

# Chapter-I

## 1. INTRODOCTION

This section of thesis presents vignette of livelihood strategy of Chepang in the study area of Nepal. The evident livelihood strategies in the country, their effect in Chepang community will be explored the linkage of standard livelihood strategies in the contemporary scenario with evident. Economic and social status of Chepang will be assessed in the study area.

### 1.1 Background of the study

Nepal is a small landlocked country situated in between India & china and having a versatile socio-cultural history. India lies South, West and East of Nepal and the China lie in the North. The total area of Nepal is 147181sqire kilometer, the highest pick of the world , Mt. Everest lies in Nepal, which is our major identity. Geographically Nepal is divided in to three ecological zones: Mountain, Hill and Terai.

There are many ethnic groups and castes with different languages, religion and culture in our country. The major ethnic groups of Nepal are Gurung, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Kumal, Dhimal and Chepang etc. Chepang is one of ethnic group of Nepal and Chepang people are living in the mountain. Chepangs have suffered from the poor livelihood condition, illiteracy and comparatively backwardness as a compared to the other ethnic group. Chepang usually live close to the forest of hill. The major home land of Chepangs is Chitwan, Gorkha, Dhading and Makawanpur. There settlement are in the height of 1000 to 2400 meter from the sea level , Chepang believe that they belongs to *kirati* group of people ,they have there distinct language. They speak the language, which is quite different language from that of Tamang, living very close to them. The features of Chepang are magnolia (Bista, 1967).

Chepang are living in primary stage of poverty and back ward community of the nation. Chepang are god fearing honest and ethnic groups. There life is intimately connected with forest. So there present feature is imbalanced between man and nature, Chepang are suffered from natural phenomena like deforestation and landslide, there inhabitance, low productive steep hills is the main causes of poor livelihood status of Chepang. however due to the practices of Slash & Burn farming system in place of organized agricultural method the condition of Chepang is fire is not enough to provide them, hunting, fishing ,collecting of edible shoots and roots are their traditional

occupation .The Chepang are also aspect at weaving basket and other item of bamboo etc.

There is very little tribal society in the world today. World wide number of nomadic hunters and gathers are declining day by day. Pygmies and bush man of Africa, Aborigines of Australia, Eskimos of North America and low lands Indians in Brazil are few examples of nomadic hunters and gathers. South Asia is a tribal territory where we can find many ethnic groups even wondering in the forest hunting and gathering wild animal and wild edible foods for their subsistence. The same case is in Nepal. There are so many such types of tribal societies including nomadic hunter and gathers in Nepal. They are known as first people, natives, nomads, tribal, aborigines, and minority and so on.

Anthropologist defines an ethnic group as a collection of group of people who share patterns of speech, basic cultural characteristics and in traditional scenes, a common territory. The most important features, however is that member of ethnic group fell that they have more in common with each other than with neighboring groups. This senses of communality both binds the members of an ethnic group together and distances them from non members of the ethnic group.

There are not authentic references, as well as convincing written documents about origin of Chepang and the creation of world of Chepang, even there are different views between sociologist and anthropologist. Some of them assume that edge of the Trisuli River or middle part of Trisuli, Rapti, and Narayani River where the original places of Chepang. Some of them believe that the Chepang are migrated from Okhaldhunga District and sunathali of Dolakha district. There are many assumption of history of origin of Chapang. Various attempts are made with ethnologically. 'Che' means 'dog' and ' pang' means 'arrow'. It means that they were hunting with the help of the dog and arrow long ago. Thus, they are named as Chepang(Gurung,1979).

Other dialects are that Chepang call themselves Chepang 'Che' means 'Top of hill' and 'pang' means 'Stone'. It means those inhabitants in the stone top of the hill call them Chepang. Some Chepang came from stone of east Mahabharat hill and separated their ancestor towards west. They speak the Tibetan- burman language .Thami and Tamang language are close to Chepang language (Thapalia 2044).Chepang believe that their fore father lived in cave of rocks. In their language "Wang" means "rock" and "Chep" means "Cave" so the word Chepang developed from these two words. But the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC doesn't believe above dialects.

All the dialects are the statements about the meaning of word Chepang. The traditional activities of Chepang of different areas of Nepal are found to be

different in their life style, specially related to socio cultural activities as compared to ethnic groups. Even among the Chepang of Chitwan, there is very difference in language with respect of their habitant. Most of the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC are influenced by other culture due to their long contact from inter dependence and inter related for social survival. The Chepang in plain and hilly area of Chitwan have difference in their occupational behaviors activities. The Chepang of plain area are more forward than the hilly area. Their productive and job opportunities also are the cause of their differentiation. Such changes and modification are the difference influences. Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC is in miserable condition, they are socially, economically, politically back warded. Their major production, grain supports their feeding only for 3to 6 month. Forest product like "Githa" and "Vakur" support the remaining Days of the year.

Government of Nepal has organized 'Praja' (Chepang) development program 2035.B.S. In order to develop social economic condition, besides this many NGO / INGOs are conducting several types of program to change the livelihood condition in Praja Jati.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Nepal is a multiethnic, multi-linguistic, multiracial and multicultural country. Every ethic group has its own economical, social, religious, and cultural beliefs. Their cultural activities has own type of important role in the national cultural and national building activities. Thus it is impossible to develop country by separating this ethnic group from the national stream.

In this context, the study attempts to document ethnography of Chepang in order to provide the information particularly in the field of livelihood condition, such as source of income, need of education, health, security, drinking water, marriage process, dress pattern, kinship, food habit, religion and life style. In order to obtain this information, the study will be field oriented and based on questionnaire.

Rich people are exploiting these people day by day. Rich people invest their money in high interest on them and Chepang are unable to pay back due to the lack of proper income. They are suffering from lack of food, shelter, and cloths. 70% of children die with in one and half year of age due to the malnutrition and different disease. (Thapalia2044) SO it is necessary that, to preserve their traditional ethnic culture. It is need to know their present condition and support to easy livelihood.

The Chepang of Shaktikhoor VDC is miserable condition. They are back warded in every sector. The study attempts to documents the livelihood

strategy of Chepang. This study focus on condition of socio economic and occupational pattern in the study area .This study explore the whole livelihood system in Chepang.

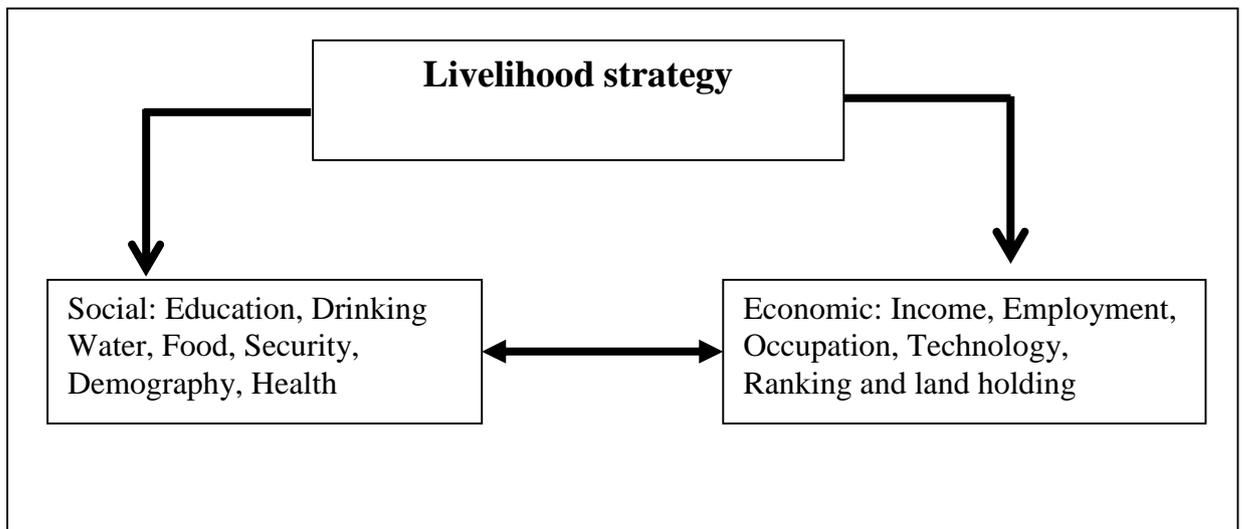
### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of the study are to find out the livelihood strategies of Chepang in Shaktikhor VDC in Chitwan. Whereas, specific objectives are as follows.

- I To analyzed the livelihood practices of Chepang.
- II To examine the socio-cultural and demographical characteristics of Chepang.
- III To find out the economic condition of chepang.

### 1.4 Conceptual Framework

The major investigation of study hovers around the traditional and modern system of livelihood condition of condition of Chepang in the study area. The livelihood practices among Chepang community basically in two sectors; social and economic sector. In social sector remains education ,drinking water, food habit, security, health, demography etc. and economic sector remains income ,employment, occupation, technology, ranking \$ land holding.



**Fig No. 1 Chepang livelihood activities**

### 1.5 Rationale of the study

This research provides the recent trends of social and economic status of Chepang community. It explore the problem and prospect of

livelihood system of Chepang so this research may help for those organization, who works on Chepang community to prepare the appropriate program to uplift the socioeconomic condition of Chepang. Nepal has diverse culture; it is quite essential to focus on economic development of various ethnic groups. Among the many ethnic groups, Chepang are quite backward one. So it is necessary to identify the Chepang in national standard and to uplift them in their economic and social condition. This study would be helpful as a literature to the forth coming researchers and those who are interested to know about this tribe.

### **1.6 Limitation of the study**

Due to the constraints of funds ,time and level of research to be conducted the descriptive study is the only option .Livelihood is the broad term in which socio cultural and economic practices are the focus points of the researcher . This study is confined with socio economic practices of Chepang community in Shakikhor VDC , Chitwan district only. Thus the results the result drawn from this study will represent the selected area only. this conclusion may not be generalized to the whole Chepang community in all over the country. But the inference might be valid to some extent to those Chepang, who have a similar geographical setting and similar settlement.

# CHAPTER-TWO

## Literature-Review

In this chapter, the related literatures have been reviewed. The reviewed literatures are books, journals, seminars papers, newspapers clippings and yearly publication related to my study.

### 2.1 Review of related Literature

There is scarcity of the literature about the Chepang of Nepal. Research and studies on this indigenous group are limited in both number and scope. There are few ecological related anthropological studies, which deals with people culture and nature. Whatever there is also a confine to anthropological sphere? There is absence of studies on the socio economic condition in the sociological perspectives. After the restoration of democracy in 1951 foreigner as well as Nepalese scholar began to study on the different field of Nepal. Especially, when the sociology course was started to teach in TU in 1981, it provided the fur their more encouragement the scholar to study about Nepal and Nepalese society.

A few studies have under taken regarding the Chepangs. Some of the foreign scholar and Nepali sociologist have about them. Some of the reviewed important literature and its concerned issues of this study have presented as follows.

Hodgson (1848) was the first scholar, who wrote about the Chepang, he mentioned the Chepang as the primitive in habitant of Nepal. He further (1857) writes the Chepang rely more on food gathering and hunting then on agriculture. They expect more from their bows and arrows then from the plough sphere. To earn money, to make a proper house and to live, to wear clothes, and to get education are thing which are just being introduced in to Chapang society.

Bista was first anthropologist to make the preliminary study in to verity of ethnic groups of Nepal .In his ethnographic survey of Nepalese people; in one of his books "People of Nepal" he has given some description on aspect of the socio economic of Chepang (Bista, 1965).

Among the Nepalese scholar Ganesh Man Gurung (1995) wrote on socioeconomic aspect where he discussed about three major instruction viz. Family, Marrige and kinship of Chepang and combines together the culture and

recent change in recent structure aspect. Family and marriage are long tradition are in the study of sociological and anthropological field.

The family of the Chepang is the bio-social, socio-economic, and socio-ritual, unite of social organization. He categorized the family pattern of Chepang as nuclear joint family. As he described of the marriage system of Chapang, he address the marriage fulfill the basic needs of human by providing security and it is important for family affairs. All together he mentioned the Chepang kinship and their blood relationship. His book on the topic 'village administration aspect' deals with the leadership of the community. If the leadership is traditional conservative, the speed of the progress will be slow and mentioned about the traditional organizational control of Chepang community and their village administration with their political participation and emerging leadership pattern.

Gurung (1995) mentioned society, culture, lifestyle, historical interpretation, ethnic identity, physical feature, food habit, clothing, festival and occupation of Chepang in 'Report from a Chepang village'.

In the book "People of Nepal"(1965) written by Bista. He has attempts to sketch an ethnographic map of all ethnic group of Nepal. He presented the ethnographic picture of Chapang as traditional, socio cultural, and economic life in briefly. In his book entitled as "Meche Dekhi Mahakali Samma"(1967). Thapalia has written book "Chepang jati Ek Parichya"(2044) B.S. He has also made an attempt to give in ethnographic picture of Chepang community of Nepal by describing the aspect of their life, origin, organization, and history and socio cultural condition as well as provided the main problem prevailing with them.

Thapa studied the Chepang of Chitwan, Makawanpur, Dhading and gorkha.He describes about Chepang in his book "Chepang haru Sanga Kehi Din"(Madhupark September October 1942 vol.7no 5p 75), that total population of Chepang geographic map, their home land, occupation, historical origin, economic condition, and marriage system among the Chapang community but he doesn't talk about the socio economic change of their life.

Bista and singh write "Ethnic groups of Nepal and their ways of living (1978)" In their book, we can find some introduction of Chepang people of Chitwan. This book is also unable to show the family pattern and their changing life style. This book gives the general introduction of Nepalese ethnic groups in general.

Rai (1985) has presented the economy of Chepang of central Nepal as very poor. He has studied their agriculture tools and technique and their living

standard. They are exploited economically, politically and socially by their neighbors, Mr.Rai pointed in his study.

Roboli (2000) has carried out a study on Chepangs. The study has particularly focused on the form of equity practiced in Chepang community. She also have described about the two Chapang festivals. She also wrote about the dowry system. The parent of the bride should provide her with a dowry, usually in the forms of animals, hens, goats, pigs, water buffalo, or cows and *Chiuri* (Bassia Butyracea).

Thus, although there are some scholar and researcher who have studied on the Chepang from different angles in different situation and places but there is no separate literature and publication on the livelihood strategies of Chepang people in Chitwan. Hence presents study seems to be urgently needed in order to sketch on structure with the changes the livelihood strategies through the economic and socio cultural life of Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC in Chitwan district and the Chepang in general.

# **CHAPTER-THREE**

## **Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design**

Exploratory as well as descriptive research design has been performed for this research. However exploratory modes of methodology dominate over the later, for the purpose of formulation lively hood practices of Chepang for the precise investigation is the main agenda of this research. The research provides some what qualitative, where as livelihood problems and prospects of Chepang will be analyzed in descriptive way.

### **3.2 Rationale for Selecting the Study Area**

Chepang is an indigenous and one of the backward communities of Nepal. Chepang are distributed mainly in Chitwan, Makawanpur, Dhading, Gorkha and Tanahu district. Chitwan is the main district where as Chepang reside in. The research have selected the area because there is not good and through study conducted in this community with the socio economic condition. This study is focus on the homogeneous rural community of Chepang, thus Shaktikhor VDC has been select purposively for the study.

### **3.3 Nature and Sources of Data**

On the basis of nature both qualitative and quantitative data have been agglomerated in order to fulfill the specific objectives of the study, the analysis is mainly based upon the primary data. On the basis of sources both primary and secondary data will be collected during the entire research process.

- I. Primary data - The interview, observation, etc agglomerated during the field works are the primary data to be generated.
- II. Secondary data- The information about livelihood strategy of Chepang from hard or soft copy of scholarly journals, books , reports , from varied sources are the secondary data are needed for the study .

### **3.4 Universe and Sampling Procedure**

The total population of Chitwan 472038 where as 235084 male and 236954 female. The total number of houses is 1160 in Shaktikhor VDC among them, total the total households of Chepang are 396. The total population of Shakikhor VDC is 7420. Among them 3610 are male and 3810 are female.40 households are selected for the random sampling. The respondents are household head for the study. The universe of the study based on the Chepang

community. The researcher took data from the sample area of the Shaktikhor VDC and the villages are Shaktikhor, Gairibari, Chhepedhap, Chisapani, kalika, Devitar, Neureni etc.

### 3.5 Data Collection Techniques and Tools :

S.N.	Data collection Techniques	Data collection Tools	Expected Data
1.	Household survey	Questionnaire	Livelihood practice system/ Production System
2.	Observation	Observation Guide	Pattern of Farming / Cultivation Practices
3.	Focus group discussion	Checklist	Traditional livelihood strategies Existing livelihood strategies and problem on livelihood
4.	Case study	Observation	Peculiarities of respondents about livelihood practices

#### 3.5.1 Questionnaire Survey

To generate the accurate data from households survey of Chepang community, structured questionnaire are prepared, the respondents were requested to fill up questionnaire. In case of respondents who can filled up the questionnaire. The questions asked to the respondents and answer were filled up to collect the required information.

#### 3.5.2 Observation

Livelihood strategies of each house holds selected in sampling took visited and observed. The data has been recorded while observing the house holds environments, economic status, occupation, social status, agriculture status etc.

#### 3.5.3 Key informant interview

Structured and unstructured interview was used to collect data about socio economic condition, lively hood condition, occupational condition and their relationship with other people of study area.

### 3.6 Method of data Analysis

The data collected so far is properly edit and coded for further processing. After the properly editing and coding, the data are subjected to various applicable statistical tests. The questionnaire data collected so far were analyzed via the simple statistical method. Depending upon the qualitative data gathered, simple descriptive method is applied to analyze the qualitative data.

## CHAPTER- FOUR

### Area and People under Study

This chapter deals with geographical location and climate of the study area, settlement pattern, natural resource, forest, population, cast/ethnicity, linguistics and social hierarchy.

#### 4.1 Geographical setting and climate of the study

Chitwan belonging to the central development region is one of the District of Narayani zones. Geographically the district is boarded by 6 Districts. Nawalparasi, Tanahu, and Gorkha in the west; Makawanpur, Dhading, in north parsu and Makawanpur in east and India in the South. The District has been elevated in different height ranging from 150 to 1500 from the sea level. The climate of the District varies from tropical to mid temperate type depending upon the geographical variation.

The major rivers of the Districts are Narayani, Rapti, Budhirapti, Rewa, Lother etc. The major hill of the Chitwan is *Chure, Someshor pahad, Siraichuli* etc. There fore the Climate of the study is not different from Chitwan District. Having a hill area it has dominated by monsoon type of climate, there is no metrological station; thus, there is no accurate data for climate.

#### 4.2 Settlement Pattern

The settlement pattern signifies not only the physical composition of the certain ethnic group but it also represents social-economic and cultural aspect of the family. The settlement pattern of the Chepangs of the study area in found typical. The settlement is still surrounded by forest in upper hill and areas not easily accessible. The settlement of the Chepang people have scattered not clustered, they have no any particular direction for settlement as other ethnic groups but it is found that majority of the Chepangs are settled either in stream or river side or near the jungle.

#### 4.3 Natural Resources

In Nepal, Forests are the main natural resources for the people; the study area is no exception for this fact. Most of the population in the study area depends upon land and forest. However, those sources are used for their daily use and are yet to manage properly to make its maximum use line with the

management and avoid lot of pressure on it as it is now for the sake of future use of it. Moreover, the limited and unproductive land has to be under cultivating by arranging measures of checking soil erosion and landslide.

#### **4.4 Forest**

People live mainly in forest beside the land such as fuel. Fodder and timber for construction are the main source for every household. Almost all the habitants are surrounded by forest. According to the information of Chitwan DFO office, about 3000 *Bigha* land is covered with jungle. It is observed and found that the major forest here is of *Sal, Sishau, Simal, Chilaune, Utsis* and *Harro-Barro* etc.

#### **4.5 Population of Chitwan District**

The science of the population that is called demography represents a fundamental approach to the understanding of human society. Without knowing the complex inter-relationship among fertility, mortality and migration, the real understanding of population and society is not possible. The total population of Chit wan 472038 where as 235084 male and 236954 female. The total number of houses is 1160 in Shaktikhor VDC among them, total the total households of Chepang are 396. The total population of Shaktikhor VDC is 7420. Among them 3610 are male and 3810 are female.

#### **4.6 Caste/Ethnicity**

Among the various characteristic of the society, Caste/Ethnic component is the main component, which directly or indirectly effect the development of the society. Various groups are living in Chitwan District. According to the population census 2058, 80 shorts of caste/ethnic group live in this District and the majority of the population is *Bramin* 29.31%, *Tharu* 12.74, *Chhetri* 10.95, *Tamang* 7.36%, *Gurung* 6.73%, *Newar* 5.43, *Praja* 4.5%, *Kami* 4.5% *Magar* 4.16%, *Damai* 2.24% (DDC,2066).

Administratively, Chitwan is divided in to 36 VDC, and two Municipality, among them important destination of Chepangs are Shaktikhor, Gairibari, Chhepedhap, Chisapani, kalika, devitar, Neureni etc. They are scattered in almost 36 VDCs and two Municipality of Chitwan Distric. In the Shaktikhor V.D.C Tamang is the predominant group and second group is Chepang. Beside them *Brahman, Kshetry, Tharu, Magar, Kami* are the common groups in the study area (DDC, 2066).

#### 4.7 Social Hierarchy

Chepong have hierarchical system among them. They have some division and subdivision in the community as Sumpraja, Dutpraja and Ghartipraja. Sumpraja is higher among them and Ghertipraja is lowest in their community. Dutpraja is lower than Sumpraja but higher than Ghertipraja is lowest in their community. *Dutpraja* is lower than *Sumpraja* but higher than *Ghertipraja*. They have restriction on food and their social activities. Recently, their hierarchy is gradually disappearing and do not have restriction on food and social activities. Chepong have no economic class or groups. Nevertheless some kind of hierarchy in the society is prevalent.

Most of the Chepong are Hindu in the religious aspect. But they are lowest and look down comparing to the other Hindu communities like Brahman, Kshetry etc. They have equal status with Tamang, Gurung in the hierarchical system of Nepalese people. Cooked foods by Chepong are not accepted by Gurung and Tamang and restrict to enter in their house as untouchable caste. Their treatment would be untouchable to them but they are not untouchable cast. They worked as a servant in Brahman's, Kshetry's house. Now days they are starting to enter the house of high caste people. The *Pande's* or *Purohit's* status is higher in the Chepong community because they believe in religious affairs.

## CHAPTER- FIVE

### Livelihood Strategies of Chepang

This Chapter deals with the Livelihood condition, Secondary occupation for livelihood, farming system of Chepang, crops produced pattern, food sufficiency for livelihood, farming system & gender participation in Chepang community, housing Structure of Chepang, off farm & farm activities, traditional skills and uses.

#### 5.1 Occupation for Livelihood and Secondary Occupation

Now days, the Chepang are interested towards Agriculture is a main occupation of the study area. About 62.5% of Chepangs house holds are involving in agriculture as a main occupation. Chepang spend most of there working hours in agriculture activities and it is a family enterprises in which all member of the family involves and works as a functional unit. Animal husbandry is an important avocation of Chepang. It provides subsistence for Chepang people. Animal like Buffalo, Goats, Pigs, Oxen, and other domesticated animal (cattle) are kept for different purpose such as for domesticate use, for sale, ploughing, milk production, fertilizer and meat. Cow and buffalos are kept for milk and oxen are kept for plugging field. In the Chepang of sample area pigs, goat, chicken is used for consumption and money for emergency expenditure. The Chepang have also done other economic activities. Manufacturing is one of the sectors of the house hold production.

The Chepang made several types of basket, ropes mats, namlo, theki (pot of wood). These households production have helped them mostly to fulfill domestic needs. Nevertheless some of the basket (*doko, dalo*) ropes, *Theki, Namlo* are sold in the market and to other villagers too the business, in the sample area the Chepang women are making wine and selling everyday. Some Chepang are engaged in fishing and gathering in the leisure period. A few Chepang are involved in the service as peons, but most of the Chepang depends in semi labor. Now they do various labors in agriculture sector such as ploughing, digging the field for the people of other communities. Some of them are working in the development programs too.

## 5.2 Agriculture and animal husbandry

Agriculture is a main occupation of the study area. Chepang spend most of their working hours in agriculture activities and it is a family enterprise in which all members of the family involve and work as a functional unit. Chepang who have their own sufficient land to feed them throughout the year, they work in their land but those who do not have sufficient land, they cultivate on others' lands as a tenant and some work as a laborer. Chepang are gathering in food grain in seven to eight months throughout the year from their land. In deficit time, to solve the deficit problem of food grain, poor Chepang go out of their area for a daily wage labor, keeping cattle in *adhiyan* and collect the wild food from forest. In non-farming season they depend on non-farming activities such as hunting and fishing etc.

The agriculture work begins in Falgun (Feb./March). During the month of Falgun, fields are dug or ploughed and prepared for maize crop. In Chaitra (March/Apr.) Wheat, millet, lentil, oilseed, are cultivated and manuring ploughing, digging work is continued. From the last of Ashad (Jun/July) to first week of Shrawan (July/Aug) *kauno*, *sama*, *chiuri* are harvested. In Ashad and Shrawan the paddy seeding is transplanted. During the month of Kartik (Oct./Nov.) and Mansir (Nov./Dec.) paddy harvesting continues. They start gathering to millet from the month of Kartik. At last, the buck wheat is harvested. Between the month of Poush (Dec./Jan.) and Magh (Jan./Feb.).

Animal husbandry is indispensable with agriculture farming. In the study area, animals are bred only for domestic use. Buffaloes and cattle are kept for milk, manure and as plough animals. They keep cows in large numbers than buffaloes. Cows are kept for manure and milk rather than for meat. Buffaloes are comparatively expensive to purchase than cows. In the study area, the poor and landless Chepangs have not farmed large animals (buffalo, cow, bulls) but most of Chepang households are farming small animals like chicken, goat etc. If the Chepang have more land, they seem to farm large animals. There, animal husbandry is relative to land ownership. Rich households have many more animals of greater varieties than a poor household.

## 5.3 Types of crops produced for livelihood

The Chepang produce mainly two kinds of crops. The rainy season crops are Maize, Millets, *Ghaiya*, *Junelo*, *Kaguno*, Beans, Soybeans, Pumpkins, Chilly, Cucumber etc and the winter season crops are Wheat, Barelly, Mustard oil, Tobacco, Ginger etc. In the study area of Shaktikhor VDC, agricultural system is very primitive type. They lived along the hillside of VDC

and cultivated crops in *Pakho* or *Khoriya*. They planted only maize, millet, *kguno*, *shama*, and *phapar* (black wheat) but they were unknown to paddy.

Now days Chepang of plain area have started new tools and technology for agriculture. Every Chepangs of study area use the chemical fertilizer and improved seed. The Chepangs produce paddy and other crops also. Before two years, they planted maize only in the summer season but now they produced maize in the winter season too.

#### 5.4 Level of food sufficiency for livelihood

The label of food production and consumption determines the poverty of people or nation. During Study period, it was tried to find out whether the annual production of food grains was sufficient to meet the daily requirement for one year. The farming lands are dividing and going in small pieces where as the population is growing rapidly. In this section it is tried to shows the level of food sufficiency from own agriculture production.

**Table No. 1**

**Distribution of Respondents by Level of Food sufficiency**

Food sufficiency in month	No. of household	Percent
Zero month	5	12.5
0-3	9	22.5
3-6	12	30.0
6-9	6	15.0
9-12	4	10.0
Surplus	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

*Source : Field survey, 2009*

The table no. 1 shows that 12.5% households were landless and their food production is zero. 22.5% households have food sufficient for zero to 3 month. 30% households have food sufficient for 3 to 6 month, 15% of the household have food sufficient for 6 to 9 months. Similarly 10% household produce adequate quantity of food grain for one year and there were 10% households who have some surplus food.

It was also observed the food deficient households compensating their needs by earning from wage labor, agro labor, pottering lone borrowing and credit purchased. Whatever they grow in the field can just support their food problem. A significant part of the agriculture products in the study area goes for brewing *jad*. Therefore, agriculture has no direct economic value except for

subsistence. Thus, may be every year the Chepang community falls victim of the cycle of poverty.

### **5.5 Farming system and Gender participation**

Formerly modern techniques were completely unknown to the agriculture sector of those poor people. The system of the agriculture production is traditional and primitive. Then physical as well as manual labors of the peasants are more important than the other means. Therefore all the family members of peasants irrespective of sex have to be engaged in agriculture work. Only some of the agriculture work has been divided into two sexes.

The division traditionally two types' general specific. In general category the work is usually allocated to one sex that could be done by either sex such as shedding of paddy. Such delicate skill full works are generally supposed to be done by women but there is no harm of social objection or criticism if that are done by both sex.

One specific division of work particularly allocated to one sex could not be done by another sex such as plough the field. It was allocated to men and it could not be done by women, any violation of such division brings many difficulties in the society. But average contribution and participation of the women is no less than that of man.

Male and female problem, different activities and traditionally male and female are engaged in an out door and in door activities respectively. Chepang women have to spend their time in collecting firewood, food, water, gathering forest resources and so on because Chepang women are in a better position to contribute much to helping and supporting the agriculture activities of their male. They are petty landlords but the agricultural productions are less and it is not sufficient for even nine months. The Chepang work hard for their substance. For the Chepang who live in the hilly area, monkeys cause considerable harm for their crops.

They are depended on food gathering and fishing for at least three to six months in a year. They also collect the vegetables and different foods from the forest. For Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC the most important fruit tree is *Chiuri*, which is considered to be their wealth. They eat it and sell in the market. Before some decades, they collected the seed of *chiuri* oil to use for cooking and selling in the market.

**Table No.2**  
**Farming, off farm & food style activities**

S.No.	Activities	Description	Remarks
1.	Farming activities	Rice, Maize, Millet, Potato, Cerials, Cattle, goat, pig, poultry, <i>Badel</i> , Sheep, <i>Chiuri</i> , <i>Ghaya</i> , <i>Junelo</i> , pumpkin, <i>Kugno</i> , Ginger , <i>Sama</i> etc	
2.	Off farm activities	<i>Doko</i> , <i>Namlo</i> , <i>Theki</i> , <i>Nanglo</i> , Mat, Rope, <i>Damlo</i> , <i>shayakhu</i> , <i>Dalo</i> , <i>Bhakari</i> , <i>Chalno</i> , <i>ghum</i> , <i>amriso</i> <i>kucho</i> <i>Mandro</i> , <i>Halo</i> , Hunting and fishing, Fire wood collection, and others bambos handicrafts.etc	
3.	Food style	<i>Githa</i> , <i>Tarul</i> , <i>Vacur</i> , Leaves, Flowers, <i>Dhido</i> , fruits , <i>Ato</i> , <i>Roti</i> , Rice, <i>Meat</i> , <i>Jad</i> , <i>LocalRaksi</i> etc.	

Source: field survey 2009

### 5.6 Housing Structure

Chepang Residential pattern and types of houses are traditional. There houses are made of stone and clay. Most of the roofs of the houses are made with watch. The Chepang houses are small and narrow. The houses are two stored and have no separated room. One storied make one room. They use the upper one for there bed room and the lower are used for the kitchen.

The size of the Chepangs houses is 5 to 7 meters long and 4 to 5 meters wide in average. The roofs are conical. Most of the houses are built on rectangular side. The door is placed in the middle of the front wall. The windows are also in the middle of the front wall or any side on the wall of the stone walled house. But wooden houses have no windows. The front side of the houses attached the Verandas. Verandas are very useful for the guest and their daily fictional life. The front of the house has also a courtyard.

It is very important for their cultural activities. Some Chepangs keep their animals in the side of the veranda. Their house looks very rough and dirty because they do not cleaned the house and surroundings properly. The Chepang Scrub the house only in the particular function. They paint their house and wall with the red mud in the festivals.

The hearth is located in the middle or in one corner of the lower storied. Therefore in side the house it looks dirty and black because of smoke. The Chepang sleep around the hearth to make their surrounding warm in the winter

season. Now days, the Chepangs of Shaktikhor VDC are trying to keep their houses and surroundings neat and clean. The buildings patterns of the houses are changing day by day as *Bramhan* and *Kshetry*.

**Table No.3**  
**Distribution of housing structure**

S.No.	Description	Number of households	Percentage
1.	Traditional	30	75%
2.	Modern	10	25%
	Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above the table no. 3 shows that out of 40 respondents 30 i.e. 75% are involve in traditional houses and 10i.e involved in modern houses. This bar shows that most of houses are traditional type.

### **5.7 Traditional Skills and there uses for livelihood**

Most of the Chepangs follow their traditional skills besides agriculture to earn their living such as from boom craft production they make baskets, they produce rope, leaf umbrellas, straw-mat, *namlo*, *damlo* etc. They also make agricultural tools such as ploughs. They even make hunting tools such as bow, arrow, and silling shot, trapping net etc. they also produce their homemade wine and *jad*.

#### **Traditional & New Learnt Skills**

Nowadays some of the Chepangs have introduced new skills in their daily life for their living from sewing and weaving, carpentry, masonry and bee keeping.

**Table No.4**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Skills**

Skills	No. of respondents	Percentage
Traditional	28	70
New learnt	12	30
Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above the table no. 4 shows that out of 40 respondents 28 i.e.; 70% are involved in traditional skill and 12 i.e.; 30% are involved in new learnt skill. Therefore the Chepangs are engaged in various skill works. Nowadays they are not limiting in their traditional skill but they study clearly indicate that though they have learnt new skills today's also most of the Chepangs are engaged in their traditional skills.

## **5.8 Sources of income**

### **A. Kitchen Gardening**

Mostly Chepang houses have kitchen garden surrounding the house. In the kitchen garden, they grow leafy vegetables, chilly, radish, yam, bean, cucumber etc. They grow tomatoes, ginger, garlic, turmeric etc. Some Chepnages cultivate potato also in the kitchen garden. All these vegetables are produced only for household consumption. In the rainy season, shortage of green vegetables is occurring. In the crisis, they eat food (*dhido*, boiled rice etc.) only with chilly and salt.

### **B. Chiuri Tree**

It is seen that there are enough trees of *chiuri* in the forest of the study area. On the study area, the number of *chiuri* trees per household is 6.87 and total trees are 13,273. Chepangs of the study area have sufficient *Chiuri*. Fruits of *Chiuri* trees are also the primary source of income of Chepangs. If the Chepangs have not food grain, they eat only fruits of *Chiuri* for sustain their livelihood. They make ghee from seeds of *chiuri*. The ghee is used for eat and also used to make soap. They purchase salt, oil, clothes, spices etc. by selling the ghee of *Chiuri* seeds. Mostly Chepangs have their own *Chiuri* trees. It is supposed that those Chepangs people are comparatively richer, who have more trees of *chiuri*. Chepangs had given *Chiuri* tree to their daughter as a dowry in their marriage.

### **C. Cottage Industries**

Chepangs have some small and traditional cottage industries. In the non-farming season, they are engage in cottage industry. Hands make all the products, which they produce from cottage industries, or all the industries are handicraft type. They make *doko*, *dalo*, *thunse*, *bhakari*, *mandro* etc. from split cave of bamboo and *nigalo* and sale it in market or exchange it with crops. Likewise, they make fishing net

and *javi* (a kind of bag) from *puwa* and nylon rope, *namlo* from jute of *bhorla*, *kucho* from *amrisho* and *ghum* from bamboo and leaf of *bhorla*. Chepangs get the raw materials from forest to make these products. But, now a day, Chepangs such occupation is bringing to an end slowly due to deforestation or more encroachment of forest.

#### **D. Hunting and Fishing**

Chepang are more experienced in fishing. The male Chepangs are going to the forest and river for hunting and fishing respectively. They hunt the wild animals by bow and for fishing; they use fishing net or fishhook. Hunting and fishing are also them to sustain their livelihood. They go to fishy at morning and engaged in fishing till evening. They are also expert in hunting. Until a few years ago, they hunt wild animals, but now a day they cannot hunt wild animals due to order of law.

## CHAPTER- SIX

### Socio- Cultural and Demographic Characteristics of Chepang

This Chapter deals with the age, sex, educational status, health & sanitation, marital status, family planning, drinking water, religion, food & drinking habit, dress pattern, festivals etc.

#### 6.1 Age & Sex

Age is ascribed status related to roles, responsibilities, prestige, and societal expectations from its member which gives them certain rights on the basis of their age .UN has defined age as “the estimated or calculated interval of time between the date of birth and date of census, expressed in completed solar year” (UN, 1967).It has also recommended that information on age should be collected in the census by enquiring the day, month and year of the individuals concerned. The term sex refers to the biological differences between male and female through which society assign different role or set of roles to them but the conception towards the distribution of roles and right varies from society to society.

**Table No.5**  
**Distribution of Respondent by age and sex**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No	Percent	No.	Percent
20-30	2	5.55	-	-	2	5.00
31-40	13	36.11	-	-	13	32.50
41-50	10	27.78	2	50.00	12	30.00
51-60	9	25.00	2	50.00	11	27.50
61 and above	2	5.55	-	-	2	5.00
Total	36	100	4	100	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above the table no.5 shows that age and sex of the sampled respondent s i.e., out of 40. Out of total respondent the age group 20-30 comprises 5%, the age group 31-40 is 32% age group 41-50 is 30%, like wise age group 51-60 is 27.50%and above 61 is 5%.

**Table No.6**  
**Distribution of sampled population by age and sex**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
0-15	60	46.51	58	45.31	118	45.91
16-59	63	48.84	65	50.78	128	49.81
60 above	6	4.65	5	3.91	11	4.28
Total	129	100	128	100	257	100
	50.19% of total		49.81% of total			

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

It refers to the age of the respondents and their family. The total population of the sampled households is 257. The table no. 6 shows that out of total Chepang households young population comprises 45.91% of the total sampled population where as the economically active population 16-59 years is 49.81% and only 4.28% of Chepang are of the age of 60 year and above. From that it can be said that majority of Chepang people were middle age group people between 16-59 years. The main reason of such a tendency is the middle age group is more active and dominant. The following table clarified the above statement.

## **6.2 Marital Status**

It is established by the society to control and regulate the sex life and closely connected with the institution of family. In fact; family and marriage are complementary to each other. Marriage is an important social institution, which admits man and women in a family life .In the Hindu culture there are various types of marriage. The Chepang are also not far from this marriage variation. The research found basically the arrange marriage in the Chepang community of the study area, inter-cast marriage is prohibited. They follow the monogamous and practical system of marriage. There fore the Chepang community generally follows the customs of marriage by mutual agreement.

### **6.2.1. Types of Marriage**

The term polygamy refers the those type of marriage in which the number of male and female is more than two, in patriarchal and matrilineal society the polygamy directly refers to that marriage where a man have more than one wives at a given time and in monogamy where only one male and one female are cohabited as husband and wife.

**Table No.7**  
**Types of marriage by number of wives**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Polygamy	8	20
Monogamy	32	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: field survey 2009*

The table no.7 shows that 20% Chepang practices polygamy. There ancestor through polygamy determines high status in the community, but now they don't divorce or eloped to the other man as in the particular cases they do second marriage. Traditional marriage customs of Chepangs is gradually disappearing.

### **6.2.2 Educational status of study area**

Educational status is one of the most important indicators of socio-economic development of the people in any country. "Education is the human right with immense power to transform. Its foundation rests the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development Annan (UNDP, 1999)" Education enlightens human beings; It helps one to judge between right and wrong. Thus, socio-economic and political status of people is directly proportional with education.

The better education one has the better choice are open. In every society, education plays a vital role in creating society well off. Literacy status had often been used to denote "How the society is educated?" during the study; an analysis was made on this issue too. The quality of education provided by the educational institute of that area primary, lower secondary and secondary school are regarded as enters of education, for the poor people, The only way of acquiring education is either formal or informal education system of government.

Lack of education is the barrier of socio economic development of a community and nation. It is a major weapon to uplift the poor condition of the weaker people of the society if it is made available to these weaker people. The Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC, are illiterate in majority.

**Table No.8**  
**Educational status of Chepang**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Illiterate	24	60
Primary school	12	30
Secondary school	3	7.5
Higher	1	2.5
Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above the table no.8 shows that 60% of sample area is illiterate 30% had studied in a primary school 7.5% and the higher education is 2.5%. Most of the Chepang are illiterate in the study area.

Before some decades, the Chepang believed that there was no use of education for their children. They did not need education to look after their agricultural and other traditional economic activities. So at that time they did not send their children to the school. But now a days in the younger generation of Chepang knowing the benefit and value of education and the active role it can play in their over all life, they have considerable interest in education. The Chepang are more becoming conscious to send their children to school. Now their children are capable of reading and writing.

**Table No.9**  
**Interested to send children to school**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Interested	38	95
Not interested	2	5
Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above table no.9 shows that among the total respondents 95% Chepang are interested to send Their Children in school and 5% are not interested to send their children in school because of their poor economic condition and traditional attitude.

### **6.2.3 Health and Sanitation**

Health is wealth. For the health facility, different institution is providing positive impacts to society and nation. This VDC is little bit far from bazaar .There is one health center and they get treatment in the health center. Some

time *Soyam Sheyvak* (health volunteer) visits there. Many of the traditional healers are common for curing illness of any kinds.

**Table No.10**  
**Treatment pattern of illness in Chepang Community**

Service Provided	House Holds	Percent
Guru	14	35
Health center	8	20
Both	18	45
total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

The table no.10 shows generally tries to reflect the respondent's first choice to get desire treatment for their sickness. Above table shows that 20% house holds go to the health post to get the desire treatment where as 35% go to the *Guruwa* and 45% go to the both treatment. Some of them do not want to go hospital; this is due to lack of medical education. It also signifies their faith over *Guruwa* a traditional village doctor like *dhami, jhakri*.

**Table No.11**  
**Sanitation condition (toilet) of sampled households**

Types of Toilet	Respondents	Percent
permanent	3	7.5
temporary	12	30
none	25	62.5
Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

The table no 11 shows that sanitation condition on sampled households, Out of 40 respondents only 3 house holds i.e; 7.5% have a permanent toilet and 12 households i.e.; 30% have a temporary toilet and 25 households i.e.; 62.5% do not have toilet. From this shows the poor condition of sanitation in Chepang community.

#### **6.2.4 Family Planning**

The most problem of Nepal is population pressure. This is affecting the efforts made of governments for the betterments of the people. The family planning services have been extended in Nepal since 2016 BS mainly through the NGOs.

Since then different types of contraceptives have been made available to the clients. For examples new device have been introduced. Intra uterine device has been developed.

The family planning program of governments is lurching slowly in village. Some Chepang men have undergone vasectomy operation and some of the Chepang women have under gone laparoscopy operation. Few of the man and also women use

Other means of contraceptive for temporary family planning. The knowledge and awareness of family planning seems to be minimum among the Chepang of the study area.

**Table No.12**  
**Distribution of respondents by using of contraceptive device**

<b>Devices</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Condom	3	7.5
Pills	2	5
Vasectomy	2	5
Laparoscopy	3	7.5
Not any device	30	75
Total	40	100

*Source: Field survey 2009*

Above table no 12 shows that out of the 40 respondents, 7.5 %have been used condom and 5% have oral pills, similarly 5% have vasectomy and only 7.5% laparoscopy. And 75% have not used any device of family planning

### **6.2.5. Drinking water**

It is found that most of the households get water from public hand pump, which are provided by governments. Some people depend on well for water.

**Table No.13**  
**Sources of Drinking Water**

<b>Sources of water</b>	<b>No of households</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Private tap water	10	25
Public tap water	25	62.5
others	5	12.5
Total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above the table no.13 shows that out of the 40 house hold 62.5% have a facility of tap water. Where as 25% have their own tap water and others are

12.5%. There is no Drainage system made by any scheme or project. But the slope ness of the land makes the dirty water down to the Kula.

### 6.2.6 Language

Chepang people have their own language that is called “Chepang language”.Chapang language is close to *Newari, gurun, Magar, Thami, Thakali, Sherpa*, Language.

The Chepang speak their own dialect, which is related with Tibet burman. Most of the language speaking in Nepal is from Tibet Burman, comparatively, Chepang language is backed as compared to other ethnic language. They are not conscious about their own language. Thus it is not developed; the language is different from each other even in the different places of Chepang community. It is distinct with the home and community.

**Table No.14**  
**Respondents familiar with their own Language**

<b>Chepang language</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
familiar	15	37.5
Un familiar	25	62.5
total	40	100

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Above table no.14 Show that out of 40 respondent 15 i.e.; 37.5% respondent know the Chepang language and 25 i.e. 62.5% Respondent do not know the Chepang language. The elder Chepang only speak their own language but the younger ones speak the *khas* and Nepali language. They speak the mixed dialects too. Today in the Shaktikhor VDC, The Chepang speak Nepali language with other cast people and in their house and community.

### 6.2.7 Religion

Though religion is a highly personal thing, yet it has a social aspect and social role to play. It has been powerful agency in society and performed many social function. Chepang practices their own tribal deities, who consists of worship of number of spirits and some Hindus deities such as *Ram, Krishna, Shiva, Devi*, etc. On the basis of their practices it is hard to categorize them in to one particular religion of Nepalese context.

Religion is the beliefs in super natural power and the nature or types of the power force mainly based on the socioeconomic and environmental aspect

of the believers that may cause to seen different types of religious practices in the world, But the religious help people to find the answer about the meaning of the life, fortuitous happing a human life and the death through which people try to manage own livelihood as well as their day to day life. Similar religious beliefs bring the individuals together and lesson the gap between them.

### **6.2.8 Food and Drinking Habits**

Specially, the Chepang people in Shaktikhor VDC are non vegetarian. They eat grain for three to six month of the year and subsist on roots, fruits and their forest production for the remaining of the year. There staple food is *Dhido* and boiled maize and millet with pulse and other vegetable soup. Their other foods are maize, millet, *Kaguno*, *samma*, and black white. But they take rice in the festival and ceremonies. They depend on fruits, roots, leaves, and wild vegetables available in the forest. *Niuro*, *Sisno*, *Tanki*, *Koirala* ,*Githa* are a bit bitter in the taste but they make it edible by boiling with the ashy water and wash it. They it buffalo, fish, pork, mutton, chicken, frogs, and toads. Toad is their staple. In the recent year, Chepang of Shaktikhor have left to eat frogs because they are living close to the *bramin* and *kshetry*.

Even though the Chepangs of Shaktikhor have started to earn by the vegetable production such as cucumber, bitter ground, pumpkin etc, still they are in miserable condition and are forced to practice subsistence always. But they are tackling hard in every aspect to their hard life to lead.

As for as Chepang of my study area are concerned they drink alcohol, smoke cigarette, *bidi*, and *surti* in their daily life. The Chepang fore father used to eat beef openly and even today they eat secretly and they don't eat the meet of sheep. It is a taboo (THE CHEPANG,G.M. Gurung) .But now the Chepang of the study area never take beef but in constraint they worship cow as other Hindu and they call it *Gaudi puja*. They eat the meet of sheep too and they have broken their social taboo.

### **6.2.9 Dress pattern**

The Chepang fore fathers wear traditional dress. The male Chepang used the *changa* and the female Chepang used *punga*, which is colorful clothes but change is non color clothes. But now the male Chepang wear *Dhoti*, *Bhoto*, *Daura*, *Kachhad*, *Pheta* because of changes,and female Chepang wear *sari* ,*Cholo*, *Patuca*, and *ghalek*. The poor male Chepang did't wear any clothes on the upper part of the body.They only cover lower part of body with *dhoti*. The female Chepang wear *sari* for the lower part of the body. They cover only the breast by loincloth.

In the Shaktikhor area a few oldest Chepang are wearing their traditional dress but most of the Chepang are wearing their modern dress *Jama* and *bramin*, *Kshetry* do. There were shirt, paint, slipper, cap, vest etc. The female were *sadi*, *blause*, *petticote*, etc. The School girl wears shirt, Frock and rebbon etc. Now a days, the new generation of Chepang (male or female) have no visible distinction between them as compared to *Bramin Kshetry*. We can find the Chepang of the Shaktikhor VDC are rapidly changing as for as their dress patterns are concerned.

#### **6.2.10 Festivals**

The Chepang observed many festivals, which are influenced by Hindu religions like *Dashain*, *Tihar (Dipawali)* and *saune shankranti* is the most important festivals for the Chepang. The Chepang of the study area traditionally celebrate *Maghe Sakranti* too. On that day, they eat fruits, boiled roots, and sweet potato which are prepared before that day.

They also celebrate *Dashain* Festivals, Which is greatest of Hindu. Most of the Chepang are Hindu in Shaktikhor VDC. These Chepang celebrate the festivals very simple way. They immolate the pigs and buffalo during the festival. The buffalos are slaughtered on the *saptimi* (seven day of *dashain*) but the pigs are scarified on the *astami* (8<sup>th</sup> day of *Dashain*). Most of the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC.

Most of the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC doesn't put *Jamara*. The poor Chepang take buff by sharing in the group. On the day of *Dashain*, they put *tika* from their relatives. The son in law and brother in law or daughter or sister bring goat or hen to their parent's house as a gift for *tika*. In return, parents give some money to them. *Depawali* is also celebrating in Chepang community. They worship the goddess *Laxmi*; do *gaudipuja* and *vhai tika* in *Tihar*. There other cultural activities are similar to *Bramin* and *Kshetry* in *Dipawali*.

#### **6.2.11 Birth**

The Chepang do not have religious activities during pregnancy period. But after the birth of child they have some ceremonies like name giving, food introduction and hair cutting which are related to Hindu religion. After the birth of the child they perform name-giving ceremony. If the child born is boy, they perform this ceremony on the 12<sup>th</sup> day and if the child born is girl they perform it on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. They observe the birth pollution within that period. They sprinkle the water mixed with cow's urine (*gahuntpani*) around the house for purity. Then the parents give name to their baby and ties yellow thread around baby's waist and leg for his/her prosperity and good health.

During the polluted period the mother of the newborn baby is not allowed to touch here and there. Some Chepangs invite Pande (Prist of Chepang) to purify the house and to give name to the new baby.

#### **6.2.12 Hair Cutting Ceremony**

Chepang perform this shaving ceremony when the male child reaches at the age of twelve. The boy's maternal uncle is invited to shave the head of the boy. The hair of the boy is shaved by his maternal uncle without the small tuft on the top of head. The maternal give some money and new clothes to the boy. The parents give party to the maternal uncle and relatives on this occasion, his parents and other put *Tika* on his forehead and they bless for his long and happy life. Nowadays, Chepang do not cut the hair because of their poorness so it is disappearing.

#### **6.2.13 Life cycle and changes**

Human life is not immortal. Birth and Death are natural things in every communities of the society. Every ethnic group has their philosophy of life and death, human relationship, importance and their social activities as well as life cycle also. Such ceremonial activities of life cycle are not an exception to change and modification but cultural contact and dominance of majority groups gradually brings change over minority groups.

Birth, marriage and death are the most important event of their life. All communities have almost such occasion as special ceremonies. Chepang communities also have their ceremonies during birth, marriage and death, which are influenced by many kinds of culture.

#### **6.2.14 Death Ceremony**

Every living being had to face an unavoidable event of life that is death. In fact, death' is certain in every life. Chepang accept the death term with the belief of new life after their death. The soul of man transfers the new life and goes to the heaven with their parent's activities of life. The unique tradition of the Chepang community is that they put gold water in the mouth of the dead body and put some money in the pocket.

This is done in order to help the dead body's soul to pay fees for crossing the rivers to reach the heaven. They offer grain, wirer pots, spade, axe, and tobacco in the funeral ground for the dead body. These implements help the soul to go to the heaven. The pregnant women, animal and other cast people should not touch the dead body. They believe that if the animal and non Chepang touch the dead body, it causes the harm for family of cadaver.

When some one dies, they cremate the dead body beside the river. The eldest and younger son mourns for 13 days after the death. The man, who mourns, shaves his hair, mustache, beard and eye brows. He wears a white scarf, doesn't speak to or touch any body and eats boiled rice and ghee for 13 days then he wears white dress provided by mother's brothers. A brothers sons or husbands brothers sons does this in case if there is no son of deceased men or women respectively.

The brothers and close family members also observe death pollution and mourn for 13 days by abstaining from eating salt, meat, millet, pulse, mustard, oil, milk, and curd (Bista, 1965).

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day, they perform a funeral ceremony leaded by *pande*. In the funeral ceremony, *pandey* request to join the group of other dead soul with in their family. He offers a bowl of boiled rice and wine. The family invites all the funeral precisionist, relatives and their villagers and gives boiled rice meat and home made wine. The visitors also bring some beer with them. The married sisters and daughters bring a goat and bottle of wine each.

They give a gift some rupees in return for whoever brings the presents of goats and wine. The funeral is done in the name of dead person.

The Chepang ancestor of Shaktikhor VDC buried the dead body in the hill. But, now days, they started to cremate the dead body in the hill. The mourning continues for the five days for the child, But for elder ones the mourning last form 13 days, There son purifies the death pollution on that day they sprinkle "*Sunpani*" and "*Gahutpani*" in low to brother in low.

### **6.2.15 Clan**

Regarding the Chepang community, differences exist among themselves on their own clan system because some of the Chepang observe the clan system where as other does not the clan system of Chepang of different geographical region differs from each other.

Some Chepangs clans are named from soil, bamboo, and so on. Chepang believed that they were originated from their heritage land and are not migrated from any others places. So clans are different from their origin. Such as clans are *parsirang*, *Gasirang*, *Bansupar*, *Chusarangi*, *Rinthal* etc. Clan are made on their traditional conception and relation of married as *Naike,byal*, *Nagarkoti*, *Bamrange*, *Dhuwakoti*, *petare*, *saune* etc.

Some of the Chepang clan names have been coined from there original village from where they migrated and their clan names are given according to their skill and occupation.

Some Chepang have acquired their clan names due to inter-caste marriage or marriage with other cast and are known as a Tamang-Chepang, Newar-Chepang and Gurung-Chepang etc This type of clan determined when the none Chepang male gate married to Chepang women (gurung).It is easy to make new clan system. So in Chepang community clans systems are found.

#### **6.2.16 Politics in Chepang community**

Chepang are back in the political activities due to the cause of illiteracy and poverty. Chepang have own their political institution known as development committee. Similarly G.M. Gurung writes about he village administration. The *Mijar* is the most powerful man in Chepang in the political hierarchy or village administration like communities of Nepal .As the head of the village; He enjoys respect as well as authority of the whole village. On behalf of the government bodies, the head man is responsible for any job. He practices considerable amount of executives through in actual practices he can never be a despot or a tyrant (the Chepang).

In Chitwan District, The land reform program is applied from 2026B.S. After that time The *Mijars* role is continuously weakening. In addition, there were *pande* and *mahapande* too in the Chepangs community. After 2017B.S. there was a political role of *panchayat* member. But *pandey* and *pancha* were replaced by the *Mijar* for political leadership for in the local area as village *panchayat*. *Panchayat* member were politically powerful and *Pande* and *Mahapande* were were religiously powerful as well. Fore father of Chepang have no interest in the election of the *panchyat*, but now they are fully participating for casting vote and some are participating in the nomination for the candidate to fight the VDC membership election.

In Shaktikhor VDC some Chepang were elected in the *panchayat* membrper in VDC level .In the election most of the Chepang cast their vote and some were elected in *panchayat*. After the political change of 2046 B.S. The Chepang are involved in village politics in continuously. It is interesting that, through they have very little political knowledge, Most of the Chepang are involved in political practices, such as Nepali congress, NCP-UML,INCP-M, RPP, Rastriya Janamorcha etc

**Table No.15**  
**Chepangs participation in local polotics**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1.	Participants	7	17.5
2.	Non participants	33	82.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: DDC Chitwan, 2065*

The table no.15 shows that The Chepang participating in politics in the study area is 17.5% and 82.5% are not participating in any politics. Generally, Chepang members are less in comparison to other ethnic members in politics but it is symbol of political change in Chepang community. Before there fore fathers were not conscious and interested in politics. Today's Chepang are participating in the village development program by involving them selves in a member in village development committee.

Now days, Chepang of study area, *Pande* has responsibility only in their religious work. He can not command in their political work in the village development committee. In the party cases such as their quarrels, adulatory, divorce. Chepang go to their VDC for judgment as other communities, people do. Some female Chepang are active as a health worker and are involving in mothers group.

## CHEPTER-SEVEN

### Economic Condition of Chepang

This Chapter deals with the economic characteristics of respondent on the heading of economic condition, family occupation, size of land holding, annual income and expenditure and skills of Chepang.

#### 7.1 Economic condition of the Chepang

The subsistence farming system of the Chepang people of the Shaktikhor VDC is a marginal type, so they hardly solve their hand and mouth problem. The subsistence agro based agriculture doesn't cope the year around hand to mouth so it is culminated by the gathering. Even today they subsist 4-6 month in the year by forest resource. Their husbandry system is traditional type and they have marginal arable land so they are unable to solve the food problem.

Most of the Chepang are gathering *Githha, vakur, tarul*, leaves, and other forest resource also. The forest resource may be poisonous but they boil and they make it poison free. They are suffering from much kind of disease and malnutrition due to the lack of balanced diet.

Some Chepang borrow the money from rich people to solve their hand to mouth

Problem but they have to return the money with high interest. They have no objection of the high interest. It is the causes of their simple nature and condition of object poverty. They can not fulfill their daily basic needs.

**Table No.16**

#### **Distribution of Respondent by Economic Status**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Middle	4	10
Poor	36	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source field survey 2009*

Above the table no. 16 shows that the Chepang of the study area lived in poor 90% and middle economic status 10%. The Chepang people who can save their money for their production is submitted in the higher classes because of their economy. The middle class is sufficient to solve only hand to mouth problem from their agro based production. Before some decades, the Chepang

were very much afraid of *Malaria* in Chitwan, so they frightened to live in the plain area but they like to live in the vertical slope land, near the bottom of the hill. Agriculture is the main occupation for their livelihood but agriculture is not sufficient for their basic need fulfill.

## 7.2 Occupation

The Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC is engaged in different occupational activities. This table provides the information about the primary occupation. The primary occupation is also not sufficient to the project, the very actual picture of their occupations .Chepang livelihood through many activities. Which is presented as follows?

**Table No.17**  
**Distribution of respondent by occupational status**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agriculture	25	62.5
Business	1	2.5
Services	2	5
Labor	4	10
Skill	8	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: field survey 2009*

Above the table no.17 shows that the Chepang of study area involved in the agriculture 62.5% in business 2.5, 5% in service and 10%people are dependent in labor and 20%in skill. Comparatively, most of the Chepangs are in the agriculture field. The Chepang are engaged in various occupations. Now a day, they are not limiting in their traditional occupation and are trying to penetrate in new field.

## 7.3 Size of Land holding

The occupational patterns indicate that majority of Chepang households depends on agriculture. Therefore the size of farming land and land ownership are the main indicators of economic status of Chepang. The possession of land is greatly valued; among the Chepang of Shaktikhor .It is valued not simply as a factor of production but as continuous source of income and security. On the other hand it is an index of social status and prestige.

**Table No.18**  
**Distribution of respondents by the size of land holding**

<b>Land in Ropani</b>	<b>No. of households</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0.1-10	20	50
11-20	11	27.5
21and above	4	10
Land less	5	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Survey 2009*

Out of total 40 households, 50% have small size of farming lands between 0.1to 10 ropanis 27.5 have medium size of farming land between 11 to 20 ropanies. And only 10% have higher size of farming land above 21 ropanies where as 12.5% houses are land less. In this way there is no satisfactory size of land holding in the Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC. It illustrate that majority of Chepang households were small size land holding farmers between 0.1-10 ropani land.

#### **7.4 Annual Income**

To illustrate the further economic characteristics of the Chepang their annual income was investigated. The respondent couldn't say their exact annual income

So various source of livelihood were asked and the total annual income derived from different source was calculated in terms of money. There was no other important income source to them then that agriculture it self.

The other income source what they do have is nominal and minor or not sufficient for their livelihood. Besides agriculture income there is other side income through service. Wage, labor, animal husbandry, and business etc. All these are not considered as good part of income as agriculture income source. But these sources of income are supposed to contribute substation ally to the economy of Chepangs.

**Table no.19****Estimated annual income of households from different sources**

Income in Rs.	Number of households				
	Agriculture & Livestock	Wage labor	service	skill	business
Less than 5000	-	2	-	4	-
5001-10,000	10	2	-	4	-
10001-20,000	4	-	-	-	-
20001-30000	2	-	-	-	-
30,001-40,000	6	-	1	-	-
40,001-50000	2	-	1	-	1
50,001 and above	1	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2009

The table shows that estimated annual income of the each house holds of Chepang from different sources. The major source of income of Chepang people is agriculture. Only about 8 house holds produce enough food grain to meet household demand.

**7.5 Estimated annual expenditure of Chepang**

To illustrate the further annual expenditure of Chepang was investigated. Above table shows that the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC spend their more income in food grain either it is own production .so various sources of expenditure of Chepang was calculated interims of money.

**Table No.20****Estimated annual expenditure of Chepang**

Expenditure InRs.	No of house holds						
	Food grain from own land	Food grain purches	Jad& Raksi	Feast& festival	clot hing	educa tion	Health
Less than 2000	-	-	4	-	8	15	30
2001-5000	3	9	36	19	18	23	5
5001-10000	4	10	-	10	14	-	5
10001-20000	8	7	-	11	-	-	-
20001-30000	4	6	-	-	-	-	-
30001-40000	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
40001-50000	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
50001-60000	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
60001-70000	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>

Source:Field Survey, 2009

It is interesting that Chepang spend almost equal amount of money for education as of *Jad & raksi*. Even low for health.

Thus this above table no. 20 mentioned analysis clearly indicates the annual deficit budget, which is supplemented by loan borrowing, credit purchased. They borrow money to solve the problem and the money with the high interest. They have no objection for high interest. The above analysis shows that the Chepang community of Shaktikhor socially and economically deprives.

## CHAPTER-EIGHT

### Summary Conclusion and Recommendation

#### 8.1 Summary

Nepal is a country of different ethnic groups, which unify the people of different origins and different cultural backgrounds there live more than 62 ethnic casts through out the country. Among them Chepang is also an ethnic group of Nepal. There are many kinds of cast and ethnic group with the different language religion and culture in our country.

The major ethnic groups of Nepal are *Gurung, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Kumal dhimal*, and Chepang etc. Chepang is one of the ethnic groups of Nepal and they live in hilly region. They are living in poor economic condition, illiterate and back ward to other ethnic group of Nepal. Chepang are living primary stage of poverty and back ward community of the nation. Chepang are god fearing and honest ethnic groups. Their life is intimately connecting with forest. So their feature is imbalanced between the man and nature.

This study has been conducted to find out the Livelihood strategies of Chepang: A case study of Shaktikhor VDC, Chitwan, Nepal. The specific objective of the study area to analyze the livelihood practices of Chepang and to find out socioeconomic condition with socio cultural and demographic Characteristics of Chepang with explore income and employment potentials in relation to mobilization of their skills. And following are the related objective such as their occupation by livelihood, Education and source of income condition, rules and negation of their culture and religion ceremonies by their myth, their employment condition, their daily hand to mouthed problem, condition of their living problem and housing pattern.

The study is based on descriptive research design because it tries to describe livelihood condition, socio-economic condition and cultural and demographic aspect of Chepang. Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study and in the case of nature of data both qualitative as well as quantitative nature of data were used. Households is taken as unit of the study and from the total 396 Chepang households that is universe of the study, 40 households have been selected as sample of the study by using simple random sampling with the seven different places of Shaktikhor VDC.

The primary data for the study were collected through the interview schedule to respondent's interview with the key informant and observation. Finally the gathered data have been first classified on quantitative and qualitative basis and analyze in descriptive and statistical way by using simple statistical method like average mean and percentage.

This study is carried out in Shaktikhor VDC of Chitwan. The total households number of the Chepang are 396 among them 40 households have been selected for the study. The study shows that livelihood strategies of Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC are very poor and miserable condition. They engaged farm as well as off farm activities.

About 62.5% of Chepang households are involving in agriculture as a main occupation. Such as Rice, Millet, Maize, Potato, Cereal, Pumpkin, ginger etc and off farm activities are *Doko, dalo, Namlo, Mat, rope, Theki*, etc. Animal husbandry is an important avocation of Chepang such as Goat, pig, poultry, Cow, Buffalo etc.

The study shows that out of the 40 respondent 12.5% households were landless and there food production is 0. 22.5% of households have food sufficient for 0 to 3month. 30 percent of households have a food sufficient for 3 to 6 month. 15% of households have food sufficient for 6 to 9 month. Similarly 10% of households produce adequate quantity of food grain for 1 year and there were 10% households who have some surplus food.

Among the 40 respondents 75% are involved in traditional houses and 25% involved in modern houses. Out of the 40 respondents 70% are involved in traditional skill and 30% are involved in new learnt skill, therefore Chepangs are engaged in various skills works.

Table no.5, distribution of respondents by age and sex of the sampled out of 40 HHs. Out of the total respondent the age group 20-30 comprises 5%, age group 31-40 is 32% age group 41-50 is 30%, likewise age group 51-60 is 27.50% and above 61 is 5%.

Table no. 6 shows that out of the 40 Chepang household's young populations comprise 45.91% of the total sampled population. Where as economically active population 16-59 years is 49.81% and only 4.28% of Chepang are of the age of 60 year and above. It can be said that majority of Chepang people were middle age group between 16 -59 years.

The study educational status of Chepang Table no.8 shows that among the 40 Respondent 60 % of sampled area is illiterate 30% had studied in primary level. Secondary level 7.5 % and higher education 2.5%. Most of the Chepang are illiterate in study area.

The study Interested to send Children to school among the total 40 respondent 95% of Chepang are interested to send their children in school and 5% are not interested to send their children in school because of poor economic condition and traditional attitude.

The study treatment pattern table no 10 shows that 20% of households go to the households to get desire treatment where as 35% go to the *Guruwa* (Traditional Healer) and 45% go to the both treatment, above the table no 11 shows that sanitation condition sampled households, among the 40 respondent only 3 households 7.5% have permanent toilet 30% have temporary toilet 62.5% do not have toilet. Among the total respondents 7.5% have been used condom, and 5% have oral pills similarly 55 have vasectomy and only 7.5% Laparoscopy and 75% do not used any device of family planning. Above the table sources of drinking water, among the 40 respondent 62.5% have facility of tap water and 25% their own and others are 12%.

The study respondent's familiar with their own language, among the 40 Respondents 37.5% respondent knows the Chepang language and 62.5% respondent do not know the Chepang language.

The study about the food habit among the 40 respondent, most of the Chepangs staple food is *Dhido* and boiled maize and millet, with pulse and vegetable soup. They depends on fruits, roots, leaves, *Tanki*, *koirala*, *Githa*, are a bit bitter in the taste but they make it edible by boiling with ashy water and wash it.

The study Chepang participation in local politics among the 40 respondents 17.5 are participating in the local politics, 82.5% are not participating in any politics.

The study distribution of respondents by economic status of the study area lived in poor 90% and middle economic status 10% and the study about occupational status among the 40 respondents 62.5% in agriculture and 2.5% business, only 5% service 10% are depend in labor and 20% are skilled. And another study about size of land holding among 40 respondent, 50% have 0 to 10 ropanies 27.5% have 11 to 20 ropanies where as 10% have above 21 ropanies and 12.5% households are landless.

The estimated annual income of the each households of Chepang from different sources. The major sources of income of Chepang people are agriculture; only the 8 households produce enough food grain to meet household demand.

## 8.2 Conclusion

Chepang people are considered Hindu *Sanskritized* group because they have been celebrating all Hindu festivals. The main objective of the study is to examine the livelihood condition of Chepang people of shaktikhor VDC of Chitwan Distric. The literacy rate is low with less percentage of literate female. Most of them do not know the importance of education. The alternate works are more beneficial and give quicker returns than the education. So the illiterate persons have adverse affect on their socio-economic condition. They utilize their indigenouse skill to fulfill their domestic requirements since the skill of these people do not pay significant role to bring change in their economic status.

The chepang of the study area has some traditional skill of making *Naglo*, *Doko*, and *Namlo* by selling these products in local market and from wage labor they are able to supplement their subsistence to some extend. The Chepang of shaktikhor VDC had their own ways of performing birth, marriage and death ceremonies. But the basis concepts of performing lie cycle ceremonies are according to Hindu religion.

## 8.3 Recommendations

To uplift the livelihood of the Chepang community of Chitwan District following recommendations are put forward:

- The literacy rate is low. Only 40% are literate where as primary 30% seconry 7.5% and higher 2.5%, 60 % people are illiterate. Most of them don't know the importance of education. So, there should be special kind of incentive to the children of this tribe for education. And a regular class for "adult education" is required to conduct which will be proved to be one step push forward for the adult of this community. That will give the incentive to their young children also.
- The agriculture pattern is old. Thus, some sort of intensive type of farming scheme should be encouraged in this area. 'JT' and 'JTA' must be sent for their help regularly, so that they could be convinced about intensive type of farming.
- The implication of small farmer program will be fruitful for the Chepangs.
- Government should provide some low interest lone for livestock and agriculture production. Government should be focused income generation

activities, such as Goat farming, pig farming, bee keeping, vegetable farming etc.

- They were not trained with any vocational guidance. So proper training for mobilization of internal resources is required.
- Ensure mechanism of social integration through cross-cultural exchange.
- They are less conscious in politics. Thus, it is necessary to motivate Chepang to take part in local politics.
- Encourage participatory management approach.
- A location of special program for Chepang is in education, health or job.
- Provide skill development training.

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## Appendix-1

### Questionnaire on livelihood strategies of Chepang: A case study of Shaktikhor VDC, Chitwan

1. Name of Respondent:-

Age: -

Sex: -

Educational status:-

Marital Status: -

Religion:-

2. Family Background :-

S.No.	Age Group	Male	Female	Total
1.	0-5			
2.	5 to 15			
3.	16 to 60			
4.	60 and above			

3. Educational Attainment :-

S.No.	Age group	Male		Female		Total	
		Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate
1.	6 to 16						
2.	16 to 60						
3.	>60 years						

4. Sources of drinking water ?

- (a) Private Tape water
- (b) Public Tape Water
- (c) Well
- (d) Others

5. System of Medical treatment.

- (a) Hospital
- (b) Traditional Medicine
- (c) Both

6. Do you go to the health center/ health worker?  
 (a) Yes  
 (b) No

7. Number of family member  
 (a) Smoking.....  
 (b) Drinking alcohol.....

8. In which family do you live ?  
 (a) Nuclear  
 (b) Joint

**9. What is your major occupation ?**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Particular</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
1.	Farming		
2.	Fishery		
3.	Wage labors		
4.	Animal husbandry		
5.	Servant		
6.	weaving mates and ropes		
7.	Others		

10. Type of house.  
 (a) Modern  
 (b) Traditional

11. Which type of marriage do adopt?  
 (a) Polygamy  
 (b) Monogamy

12. Which treatment pattern do you take?  
 (a) Guruwa  
 (b) Health Centre  
 (c) Both

13. What type of toilet do you have?  
 (a) Permanent  
 (b) Temporary  
 (c) None

14. Which contraceptive device do you take?  
 (a) Condom  
 (b) Pills  
 (c) Vasectomy  
 (d) Laparoscopy  
 (e) Not any device

15. Do you participate in local Politics?

- (a) Participate
- (b) Not participate

16. What is your main language?

.....

17. What is your Secondary Occupation ?

.....

18. Do you have your own land?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

19. How much land do you possess ?

- (a) Landless
- (b) 0.1-10 Ropanies
- (c) 11-20 Ropaines
- (d) 21 and above Ropaines

20. Types of Land.

.....

21. Food Sufficiency.

- (a) 3 months
- (b) 6 months
- (c) 9 months
- (d) 12 months
- (e) Excessive

22. What are your alternative sources of food ?

.....

**23. Livestock information:**

S. No.	Types	Own	Sharing basis	Total
1.	Cow ,oxen			
2.	Buffalo			
3.	Goat			
4.	hen, ducks			
5.	Pig, wild bore			
6.	Others			

24. Do you think it is compulsory to send your children to school ?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

**25. Income Level:**

<b>Income in R.S</b>	<b>Numbers of households</b>				
	<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Wage</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Business</b>
Less than 5000					
5001-10000					
10001-20000					
20001-30000					
30001-40000					
40001-50000					
50001-above					

**The End**

## Check List

### Only for Key Informant

- 1) When and where did you and your Fore Father come in this village?
- 2) Do you have own traditional dress pattern?
- 3) What mother tongue do you speak?
- 4) Do you have your own Food habit?
- 5) Do you take rest once a week?
- 6) Do you have your own job?
- 7) What do you do in leisure time?
- 8) What is your main occupation?
- 9) Do you have land?
- 10) How much do you earn in one month?
- 11) Any other noticeable culture and tradition in your community?
- 12) Indicate the type of customs, which is being a practice in your family during birth, marriage and death ceremonies?
- 13) What type of program do you wish with government should implement for the upliftment of your community?

S.N.	Problem	Reason	Needs
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Thank you very much for your kind and hospitality.