

CHAPTER: I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The rich cultural heritage of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal has evolved over centuries. This multi-dimensional cultural heritage encompasses within itself the cultural diversities of various ethnic, tribal, and social groups inhabiting different altitudes, and it manifests in various forms: music and dance; art and craft; folklores and folktales; languages and literature; philosophy and religion; festivals and celebrations; and foods and drinks.

Nepal is a landlinked country of South Asia, situated in the Himalayas, and shares its borders with the Tibet Autonomous Region of People's Republic of China in the north and the Republic of India in other directions. Consequently, the population of Nepal now mainly consists of the descendants of Tibeto-Burman migrants from the north and Indo-Aryans from the south. Ethnic diversity and proximity to giant cultures have continued to influence the culture of Nepal. Although, Nepal has inherited several customs and cultural practices from China and Tibet as well as from India, all the same, based on its topography, available resources and climate, over a period of time, it has attuned these influences to its own indigenous requirements.¹

Nepal is a small country inhabited by 18.5 million people who belongs to various ethnic/caste groups many of whom have a distinct and language

¹ Society and culture/www.sosref.org.np

of their own as well as different religious persuasions. So, it has multi-cultural society for centuries based on Hinduism. According to the 1991 Census figure, 86.5% of the total population is reported as Hindu and the remaining 13.5% are divided among several others such as Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, etc.² Cast system and hierarchy is the prime foundation of the Hindus, which is based on the Varna system.

In Hindu religious books have been defined man as four Varna. They are *Brahmins*, *Chhetri*, *Baishaya* and *Sudra*. Among them *Sudra* indicates *Dalit*. The term *Dalit* is understood as untouchable caste. But, in *Veda*, the ancient religious book of Hindus, *Sudras* are not originally considered untouchable. During the regime of Jayasthiti Malla, the caste system further deepened in Nepali society. Jayasthiti Malla imitated Manu and *Yagyavalakya Smritis* in India, creating and enforcing discriminatory rules and regulations for lower caste people. He made rules for each caste's rituals and imposed specific punishments and fines for those who left their pre-determined professions. During the regime of Prithivi Narayan Shah, the caste system was further strengthened. Prithivi Narayan Shah spread the social origination system of four varnas and thirty six caste division. During the Rana regime, the government divided its people into five groups; *Brahmans* (Tagadhari), *Khas*, *Matawali*, *pani chalne* (touchable) *Shudra* and *pani nachalne* (untouchable) *Sudra* by promulgating the civil code in 1854 A.D. This civil code legally systematized the caste discrimination³.

² *Chhetri, Ram B, Gurung, Om, 1999: Anthropology and Sociology of Nepal, p-56, SASON, Kathmandu, Nepal.*

³ *BK, Man Bahadur & Raj Kumar Gandharba, 2007: Dalit Bibliography, p-05, Jana Utthan Pratisthan, Anamnagar, Kathmandu, Nepal.*

Dalit community is most marginalized and disadvantaged group in the Nepalese society. This is the manifestation of historical fact that the exploitative Hindu caste hierarchy of Nepali society compelled *Dalits* to be excluded in every sphere of their living. They are socially exploited, politically powerless and under-represented and economically poorest segment of the society.⁴

Eventually, the purpose of this research is to contribute the understanding of the disaster threats and socio-cultural and economic statuses of *Damai* people of *Damai* Toal in Embung VDC ward no. 1 of Panchthar district. Since, they are the socio-economically deprived caste group in Nepal due to traditional caste based discrimination. This also examine the issues of caste based discrimination and existing practice of untouchability.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The government has launched some appreciative programs and has established some organizations including *Dalit Bikas Samittee* in 1997 and *National Dalit Commission* in 2002. Now, country is moving towards making innovative constitution through Constitution Assembly and restructuring the state under the inclusive democratic phenomenon.

Damai people of *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC are running the risk from landslide since 2045 BS. They are still forced to settle in landslide prone area. They have no land for safer inhabitation. So, they are more threatening by disaster over the period. Why this situation has been rising, is the question need to know ?

⁴ *Ibid*, p-01

They are involved in agriculture and their own traditional business i.e. sewing clothes. Despite their hard labor they have difficulty in managing bread and butter. In terms of *Damai* this situation seems twice over there. So, the fact shows *Damai* has been suffering from different complexity in the society.

Usually this study attempts to answer above condition and the socio-cultural and economic status of *Damai* people of *Damai* Toal in Embung VDC ward no. 1 of Panchthar district. Besides, this study undertakes following research questions related to *Damai* people.

1. What are the demographic socio-economic characteristics and cultural situation of *Damai* people ?
2. What are the threats in terms of disaster in *Damai* Toal ?
3. Why do most of the *Damai* people are settled in disaster prone area ?
4. What are the major focused activities to *Damai* people ?
5. What are the major changes after Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) Program implementation in *Damai* Toal ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

A key objective of the study is to find the socio-economic status, cultural situation and disaster threats of *Damai* people in Embung VDC. The specified objectives are given below;

1. To analyze the socio-cultural and economic status of *Damai* people of *Damai Toal*.
2. To identify disaster threats, coping capacity and gaps of the *Damai* People of *Damai Toal*.
3. To analyze the major changes, impacts and conditions of *Damai* people before and after the CBDRR program.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The study has significance to know real picture of disaster threats, socio-cultural and economic status of the *Damai* People in Embung VDC. It tries to show the major changes comparatively after implementation the NRCS activities. The political, economical, social, cultural and educational situations of the people are also tries to know on this study.

It is necessary to undertake special efforts to give *Damai* the chances in any cost to involve themselves in social and economic activities to increase ownership of any community. This studies aims to provide the hub data on socio-economic status, cultural situation and disaster risk of *Damai* people in *Damai Toal*. This may useful in planning for the development of socio-economic and in disaster risk reduction.

1.5 Organization of the study

The study has been divided into eight chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, importance of the study, organization of the study and limitation of the study. The second chapter is allied to the literature review. The third chapter is research methodology. The forth is on

general introduction of the study area. The fifth chapter presents the socio-economic status while the sixth chapter presents the material and non-material cultural situation of *Damai* people in *Damai Toal* of Embung VDC. The seventh chapter of the research shows the disaster threats and major changes before and after the NRCS activities. The eighth chapter reflects the summary and conclusion of the study.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

As no study is free from limitation, this study may not be exceptional. This intends to identify basically the socio-economic status, cultural situation and disaster threats in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC. A large area could not be included due to the lack of resources, time and financial constraint. The study covers 21 households of *Damai* Toal among 64 households of the NRCS CBDRR Program implemented area. So, this may not represent the whole VDC as well.

CHAPTER: II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nepalese cultures are basically based on caste. So, Nepalese caste/ethnic groups are proper subject on behalf of sociological and anthropological study. Many scholars have done number of research studies upon them. Although, very few scholars have focused towards disaster threats and it's impact to the *Damai*. Due to the lack of sufficient studies the researcher has trying to attempted study on disaster threats and socio-cultural and economic condition of the *Damai* some extend. The researcher has visited number of website, books and articles to review the concepts and findings on this study. Relevant literature here is reviewed as follows.

2.1 The *Dalit* and Disaster Threats

Nepalese caste system, like the Indian caste system, is highly complex and continues the traditional system of social stratification of Nepal. The caste system defines social classes by a number of hierarchical endogamous groups often termed as *J t*. This custom is found must in Hindu communities of Nepal.⁵ Caste categories diverged from the four *Varnas* of the classical *Vedic* model and instead had three categories to accommodate the tribal peoples between the pure and impure castes. These, three tired hierarchy were further classified into five hierarchies with the following order precedence.

1. **Thagadhari** (Twice-born Casts, considers *Brahman* and *Kshatriya*)

⁵ *Nepalese Caste System*/www.en.wikipedia.org

2. Matwali (Ethnic/Tribal Casts)

2.1 Namasyane Matwali (Non-enslavable alcohol-drinkers)

2.2 Masyane Matwali (Enslavable alcohol drinkers)

3. Dalit (Untouchables)

3.1 Pani nachalne choichoto halnu napanne, (Impure but touchable castes)

3.2 Pani nachalne chiochoti halnu parne, (Impure and Untouchable castes)

These categories imply that *Thagadhari* (Wearer of holy cord) remains in the highest hierarchy in the Nepali caste system followed by *Matwali*, (Non-enslavable alcohol-drinkers) and enslavable alcohol drinkers, touchable caste and lastly untouchable so-called *Dalit*.⁶

2.1.1 Who are Dalits ?

The word “*Dalit*” comes from the Sanskrit root *dal-* and means “broken, ground-down, downtrodden, or oppressed.” Those previously known as Untouchables and Depressed Classes. *Dalit* refers to one’s caste rather than class; it applies to members of those menial castes which have born the stigma of “untouchability” because of the extreme impurity and pollution connected with their traditional occupations. *Dalits* are ‘outcastes’ falling outside the traditional four-fold caste system consisting of the hereditary *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, and *Shudra* classes; they

⁶ *Nepalese Caste System/www.en.wikipedia.org*

are considered impure and polluting and are therefore physically and socially excluded and isolated from the rest of society.⁷

Gyanu Chhetri, in his article “*A Sociological Analysis of Dalit Occupational Cast Group in the Hills of Nepal: A Sociological Analysis*” describes, according to the occupational division as derived from the Varna model, Kamis are blacksmiths and goldsmiths; Damais are tailors and musicians; and Sarkis are cobblers. Kamis are further divided into sub-groups. Od Kamis are Carpenters and Masons; Lohar are Blacksmiths and Sunar are Goldsmiths. During the 14th century division of labour, as said earlier, these people were given the mentioned job and hence classified as service providing caste groups so were the Bahuns/Pandits. Such a system favoured occupational specializations. The tradition continued and castes or occupation became hereditary over time.

After initial hesitation and controversy among *Dalits* and *non-Dalits* alike, use of the term “*Dalit*” has gained general acceptance, and has been widely used at national and international levels. A DFID and the World Bank report aptly notes, “A lingering hesitation to use the term “*Dalit*” or to name caste-based discrimination head-on-and a preference for euphemisms only serves to confuse issues pertaining to *Dalit* rights. The term “*Dalit*” should be accepted universally.” It is usually said that there are 22 *Dalit* castes, but it has not always been the same 22 that have been

⁷ *Who are Dalits & what is Untouchability?*, www.ncdhr.org.in

identified. The *Uppechhit, Utpidit ra Dalitbarga Utthan Bikas Samiti* (National Committee for the Upliftment of the Depressed, the Oppressed and *Dalits* Community), established by the government, identified 22 *Dalit* castes. After nationwide consultation, the *National Dalit Commission* (NDC) defined *Dalit* community and caste based untouchability in its Bill for an Act in 2003. According to this, ‘*Dalit* community’ refers to communities, who have been left behind in social, economic, educational, political and religious spheres and deprived of human dignity and social justice due to caste based discrimination and untouchability. “Caste-based Untouchability” refers to those communities, who have been discriminated against as water polluting, or touching whom requires purification, untouchables or any form of discrimination against any community that was identified as untouchable before the promulgation of the New Civil Code, 1963. Based on these definitions, NDC also tentatively identified 22 *Dalit* castes, including five from the Hills and 17 from the Terai (not identical to the Samiti list). A few *Dalit* castes such as *Viswakarma*, *Pariyar* and *Sarki* of the Hills and *Chamar* of the Terai have multiple names and some *Dalit* castes such as *Musahar* and *Bantar* of the Terai have single names. For example, *Viswakarma* has now become a common caste name that refers to those *Dalits* who identify themselves as *Kami* or *Lohar* or *Sunar* or *Wod* or *Chunara* or *Parki* or *Tamata*. Many family names of *Dalits* are identical with that of *Bahun-Chhetris* and some are identical with *Vaisya* and some indigenous peoples. Population of *Damai* by development region wise according to population census 2001 is in **Appendix- 1** of this research paper.

2.1.2 Untouchability, Discrimination and Legal Code in Nepal

There was no untouchability in early times. In the famed *Hindu* scripture *Gita* Krishna tells Arjun that, “character is based on virtue that your deeds should reflect your virtuousness, and that caste is determined by your deeds or karma.” The *Mahabharata* has also denotes that;

Jatya cha sadrishya: serbe kulena sadrishasthaa. - Santiparba 107/30

It means; there was no racial discrimination in the primitive society. The human beings are considered equal by cast and race. But, there is no record as such from which the authenticity of the origin of the cast system. The difficulty arises due to two interrelated factors that; the history of Nepal itself and the heavy reliance on fragmentary and legendry sources the trace the origin and to define the present legacy of the caste system in Nepal.

Although, the book *Darban Manifesto and Plan of Action* describes the Varna was developed on the basis of division of labour according to social agreement during the Pre-Vaidic (1500-1000 BC) and Post-Vaidic Period (1000-600 BC). Varna consisting of the hereditary *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, and *Shudra* classes; they are considered impure and polluting and are therefore physically and socially excluded and isolated from the rest of society.

Dor Bahadur Bista, in his book "Fatalism and Development" has describe, Cast concepts only entered Nepal for the first time in the beginning of the Licchavi era, in the form of Vaishnavism, and when it did arrive it had to adapt itself not only to Shaivism but also to Buddhism.

Caste and practice of untouchability have for long been known as “peculiar” cultural practices of the people of Nepal, particularly the Hindus. Due to their caste identity *Dalits* regularly face discrimination and violence which prevent them from enjoying the basic human rights and dignity promised to all citizens. More than 260 million people worldwide suffer from this “hidden apartheid” of segregation, exclusion, and discrimination.

Here is an interesting experience of Padamsingh Biswokarma, a teacher in Baglung. *Himal Khabarpatrika* was speaking to him on *Dalits* issues. At the moment of a reporter's question he expressed;

“Once, on the way from Pokhara to Baglung, I met a pundit on the road. I discussed the scriptures with him. While we were taking leave from each other he asked me which Bahun I was, and I said Biswokarma. After that he began to address me as timi, not tapai. I felt bad but such instances are common.”

This is an extremely soaked representing example of discrimination upon untouchable, lots of such as are not expose.

Action Aid, Nepal's study findings on caste based discrimination, including untouchability, in Nepal. Altogether 205 existing practices of caste-based discrimination were identified in the eight sample sites. Out of the 205 existing practices of caste-based discrimination 54 are related to denial, which includes 10 related to entry; 14 to services; 6 to access to common resources; 10 to kinship and other relationships; and 14 to participation. Out of the 205 existing practices of caste-based

discrimination 9 are related to forced or discriminatory labor. Out of the 205 existing practices of caste-based discrimination 20 are related to dominance; 20 to atrocities; 3 to social boycott; and 18 to attitudinal untouchability. Out of the 205 existing practices of caste-based discrimination 81 are discrimination in different fields, which includes 18 related to occupation; 11 to educational institutions; 10 to political rights; 14 to government policy and programs; 7 to government and NGO offices; 13 to development programs and donors; and 8 to religious and cultural activities.⁸ Here are the most:

-) Prohibited from eating with other caste members
-) Prohibited from marrying with other caste members
-) Segregation in seating and food arrangements in village functions and festivals
-) Prohibited from entering into village temples
-) Prohibited from entering dominant caste homes
-) Forced to vote or not to vote for certain candidates during the elections
-) Face social boycotts by dominant castes for refusing to perform their “duties.”⁹

These kinds of issues are still prevalent and common throughout Nepal. Despite the 1963 abolition of *Muluki Ain*, the Civil Code of 1854 which oppressed and marginalized lower caste and ethnic groups, the practice of caste-based discrimination is still prevalent and goes unpunished in Nepal. *Dalits* have the slightest representation in all political sectors of

⁸ *Bhattachan, KB, Sunar, TB and Bhattachan, YK, Caste Based Discrimination in Nepal, 2007.*

⁹ *Who are Dalits & what is Untouchability?, www.ncdhr.org.in*

Nepal and caste based discrimination issues take little priority in the media; as a result, their voices go unheard. Excluding *Dalits* from decision making bodies and public newscasts, places them in a defenseless position, which, in turn, creates more caste and gender based discrimination.¹⁰

The *Dalits* have less access to economic opportunities with almost 50% of *Dalits* living below the poverty line (compared with a national average of 31%). The root cause of their poverty and social exclusion is caste-based discrimination. The *Muluki Ain* (Country Code, 1854) codified Nepali society into a hierarchical system with the *Brahmins* at the top and *Dalits* at the bottom. The allocation of rights and the application of law were adapted to give the higher castes privileges and to downgrade the rights of the lower groups.

The representation of *Dalits* in the government is insignificant compared to the size of their population. Their political representation remains low despite promises of inclusion by successive governments. The *Dalits* also have less access to education, with a literacy index of 23.8 compared with a national average of 36.7, and basic health services shown in low life expectancy of 50.3 years compared with a national average of 55 years. Years of subordination have eroded capacity and confidence making it difficult for a majority of the *Dalits* to live a productive and dignified life. The situation of *Dalits* remained more or less unchanged throughout the *Panchayat* era (before 1990s). Nepal's *Dalit Movement* gathered momentum following the restoration of democracy in 1990. Today, there

¹⁰ *Annual Report, 2008, Dalit Welfare Organization.*

are different *Dalit* organizations that are active at both the national as well as the community levels. *Jana Utthan Pratisthan- Nepal* (JUP) is one of the leading national NGOs working for *Dalit* community. *Dalit* professionals from diversified professional careers who continue to promote it founded the organization.

Untouchability is illegal but is still deeply entrenched in Nepal. The practice of *Untouchability*, or rather its intensity, varies from region to region. *Dalits* are also not a homogenous group and differ even among themselves in terms of the language, religion, culture and region where they live.

Pressure from *Dalit* activists resulted in the government established a Committee for the Upliftment of Depressed Communities in 1997. However, this body remained largely ineffective. In 2002 the government established the *National Dalit Commission* but this body too remained ineffective largely because it was created through an executive decision and not through special laws to give it the authority needed to address to the main issues facing the community.¹¹

The 10th Plan with respect to the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (PRSP, 2002) recognized the centrality of socially inclusive development. PRSP has taken social inclusion and targeted program as one of the four pillars and focused 1. Mainstreaming the excluded groups to ensure equitable access for all and 2. Providing targeted program to hardcore poor. Thus it has focused on various welfare programs, such as; employment for *Dalits*, preferential provision in foreign employment,

¹¹ [www.jup-nepal.org/JUP-NEPAL/Janautthan Pratisthan Nepal](http://www.jup-nepal.org/JUP-NEPAL/Janautthan%20Pratisthan%20Nepal).

sensitization programs against *untouchability* at the local level, encouragement to *Dalit* women for school teachers, scholarship programs, housing arrangement for homeless *Dalits*, skill promotion for income generation, training for modernizing their traditional occupations, arrangement of leasehold forest within community forests for *Dalit* forest users, provision of grant to poor *Dalit* for micro-irrigation, provision of focal point in government agencies for *Dalit* issues, abolish all discriminatory provisions enacting new special law, mandating political parties to nominate *Dalits* in each level.¹²

The mission of the Ninth Five-Year Plan of the erstwhile HM Government of Nepal, 1997-2002, was to increase the capability of the *Dalit* community and other backward communities. The Tenth Plan, 2003-2007, was defined as strategy to eliminate poverty. It was said that social inclusiveness would be the main priority of the State. Programs were designed to address the poor and bring the classes excluded from the State structure into the mainstream.¹³

The elections for Constituent Assembly held on 8th April, 2008, overthrew the 240 years old Hindu Monarchy through its declaration on 28 May, 2008, and established a Democratic Republic. The Assembly transformed the traditional image of society. No other state structure before this was as inclusive in terms of ethnicities, languages, regions, genders, and groups. 216 members are of indigenous ethnicities, 196 are *Madheshi*, 198 are women, and 50 are *dalits* in an assembly of 601

¹² *Dalit Bibliography*, p-07, *Jana Utthan Pratisthan*, 2007, Kathmandu, Nepal.

¹³ *Darnal Subash*, *A Land of Our Own*, p-11,12, *Samata Foundation & Jagaran Media Center*, 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal.

members. The minority groups, the disabled and people of Third Gender are also represented. But, in the parliaments that were formed in 1992, 1995, and 1999, and in the Interim Legislature, the representation of *Bahun-Chhetris* was 57 percent, 63 percent, 61 percent and 50 percent respectively. But, in the Constituent Assembly, the share of *Bahun-Chhetris* has shrunk to 30 percent, while the representation of women, indigenous ethnicities, *Madheshis* and *dalits* has increased.¹⁴

In that way, Nepal has passed a historic ‘Untouchability Bill’, is the *Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability Crime Elimination and Punishment Act*, which was adopted unanimously by Nepal’s interim Parliament on May 24, 2011 prohibits the practices of ‘*untouchability*’ both in the public and private sphere. *Dalit* groups have advocated for two years ensuring that the law did not only extend to the public sphere, but also to the private. It is the first time that a law, which criminalises ‘*untouchability*’ practices in the private sphere, has ever been introduced.¹⁵

2.1.3 Disaster Threats upon Untouchables

In terms of modern knowledge, the term 'disaster' denotes any odd event, whether natural or manmade, which can bring about sudden and great miseries to humanity in terms of loss of life or/and property. It also signifies misfortune at larger scale or a calamity of considerable amount for a section of humanity. Such calamities event may have sudden destructive impact or may create disasters over an extended period. The

¹⁴ Darnal Subash, *A Land of Our Own*, p-15, Samata Foundation & Jagaran Media Center, 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal.

¹⁵ *Untouchability-bill/www.idsn.org*

alternative meanings are similar to that of cataclysm, catastrophe, tragedy or devastation.¹⁶

Generally, disaster has the following effects in the concerned areas,

1. It completely disrupts the normal day to day life
2. It negatively influences the emergency systems
3. Normal needs and processes like food, shelter, health, etc.

are affected and deteriorate depending on the intensity and severity of the disaster. It may also be termed as “a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources.”¹⁷

The world has seen many disasters over the years. Many were caused by people- wars, terrorists and others are sometimes referred to as “acts of nature.” Generally, disasters are of two types; **Natural** and **Manmade**. Based on the devastation, these are further classified into major natural disaster and manmade disasters.

Disaster has been as long as recorded history, and presumably even longer. Generations of people have had to withstand disaster. Nepal is a disaster-prone country mainly due to its young geology, mountainous terrain, and widespread poverty. An assessment made by the Ministry of Home Affairs shows that more than 18,000 people were killed by various disasters between 1983 and 1998. The losses of productive properties such as animals, agricultural land, and crops are overwhelming. Major

¹⁶ Sing, Tej, *Disaster Management*, p-2,3, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi.

¹⁷ *What is Disaster ?*, www.karimganj.nic.in/disaster.htm

types of disasters in Nepal include floods, earthquakes, droughts, landslides, epidemics, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods, fire, and ecological hazards. Less devastating disasters include avalanches, rainstorms, hailstorms, stampedes, and industrial accidents. Among the major disasters, floods, landslides, and epidemics are the most frequent and are usually deadly.¹⁸

Rugged and fragile geophysical structure, very high relief, high angle of slopes, complex geology, variable climatic conditions, active tectonic processes, unplanned settlement, dense and increasing population, poor economic condition and low literacy rate have made Nepal vulnerable to various types of natural disasters. Most part of the country is seismically active. Hence, the geomorphology is very fragile. The constant tectonic action of different degree along with varied intensity of weather condition has adverse effect on stability of earth surface and river course. The physiography of earth is changing slowly due to its own tectonic action and universal planetary action. Such activities are more pronounced in Asia (Oceania) and South America. Among them all, the Himalayan region and some pocket of the Oceania are most active. And major part of the Himalaya lies in Nepal. The Himalayan region of Nepal can be considered as one of the severest flood hazard zone of the world. Besides, Heavy precipitation, high wetness and steepness of watersheds and river channels contribute to flood magnitudes. Mainly, the middle Hills are prone to landslides and the Tarai to flood and fire. Thus, flood, landslide and fire are the most frequent natural disasters in Nepal. These disasters

¹⁸ *Participatory Disaster Management Program/www.saarc-sdmc.nic.in*

occur almost every year in one part of the country or the other causing loss of life and heavy damage to physical properties. It is a great challenge to the nation to protect infrastructure and property from frequent landslide and floods. Each year flood, landslide, fire, epidemic, avalanche and various other natural and man-made disasters cause the casualty of thousands of human lives and destruction of physical properties worth billions of rupees.¹⁹

Most of the SAARC countries situated in a mountainous terrain, which is distinguished by rugged topography and complex geological structure. Owing to such challenging topographical and geological conditions mountains are most vulnerable to landslide. Massive loss of lives and infrastructures are reported to be damaged and destroyed by landslide in the hilly region.

Landslides are very common in Himalayan terrain, Nepal. Intense summer monsoons are the main trigger for landslides. Every year, especially during monsoon periods, tremendous damage to lives, property, infrastructure, and the environment in Nepal is caused by landslides and related natural events. In the fragile Himalayan terrains of Nepal, people live in widely spread settlements and suffer more from landslides than from any other type of natural disaster. A large number of human settlements on the Nepalese mountains and hills of Lesser Himalaya are situated either on old landslide mass or on landslide-prone areas. Because of this, a great number of people are affected by large- and small-scale landslides all over Nepal, especially during monsoon

¹⁹ Paudel, Dr. Meen Bahadur, 1999: *Nepal Country Report*, p-04

periods.²⁰ Poverty, vulnerability and disasters are linked; it is most often the poorest that are worst affected and suffer most. Their poverty makes them more vulnerable. Their capacities to cope with disasters and recover from the effects are constrained by their lack of resources. Disasters rob the poor of their meager possessions, their homes and livestock and most importantly, their livelihoods. Conversely, droughts, floods and even earthquakes have impacted on people's lives and livelihoods without being deemed a disaster, when those people were sufficiently prepared and had the capacity to cope and recover quickly.²¹

Lion Caplan, in his book, “Land and Social Change in East Nepal”, describes, in a royal declaration issued by the first king of Nepal, Prithvi Narayan Shah, the *Limbus*, in return for their support, were assured a measure of internal rule under their chiefs and guaranteed their rights to ancestral lands, *Limbuan's* strategic location has played some part in holding subsequent rulers in Kathmandu to this initial pledge.

The *Limbu* are thus identified with the *Kipat* system of tenure, and for some time now only *Limbus* has been able to own this kind of land. All other groups, *Hindu* and tribal, possess land under the *Raikar* system which is the dominant form of tenure in the country. Both systems exist side by side in *Limbuan*.

In the same way, caste discrimination against *Untouchable* throughout the history has created inequality in the access to and distribution of economic resources in Nepal. In past, even the state institutionalized the

²⁰ *Assessment and Management of risk for Engineered System and Geohazards/www.tandfonline.com*

²¹ *Natural Disasters/www.practicalaction.org*

caste-based discrimination in several ways. Caste discrimination, though outlawed now, still has impacts on the distribution of economic resources such as land.²²

Dr. Binod Pokharel, in his PhD research paper, demonstrates all of the Brahmins/Chhetri groups own *khet* land while 23 percent *Tamang* have no *khet* land in Melanchi Valley. This ownership of land is low compared to Nepal as a whole (0.95 hectare per household). The majority of *khet* land holders from *Tamang* occupy small pieces of land in the village. This shows cast discrimination in terms of landholding is national wide.

A research of wily, Chapagain and Sharma shows, nearly 75 percent of *Untouchables* in Nepal are functionally landless. Ownership of both irrigable and dry land is highest among the “high caste” (5.63 Ropanis of irrigable and 6.64 Ropanis of dry land) and least by the *Dalits* (2.05 Ropanis of irrigable and 4.76 Ropanis of dry land). On the basis of one study, the percentage of *Dalits* who own less than 3 Ropanis of irrigable land is 70% in the mountains, 77% in the hills and 100% in the Terai. Fifty-four percent of *Dalits* in the mountains, 54% in the hills and 100% in Terai own less than 3 Ropanis of dry land.²³ It clearly shows the overall land holding of *Untouchable* in Nepal is near to the ground. So, the *Untouchables* are forced to settle in disaster prone zone, but very few are in safe. They losses of farming land, agricultural production, livestock and homes every year. Those who may keep their homes in Nepal may be

²² [www.umb.no/Cast Discrimination, Land Reforms & Land Market Performance in Nepal](http://www.umb.no/Cast%20Discrimination,%20Land%20Reforms%20&%20Land%20Market%20Performance%20in%20Nepal).

²³ *The Dalits of Nepal & a New Constitution*, p-29, UNDP, 2008, Kathmandu, Nepal.

affected by other consequences of landslides such as loss of power in the home or telecommunications. This fact shows that *Untouchables* are the most victimized community in the country.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Many sociologists and anthropologists have developed lots of theories to interpret and understand the society and culture over the decades. Structural functionalism is a broad perspective in sociology and anthropology which sets out to interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts. Functionalism addresses society as a whole in terms of the function of its constituent elements; namely norms, customs, traditions and institutions.

Malinowski's basic theoretical attempt was to derive the main characteristics of the society and its social systems from a theory of the causally pre-cultural needs of the organism. He believed that culture is always instrumental to the satisfaction of organic needs. Therefore, he had to bridge the gap between the concept of biologically basic needs of the organism and the facts of culturally organized behavior. His first major step was to set up the classification of basic needs which could be directly related to a classification of cultural responses which could then in turn be brought into relation to institutions. Next, he developed a second category of needs (derived needs) which he inserted between his basic needs and the institutional integrates of collective behavior.

Nepalese scholars Prayag Raj Sharma in his article "Caste, Social Mobility and Sanskritization" and Dr. Gopal Singh Nepali in "The Newars" applies the structural fictionalization model during their studies.

They were highlighted the changing socio-cultural institution i.e. family, kinship, marriage, death, birth and initiation.

Above maintained theoretical approach explains the relationship between class, culture and society.

CHAPTER: III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The basic idea underlying the current field study was to document the socio-cultural and economic status of *Damai* people. This chapter reveals the various methods applied in order to complete the thesis work. They are reason for selecting the field area, reasons for selecting the topic, research design nature and source of data collection, sample size, Vulnerable Capacity Assessment (VCA), method of the data collection, data analysis procedure.

3.1 Selection of the Study Area

NRCS is a one of the leading organization working in rural areas in the field of Disaster and Community Development. Disaster management is the 'most' one of them. Panchthar Red Cross has been also working in different fields since its inception in 2031 BS with the technical and financial support of British Red Cross.

The research will be conducted in *Damai* Tole of Embung VDC which is the area of CBDRR Program implemented by the NRCS since 2009 AD. Embung VDC is situated in the east of Panchthar district headquarters. The VDC seems to be multi-caste in nature.

The key intention for selection of the area is as follows;

1. *Damai* people with less opportunity and land are running the risk in terms of landslide since 2045 BS.

2. Researcher is most interested upon *Damai* caste to find out the various aspects of their community i.e socio-cultural and economic status.
3. Researcher is somewhat familiar with this area due to the profession in NRCS Panchthar through CBDRR activities.

3.2 Research Design

This study depends on the descriptive research design to analyze the socio-cultural and economic status, disaster impact, coping method and capacity of *Damai* People of Embung VDC. The study will describe major variables like planning, implementation and monitoring of program on *Dalit* and disaster issues, NRCS policy, procedure and strategy on *Dalit* and disaster, organization and human resources.

Above mentioned variables will be analyzed to determine the effectiveness of mainstreaming *Dalit* and disaster issues in NRCS program. For covering more issues in the study Vulnerable Capacity Assessment (VCA), Focused Group Discussion (FGD) will be carried out in the related field.

3.3 Nature and Source of Data

The method of study will be qualitative and quantitative based on primary and secondary data. Primary data will be main source of the study which will be accumulated from the field survey in the related area while secondary sources of data will be collected through published and unpublished research articles, books, journals, case study, research reports, newspapers, DDC/VDC profile and relevant websites.

3.4 The Universe of the Study and Sample

Census and sampling method will be used to accumulate data for the study. For this, Embung VDC wards no. 1 of Panchthar district will be selected on the basis of representative of *Damai* Tole. NRCS has covered 64 households (HHs) as the universe from ward no. 1,2,4 and 5 for conducting CBDRR Program. Out of the total 21 vulnerable households 17 will be taken as a sample survey which is *Dalit*, known as '*Damai*'. The household will be selected on the basis of landslide prone area where they are settled even now.

3.5 Data Collection Technique

Different methods and techniques will apply during the study. However qualitative as well as quantitative data will be accumulated through different methods as follows;

3.5.1 Household Survey

Household survey will be done to hit upon the information on socio-cultural and economic condition of each HHs. This will focus to cover the detail information on the various socio-cultural aspects of the family, education, income, occupation, status, population demography, age and sex composition.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

Numerical data will be accumulated through questionnaire schedule. The questions will be asked to 17 to 20 respondents. They will be literate, illiterate, elder citizen, youths, children, leader and social activist to find the current issues of the

community. Most of the respondents will be inhabitant of *Damai* people of *Damai* Toal.

3.5.3 Observation

With the direct involvement of the researcher in the related field attempt to find out economic, social, political, cultural, topological, psychological aspects of *Damai* Toal and effect of disaster, their coping methods, coping capacity etc will be made. The *Damai* people are organized to reduce the disaster risk through DRR unit. It is observed that they are now aware on social and cultural practice. They have their own ritual and occupation.

3.5.4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGD will be done to identify the particular issues of male and female regards on health, hazardous threats, their roles and status. As we know the experience and role of male and female have dissimilar.

3.5.5 Vulnerable Capacity Assessment (VCA)

VCA is a basic tool to identify disaster impact. It supports to analyzed vulnerability, capacity and gap of the community. VCA may be useful tools in the context of disaster assessment. The questioner will be develop for this process where includes disaster history, VCA map, identified risk by respondent and transit walk.

3.5.6 Key Information Interview

Key information interview will be done with male and female representing different groups and different cluster.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

The collected data will be arranged and edited through a questionnaire first and then it will be analyzed appropriately. The questionnaire will provide quantitative data while the information gathered in VCA, FGD and Interview will be the qualitative one.

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY AREA

This chapter most deals with Geographical Setting, Location, Natural Resources and Social Settings of Embung VDC of Panchthar District.

4.1 Geographical Setting

Panchthar District is a part of Mechi Zone and, one of the seventy-five districts of Nepal. The district is extends 26°28' to 26°59' North Latitude and 80°02' to 87°30' East Longitude. The district, with Phidim as its District Headquarters, covers an area of 1,241 km² and administratively it is divided into two constituencies, 39 VDCs and one Municipality. It is situated of 609 to 3675 mtr from the sea level and, has a population (2001) of 202,607 (104306 Female and 98301 Male) reside in these district in 32667 Households. The literacy rate of Panchthar is 55.4 percent.

The District is bounds by the District of Sikkim and Darjeeling in the east, Terathum and Dhankuta in the west, Taplajung in the North and Morang and Ilam in the south. In the District there are several famed Tourism Area and rivers i.e. *Timbu Pokhari, Zor Pokhari, Miklajung, Silauti Danda, Hilihang Darbar, Tumbewa Danda, Tamor and Kabali River*. Ninety Eight kilometers of black topped road and graveled roads linking all VDCs of the Panchthar District are the measure means of transportation. The District's majority population is that of *Kirantis* and other ethnic groups and hill castes. Out of the total households 16359 are *Kirat*, 12571 *Hindu*, 3114 are *Buddhist*, 83 are *Christian* and 15 are

Muslims by religion. Now, the Panchthar is known as ***Land of Limbuwan*** due to considering of *Kirat* majority population.

4.1.1 Location

Embung, the smallest VDC of Panchthar District, is geographically situated in the North of the District Headquarter. The elevation of Embung is 502 to 3002 mtr from the sea level. The VDC is surrounded by Pouwasartap VDC in the East, Nawamidanda VDC in the West, Siwa VDC in the North and Chilingdin VDC in the South occupying about area of 63,65,895 sq.km. Embung VDC is 28 km away from District Headquarter and 21 km North from Ranke Bazaar, known as Commercial Centre of Ilam and Panchthar District.

The temperature of this VDC remains 0°C in winter and up to 32°C for the hot period in the mid day. The population of Embung is 2475, living in 428 individual households.

4.2 Natural Resources

Land, forest and water are the foremost natural resources of Nepal. Most of the people are depending on natural resources directly through the years. The natural resource of Embung VDC has been deal as in terms of following;

4.2.1 Land

Embung is the smallest VDC of Panchthar District about 63, 65,895 sq. km. Out to be about 86 hector is cultivated land in summer and 64 hector in winter. So, the '*Khet*' wet land covers 150 hector and '*Pakho*' dry land

43 hector respectively. Due to lack of sufficient irrigation land productivity is lower. Even, the land is appropriate for crash crops.

4.2.2 Forest

The forest covers an area of 35 Ropani in Embung VDC. The VDC is strengths on bio-diversity with forest. However, the trend of forest degradation in Embung is seems much existing period.

There are two community forests named *Yuma Tambang* and *Mahaguru Falgunanda*. It is prohibited to take away a single twig of wood. The Pauwa Range Post Ranke has been working for the VDC including Pouwasartap, Chilingdin, Siwa, Nawamidanda and Lumphabung VDCs of Panchthar district.

4.2.3 Water

In the east of the Embung VDC there is a Fichhu Khola, Phenche Khola in the west and, Sangyabo and Nibu Khola in the South. The people of VDCs have been producing hydro electricity from those Kholas since the years. DFID, NRCS and Drinking water sub-division office Panchthar has made drinking water facilities to the people. According to data of district profile, 319 households of the VDC are beneficated by the pipeline for drinking water. In addition to this 84 HHs are beneficated by Kups, 20 HHs by brooks and 4 HHs by Stone tap.

4.3 Social Setting

4.3.1 Population Composition

The total population of Embung VDC is 2475. Out of this, 1247 are male and 1228 are female (District Profile, 2058). The number shows a smaller amount due to less household and small area of the VDC. Distribution of population of Embung VDC is given below.

Table 1. Population Composition of Embung VDC by Ward, HHs and Sex

Ward No.	No. of HHs	No. of Population		Total No.
		Male	Female	
1	63	147	205	352
2	43	93	124	217
3	49	107	154	261
4	41	132	113	245
5	25	79	95	174
6	52	187	129	316
7	54	154	186	340
8	47	177	70	247
9	54	171	152	323
Total	428	1247	1228	2475

Source : Field Survey, 2009

According to above table, the population of ward no.1 is highest and ward no. 5 is lowest. Similarly, the number of male in ward no. 6 is highest and, is lowest in ward no. 5, the number of female in ward no. 1 is highest

and, is lowest in ward no.8. Female population is dominated in ward no. 4, 6 and 8.

4.3.2 Castes

The Embung VDC has a very diverse population of various ethnic groups. The majority castes of this VDC are *Limbu*, *Tamang*, *Brahaman*, *Sunuwar* and *Damai* respectively. Following table shows the caste and ethnicity composition of this VDC.

Table 2. Caste/Ethnicity Composition of Embung VDC

SN	Cast/Ethnicity	Household	Percentage
1	Limbu	252	58.88
2	Tamang	80	18.69
3	Bahun	48	11.21
4	Sunuwar	18	4.21
5	Damai	16	3.74
6	Chetri	6	1.40
7	Newar	3	0.70
8	Sarki	3	0.70
9	Kami	1	0.23
10	Rai	1	0.23
Total		428	100

Source : District Profile Panchthar, 2058

The above table shows that people of various castes are living in the Embung VDC. Among them ethnics are more settled. The data shows,

Limbu are highest with 252 households and, *Kami* and *Rai* are lowest with one-one household. Out of which 20 households are *Dalit*. The major *Dalit* casts are *Damai*, *Kami* and *Sarki* in this VDC. According to data *Damai* are highest and *Kami* are lowest. *Dalit* constitute about 4.67% out of total household of this VDC.

4.3.3 Religion

Most of the people of Embung VDC are believe in *Kiratism* and, significant number of people in *Buddhism* and *Hinduism*. Following table reflects the genuine figures upon religion.

Table 3. Composition of Religion in Embung VDC

S.N.	Religion	Household	Percentage
1	Kiratism	268	62.62
2	Buddhism	81	18.93
3	Hinduism	79	18.46
Total		428	100

Source : District Profile Panchthar, 2058

The above table shows that 268 (62.62%) household of the Embung VDC are observe in *Kiratism*, 81 (18.93%) household in *Buddhism* and 79 (18.46%) household are in *Hinduism*. They all have dissimilar and strong faith over their religion even they are bonded for a long on smooth relationship as brotherhood.

4.3.4 Language

The people of Embung VDC use different language. Most of the people can speak and understand Nepali (Khas) Language, although they usually

speak their own mother language as their cast in the community. Mother tongue according to their casts is as follows.

Table 4. Mother Tongue of People of Embung VDC

S.N.	Language	Household	Percentage
1	Limbu	252	58.88
2	Tamang	80	18.69
3	Nepali (Khas)	74	17.29
4	Sunuwar	18	4.21
5	Newari	3	0.70
6	Rai	1	0.23
Total		428	100

Source : District Profile Panchthar, 2058

The above table reflects that 252 (58.88%) household of the *Limbu* people speaks Limbu language, 80 (18.69%) speaks Tamang, 74 (17.29%) speaks Nepali (Khas), 18 (4.21%) Sunuwar, 3 (0.70%) speaks Newari and 1 (0.23%) *Rai* speaks Rai language. Nepali (Khas) language is use by *Bahun* and *Chhetri*. *Damai*, *Kami* and *Sarki*, within the community are also use the same language as *Bahun* and *Chhetri*.

4.3.5 Education

Education is a means to development of whole man. Each society depends on education to progress and decline. The following report reveals the people of Embung VDC acquiring each standard of education from illiterate to high literate.

Table 5. Literate Status by Age (6 and Above) in Embung VDC

S.N.	Particular	No. of Persons		Total No.	Percentage
		Male	Female		
1	Can Read & Write	937	813	1750	91.62
2	Can Read Only	9	5	14	0.73
3	Can't Read & Write	49	97	146	7.64
Total		995	915	1910	100

Source : District Education Office Record, 2012

The above table shows that 1750 (91.62%) people of the Embung VDC can read and write, 14 (0.73%) can read only and 146 (7.64%) can't read and write. It shows maximum persons of this VDC are literate/illiterate. Among them female/male are highly illiterate about 5.07%.

4.3.6 Economic Status

Most of the people of Embung VDC are engaged in agriculture. Besides this, remaining is engaged in various occupation i.e. teaching, business, government and non-government office. An economically active and inactive inhabitant of the VDC is given below.

Table 6. Economically Active and Inactive Population

S.N.	Particular	No. of Persons		Total No.	Percentage
		Male	Female		
1	Active	537	320	857	34.62
2	Inactive	710	908	1618	65.37
Total		1247	1228	2475	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

According to above table 857 (34.62%) of the people in Embung VDC are economically active and 1618 (65.37%) are inactive. The percentage of the active people is seems high even though the economic condition of the people are pitiable because of limited land, resources and lack of market.

CHAPTER V

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITION OF DAMAI PEOPLE IN THE STUDY AREA

5.1 Social Status of the Damai People

The *Damai* people have their own identities, occupations and status. Even, it has been changing incessantly by the period. The major finding of the research in this chapter has been observed as follows.

5.1.1 Intorduction to Damai People

The *Damai* is recognized as the caste of professional musicians and tailors. They are best known for their musical traditions through *Panchi Baja* and *Naumati Baja* in Nepali society since over the years. The *Damai* uses these musical instruments in Hindu festival, ritual ensembles, temple ensemble and traditional dancing.

The caste that plays musical instruments is known as *Damai*, *Hudke*, *Dholi*, *Nagdi* or *Nagarchi* and, those who engaged in sewing clothing is known as *Suchikar/Sujikar*, now it is called *Tailor*, *Master* or *Darji*. The *Damai*, at present, is known as *Pariyar*, *Nepali* and *Darji*. This caste is scattered all over Nepal. It has identified various subcategories, included in Appendix 2. The status of the *Damai* cast in the Hindu society are considered greater then *Gaine* and lower than *Kami*, *Kadaro* and *Sarki*.

Like in other casts *Damai* are divided into several subcategories. Among them *Siwa* and *Bagdas* has been living since seven generations in *Damai Toal* of Embung VDC. According to key informants, they don't have

authentic records about ancestral history. Even, one of them told that their ancestors were from Kavre, Banepa. An ancestor's named Sunder was getting married with a *Gautam* (Bahuni) Woman and emigrant to Embung, whose lineage are at present in this VDC. Some of them are migrated to Chilinding and Ranitaar VDC of Panchthar District.

The *Damai Toal* is spread in 250 ropani, was covered by vast jungle in the beginning. The *Limbu* people, owner of the land, offered to *Damai* people without cost regarding settlement. The total population of the *Damai* is estimated to be 39, 03,305 in Nepal, 4,327 in Panchthar and 120 (M:57/F:63) in Embung VDC of Panchthar District (DPP, 2065) while the population of the *Damai* in *Damai Toal* of Embung is estimated to be 93 (M:45/F:48). According to key informants, total house hold of the *Damai* in ward no. 1 of the *Damai Toal* is 17 who are placed in landslide prone area. Almost of the people of *Damai* are *Siwa* and *Bagdas* in sub-cast.

5.1.2 Population Structure of the Respondents

Out of the total household of Embung VDC, the *Damai* people from landslide prone area of 17 households are taken as the sample. They are more vulnerable then majority populations. The following table reflects the population structure of respondents.

Table 7.1 Population Distribution by Sex

Sex	Population	Percentage
Male	45	48
Female	48	52
Total	93	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table presents that the male population is dominated by female population. Out of the total population of *Damai* 45 (48%) is male and 48 (52%) is female. The average number of the family in each household occurred eight. Sample population of the *Damai* by age group is given below. The age group is classified as psychological development pattern.

Table 7.2 Population Distribution by Sex and Age Group

Age Group	Sex		Total No.	Percentage
	Male	Female		
Under 6	4	4	8	9
7-16	12	18	30	32
17-40	19	17	36	39
41-60	7	9	16	17
61 above	3	-	3	3
Total	45	48	93	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table reflects that the population of age group under 6 is 8 (9%), 7-16 is 30 (32%), 17-40 is 36 (39%), 41-60 is 16 (17%) and above 61 is only 3 (3%). The population of age group 61 above was observed lowest and 17-40 was highest. It declares that the highest age group, known as adult is an economically active and left are dependent. The number of active population of *Dmai* is 36 as well.

5.1.3 Family Structure

Family is defined in various meaning. This is an outstanding primary institution of the society which is bonded by blood and kinship. It is the most multifunctional of all institutions. Most of the sociologist and

anthropologist have classified family into two types. The first, nuclear family consists of husband, wife and children and, the second, joint family consists of large group of family with a fringe of spouse. In the urban cities modernization depresses joint family; instead there is ascend in demand in favor of nuclear family. The *Damai* of *Damai Toal* too have slowly started to adopt the similar trend. It was observed that the majority of the *Damai* people have done monogamy marriage with nuclear family. The average family size occurred eight.

Table 8. Distribution of Household by Types of Family

Family Type	No. of Household	Percentage
Joint	1	6
Nuclear	16	94
Total	17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

Out of total, as above table only 1 (6%) houses holds joint family and 16 (94%) holds nuclear family. Due to poor economic conditions the *Damai* people are forced to stay as a nuclear family. It is because; they need sufficient manpower to labor work while joint family system is slowly declining because of modernization. The *Damai* family is ruled by the household head. They usually make all the decisions. The elder female takes responsibility only in the absence of the elder male. It signified that the *Damai* society gives high priority to the male.

5.1.4 Educational Status

According to CBS, 2001, out of the total population of panchthar district, *Damai* take the majority of 2.14 % (4,327) and their literacy rate comes very poor. Hence, an educational condition of the *Damai* people of

Damai Toal of Embung VDC is as same and, it seems falling downward. In fact, the weak economic situation is the main barrier for the *Damai* people to go to school regarding better education. There are 5 Primary (2 Government and 3 Private), 1 Lower Secondary, 1 Secondary and 1 Higher Secondary Schools in Embung VDC. Among them one Higher Secondary and Boarding School is nearby the *Damai* community. All most all of the *Damai* people generally propel their children to government school and, nominal are to private school. Due to provision of free education in government school they are more attracted than private school. Following table shows the educational status of the *Damai* of *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC.

Table 9. Distribution of Educational Status of Damai People

Education	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Literate	31	68.88	27	56.25	58	62.37
Illiterate	14	31.11	21	43.75	35	37.63
Total	45	100	48	100	93	100
Grade 1-5	7	35	12	52.17	19	44.19
Grade 6-9	13	65	11	47.83	24	55.81
10 above	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	20	100	23	100	43	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table shows that the total male literacy rate is 31 (68.88%) and female literacy rate is 27 (56.25%) while the 14 (31.11%) is male Illiteracy and 21 (43.75%) is female Illiteracy. Beside this, 7 (35%) male and 12 (52.17%) female has been studying in grade 1 to 5, 13 (65%) male and 11 (47.83%) female has been studying in grade 6 to 9 respectively.

However, the table further shows that the SLC passed are none. Because of the poor economic condition many children had left schools. Even, now days, the *Damai* people are somewhat aware on education and other activities in the community.

5.1.5 Caste-based Discrimination

Caste-based discrimination is deeply rooted in Nepalese society over the years. The sense of untouchability is unmovable existing period in rural community. The *Damai* people of the Embung VDC are facing the same condition. The following report shows, they are still discriminated on public spheres.

Table 10. Distribution of Cast Based Discrimination to Damai People

Location/Venue	Ranking
House	A
Tea Shop	B
School	C
Health Post	C
Public Field	C

Source : Field Survey, 2009

[Note : A refers the highest level of discrimination, B refers medium and C refers nil.]

The above table reflects that caste-based discrimination is high in household level and medium in tea shop, while the report shows nil discrimination in school, health post and public field, is some optimistic aspect. Nowadays people are being aware of their surroundings. So, the sense of untouchables is being gradually declining.

5.2 Economic Status of the Damai People

Food, fiber, sex and shelter are the main basic human needs. The *Damai* people are facing various problems in one or any aspects. To fulfill all those needs economic activities take part in hub role.

The main economic sources of the *Damai* are agriculture, animal husbandry, tailoring and daily wages. Sometimes they grow vegetables and varieties of crops like; ginger, garlic and chilli. They have their own land but due to landslide and their traditional cultivation practice they do not product plenty food. The main finding upon economic condition of the study has been presented as follows.

5.2.1 Land Ownership

Land access has been seen as a giant obstacle to *Dalit* liberation. A report shows that 77% of *Dalits* in the hills owning less than five ropanis of land in national wide. In the same way, the land, in terms of *Damai* people of *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC is seems owning less. The land holding pattern of the *Damai* is given below.

Table 11. Distribution of Land Pattern of Respondents

Land holding in Ropani	Respondent	Percentage
Land less	2	12
Below 2.6	2	12
2.6-6.5	4	24
6.5 above	9	52
Total	17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table shows that out of total 2 (12%) household are landless who inhabits and cultivates others land in *Kuta*. It further observed 2 (12%) households have below 2.6 ropanis, 4 (24%) households have between 2.6 to 6.5 ropanis and 9 (52%) households have above 6.5 ropanis of land. Hence, the data presents that the *Damai* have no sufficient land for harvesting.

5.2.2 Housing

The most of houses of the *Damai* in *Damai Toal* are made of stone with thatch roof and some are made of woods with bamboo sticks so-called *Cheam*. The majority of the houses are double storied. There is no plastered or cemented house but, they have 11 water seal latrines provided by CSP Panchthar. Types of houses in this community are observed as follows.

Table 12. Distribution of Houses by Types

Types of House	No. of House	Percentage
Cheam	3	17.65
Stone wall	14	82.35
Total	17	100
IG sheet roof	1	5.88
Thatch roof	16	94.12
Total	17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table presents that, out of 17 houses 3 (17.65%) is made of *Cheam* and rest 14 (82.35%) are made of stones. Among them 1 (5.88%) houses are galvanized and 16 (94.12%) are thatch roofed.

5.2.3 Occupation

The majority of population of the *Damai* in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC is involved in agriculture. Although, their agricultural work is in risk due to landslide threats. Various jobs description of the *Damai* is given below.

Table 13. Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	No. of Respondent/HHs	Percentage
Government Job	1	6
Sewing Cloths	2	12
Mason/Carpenter	1	6
Wages	13	76
Total	17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

Out of 17 households (table 13), only 1 (6%) respondent works on government job at school, 2 (12%) respondent are involved in their traditional business that, sewing cloths, 1 (6%) respondent works as mason and 13 (76%) respondents said that they all are depend on wages. Most of the adults from their house go to labor work usually 8 to 10 months in a year. The study further shows that the trend to going aboard is gradually rising in *Damai* community. During the field survey 3 persons including one lady from 2 households are in gulf country since two years.

5.2.4 Food Production

The main productions of the *Damai* in *Damai* Toal are maize, millet, paddy and cash crops i.e. ginger, onion, chili. The product of food grains

is inadequate due to nature of land and lack of knowledge on modern fertilization technique. While each household products average 100 to 150 kgs ginger and 50 to 100 kgs garlic in a year. The food grain production by the *Damai* people is as follows.

Table 14. Distribution of Respondents by Food Production

Production in Muri	No. of Households of Food Production			Remarks
	Paddy	Maize	Millet	
Below 2	4	3	15	
3-4	11	9	1	
Above 5	2	5	1	
Total HHs	17	17	17	

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table shows that out of total households of the *Damai* in *Damai Toal* 4 households products less than 2 muri Paddy, 3 households products less than 2 muri Maize and 15 households products less than 2 muri Millet, 11 households products between 3 to 4 muri Paddy, 9 households products between 3 to 4 muri Mize and 1 household products between 3 to 4 Millet. So on, 2 households products more than 5 muri Paddy, 5 households products more than 5 muri Maize and only one household products more than 5 muri Millet in a year. According to table it is clear that the Maize is a main food grain of the *Damai* community which products more than other. Most of the *Damai* make white beer, so-called *Jaad* and wine (Raksi) by maize and millet.

5.3.5 Food Sufficiency

Food, one of the basic needs of human being, without sufficient production it doesn't fulfill ones need. For sufficient production it requires modern technology, fertilizer and genuine knowledge while it appears reverse in *Damai Toal* of Embung VDC. Due to limited land holding the *Damai* people can't product adequate food crops. It seems major crisis to them. They are facing this condition over the periods as long as landslide threats. Food sufficiency per household in a single year has been given below.

Table 15. Distribution of Respondents by Food Sufficiency

Month	Respondent	Percentage
Below 3	9	54.94
4-6	6	35.03
7-9	2	11.76
Above 10	-	-
Total	17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

According to above table the most of the respondents have no sufficient food. It is shown as 9 (54.94%) for three months in a year. In the same way, 6 (35.03%) respondents have food sufficient for 4 to 6 months, 2 (11.76%) have for 7 to 9 months and, none respondent have food sufficient for nine months above. So, the majority of the *Damai* people are depend on various occupations, especially on daily wages for their livelihood.

5.3.6 Livestock

Most of the *Damai* people in Embung VDC are involved in animal husbandry. This may be a better contributory economic source if someone keeps livestock as commercial purpose. In terms of *Damai*, is not easy due to market regarding selling and purchasing livestock's. However, it is found that they usually purchase and sell their farm animals within the community and sometimes another community. The following table has shown the details of animal husbandry.

Table 16. Distribution of Respondents by Animal Husbandry

Type of Animal	No. of Animal	Percentage	No. of Household
Cow	13	10.24	12
Buffalo	5	3.94	5
Pig	23	18.11	15
Goat	37	29.13	16
Hen	49	38.58	17
Total	127	100	-

Source : Field Survey, 2009

The above table reports that out of total 12 households have 13 (10.24%) cow, 5 have 5 (3.94%) Buffalo, 15 have 23 (18.11%) Pig, 16 have 37 (29.13%) goat and 17 household have 49 (38.58%) hen. The *Damai* people generally used hen for egg and meat, cow and buffalo for milk and compost. Most of the *Damai* families sell pig and goat to meet their expenditure. Even, each family keeps a pig for *Dashin*.

CHAPTER VI

CULTURAL STATUS OF DAMAI PEOPLE IN DAMAI TOLE OF EMBUNG VDC

This chapter is basically divided into two parts. The first one is Material Culture and the second is Non-material Culture. The key findings of the research have been on hand as follows.

6.1 Material Culture

The settlement of the *Damai* people in Embung VDC, their clothing, ornaments and food habits are observed as follows. These are known as material culture in terms of sociological meaning.

6.1.1 Settlement

The settlement pattern of the *Damai* in *Damai* Toal is clustered at a sloppy land. Majority houses of *Damai* are traditional and generally, made up by stone, mud and thatch roof with two storied. They use the first floor for kitchen and sleeping and, the second floor for store keeping to their food grains. They have practice to use red mud with cow dung inside and outside regarding painting their houses. Most of the households are depend on forest for cooking. This is the main source of fuel. Nominal households are benefited by hydro-electricity. The majority households of the *Damai* used toilets. They are being aware on health and hygiene due to NRCS activities and, being conscious on radio, TV and mobile through IT revolution.

6.1.2 Clothing

In the *Damai* community most of the elder people wear traditional dresses while new generation wears modern dresses. The elder men usually wear *Doura-Surawal*, *Kot*, *Estakot* and *Dhaka-Topi* while the women wear *Guniyo-Cholo*, *Sari* and *Patuka*. The young boys wear casual dresses as *Vest*, *Pant*, *Shirt*, *Half-Pant* and *shoes* while the girls generally wear *Kurtha-Surawal*, *Vest-Pant* and *Sandal*. The *Damai* youths are being fashionable gradually.

6.1.3 Ornaments

The golden and silver ornaments are most famous among the *Damai* women while modern crafted ornaments are famous among the young girls. They wear various earrings, bracelet and neckels. The married women usually used to *Sindur-Pote*. Besides this, they wear finger rings, earrings so-called *Marwari*, nose rings called *Fuli*, *Dhungri*, *Bulaki* and bracelet called *Kali* while some *Damai* male also used to finger rings. It was found that most of the traditional ornaments such as *Dhungri*, *Bulaki* are crafted by silver-smith within the community. Although, the young girls do not like such ornaments that crafted at the community level. They generally follow contemporary trends whatever might changes on ornaments, clothing and food habits.

6.1.4 Food Habits

The *Damai* of *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC takes food two times a day in the morning and evening. They usually consume rice, millet bread and fried maize while they use millet and maize to make *White Beer* known

as *Jaad* and *Wine* [Raksi] which is their favorite drinks. The *Damai* people take daily *Jaad-Raksi* as tea and breakfast. It is considered that the *Jaad-Raksi* is an essential drink regarding hospitality to their guests and during the festivals. Majority of the *Damai* were found non-vegetarian. They generally consume chicken, buff and pork.

6.2 Non-Material Culture

The Religion, life cycle rites and festivals of the *Damai* people are included as non-material culture in this topic.

6.2.1 Religion

Basically the *Damai* people of Embung VDC follow Hinduism. They perform their rites and rituals under the Hindu philosophy. They worship the God Shiva, Ram, Krishna and various Goddesses while they are not allowed to enter the temple. The *Damai* have followed all main ritual and festivals of Hindu. Most of the *Damai* have secret deity known as *Kuldeuta*. They worship their *Kuldeuta* once a year and offer different animals i.e. goats, cock, and male buffalo. The *Damai-Dhaami* or *Jhankri* plays a hub role during *Kulpuja*. It was found that they have valuable position within the community.

6.2.2 Life Cycle Rites of Damai People

All ethnic groups have different life cycle rites. As *Damai* of Embung VDC also observe birth, marriage, and death ceremonies according to their rites which are illustrated as follows.

6.2.2.1 Birth

The *Damai* people are considered that the baby is the gift of God. After the birth of infant the mother and her family are regarded as impure until *Nawaran*. During the period they are barely prohibited to perform holy activities and no one does entertain to take bread and butter without family. The period until not doing *Nawaran* is known as *Sutak*.

6.2.2.2 Nawaran

The *Nawaran* is the first and most essential rituals of the *Damai* people. The major purpose of this ceremony is to purify the mother, baby and the family. The *Nawaran* is performed on the 5th or 7th day if the baby is female and on the 9th or 11th day if the baby is male. The infant is named on this day. Urine of cow so-called *Gauth*, Barlly called *Jaun*, Black Sesame so-called *Til* and Gold Water are the fundamental objects for the rituals. On the occasion, the *Damai* mostly invite their relatives and neighbors and, feed them rice, meat and *Jaad-Raksi* as drinks. After giving the baby name they offer something known as *Daan* to their sisters and priest. The *Damai* make use the *Brahaman* priest who carried out the intact ceremony.

6.2.2.3 Bratabandha [Initiation Ceremony]

The *Bratabandha* is performed only of the son in *Damai* community when they becomes the age of 12 to 15 years. The priest decides the precious day regarding *Bratabandha* by forecasting. Without this rite a child is prohibited to perform holy rituals and not allowed to get marriage. That is why the *Bratabandha* is considered a vital ceremony.

Generally, the maternal uncle [Mama] used to shave the hair of the child living pigtail, known as *Tuppi*. During the *Bratabandha* their relatives and neighbors offer the some rice so-called *Vikchha* to the child and finally it is provided to the priest. The main act of this ceremony is to give a sacred thread [Janai] and taught a *Mantra* by the priest. It is believed that the *Mantra* must be spelled each day at morning. At the end of the ceremony they organized a grand feast for their guests.

6.2.2.4 Marriage

Marriage is a social acceptance as husband and wife. It legally permits the sexual relationship between partners. This is the universal social institution which aim is to social mobility.

The *Damai* of Embung VDC has no rules of the age regarding marriage. But, they usually perform marriage about the age of 15 to 20 years. They have practice to do marriage through the mediator, known as *Lami*. It was found that the majority of *Damai* people prefer arrange marriage. However, love marriage also being popular among young generation while it is prohibited. If a *Damai* marriages with the other's wife there is a practice of *Jari*.

The *Lami* is authorized to ask the girl for the marriage from the boy side. After the acceptance of marriage proposal they visit the *Brahman* Priest for the prosperous day and start to arrange wedding ceremony. At the day of wedding the grooms arrange to move towards the bride home, so-called *Janti*. When the *Janti* moves, the *Damai* band plays the traditional musical instruments known as *Panchhe-Baja*. The set including *Panchhe-Baja* are *Damaha*, *Tamke*, *Jhyali*, *Shahanai* and *Narsingha*. The musical

band of *Damai* plays melodious of folk tunes where others dance and celebrate the particular day.

When the groom along with *Janti* reaches the bride home, they perform a rite called *Janti-Parsane*. After this, the couple takes a sit at *Bibaha Mandap*. During the ceremony the groom places *Sindur* on the forehead and *Pote* on the neck of the bride then they are pronounced married. The next vital ceremony is washing the foot so-called *Goda-Dhune*, is done first by bride's family and then after by their relatives. After completion of *Goda-Dhune* they perform *Kanya-Daan* and the bride is carried to groom's home. The bridal family generally provides furniture, golden ornaments and clothes as dowry.

6.2.2.5 Death

When a person died in the *Damai* community they take the dead body towards river banks or at selected place. The elder son lights the fire known as *Dagbatti*. After the body is cremated the sons head are shaved and give them to wear white Dhoti. The females [Wife, Daughter and Sister-in-law] also rap Dhoti without Blouse. The death pollution is observed for 13 days. The men who are stayed during days are called *Kriyaputri*. They are strictly stay away from other people and cat, if touched they are believed impure. They are forbidden to eat salt, meat, onion etc for 13 days. They used to eat one time in a day, known as *Eak-Chhaki*. On the funeral in day 13th the priest purifies the *Kriyaputri* and it is believed that they are free from stipulation.

After 45th days of the death the *Damai* perform a rite called *Paitalish-Dine* and they are free to wear and eat anything and, carry on with their

normal life while some of the *Damai* people performed in a year. Likewise, after a year they perform *Shradhaa* on the memory of late person. The *Shradhaa* is performed in every year of the day of death.

6.2.3 Festivals

Most of the *Damai* people of Embung VDC are observed full of various festivals as in other ethnics of Nepal. They have no separate festivals on the basis of caste. They usually celebrate same as Hindus festivals, observing the following;

6.2.3.1 Dashin

The *Damai* people are celebrates *Dashin* with high passion as Hindus for 10 days. The goddess *Durga* is worshiped during this day. The first day of *Dashin* is called *Ghatasthapana*. On this day the maize, so-called *Jamara* is plant on cow dung with mud or sand normally in *Tapara*. The *Damai* people scarify the pig, buffalo, hen and goat in the 7th day of the *Dashin*, known as *Asthami*. The day after *Asthami* comes *Dashami*. They receive *Tika*, *Jamara* and blessing on this day from the seniors. They celebrate the *Dashin* till the *Purnima*.

6.2.3.2 Tihar

The *Tihar* is the second giant festivals after *Dashin* of the *Damai* as Hindus. It is allied the God of Death Yamaraj and his sister Yamuna's story. The *Damai* celebrate *Tihar* for five days, falls on Katik-Mangsir. The first day of the *Tihar* is worship of Crow, called *Kag-Tihar*, the second day is known as *Kukur-Tihar* and the third day is *Laxmi-Puja*, where the cow is worshiped as *Laxmi*, goddess of wealth. At the night of the *Laxmi-Puja* majority of the *Damai* people lights the candle

surroundings ones house. The fourth day of the *Tihar* is worship of Ox and the final fifth day is known as *Bhai-Tika*, where the brother receive *Tika* from the sister. A part from this the most appealing rites of *Tihar* is *Deusi* and *Vailo*. The significant foodstuff of the *Tihar* is *Sel-Roti*.

6.2.3.3 Maghe Sankrantee

The festival *Maghe Sankrantee* is observed on the first of the month of Magh. The *Damai* people of Embung VDC are highly gives priority to celebrate this festival. They take bath in the early morning and take bless from the senior of the family. On the occasion of the *Maghe Sankrantee* they invite their married daughter/sister and consume *Raksi*, *Masu* and *Tarul*.

6.2.3.4 Tij

The *Damai* women celebrate *Tij* with great fervor as Hindu women. It is considered the most significant festival for Nepalese women. The *Tij* observed on the month of Bhadau. On the occasion of *Tij* the married women are called towards fathers house so-called *Maiti* and feed them yummy foods till midnight. At morning, they take a bath and worship the God Shiva with fasting on behalf of their husband shall have a long life and unmarried shall have a better man as their husband.

6.2.3.5 Kul Puja

Majority of the *Damai* people in *Damai* Toal have secret deity, called *Kuldeuta*. They conduct *Kul-Puja* once a year in single or joint family with entire clan. They offer goats, cock, and male buffalo during *Puja*. It is believed that the main objective of this *Puja* is to keep happy to ancestors.

CHAPTER VII

DISASTER THREATS TOWARDS DAMAI PEOPLE BEFORE AND AFTER NRCS ACTIVITIES IN EMBUNG VDC

NRCS District Chapter Panchthar CBDRR program has been covered 64 Households from Ward No. 1,2,4 and 5 of the Embung VDC. The District Chapter has been implementing CBDRR Program in this VDC since 2009 AD. The main purpose of this program is to reduce vulnerability and enhanced the capacity of vulnerable people. The major changes before and after CBDRR program are observed as follows.

7.1 History of Disaster Threats in Damai Toal

The *Damai* people of Embung VDC are settled in *Damai* Toal since 7th generations. They have no actual account about their ancestral history while they have perfect account on disaster threats. It was found that the main threat of the *Damai* people is landslide. They are running the risk since 2045 BS when a huge Earthquake occurred on the month of Bhadau. Since then, the land of *Damai* Toal begins to split gradually each year usually in monsoon. Numbers of households are partial and fully damaged due to landslide. Even though, they are still forced to settle in prone area because they have no safe and sufficient land. The main findings of this research upon disaster are given below.

7.1.1 Main Hazards

This section deals the major hazards of the *Damai* people in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC. To identify the hazards, *Hazard and Risk Assessment*

was conducted through FGD. The assessment on hazard is observed as follows.

Table 17. Distribution of Main Hazards by Respondent

S.N.	Hazard	Respondent	Percentage
1	Landslide	13	76
2	Poor Health & Sanitation	3	18
3	Fire	1	6
Total		17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

Out of 17 respondents to the question on major hazard in above table, 13 (76%) strongly high ranked the landslide as major hazard, 3 (18%) said that poor health & sanitation is medium and 1 (6%) ranked fire as less hazard.

7.1.2 Probability of Hazards/Events

The FGD and probability matrix presents landslide as very probable, poor health and sanitation as probable and fire as less probable. Usually, the sanitation problem happens on the months of Baisak-Jeth, fire on the month of Chait to Asar and landslide occurred on the months of Baisak to Asar. Among them, majority of the *Damai* people considered that landslide as breathtaking.

7.1.3 Impact by Landslide

The *Damai* people of *Damai* Toal in Embung VDC are in high risk since over the years. The impact of landslide towards them seems in excess due to sloppy and slack land while a root cause of disaster as understand by

some *Damai* people is the God. They muscularly believed that if the God became unhappy with them such kind of disaster will happen. The main impact of landslide has included as below.

Table 18. Landslide Impact to Respondent

S.N.	Types of Damaged HH	No. of Household	Percentage
1	Partial	14	82
2	Full	3	18
3	Non	0	0
Total		17	100

Source : Field Survey, 2009

While the research done on disaster impact it was found as above table, 14 (82%) houses were partial damaged, 3 (18%) were fully damaged and none was found undamaged out of 17 households. However, four households of this community were found left before the year because of landslide threats. Despite the households 4 water tap and 7 toilets were observed damaged. Fortunately, on one of the *Damai* people are harmed by disaster till the date. The DRR unit has supported GI sheet and tarpaulin to most vulnerable three households to construct evacuation shelter.

7.2 Changes after NRCS Activities

The NRCS District Chapter Panchthar has been undertaken various activities through CBDRR program in Embung VDC. As CBDRR program has made decision to disaster issues as cross cutting issue of the community. However, the major activities undertaken by this program are sanitary unit construction, water source improvement as a mitigation

work, IG, Emergency Fund (EF) development, awareness rising, trainings on disaster management(DM), community mobilization (CM), first aid (FA) and account keeping.

A change in the social relationship is known as social change. On the other hand, changes in custom, culture and manners of human beings also known as social changes. Throughout the program following major changes has observed in the *Damai* community.

7.2.1 Changes on Health and Sanitation Practice

The *Damai* people are most aware on their health and sanitation activities at present. Before the days they did not use toilets properly while the majority households have. But, they had no other sanitary units like, dry rack and washing plate form. Now a day's most of the households have constructed dry rack, washing plate form, garbage pit and dust bin made of *Doko*. It was observed that, they kept *Doko* bin in public area and near the tap.

On the other hand, they usually make use of boiled drinking water, washes hand before toilet with soap or ash. Due to lack of awareness they were blindly trust on faith healer, known as *Dhami-Jhakri*. But currently, they go to health post for medical treatment. The *Dhami-Jhakri* too supports them by refereeing the patient to health post.

7.2.2 Changes on Animal Husbandry

Before the years the *Damai* people did not know how to manage animals shed? What are the demerits of unmanaged sheds? How to uplift ones

business through livestock? During the field survey it was found that the NRCS has more oriented them on those subjects.

The *Damai* people of Embung VDC are begin to manage animal shade and dung appropriately. They keep the animal shed distant from their house and visit sometimes to veterinary person for their livestock. They are being professional gradually through IG activities on animal husbandry. The respondent said that, the NRCS has been supporting them on IG activities through DRR Unit since its inception. They provided NPR 2,000 at interest 12% for a year to the most vulnerable household for livestock. It was found that, five respondents have fetched net profit NPR 17,500 through pig and goat keeping in previous year. As a consequence, IG activities have been supporting them to uplift their livelihood.

7.2.3 Changes on Harvesting

A high number of the respondents were found, has changed their harvest since previous year. They started to plant such types of food grain i.e. maize, millet, ginger, garlic and chilli as well. They were strictly prohibited to plant paddy due to landslide risk which needs irrigation to a great extent. To mitigate the landslide risk they have prepared a cluster plan. They take action in various issues according to their plan and updates in each year.

7.2.4 Changes on Coping Behavior

Before the periods the *Damai* People of *Damai* Toal considered themselves as weak and worthless. They did not know how to cope others

on disaster? How to manage NFRI to victims? How to organized and coordinate to other stakeholders?

Whereas they became wide awake on those issues, they started to collect NPR 10 each month and seasonal foods once in a year from each households as Emergency Fund (EF). Generally, they use the fund when disaster occurs. They have a 7 members committee, known as Cluster Unit. The unit plays leading role to operate all activities in *Damai Toal*. The Cluster functions under the DRR Unit which is an 11 members committee of entire the community. The Unit has their own policy and procedure.

The *Damai* people organize extensive discussion, consult CBDRR staffs and prepare a DP plan and hazard map every year. According to their DP plan, they play *Narshingha* and hand mike during and pre-disaster. They exhibit red flag written '*Pahiro Chhetra*' surrounding landslide area as a pre-warning system which sensitized people form the risk.

7.2.5 Changes in Psychological Aspects

Psychological aspect plays a hub role in the society for the changes. Awareness through training, workshop, orientation and meeting brings changes in human attitude. The *Damai* people's attitude towards social activities has significant changes. This research shows that, the CBDRR program has been developing positive attitude towards social relationship, community mobilization, community organization and disaster management.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Summary

The *Damai* is known as the caste of professional musicians and tailors. They are best known for their musical traditions through *Panchi Baja* and *Naumati Baja* in Nepali society. The caste that plays musical instruments is known as *Damai*, *Hudke*, *Dholi*, *Nagdi* or *Nagarchi* and, those who engaged in sewing clothing is known as *Suchikar/Sujikar*, now it is called *Tailor*, *Master* or *Darji*. The caste *Damai* is spread all over Nepal. They are divided into several subcategories. Among them *Siwa* and *Bagdas* has been living in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC since over the years. According to key informants, they are migrated from Kavre, Banepa.

It was observed that the social, educational and economical status of the *Damai* people is not good. However, their attitude has been changing gradually. The profound research has not yet been done to evaluate the *Damai* status, disaster impact and changes before and after CBDRR program. That is why; this study was done in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC.

This study has objectives to analyze the socio-economic condition, cultural situation, disaster impact and major changes before and after the CBDRR program. The study is descriptive and exploratory in nature. It has used primary and secondary data. The Primary data was collected through field survey while secondary data was from relevant websites, documents, journals, research reports, newspapers and books. The

researcher has gathered primary data through a questionnaire, FGD, VCA and key informants interview respectively.

Out of the total vulnerable households in *Damai* Toal 17 were taken as a sample survey. The households were selected on the basis of landslide prone area where the *Damai* people are settled. Majority households of the *Damai* Toal were assessed damaged due to landslide.

The population of the *Damai* in *Damai* Toal of Embung VDC is estimated to be 93. Out of the total population of *Damai* 45 (48%) is male and 48 (52%) is female. The population of age group 17-40 is observed highest and above 61 is lowest. The popular structure of the *Damai* family is nuclear with an average family size of eight. The majority houses of them are made of stone with thatch roof and double storied. They have adequate drinking water but, unmanaged pipeline.

The *Damai* people are found simple. They usually wear *Doura-Surawal*, *Estakot* and *Dhaka-Topi* while the women wear *Guniyo-Cholo*, *Sari* and the youths wear casual dresses. The famed ornaments among women are *Fuli*, *Dhungri*, *Bulaki* and girls are modern crafted. The most of the *Damai* consume *Jaad-Raksi*. It is considered an essential drink. They follow Hinduism and do life cycle rites as Hindu culture. They are observed to celebrate festivals same as Hindus like; *Dashin*, *Tihar*, *Tij*, *Maghe Sankrant* etc.

Economically the people of *Damai* Toal are deprived. They are depending on agriculture while they have no sufficient land. How much land they have, is in landslide risk. It was observed that 2 respondent have no land while 2 (12%) households are holding land less than 2.6

Ropani that is why, they have no sufficient food. Out of the total population, only one respondent works on government job.

While studying on educational status in *Damai Toal* the *Damai* people were found backward. Out of the total population 58 (62.37%) are literate. Among them 31 (68.88%) are male and 27 (56.25%) are female while there are no *Damais* who have passed the SLC examination. Due to lack of education and awareness caste-based discrimination in household level was found high in this community despite public zone. But, at present due to the NRCS activities certain changes on health and sanitation, animal husbandry, farming, coping practice in disaster and human attitude has observed.

8.2 Conclusion

The research shows that socio-economic conditions and disaster risk of the *Damai* is more than other casts in *Damai Toal* of Embung VDC. They are not getting sufficient support from the concerned authorities to uplift their overall situation. However, the NRCS has been undertaken a CBDRR program which main objectives is to reduce vulnerability while the issues from *Damai* seems multi nature. So, the NRCS does not fulfill their requirements alone. Before the years the CSP funded by DFID has supported them to construct taps and toilets within the *Damai Toal*.

The health and sanitation situation of the *Toal* was not better at households' level. Most of the children and old aged were suffering from water born diseases due to lack of awareness. When they became unhealthy, they usually visited to *Dhami-Jhakri*. But, at present, they visit first to health post for medical treatment. It was observed that sanitary

units like; garbage pit, washing plate form and dry rack are constructed in each household. Miracles changes has been seems by the sincere efforts of NRCS on IG, EF support, sanitation practice, disaster management, water source improvement, sanitary units construction, awareness rising and various trainings.

The insufficient production, low land holding capacity and landslide threats of the *Damai* people is the main causes to drive other places. As their saying, landslide is their headache. While responding, majority of the respondents said that there is less potential to survive by farming and livestock that is why; some of them go to search for labor work.

Out of total 2 households are involved in their traditional business that swings cloths and beating music. They have no such kind of modern instruments and trainings for tailoring. Therefore, their traditional business is going to be replaced by modern one.

The educational status of the *Damai* people was observed very poor. They do not give more emphasized in female education. The social statuses of them were found very low than the male due to patrilineal society. Hence, the people of *Damai* in *Damai Toal* are running the risk from multi issues. However, they have been coping with them with their full strengths.

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APPENDIX- 1

Development Region	Population	Percentage
Eastern	73789	18
Central	68515	17
Western	118033	28
Mid Western	69202	21
Far Western	60757	16
Total	390305	100

APPENDIX- 2

Subcategories of *Damai*

- J Aauji
- J Asasai
- J Bagchan
- J Bagdas
- J Bahak
- J Bajgain
- J Bardew
- J Bhandari
- J Bhitrikoti
- J Bhusal
- J Boodhaprithi
- J Budhapothi
- J Chahar
- J Chhinal
- J Chuhan
- J Damai Parel
- J Damai Pariyar
- J Darnal

J Das
J Daunde
J Deukar
J Dewal
J Dholi (also used by those who forgot their sub-caste)
J Dhyaki
J Gautam (Gotame)
J Ghale
J Ghatani
J Guinde
J Hingmang
J Hudke
J Jairu
J Kalakhati
J Kandel
J khadka
J Koirala
J Lamghate
J Luintel
J Magar
J Mainali
J Mahara
J Mahate
J Male
J Nagarchi
J Nagwag
J Nagwan
J Naubag
J Negi
J Nepal
J Panchkoti/Panchakoti
J Pariyar (Achhame, Chudal)
J Pokharel
J Raigain
J Raika

J Rana
J Ranpahenli
J Ranpal
J Ratna/Ratne
J Ratnapariyar
J Ryainjhyain
J Samudrasai
J Sasmundra
J Shahassamudra
J Shilal
J Shinal
J Shiwa/Siwa (Kukhure, Gotame, Bhede)
J Sooji
J Sudas
J Sunal
J Sunam
J Sunam
J Sunchyuri/Sunchiuri
J Thagunna
J Thapa
J Thatal
J Tiwari/Tikhatri
J khadka