The raised fund will be used to initiate the initial construction plan. The representatives from central office of WHR also committed to provide financial assistance to build Chhahari during the event with a matching grant.



## Events and seminars attended

**Sadhana Shrestha**, board member of WHR attended "**53rd United Nations Commission on Status of Women**" meeting dated 2<sup>nd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 with the theme "Equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women including care giving in the context of HIV/Aids". During the session, she presented a paper on widows in Nepal with an overview of South Asian context among a panel of speakers from Uganda, Nigeria, Johannesburg, India, and UK. Margaret Owen, Director, WPD with inputs from the panelists drafted a resolution to submit to the United Nations to establish mechanisms to fill the gap in data and ensure that the voices of widows are heard in peace-building and reconstruction deliberations, in the spirit of UN SCR 1325 and the MDGs.

**Srijana Lohani**, Program Manager of WHR participated in the workshop on "**Preventing Trafficking of Human Beings**" dated 18-25 May 2009 at Haifa, Israel. The participation in the workshop was of great value, and the experience learnt from the workshop will be used for the organizational welfare along with the noble cause of preventing inhumane activities like trafficking.

**Jasmine Shakya**, pillar coordinator of WHR attended program titled "**Combating social stigma and harmful traditional practices affecting women: Dialogue with inter faith groups**" organized by ATSEC, India with the support from UNIFEM. The program was held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The participation in the workshop was of great value, and the experience learnt from the workshop.



### Welcome to new staff

WHR family welcomes our new staff **Ms. Rosy Singh** as Communication and Planning Officer.

We wish all the best for her future endeavors.

### Editorial Board:

**Advisor:** Lily Thapa

**Editor:** Sumeera Shrestha

**Designer:** Bal Krishna Adhikari

**Contact Address :** Shree Hari Marg– 145, Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal  
**P.O.Box :** 8973 NPC 427, **Phone #** +977-01- 4446020 **Fax :** 977-01-4413868  
**E-Mail :** [csw@mail.com.np](mailto:csw@mail.com.np), **Website:** [www.whr.org.np](http://www.whr.org.np)