

Glimpse



A Newsletter of CSD – December 2017, Issue 20

CSD appoints New Executive Chief

CSD has appointed Mr. Bechan Giri as the new Executive Chief effective from December 26, 2017. Mr. Giri's appointment comes with the resignation of former Executive Chief of CSD, Mr. Shanker Nath Kapali on health ground.

Mr. Giri has a rich and diverse experience of commercial banking, agriculture finance, research and microfinance. He worked for 27 years at the Nepal Bank Ltd., with the last position as the Deputy General Manager. He had also led NADEP Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. as the CEO for a short period of time. During his initial years, Mr. Giri also worked at the Department of Agriculture under the Ministry of Agriculture and at the Agriculture Projects Services Centre (APROSC). He holds a Masters degree in



Chairman of the Governing Board, Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha welcoming the newly appointed Executive Chief, Mr. Bechan Giri

Agriculture Development and Rural Finance from the University of Bradford, United Kingdom.

Mr. Giri endeavors to take forward the vision and mission of CSD and contribute towards the development of the microfinance and cooperative sector.

CSD Chairman Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha along with the other staff welcomed Mr. Giri in the CSD office at a special function. He congratulated him and wished him success in his new responsibility and hoped that he would lead CSD to a new height. Mr. Giri in return assured, "I will try my best to carry on the vision and mission of CSD and will build up cordiality among staff and members of CSD."

CSD Convenes its 26th Annual General Meeting

One of the pioneer microfinance institutions of Nepal, the Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) convened its 26th Annual General Meeting on October 8, 2017 in the presence of institutional and individual members. The distinguished guests and members of the AGM were welcomed by the Executive Director of CSD Mr. Shanker Nath Kapali.

In his welcome note he highlighted the contributions of CSD in empowering the poor and women of Nepal through microfinance for the past 26 years.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha, Chairman of the Governing Board who presented a brief report on the progress and financial status of the



The Executive Director of CSD Mr. Shanker Nath Kapali welcoming the distinguished guests of the 26th AGM

Centre as well as its future programs and strategies. Speaking during the event Mr. Shrestha said, "The progress of microfinance is admirable considering the outreach of its services to over 2 million families. In a nutshell there has been encouraging levels of progress made by the MFIs while looking at it from the periphery but an in-depth

research must be done to assess the real situation."

He further added, "Microfinance service providers are drifting from the true objective and mission of microfinance and are involved in unhealthy competition which inadvertently affects the quality of microfinance services." He urged

MFI's leaders to be alert and aware of the repercussions that these digressions can result in. He said, "CSD recently organized a National Level Symposium of CEOs to discuss the current issues and challenges in the sector. The participants have passed a declaration to improve the sector. It should be implemented by all concerned."

(contd. on page 2)

Delegates from IDF, Bangladesh Complete an Insightful Visit to Nepal



Bangladeshi officials visit centre meeting of Swabalamban Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd.

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) organized an exposure/study visit to different microfinance institutions of Nepal for the senior officials of Integrated Development Foundation (IDF) Bangladesh from October 24 - November 1, 2017 (Kartik 7-15, 2074). The objectives of the visit was to observe and learn about the microfinance practices in Nepal as well as sharing experience of the IDF with the MFI officials in Nepal.

There were a total of 10 participants coordinated by Mr. Harun Rashid of IDF. The visit began with the observation of the centre meeting of Swabalamban Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd. (SWBBL) in Gundu, Bhaktapur. The IDF officials were then briefed on the State of Microfinance

in Nepal by Ms. Stephaniema Rana, Senior Officer of CSD. She also highlighted their success, problems and challenges faced by MFIs in Nepal and also enlightened them on the journey of CSD and its contributions towards the development of the microfinance sector for the past 26 years in Nepal.

During the visit the participants observed centre meetings and micro enterprises of Shreejana Bikas Kendra, Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd., Dhaulagiri Community Resource Development Center (DCRDC), Mahila Adhikar Tatha Bikash Kendra and Manushi.

The participants observed the operational modalities of the MFIs and had

meaningful interactions with the borrowers and staffs of the MFIs visited. They were highly motivated by the progress made by the client of MFIs.

The delegates were touched by the hospitality and warmth they received from the MFIs members during their visit. The visitors were particularly impressed by the discipline maintained by the members during the centre meetings. They were full of praise to see the members attending the center meeting in uniform. Mr. Selim Uddin, the Managing Director of IDF, during the centre visit of Mahila Adhikar Tatha Bikash Kendra at Balaju called the members as 'Angel of Flowers' which is evidence of their appreciation. He further added that they will be introducing uniform for members in IDF also. He said, "It shows unity and uniformity."

After observing the centre meeting at Balaju Mr. Rashid said, "We are very impressed by the way the centre meeting was conducted so nicely and systematically in one hour. We hope that you will continue with the kind of loyalty and faith you have shown to your organization and you will reap the benefits in the future and do good business." The participants were also able to witness the rich culture and history of Nepal during sightseeing in Kathmandu.

The coordinator of IDF, Mr. Harun Rashid thanked the CSD team and other people who contributed in making the visit a success. He further added, "We were impressed by the way the field officer conducted the centre meeting. We felt as if it was established by Professor Yunus himself. The centre discipline was well maintained, there was pin drop silence. Overall it was a good visit and we feel that the MFIs in Nepal have still maintained the quality of microfinance."



Group photo with orphanage children of Shreejana Development Center, Pokhara

(... contd. from page 1)

CSD Convenes ...

Mr. Shrestha stated that in the previous year CSD had successfully organized 18 training programs, 8 workshops and exposure visits to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, India and Cambodia where teams were able to learn about their working modalities followed by experience sharing with the participants.

Similarly, with the view to develop and promote capable entrepreneurs a sub-committee of experts has been formed to conduct the evaluation of 'Microfinance Entrepreneurship Award' that will be presented to the member organization that best develops its members as micro-entrepreneurs.

He further added, "As the Centre has taken up the responsibility of publishing a Country Report on the State of Microfinance, I request all MFIs to cooperate with us and

provide us with the data required to complete the report. We hope to bring out a report that illustrates the true picture of microfinance in Nepal. We look forward to your timely cooperation in this regard."

The members of the AGM passed the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account of the FY 2016/17 and the programs and strategies of FY 2017/18. The AGM also agreed to appoint Mr. Sujana Kafle and Associates as the Auditor for the next FY 2017/18.

Branch managers are the ambassadors of any institution. They are a driving force that is responsible to motivate his/her team to achieve the organizational goal. A strong foundation is one of the fundamental requirements of an organization to prosper. Similarly, having a capable branch manager is equally important. S/he acts as a liaison between the management and the field staff and maintains organizational balance. To sum up, a branch manager is responsible to oversee the entire operation of the branch and development of its clients. Therefore, capacitating the branch managers is one of the most important steps towards creating a self sustainable organization.

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) organized a customized four day training program for branch managers of various branches of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. titled "Microfinance Management Training for Branch Managers" from October 31 - November 3, 2017 (Kartik 14-17, 2074). There were a total of 24 participants in the training organized at CSD training hall in Kathmandu.

The four-day training intended to equip managers with tools for managing a branch and improve their skills in financial analysis, planning, budgeting and implementation, monitoring and supervision, credit management, client's management, risk management and leading, motivating and managing staffs.

This training program included a field visit to branches of Swabalamban Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd. (SWBBL) and Manushi to observe their operational modalities and process. As such, the participants were able to gain theoretical as well as practical

CSD Conducts Microfinance Management Training for Branch Managers of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd.



Group photo of training participants

knowledge through observations and interactions with the branch managers.

The findings of each group were presented after the branch visit the next day in the forum where the Chairman of CSD, Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha, CEO of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. Dr. Sumitra Manandhar Gurung as well as the branch managers of SWBBL and Manushi were present.

During the field visit the participants identified some key areas of improvements required to be made by them as managers. Among them strong record keeping was a must according to the participants. Moreover, participants also highlighted the need of effective monitoring and supervision that would strengthen the operations of a branch. They also developed some ideas regarding delinquency management that has been haunting the microfinance sector. The

participants realized that it would be beneficial to concentrate more on developing the existing members of organization rather than increasing the number of members by duplicating loans with the clients of other MFIs. They also received valuable tips from the managers of the visited branches regarding effective management of the branch. It is hoped the participants have been able to enhance their potential on financial as well as managerial aspects.

Speaking during the presentation session Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha emphasized on the importance of having a manager with good moral character. Mr. Shrestha said, "If a manager is bad the staffs working under him or her become bad too. Bad employees make bad members. As such, if your staffs do not perform well you will be the one responsible for their actions."

During the feedback session, Ms. Samjhana Balami from Chitlang said, "I feel very lucky to be part of this kind of training at the start of my career in the microfinance sector. I have learnt a lot in the four day training program because before this I did not know anything about microfinance as I previously worked in an (NGO). Moreover, the field visit to Chhuchupati branch of SWBBL was very beneficial where we learnt the importance of increasing the savings deposit of members."

The training program officially ended with closing remarks by the Executive Director of CSD, Mr. Shanker Nath Kapali where he thanked Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. and the participants for their active participation in the training. He also expressed gratitude towards the facilitators that contributed towards making the program a success.

Mr. Kapali concluded by saying, "You are the main pillars of your organization. You are well aware about the duties and responsibilities that you are carrying on your shoulders. The direct repercussion of what you say, what you do or how you carry out the programs directly or indirectly affects your organization. Therefore, you must perform your duties well."



A view of the training

CSD Conducts Customized Training for the MFIs of Kanchanpur District



Group photo of participants

In any microfinance institution the field staffs are at the forefront of its daily microfinance operations. As such they play a vital role in achieving the objectives of microfinance to serve the poor. They are the ones closest to the members. Therefore, strengthening and capacitating the field officers is a must to sustain the MFIs.

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) organized a customized training on the "Fundamentals of Microfinance Operations" at the request of Shree Udayadev Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. targeting the frontline field staff of the organization. It was a three day training organized in Kanchanpur from December 16-18, 2017 (Poush 1-3, 2074). There were a total of 22 participants from Udayadev Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd, Kisan Bahuuddeshiya Sahakari Sanstha Ltd, Kanchan Jhalari Cooperative Ltd. and Srijanshil Saving & Credit Cooperative Ltd. Unlike other training programs the majority of participants were female.

The objective of the training was to orient field officers on the basic principles of microfinance and improve the work efficiency and minimize the cost of operation through the effective use of

the available resources of the organizations. The training sought to mitigate the various risks associated with organizational operations like delinquency management by developing innovative ideas to tackle delinquency, find out its causes and remedies. It also aimed to equip the participants with techniques of identifying target groups in microfinance as well as inform them about the importance and mobilization of savings, and loan management.

Welcoming the participants Mr. Ganesh Chand, Managing Director of Udayadev Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. said, "This is an opportunity for the participants to have an idea of how microfinance operates as well as learn about the various issues and challenges confronting the microfinance sector."

The Chairman of Udayadev Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. Mr. Purna Bahadur Chand said, "Microfinance is all about improving the economic and social standard of the poor. Therefore, during the training you can discuss all the problems and difficulties you have faced while working in microfinance and when dealing with the members. You can find

out the solutions over the training period. I would like to request you to apply the knowledge and learning for the betterment of your organization."

The three day training program was facilitated by the Director of CSD Mr. Satish Shrestha and Mr. Rajan Prasad Bhattarai an expert of microfinance. The main areas dealt in the training were the principles of microfinance, target group and their training, group formation, credit appraisal and repayments, delinquency management and ratio analysis.

During the training Mr. Satish Shrestha said, "There is no bad loanee but only bad loan. Analyze the intentions of the clients before sanctioning the loans. Providing loans to the members beyond their repaying capacity would lead to delinquency."

During the feedback session, Mr. Anil Prasad Bhatta of Srijanshil Saving & Credit Cooperative Ltd. said, "We have learnt a lot during the course of the three day training program. The main thing we have learnt is the importance of identifying the target group. The absence of which might cause a negative effect on the operation of the organization. We have also learnt that long term sustainability of the organization would ensure employment opportunities to the staffs." The training program officially ended with closing remarks by the CEOs of the respective MFIs that participated in the training. The Managing Director of Srijanshil Saving & Credit Cooperative Ltd. Mr. Madan Raj Bhatta appreciated CSD for organizing such a valuable course for field officers of MFIs in Kanchanpur. The interaction with the participants showed that they were satisfied with the three days program where they were able to take away a lot of positives in the end.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Exposure Visit to the Philippines

A team of Board Officials and Senior Management staff from Nepalese MFIs will be visiting the Philippines from January 14-22, 2018 to observe the prevalent microfinance practices in the country. The study visit is organized in collaboration with the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, Inc. (MCPI).

2. Managing Credit Portfolio in Microfinance

The Centre is organizing a training on 'Managing Credit Portfolio in Microfinance' from January 7-9, 2018 in Kathmandu. The training will assist field officers to standardize the process of credit management in order to safeguard their loan portfolio by minimizing risk. It will also help to overcome operational issues and challenges faced at the field level.

3. Managerial Skill Development Training

A training on 'Managerial Skill Development' will take place in Kathmandu from January 24-26, 2018. Through the training, CSD aims to provide the branch managers with the knowledge and skills to run a branch effectively and efficiently. It will also focus on methods to effectively deal with both clients and staff.

Field Staffs of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. exposed to Fundamentals of Microfinance

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) organized a five day training program titled "Training on Fundamentals of Microfinance" from December 11-15, 2017 (Mangsir 25-29, 2074). The training was held at the CSD training hall in Kathmandu for field level staff of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. There were a total of 22 participants. The main objective of the training was to enlighten the participants on the fundamentals of microfinance through theoretical and field orientation. It aimed to enhance the operational skills of the participants and provide them with an opportunity to learn to develop a strong bond with their members. The training also intended to equip participants to deal with different types of risks as well as make them aware about the various issues and challenges faced by the microfinance sector. The participants were eager to learn how to tackle delinquency which is likely to plague the microfinance sector and gain knowledge on fundamentals that have to be adhered to keep microfinance safe and sound.

The facilitators enlightened the participants on the contributions of microfinance in improving the social and economic status of ultra poor and under privileged women in Nepal. They also discussed about how the idea of the bankable poor was once considered a utopia is now a reality. Microfinance has been able to bring about a social change by empowering poor women through entrepreneurship. The facilitators urged the participants to emphasize mainly on the needs and interests of the members. They also advised them to focus more on increasing the savings rather than concentrating only on credit. Similarly, they also pointed out the importance of insurance which acts as a safety net to the members.



Participants attentively listening to the facilitator

During the training Mr. Uday Raj Khatiwada, CEO of Swarajgar Laghubitta Bikas Bank Limited, said, "The MFIs must know their members and the members should know their MFI. Sanctioning small loans to the clients is the best way of microfinance instead of disbursing large amount of loan without appraising their capacity." He further added, "It requires a minimum of 3 loan cycles to know a client well so you all should go slowly while sanctioning loan to the new clients."

The five day training program was a complete package with bits of everything from knowledge to entertainment to interactions. It also included field visits to branches of Swabalamban Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd. (SWBBL) and Manushi to observe their operational modalities as well as observation of their centre meetings. The training program witnessed an active participation from the participants. The centre and branch visit was very beneficial to them. They had an opportunity to evaluate themselves and assess on where they are and where they ought to be. The training proved to be a refresher to the participants which helped them to polish their potential as a field

officer as well as gain additional knowledge to further improve their skills. Findings of the field visit were presented the next day in the presence of Chairman of CSD and the CEO of Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd.

Speaking during the presentations Chairman of CSD, Mr. Shankar Man Shrestha, said, "MFIs have not paid attention to problems such as dormant members and mounting number of drop out members that has made great loss to MFIs." He drew the attention of the field officers towards this. He cautioned, "The increasing overdue problems will weaken the MFIs."

During the feedback session, Mr. Anil Chaudhary from the Rautahat branch said, "An important message I have learnt from the training is that just like it is impossible to ride a motorcycle without petrol, microfinance also cannot sustain itself without savings mobilization."

The closing session was graced by CSD Board Member, Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha and Dr. Sumitra Manandhar Gurung. Addressing the participants Mr. Shrestha said, "The microfinance program can only succeed if the employees view their job in microfinance as a service to the society than just means to earn salary. One must be honest and have high degree of integrity to work for the poor."

Dr. Manandhar pointed out how lucky the participants were to be able to receive training so early in their employment. She asked them to make the best use of their potential and work loyally for themselves, the members and the organization.



Review session conducted by participants

Member's Corner



Profile of Nawapratiwa Saving & Credit Co-operative Ltd.

Nawapratiwa Saving & Credit Co-operative Ltd. is a community based co-operative with its headquarters in Arun Khola, Nawalparasi, Nepal. With a view to build a self-sustainable and prosperous society it was established in 1997 AD. Its total capital was Rs. 10,800 from 27 members. Since then, the organization has been working towards financially, socially and educationally empowering its members through different programs, by extensively utilizing the locally available resources as well as continuously working for enlightening the members on savings and credit operations and inciting them on undertaking income generating activities for saving their income.

Vision

Help build a self-sustainable and prosperous society through safe and sound operation of savings and credit mobilization.

Mission

Improve the living standards of the poor by providing competitive financial and social services.

Goal

Provide microfinance services to 37,000 families by fiscal year 2075-2076.

Objectives

- Motivate members for regular savings by developing the feeling of self-help and mutual cooperation among the members.

Protection Schemes & Activities

- Stress Free Program
- Life and Housing Protection Scheme
- Relief Service for Member
- Nawapratiwa with the poor (Bipanna sang Nawapratiwa)
- Social development program
- Nawapratiwa Young Entrepreneurs Development Program
- Microfinance for the young
- Environmental Improvement Program
- Health program
- Livestock protection and agricultural program
- Accommodation program for meaningful life
- Honoring senior citizens and organizing pilgrimages
- Income generation, capacity building skill development and other social development activities
- National and international training, observation exposure visits, symposium, interaction and award ceremonies
- Remittance services

- Build income generating capacity of members by providing loans for various local and potential enterprises.
- Conduct activities such as social, cultural, educational, health, agriculture, tourism and environment protection and establish a collaborative relation with institutions operating with similar purposes.
- Identify poor families in the community and help them undertake income generating activity.
- Help uplift the socio-economic condition of the weak and the low income group and help to build improved houses.
- Conduct various awareness programs, training, seminar, tourism, campaign, and interaction and capacity enhancements for social transformation.
- Develop of entrepreneurship of local people and provide required capital in the form of loans
- Avail wholesale loans from other banks and financial institutions to retail the same to the poor households.
- Develop young entrepreneurs by initiating enterprise development programs aiming at unemployed youths.



Chandra Mani Kharel
Chairman



Ram Prasad Kafle
Chief Executive Officer



Nawapratiwa Saving & Credit Co-operative Ltd. Head Office

- Provide insurance and remittance services to the members by coordinating with insurance companies and also provide social security services to the members.

Operational Status as of November 16, 2017

Area Coverage	: Two Districts (Nawalparasi and Palpa)
No. of Branches	: 10
MF members	: 25,381
MF Borrowers	: 13,805
Share Capital	: Rs. 4,96,07,400
Loan Outstanding	: Rs.85,13,32,802
Savings from Members	: Rs. 43,85,41,749
Loan Overdue	: Rs. 45,44,832
Profit	: Rs. 1,60,38,071
Reserve Fund	: Rs. 4,56,59,273
Operational Self Sufficiency	: 143.68%
Repayment Rate	: 99.88%

Savings Products

- Group Savings
- Education & Pension Savings
- Personal Savings
- Festival Savings
- Child Savings
- Wedding Savings
- Housing Savings
- Women Welfare Savings
- Prosperity Savings
- Compulsory Savings
- Periodic Savings

Loan Products

- General Loan
- Seasonal Loan
- Emergency Loan
- Microenterprise Loan
- Housing Loan
- Solar/Energy Loan
- Agriculture Loan
- Hire Purchase Loan
- Foreign Employment Loan
- Educational Loan
- Social Loan

CSD Capacitates the Branch Managers of MFIs

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) successfully organized a three day "Training on Branch Management" for the branch managers of MFIs from November 8-10, 2017 (Kartik 22-24, 2074). The training was held at the CSD training hall, Kathmandu, with 17 participants from NADEP Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd, Swarojgar Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd., Jeevan Bikas Samaj, Shree Udayadev Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. and Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd.

It was a mixture of both theoretical orientations and practical exercises. The objective was to upgrade the skills of branch managers to effectively manage their operations and clients.

Keeping in view of deviations in microfinance operations they were also oriented on the fundamentals of microfinance, ways to effectively manage organizational risks and supervision of loans to clients. Similarly, the participants were sensitized on the needs and ways to capacitate their clients and serve them well. Additionally, they were also exposed to various tools of assessing branch performance and analyzing their organizational efficiency, productivity and portfolio quality, current position and ways to manage their branch operations effectively.



Resource person facilitating the training

In course of discussions in various sessions there were issues of mission drift, more profit orientation and less concern of MFIs on client's interest and development. The participants expressed their concern on giving target to field staff that has led to duplication of clients and reckless over financing that jeopardizes the quality of loans. It was realized in discussions most MFIs have not adhered to the fundamentals of microfinance and that the well-being and interest of clients are overlooked.

Mr. Sundar Prasad Shrestha, one of the facilitators urged the participants to put themselves in the client's shoes to evaluate their performance. Moreover, the participants were in favor of introducing new technology like online banking and SMS banking to increase the work efficiency.

During the feedback session, Mr. Diwakar Guragain of Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd. said, "This three day training made me realize that there are a lot of things to be learnt. We were able to learn how to operate the branch effectively and mitigate risk."

In the closing ceremony after distributing the certificate of participation to the participants Mr. Shanker Nath Kapali, Executive Chief of CSD thanked the participants for their active participation in the training on behalf of CSD.

He said, "Branch managers should be role models for other staff in branches and work for the development of the targeted clients." He further suggested that they should be the ambassadors of their organizations and help the poor to uplift them from poverty.

Nepalese MFIs' Officials on Insightful Exposure Visit to Bangladeshi MFIs

The Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) organized an exposure visit to Bangladesh in joint collaboration with the Integrated Development Foundation (IDF) to observe their MFI's operation from November 4-11, 2017. The main objective of the visit was to provide learning opportunities to the participants to acquaint with the microfinance sector of Bangladesh, its approaches, mechanism, products and services.

The visit began with the introductory meeting with the Director of IDF Mr. Selim Uddin. He briefed about the vision, role and responsibilities of IDF and the status of different types of MFIs in Bangladesh and how they have been managing microfinance programs. He also shared his personal experience in microfinance sector. The team visited the Grameen Bank Head office and IDF head office in Dhaka. They also observed branch office as well as centre meeting of both the organizations.

Moreover, the participants also had an opportunity to visit the health care, solar energy, IDF School, cattle raise projects and the teachers training program at



Nepali officials in Grameen Bank, Bangladesh

Chittagong. The team was impressed by the value added programs of Bangladeshi MFIs. During the visit, the team noticed significant changes in the lives of the members after microfinance. They have been able to give their children a comfortable and quality life.

In the wrap up meet in CSD, the Vice Secretary of Grameen Mahila Utthan Kendra Ms. Mina Giri said, "The visit was informative and we learned about microfinance and its fundamentals. We

feel that we need to focus more on client development and also motivate the employees to upgrade their organizational performance."

This visit has given an insight and understanding of the functioning of microfinance in Bangladesh. All the participants were overwhelmed by the hospitality and culture of Bangladesh people and thanked CSD for organizing such a fruitful study visit.

The visit was coordinated by Mr. Sanjay Shrestha of CSD. The team comprised of 9 officials from 5 different MFIs, Ms. Mina Giri – Vice Secretary and Mr. BP Oli – Branch Manager of Grameen Mahila Utthan Kendra, Ms. Sabitri Dumrakoti Parajuli – Branch Manager of Mahila Adhikar Tatha Bikas Kendra, Mr. Tanka Prasad Dhakal – Branch Manager and Mr. Bishnu Prasad Rimal – Accountant of Dhaulagiri Community Resource Development Center, Mr. Khemraj Khawas – Officer and Mr. Lalit Kumar Gangai – Assistant Officer of Jeevan Bikas Samaj and Mr. Shaktiram Yadav and Mr. Shatrudhan Sah – Branch Manager of Shrijana Samudayik Bikas Kendra.

Nepalese MFI Officials Visit Bangladesh MFIs

“If you go out into the real world, you cannot miss seeing that the poor are poor not because they are untrained or illiterate but because they cannot retain the returns of their labor. They have no control over capital, and it is the ability to control capital that gives people the power to rise out of poverty.”

Prof. Muhammad Yunus

Bangladesh is considered as the birth place of microfinance. There is no better place to learn about the true essence of microfinance than Bangladesh. Keeping this in mind the Centre for Self-help Development (CSD) has been organizing exposure visits to Bangladesh for the past few years to learn first hand knowledge on the operations of MFIs in Bangladesh.

CSD organized yet another exposure visit to Bangladesh in collaboration with the Integrated Development Foundation (IDF), Bangladesh from November 18-26, 2017.

The main objective of the visit was to enhance the practical knowledge of the participants through exposure to the best practices of microfinance, approaches, mechanism and various savings and loan products used in Bangladesh.

The visit program began with a call on to the Grameen Bank Head office in Mirpur, Dhaka. The participants were briefed on the various products and services offered by Grameen Bank with its latest status of operation and the positive impact it has on the millions of clients it serves by Mr. Sayed Mohammad Alamgir, Chief of International Program Department. The visiting team also had an opportunity to interact with Mr. Ratan Kumar Nag, the Managing Director of the Bank.

The team observed the center meeting of the bank at Chittagong, visited enterprises of clients as well as interacted with branch officials at Zobra, the birth place of Grameen Bank. The participants extensively observed various programs of another MFI, IDF. They were briefed on credit as well as credit plus programs such as health, education, alternative energy and its unique Chittagong red cow breeding program.

The visit then moved on to Cox Bazaar where the participants had an opportunity to observe the centre meetings of ASA and participated in a short review discussion about the visited centres at the head office.



Nepalese officials with microfinance members of Bangladesh

There was a round up session at the IDF head office as a review of the overall exposure visit on the last day. There was also a post review session organized at CSD where the participants recalled their experience of the exposure visit to Bangladesh and shared their learning.

The participants were delighted in getting the opportunity to learn about microfinance in Bangladesh. They were able to learn from their own observations traveling to the remote areas. The participants had an opportunity to understand how the people were able to socially and economically uplift themselves through various microfinance programs of IDF, Grameen Bank and ASA. They were also motivated by the level of monitoring and supervision existing in the MFIs of Bangladesh. Similarly, they pointed out that the main difference between microfinance program in Bangladesh and Nepal is that there are many credit plus programs launched in Bangladesh whereas it is limited to credit only in Nepal. The participants also realized that the employees of an organization should be viewed as the organizational capital which would benefit the organization in the long run.

One of the participants from CYC Nepal Mr. Uttam Bahadur Mahat said, “There are a lot of things that needs to be followed. Among them what struck me the most was the loyalty shown by the

borrowers in Bangladesh sticking to one MFI for the past 25 years and engaging in income generating activities. This is rare in case of microfinance members in Nepal.”

Another participant from Shreejana Bikas Kendra, Mr. Sushil Kumar Tamang said, “The most important people are our borrowers. It is the main source of income for the MFIs. If one of the clients is unable to pay the installment its effect is not only in one centre but in entire area. Therefore, the members should be treated as a family and nurture them with great care.”

The team of eight MFI officials from 6 different MFIs from Nepal was coordinated by Mr. Satish Shrestha, the Director of CSD. The members of the team were Mr. Uttam Bahadur Mahat- Life member of CYC Nepal, Mr. Kali Das Chaudhary- Senior Officer of Grameen Mahila Utthan Kendra, Mr. Bijendra Chaudhary- Head of Department of Human Resource & Operations and Mr. Badri Prasad Adhikari- Head of Department Finance of Mero Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd., Mr. Sushil Kumar Tamang- Area Manager of Shreejana Bikas Kendra and Mr. Ashok Kumar Mandal- Branch Manager of Shreejana Bikas Kendra, Mr. Kramlal Chaudhary- Branch Manager and Mr. Ramesh Chaudhary- Branch Manager of UNYC Nepal.



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