

# CHAPTER - I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country with nearly 76 % working population employed in agricultural sector, but contributing only 40% in GDP of the country. With per capita GDP of \$ 220 Nepal ranks among the poorest countries in the world and about 42 % of the population remains below the poverty line, while this rate has not changed significantly over the last 30 years (ADB, 2001).

Almost 95 percent of the poor live in rural area and 82 % of them have agriculture as primary source of livelihood (Bhattra, 2001). Almost all agricultural land is privately owned at household level. More than 10 % household are landless. Over 50 % household possess only 66 of the total cultivated land of the country and whereas top 9 % households control 47 % of the agricultural land (CBS, 1997). Such unjust distribution and control over the land resources on the one hand with no access to alternative means of livelihood on the other hand made the Nepalese poor vulnerable insecure and backward (Paudel, 2002).

'*Kamaiya* system is a form of bonded labor practiced in five districts of western Terai of Nepal; namely Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Kanchanpur. An indigenous group called Tharu traditionally inhabit there. Their simplicity, native and innocent characterizes this ethnic group. Exploiting such behavior, newly emerged land lords migrated from the neighboring hill districts displaced them from their land. These people who are largely illiterate and possess very few non-agricultural skill were forced to enter into bondage with the new landlords for payment of the debt incurred (Bista, 1998).

Nepalese society is full of inequality and heterogeneity. Despite being the caste system is illegal in Nepal, people still following it. As a result, some traditions of Nepal remain inhuman and cruel. *Kamaiya* system (bonded labor) is one of them. So, prevalence of widespread poverty and absence of alternative means of livelihood the poor Tharus fully depend upon their bare hands as farm laborers. Farm workers are popularly known *Haliya*, *Haruwa*, *Chanuwa*, *Kamaiya*, *Gothala*, *Bhausarwa* and *Chhegarahaw*. The practice of *Kamaiya* system is a residue of former slavery, which still exists specially in the mid and far western Terai districts.

The term “*Kamaiya*” is derived from Tharu community at the structure of joint family system. Earlier almost all blood relations used to under one root as it served the purpose of providing surplus labor needed for farming and household activities. Sometimes as many as a hundred families lived together. In such system the eldest son of the house, known as Gardhuriya in Dang, occupies the highest position in terms of power and prestige. In other word, he is the sole decision maker through not necessary the sole breadwinner. Beside he is even responsible for performing all religious ceremonies.

According to historian Baburam Acharya, “The Tharus are indigenious to Terai of Nepal and they have strong nationality and possess a group feeling.” Unfortunately, some of them were controlled by landlords and silently suffered from slavery system for a long time. There was different type of slavery system or bonded labour systems in Nepal. For example; ‘*Das Pratha*’, ‘*Haliya Pratha*’, ‘*Kamaiya Pratha*’, ‘*Kamlhari Pratha*’.

### **Status of *Kamaiya***

Socially and economically all *Kamaiya* families were totally controlled by their masters. Physically and mentally they are exploited. The exploitation of landlord over *Kamaiya* family is often most extreme with the women *Kamaiya*’s wives and daughters. A female member (wife, sisters, or daughters) of *Kamaiys* family who work in a landlord’s house together with their male member are known as ‘*Bukrahi*’. A *Kamaiya* with *Bukrahi* can get comparatively more wages than working as s single. Thus who has no wife tries to involve any working age female from his family (may be mother, sister, or other female members) to get more wages. The *Bukrahi* is also entitled to get separate wage to be added to the wage of the *Kamaiya* but generally it is not more than one fourth of the wage earned by the single although she also works hard and for long hours from household chores to the farms of the landowner. *Kamaiya*’s daughter known as ‘*Kamlhari*’ perform all household chores in landlord’s houses in yearly contract basis with separate wages. Women members of family who work in the land lord’s house particularly in kitchen are known as ‘*Orginiya*’ and most of the time she has to be ready to provide any kind of service to her landlord. Thus, they were in more vulnerable and unsecured situation.

*Kamaiya* families were freed from the generation of bonded labor system in general. However, those families were more affected from such haphazard decision made by the government. To some extent, they are benefitted and simultaneously, in many cases, they were also badly affected. Although those families have been benefited from non-formal and income generating activities after liberation. Most of the *Kamaiya* families, who left the landlord's house immediate after announcement, became jobless.

Maintaining their day to day life, they started to look for various employment opportunities to earn whatever was possible with in their areas. Most of the male members went outside looking for the job and women had to take responsibility to look after the whole household burden including taking care of elderly people and feeding the children of the family. To fulfill their basic day- to - day requirements, many girl children and adolescents took the nearly town to work in a very minimal wages as domestic workers or hotel and teashop labors. After the liberation of freed *Kamaiya*, many national and international organizations have involved themselves in uplifting the freed families. Freed *Kamaiya* are targeted in many development interventions. The participating organizations have been trying to bring them in to the mainstream of their development.

### **Freed *Kamaiya*'s Situation**

The government of Nepal abolished *Kamaiya* system in Nepal in July 17<sup>th</sup> 2000. They are among 10000 farmer bonded farm workers who were freed from a generation - old debt to feudal landowners in Nepal. The government enacted the "labor Act", under the act, all kinds of bonned labors are banded. *Kamaiyas* have been freed from their debt. It also has the provision for punishment of up to 3- 10 years imprisonment for those who continue the practice of bonded labor.

After a few week of the announcement, landlords started to remove their *Kamaiya* from the *Bukras* provided earlier. The ultimate result was the unexpected gathering of *Kamaiya* in the street of the district HQs along with their families. As they were forced to come to under the open roof of the rainy cloudy sky, there was no option for them other than to sit on picket in front of the DDC office. The situation was quite complicated and there was no immediate solution from other social actors except the government. The government could not manage the situation in the absence of any

short term or long term plans to address the problem. As an emergency management for a very short period, *Kamaiyas* were asked to live temporarily on the fellow land in so-called camps by making temporary huts with tarpaulins or plastic roof provided by the DDCs and NGOs. In the middle of the monsoon, it was the difficult thing to do. Most of the former *Kamaiya* families did not have utensils to cook food, enough clothes to put on and even a charpoy to accommodate their family members. There were no toilet and sanitation facilities. This resulted in to outbreak of diseases like encephalitis and diarrhea. The problem of freed *Kamaiya* has become more complicated than in the past. In this way freed *Kamaiya* were liberated has done without well preparedness. The issue was politicized and they were declared free but no one ever thought of the complications that could arise after the freedom (Ms \_ Nepal 2002).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

*Kamaiya* system is an issue that could have tarnished the image of Nepal admits the world wide cry for human right movements. The system is prevalent mainly in the five district of the mid and far western Terai region of Nepal. The *Kamaiya* system in Nepal is a permanent farm labour arrangement. Some of these laborers or *Kamaiyas* with “*Saunki*” (loan) are tied in relationship bandage and unfree, attachment or equal to bonded laborers.

Bonded labour system is one of the worst form of abuse of human right. Banke, Bardia, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Dang and Surkhet are the districts where the *Kamaiya* system has been a burning problem. In the form of bonded labor, *Kamaiyas* are surviving in the vicious circle of poverty. Debt is inherited from the previous generation and transferred to the next. Thus many children are bonded even before they have born under *Kamaiya* system. Any form of slavery is social evil. All people have own rights to survive freely, which is the human right. After *Kamaiya* movement, the bonded labor or any form of slavery under *Kamiya* system is freed on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2000 by the government.

After freedom, they faced many problems. Previously they lived in the house of landlord and work for them and something of the livelihood received from landlord but after freedom, they became homeless. Many problems have seen such as income, education, health, resettlement are displaced. They had no place to stay, no eat, and no

money to manage their new life. They are land working people. Now they are in difficulty due to lack of other type of skill and training. In the report of Bhusal and White (2001), the government announces to provide piece of land the freed *Kamaiya*, so that they can be settled but this process is not completed. Some freed *Kamaiya* staying in the camp and unregistered land. Therefore their socio-economic condition is very poor.

Thus the government, I/NGOs have been working with main aims of uplifting the overall status of freed *Kamaiya* families. In this process; freed *Kamaiya* families got various opportunities to be involve in different development process and interventions. Some changes (both positive and negative) have also been taken place in freed *Kamaiyas*' life after freedom. But how *Kamaiyas* have experienced and perceived the various development interventions which have been going on in their settlement. Therefore this study is particularly focused to assess the change which *Kamaiya* have perceived in their life after freedom and to what extent the development interventions have supported them to fulfill their requirements. This is important and is expected to help in understanding the basic need of *Kamaiya* as revealed from their experiences.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to assess the overall changes in freed *Kamaiya* in Dang district since the government announced them free in July 17<sup>th</sup> 2000. The specific objectives are as follows:

- ) To look at the attitude of *Kamaiya* after being freed from *Kamaiyahood* in Dang district.
- ) To explore the perception of freed *Kamaiya* about the interventions launched to uplift them.
- ) To assess the changes they have been perceived by *Kamaiya* in their lives after being freed.

### **1.4 Significant of the Study**

Before the liberation of the *Kamaiya* families, many studies had been carried out about the system in Nepal in general. The issue of freed *Kamaiyas* became a new area of intervention for research and studies since the government of Nepal announced

them free. Therefore it is important to study the situation of the *Kamaiya* after liberation.

After abolition of the *Kamaiya* system, there have been efforts to rehabilitate the freed *Kamaiya*. HMG/N declared allocation of parcel of land (2 – 5 *Kattha* per household) and 10,000 rupees grant for the house building for the rehabilitation of landless and homeless freed *Kamaiyas*. It is legally good but in practice that was not taken care of welfare situations. Though the government gave the land for setting down but that is useless land and they had no means of the fulfilling needs. Now the *Kamaiyas* are setting down those places with increasing scarcity of resources, means and opportunity for livelihood. In this particular freed *Kamaiya* settlement, there are different types of NGOs / INGOs working for the development of *Kamaiyas* socio-economic status. However few positive changes could be found towards *Kamaiyas* socio-economic status. As for the improvement of freed *Kamaiyas*, it is necessary to know about problem and situation of freed *Kamaiya*. So the study is important to know about the changes in the lives of freed *Kamaiya* and their situation.

This study is focused on understanding how freed *Kamaiya* compare themselves being a *Kamaiya* and free person after the liberation. An attempt has also been made to understand how they perceive these change as an individual and as a *Kamaiya* and how they understand or perceive various development interventions being carried out by development agencies particularly in their settlement to uplift their status. It will also make clear that *Kamaiya* are not only Tharus but they also belong viz. *Brahmin*, *Chhetri*, *Dalit*, etc. Somehow it will also be helpful to NGOs / INGOs to conduct the freed *Kamaiya* management programs in the communities.

## **1.5 Organization of the Study**

For the sake of simplicity, this study has been structured in to seven chapters.

- ) Chapter I outlines the background of study, statement of problem and objectives, significance, and organization of the study.
- ) Chapter II gives the overview of the literature to complete this study. Relevant literatures have been discussed to explore ways to best study the proposed topic. Both empirical and theoretical perspectives as cited in various literatures have been thoroughly examined to conceptualize the current trends on the understanding of the freed *Kamaiya* issue and conceptual framework.

- ) Chapter III describes the detail about research methodology, tools and technique, which were applied and used to collect the primary and secondary data for the study and also outlines the limitation of the study.
- ) Chapter IV introduces the study area, location, demography, social services and socio-cultural setting of the study area.
- ) Chapter V describe about the population composition, literacy status, economic activities and short description about development intervention that have been running in the study area.
- ) Chapter VI explains about the data processing interpretation and findings of analysis.
- ) Chapter VII concentrates on summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER - II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature review for “changes in the Lives of Freed *Kamaiya*” has been done with focus on the past researches and studies carried out by our seniors in early days. Different reports prepared by various development organizations and individuals extensively involved in freed *Kamaiya* development have also been reviewed.

#### **2.1 The *Kamaiya* (Bonded Labor) System**

The *Kamaiya* system has been defined in many ways. The term originally derived from the *Tharu* dialect is defined in Nepal Dictionary as ‘A tiller land earner mainly or obedient person ; one who earns along with family in other’s land by borrowing in cash or kind from the land owner or peasant equivalent to him.’ However, the definition doesn’t portray the nature of *Kamaiya* full in its present context. It virtually fails to recognize the bonded nature of *Kamaiya*. Traditionally, a *Kamaiya* has been defined as an agricultural labour who has infact, ‘life – long involvement in works pertaining to land or other sorts of permanent property. Instead, he remains tied to lands alone forever’ (INSEC, 1992).

In many African, Asian and Latin American countries bonded labor system was prevailed. The present Caribbean of South American was also carried as a farm labor for the English people. As the time passed by many social revolution occurred and people became free from the bonded labor. After the restoration of democracy, people in Nepal also organized and put their voice against such system. As the consequence, bonded labor freed and setting processing for freed *Kamaiya* took place (Chaudhary, 2005).

Chaudhary (1999) has revealed the *Kamaiya* are these courageous bold, laborious and energetic laborers or so called farmers who work with their families in the farms of landlord instead of getting some cash amount or grain. It indicates that *Kamaiya* are poor persons who do not have their own land for cultivation. They are working as slave to the landlord’s house.

The modern meaning of the *Kamaiya* is bonded labor. There are different kinds of bonded labor in Nepal. *Kamaiya* is probably the most exploitative form. It is practiced



not in Nepal of movies and mountaineers, but in the western part of Nepal's lowland Terai plains. The vast majority of *Kamaiya* are the indigenous Tharu (INSEC, 2001).

### **Kamaiya System in Nepal**

The *Kamaiya* system in Nepal is associated with *Tharu* community. A negligible number of *Kamaiya* may be found from other castes. Though the exact year can not be traced back as to when the *Kamaiya* system emerged, but it is estimated that probably the system had started to develop since 1950s from Dang in the present from. Before eradication of Malaria, rulers of the period used to provide considerable quantity of land to the member of the royal family, government bureaucrats, army officials and priests as the prize for their better services. Similarly after the control of malaria in Terai during 1960s a large number of people from hills and mountains of the country and also from India started to migrate and settle down in this region. The clever and smart migrants gradually started to capture the better located and fertile land owned by the hard working people of the *Tharu* community. The migrants registered the land legally in their own names with the help of concerned government officials. Consequently most of the *Tharus* were displaced from their own land by the migrants through unfair means. They themselves also started sell their land at very cheap prices in order to pay land tax, to buy seeds and other inputs repay their loans and to celebrates their traditional festivals. As a result, most of the small landowners of *Tharu* community became landless and started to work as wage labour to the legal owners of the land (GEFONT, 2001).

The *Kamaiya* or bonded labor system was nurtured with in the Tharu community so as to ensure round the year cheap agriculture labors. Due to lack of awareness and literacy, most of the Tharu's landed up as *Kamaiyas* to both Tharu and non Tharu landlords. Because of the poverty of the Tharu community, their children are susceptible to exploitative labor such as domestic work. The trade in domestic servants takes place on "*Maghi Festivals*" in January, which marks the break in the farming season. Landlords came to village looking for new workers. Children already working as *Kamaiya* are usually return home at this time for holidays. On that, day some get a break from their work others get their contracts renewed (Subedi,1999).

In Nepal the Rana rulers allowed local Tharu headman to collect taxes for the crown. As the system of indirect taxation changed gradually over time, the tax collectors

were increasingly drawn from high - caste Nepali speaking - people from the hills. These tax collectors were called “*Zamindar*” (Landlords). In addition, large tracts of land in the Terai were given away by the rulers as rewards to courtiers or general to ensure their loyalty. The land granted in this way was called “*Birta*” land and the recipients “*Birtawala*”. They had the power to collect on the land and in return paid tribute to the crown (Dhital, 2001).

The *Kamaiya* system revolves round a yearly contract made between an agricultural labourer and a landlord. A *Kamaiya* would make an agreement with a landowner every *Maghi* or New Year. The landlord promises to provided and agreed upon remuneration- usually paid in sacks of rice in year for the landlord. Most *Kamaiya* own no land themselves, or if they do, it is far too little to provide for them. Most *Kamaiya* were already in debt. The initial loan (it is called “*Saunki*”) was small but the steep rate of interest made repayment impossible. Therefore they must sign contract with the landlord or find another landlord willing to take over their debt. At least there are three types of labor relation related to *Kamaiya* system, which help to bird the *Kamaiyas* with the system (Sharma, 1999). This system can also be understood by 31 – Land, labor and loan. Between *Kamaiyas* and landlords have various kings of interlinked contracts like;

#### **Land Contract:**

According to the contract *Kamaiya* family supply the labor and landlord supply the input. Certain piece of land out of the total land, which a *Kamaiya* cultivates, is separated. It depends on the total land of the landowners and the number of working members of *Kamaiya* family. A fixed proportion of crops what the *Kamaiya* produces from the farmland of the land master are given to him. This proportions various from *Tikur* (one third) to *Panchkur* (20%). Some land owners provide the proportion in each crop; where as some of them count it only in case of major crops (mainly paddy).

#### **Labor Contract:**

The employer requires the *Kamaiya* to bring along other family member, notably wife to work for the employer. The female labor accompanying a *Kamaiya* is popularly known in the house doing domestic chores and also in farm activities. Such labor is paid meager annual wage, usually one - tenth of the wage for *Kamaiya*. Typically a

*Kamaiya* is paid about 80 *Kachcha Man* (about 1000 kg.) of paddy and *Bukrahi* gets 4 to 10 *Man* of paddy for her work. The wage of the *Kamaiya* is less when not accompanied by other female members of the house- sister or mother. Generally, major earners of *Kamaiya* family thus get tied up with one job, virtually with one pay. This greater reduces the earning of the family to a bare minimum, enough only to meet the day to day food consumption needs. (A revisit to the *Kamaiya* system of Nepalese, 1998, Shiva and Manasa Thakurathi).

### **Loan Contract:**

The family members who enter the *Kamaiya* system are not allowed working outside to earn more for their family and consequently they are compelled to borrow more money from their landlord to make their ends meet and other necessary expenses (marriage, medical, treatment, festival, etc.). The new loans received accumulate annually on the principal amount known as '*Saunki*'. In principle, a *Kamaiya* is free to change his landlord at the end of the contract period during *Maghi* every year but in practice he can't change before their landlords only who the new landlord pays the *Saunki* to the old landlord. The parents hand over the liabilities to their children. Due to lack of alternative opportunity of employment, a *Kamaiya* is never able to pay back of loan. Therefore, the *Kamaiya* has to accept a life of perpetual bonded labor. In this way the whole *Kamaiya* families are sold from one landlord to another.

The Tharus of Nepal are honest simple and hard working people representing aboriginal ethnic group. Mostly concentrated in the Terai belt of the country. The western Terai, familiar as *Naya Muluk* and *Kalapani* was densely covered by forest where only Tharus were the early dwellers struggling with malaria on the one hand. And wild animals on the other hand. Both were equally dangerous to their lives. The Tharus of Far Western and Mid Western Terai are synonymous to *Kamaiya* as most of them fall under the system (RRN, 1999).

The constitution of Nepal, 1990 prohibits any kind of slavery or serfdom. But no law against such practice is formulated. London based Anti Slavery International and Kathmandu based Human Rights group Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) have conducted a study on the status of *Kamaiya* in mid and far western Nepal. They concluded nearly 95 % of 100000 *Kamaiya* family members in the region belong to ethnic Tharu community (Peter Lowe, 2002).

The long-term contract (normally for one year) between *Kamaiyas* and landlords along with other rural- feudal relations associated with it is known as *Kamaiya* system in general in the western Terai region. Long-term contract is prevalent in every part of the country known as *Harawa*, *Charawa*, *Hali*, *Gothala*, etc. in accordance with the local social practice. The terms and conditions also vary from place- to place and person - to person. Civil Society believes that *Kamaiya* system is another form of slavery that was formally abolished in 1924 by the then Prime Minister Chandra Shamsar Rana (GFONT, 2001).

INSEC report 2001 states that basically Tharus are honest but other people play trick with them to snatch land from their ownership. In old days, *Kamaiyas* sold land at a very low price remaining as farm laborers all the time. INSEC states that if we look back at the history of land reform system and free labor system in Nepal we have to study the Nepalese society since unification. There were many types of land system like; *Raikar*, *Birta*, *Guthi*, *Kipat*, *Ukhada*, *Rajya* and so on. Report 2000 of BASE states that there was no only slavery system but unpaid labour system as well. According to law, only government could use unpaid labour in the name of '*Jharu*', '*Beth*', '*Begar*' (Pyakurel, 2000).

The Land Reform Program implemented in 1960s also promoted the *Kamaiya* system in this region. It was because absentee landowners started to cultivate their land by using *Kamaiya* and their family to save their land from exceeding the ceiling. Almost 60 % of *Kamaiya* families are landless. 45 % in Dang to 92 % in Banke. Altogether 57 % of landlords do not have land in their name. Among the indebted *Kamaiya* families, 58 % are landless, 24 percent have their *Bukra* on barren land where as the remaining 18 percent have their own land albeit as very small plot. Almost all landless *Kamaiya* families used to live in the '*Bukra*' provided by their landowners with whom they had worked before the announcement of *Kamaiya* liberation on July 17, 2000. The condition of the landless families has been found more vulnerable as compared to those with small piece of land (Sharma, 1999).

Clearly it is difficult for those *Kamaiyas* to change their master who have borrowed heavy amount or whose '*Saunki*' have multiplied many time. As a result, they are forced to work under the terms and conditions imposed by their master. Those who change their master fall in to the swamp of loan instead of improving their condition and ultimately become bonded laborers. A *Kamaiya* is free theoretically to bargain

during *Maghi* about the term and conditions of the contract for the next year but he is forced by social, economic and other compulsion to accept the terms and conditions dictated by his master. During the contract period neither the *Kamaiyas* can break the contract nor does the land master relieve him from the job (GFONT, 2001).

## **2.2 Wages System to Kamaiya Worker**

The wage system varies with a high degree of diversity in *Kamaiya* prone districts and *Kamaiya* to *Kamaiya* even of the same place. Some major forms of wages are as follows;

A fixed proportion of crops that the *Kamaiya* produce from the farm land of their master are given to him. This proportion varies from *Tikur* to *Panchkur* (20%). Some landowners provide the proportion in each crop, whereas some of them count it only in case of main crops (mainly paddy).

Certain piece of land out of the total, which a *Kamaiya* cultivates, is separated and the *Kamaiya* is entitled to receive the total production of the piece of land as his remuneration of the whole year. It depends on the total land of the landowner and the number of working members of the family of the *Kamaiya* concerned. It is observed that the normal practice is to provide the output of 2-4 *Katthas* from one *Bigha* of land.

There is also general system of wages payable in kind along with “*Masura*” which is paid by ‘*Bora*’. A *Bora* is equivalent to 75 kg of paddy. It also depends on the number of family members working for the landowner. Normally practice, as observed, is to provide 675 kg. In some cases, the payment of remuneration to *Kamaiya* is calculated on monthly or yearly basis. It is very low in comparison to the existing market rate.

Beside this, landowners provide a residential hut (*Bukra*) and kitchen garden (*Chheuti*) to the homeless *Kamaiya* for the time period he works with him. Thus in the present context, the highly exploitative system of wages labor associated to land is the *Kamaiya* system (GFONT, 2001)

In many aspects the *Kamaiya*'s social lives are controlled by their masters: freedom to travel, access to medicine, control of property and most especially right to their own children. Of course the extent of the landlord's claim varies - in some cases the general description may not fit in but the point is that the *Kamaiya* landlord relationship lays claim to the *Kamaiya*'s existence as an independent social being.

Some one is bought, some one is sold. In the extreme cases, the *Kamaiya* becomes a person who goes on working, loving-dreaming perhaps despite their social death (Peter Lowe, 2002).

### **2.3 Abolition of Kamaiya System**

Civil society believes that *Kamaiya* system is another form of slavery that was formally abolished in 1924 by the then Prime Minister Chandra Shamser Rana. But the *Kamaiya* system was practiced for decades. In 1990 the constitution of Nepal (2047 B.S.) prohibits any kind of slavery or forced labor. In the *Kamaiya* system, labors were treated as bonded and forced to work for their landlords. Therefore it was widely criticized as another form of slavery. After the restoration of democracy, people of Nepal organized and put their voice against such system. As consequence, the process of settling down freed *Kamaiya* took place (Shivakoti, 2003).

While reviewing the nature of the major programs conducted by the organizations before the declaration of liberation of *Kamaiyas*, we can categorize those in to awareness raising activities, formal and informal education, income generating activities, campaigning for health care, organizing and unionizing and lobbying and advocacy for the abolition of *Kamaiya* system. In addition, the government was implementing *Kamaiya* livelihood programs. Even after the declaration, most of these programs are being continued with some additions and modifications. Visibly after liberation, the advocacy for abolition of *Kamaiya* system has turned towards short-term relief as well as long term developmental rehabilitation programs for former *Kamaiya*. The short term and primary relief programs after liberation includes construction of temporary huts; distribution of food grains and clothing and arrangement for drinking water, health care and schooling of the children. The distribution of land to the landless and homeless *Kamaiya* families for rehabilitation and permanent settlement is the long term program (GFont, 2001).

*Kamaiya* movement was started 1985. BASE organized *Kamaiya* and other Tharu people in western Terai region. In 1994 London base Anti Slavery International and Kathmandu based Human Rights group. INSEC conducted a study on status of *Kamaiya* in mid and far western Nepal. They conclude nearly 95 % of 100,000 *Kamaiya* family members in the region belong to ethnic Tharu community. Local NGOs implement literacy, income generating activities and child education program

for *Kamaiya* and other Tharu people with the support of International agencies (Peter Lowe. 2001). The *Kamaiya* liberation movement was backed by right groups in Nepal and abroad. As many human rights activists, educationists, sociologists and politicians advocated on behalf *Kamaiya*, then the government of Nepal started some home work to settle them down in to two stage such as;

For the first time INSEC conducted a survey in 1992 and then other NGOs also became interested to work for *Kamaiya*. GFONT started to work for them from 1994. The government came into the scene from 1993 (GFONT, 2001). The HMG Nepal started to allocate budget on specific programs for *Kamaiya* and their family from the Fiscal Year 1993/94. National Budget allocated to conduct various activities under “*Kamaiya Rin Mochan Tatha Britti Bikas Karyakram*” under Ministry of Land Reform and Management. According to a 1995 study conducted by the Ministry, there were more than 83000 members in nearly 15,000 *Kamaiya* families in these five districts. (MOLM, 1995)

Just after the restoration of multiparty democracy, the issue of *Kamaiya* workers came into highlight as an issue of human right violation in the form of Bondage and debt bondage. As a consequence, NGOs, INGOs and UN Agencies became active on the issue of bonded labor considering *Kamaiya* system as the extreme form. Government Organizations also came in to the scene to work in favor of *Kamaiya* workers particularly through the Ministry of Land Reform and Management (GFONT, 2001).

In July 17, 2000 the government of Nepal abolished *Kamaiya* system in Nepal. They are among the 10,000 former bonded farm workers who were freed. All kind of bonded labors are banned. *Kamaiya* are free from their debt. It also declared the provision of punishment of 3-10 years imprisonment for those who continue the practice of bonded labor. The government also formed a high level *Kamaiya* identification and monitoring committee headed by Deputy Prime Minister in the centre and also in the five concerned district headed by DDC chairman. However, they are struggling to fulfill their basic needs and to get basic human rights as well (MS Nepal, 2001). In the second policy concept paper, government has mentioned about the data collection and to fulfill the basic requirement of freed *Kamaiya* families (ILO, 2002)

The contribution of ILO/ IPEC on the elimination of child worker in general and child bonded labor in particular is also significant. The ILO, UNISEF and DANIDA are working with the government and local units, NGOs and trade unions, which have had a significant impact in all the five *Kamaiya* concentrated districts. The Italian Social Partners Initiative through ILO-IPEC in the field of Bonded adult and child Labor in cooperation with trade union movement particularly GFONT is important in this regard. The ILO also has announced to launch a project entitled sustainable Elimination of Bonded Labor in Nepal to protect and promote the rights of agriculture workers for three years. This project includes creation of alternative employment opportunities and addition to education and health support to the children of former *Kamaiya* families (GFONT, 2001)

Second UN conference on Human Settlement states that adequate shelter mean more than a roof over the head, means privacy, peace, physical accessibility, security, stability, durability, lighting, heating, and ventilation, basic infrastructure, water supply sanitation and waste management facilities related factors. In December 2001, the high school student of Denmark decided that they would support the freed *Kamaiya* of Nepal by collecting money for a school project run by BASE and MS Nepal. (MS Nepal, 2002).

As an outcome of the continuous pressure by the *Kamaiya*, Trade unions and NGOs HMG ultimately decided to provide five *Kattha* of land to the liberated but landless and homeless *Kamaiya*. However the government has not implemented the decision effectively. Recently, the government declared that although 9,378 landless *Kamaiya* have been provided land for their settlement. Unfortunately in practice, it is found that most of the *Kamaiya* who received land owner's certificate are not getting land. Most of them are still compelled to live in the so-called camps in extreme hardship and under an intolerable situation (Action Aid, 2001).

### **Kamaiya Identification and Land Distribution Pattern**

Freed *Kamaiya* status report, 2001 started that the government has made an announcement to provide maximum 5 *Kattha* of land of the families of former *Kamaiya* to receive land and other rehabilitation services, freed *Kamaiya* families must be issued an identity card from the local Land Reform Office. Accordingly Ministry of Land Reform and Management has classified freed *Kamaiya* in to four



different groups and provided them land in the different size as per the classification. Major classified groups and criteria of classification are as follows:

**Class A:** *Kamaiya* families those who had no land house both before liberation falls under this and they have received 4 *Kattha* land from the government and identified by Red ID Card.

**Class B:** *Kamaiya* families those who had their own land before liberation falls under this class and they have received 2 *Kattha* land from the government and identified by Blue ID Card.

**Class C :** *Kamaiya* families those who had their own house and 2 *Kattha* land before liberation falls under this class and they have received 1 to 1.5 *Kattha* land from government and identified by yellow ID Card.

**Class D :** *Kamaiya* families those who had their own house and maximum of 2 *Kattha* land before liberation falls under this class and they have receive only 3 or 4 *Dhur* land and identified by white ID Card.

A number of *Kamaiya* in all districts still can be found remaining with landlord in the previous terms and conditions where as some are working in a new agreement specially under share cropping in the changed context. The new pattern of sharecropping has started again to exploit women and children of the free *Kamaiya* families. The landowners have given their land of sharecropping to their former *Kamaiya* but in a condition to use the adult female member or children for their household work. This indicates towards a changing form of exploitation of *Kamaiya* families after the declaration of liberation (GFONT, 2001)

The problems of freed *Kamaiya* have become more complicated than in the past. Recalling the days in the past most of the freed *Kamaiya* scattered in several camps reveal that landlords took all the responsibility of looking after their *Kamaiya*. If one fell sick, the landlord used to bear the cost for medicine and treatment. But at present it has become difficult for freed *Kamaiya* as they have become jobless. “This may turn them into rebels. The frustrated freed *Kamaiya* youth may be attracted toward carrying guns out of dissatisfaction. But they will not do that because they have known the better than carrying guns”, they said. The way freed *Kamaiya* was liberated has not been good. The issue was politicized and they were declared free but

no one ever thought of the complications that could arise after the freedom (Paudel, 2002).

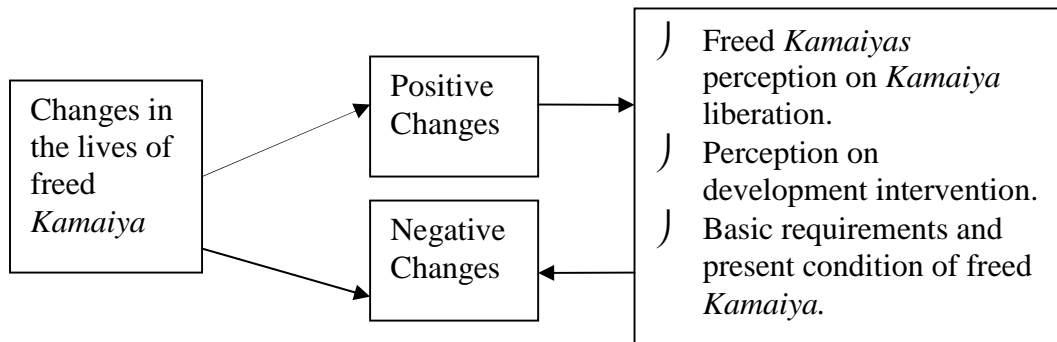
In fact youth is the group facing the most difficult situation as the major problem lies in unemployment. They are living a life of frustration and with uncertain future. Luckier ones get jobs in the nearby village, but the unlucky ones have to travel a long distance even some 50 km to find out work as laborer (MS Nepal, 2002).

## **2.4 Conceptual Framework**

Legally bondage labors are freed in July, 2000 in Nepal. Most of the bondage labours were *Kamaiyas* people. They were farm labor. It was the middle of the monsoon or pick season of agriculture work, Government made an announcement with out any homework. Therefore immediate after announcement *Kamaiya* workers were in very difficult situation. Legally they are freed but practically they have many challenges to maintain their day to day life. They faced food and shelter problems in that context. They also faced many other difficulties in real life. Among them women and children were more affected and vulnerable. Slowly freed *Kamaiya* families are settled in different settlement in different districts.

Hence, this study has tried to explore *Kamaiya*' perceptions on their liberated life and how they perceived the liberation event in general. This study has tried to assess the changes which *Kamaiya* perceived in their lives after liberation and why they perceived these as changes has also tried to find out. Many development agencies have involved with different intervention to uplift *Kamaiya*'s live. What are these interventions and how *Kamaiya* perceived these interventions and whether these interventions address their basic requirement or not, these are the part of the study. Changes may be positive or negative. Similarly the impact of development intervention may be positive or negative. But who are the responsible to evaluate it whether it is positive or negative. It is very important to know that how the concerned (or target) individual or group has perceived it and they are the responsible to evaluate it. Because all investment and efforts has been done in the name of target groups or beneficiaries with the aim of their development. Similarly in this study how freed *Kamaiya* perceived the change in their lives after freedom and how they have perceived the intervention. It is hoped that this study will be helpful to understand the current situation of the freed *Kamaiya*. It will also helpful to identify the requirement

of freed *Kamaiya* and the area of the support for development agencies. It is a kind of comparative study of freed *Kamaiya*'s life before and after liberation.



## CHAPTER - III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Selection of Study Area

After abolition of the *Kamaiya* system, though the government gave the land for the setting down but that small piece of land is insufficient to sustain a family. They had no means of fulfilling needs and opportunity of employment. In these particular *Kamaiya* settlement different types of NGOs / INGOs also HMG/N are working for the development of *Kamaiyas'* socio-economic status but they have not induced the condition of the *Kamaiy's* after declaration of freedom. So Muktinagar freed *Kamaiya* settlement of Lalmatiya VDC in Dang district with 132 freed *Kamaiya* families have been selected purposively as the study area.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study is based on both descriptive as well as analytical research design. Analytical research design has been done to collect the information about the changes in the lives of freed *Kamaiya* of the study area. Descriptive research design is used for collecting the qualitative information.

#### 3.3 Nature and Source of Data

The study is based on qualitative and quantitative information. Mainly two types of data sources are used for this study. One is primary data source and another is secondary data source.

##### 3.3.1 Primary Data Source

- ) Household Survey
- ) Observation
- ) Key Informants Interview
- ) Case Study

##### 3.3.2 Secondary Data Source

Secondary data and information are collected from the following source :

- ) Research study report done in past.
- ) News letters and regular publication of these organizations who have been working with freed *Kamaiya* families.

- ) Different projects progress report of programs implementing organizations.
- ) Different articles published in media / magazine.

### **3.4 Sample Design**

Study area was selected purposively. Simple random sampling method was applied to select the household for the interview. All together 40 freed *Kamaiya* households are selected for this study. It is 30 percent of the total households (132 households). Sampled households have represented class A (having red card) categorize of freed *Kamaiya* families because all *Kamaiya* families of that Muktinagar freed *Kamaiya* settlement of Lalmatiya are only having red card. Both male and female respondent are selected for the household interview for this study.

### **3.5 Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

Following tools and techniques were used for primary data collection from the field for this study.

#### **3.5.1 Household Survey**

A simple schedule with series of questions and checklist was used to conduct the household interviews with 40 respondents from the selected freed *Kamaiya* families. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during household interview. Interview schedule was prepared to get the quantitative information like demographic details of the respondent's families; daily working hours and work pattern (before and after liberation) etc. of the respondents and qualitative data like individual experiences perceptions about liberation and development interventions, changes observed in their own life and level of awareness etc. were collected during household interview.

#### **3.5.2 Key Informants Interview**

To obtain the livelihood situation and the local people in the present time, it is very necessary to know the profession, occupation, income, and expenditure, food sufficiency, local production, market place, distance to get forest resources etc, of the past time. Key informants interview was designed to get the information about development interventions, implementing organizations, perceptions regarding overall freed *Kamaiya* situation; impact of development intervention and future plan of the organization. The key respondent for this interview were selected from different

groups. Six people were interviewed as key informants who live inside and outside the settlement. One school teacher, one *Kamaiya* movement leader (Dilli Bdr. Chaudhary) two community leaders of this settlement, one project field staff and one Chetana Club president were selected for the key informant's interview.

### **3.5.3 Case Studies**

Three case studies have been taken. Most of the participants were so excited to share their general experiences, concern problems, however few participants were hesitated to share their family problem. This observation also helped the researcher to identify the appropriate participants for the case study.

### **3.5.4 Observation**

Observation means viewing or seeing of the field study based research. For this study, actually, the technique is used to observe their drainage / sewer condition, average building and living condition, environmental condition, soil waste disposal system, drinking water condition and their livelihood activities. These observed data and information were very essential for the study.

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity of Data**

Mainly the data and information were based on field study. Some quantitative data and figures are also used as references particularly in the introductory chapter and literature review from different secondary sources mentioned above. Different methods and techniques were used for data collection that help to verify and cross check the collected data and information. It is hoped that the all information are based on reality.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

After collecting first hand data from field, all the data were tabulated in simple excel sheet. Frequency tally mark was used for qualifying the qualitative data or responses then the findings of the study are presented by table, pie chart and bar diagram along with detail description. Finding collected from different methods are described in each related sectors. Mostly the findings are found similar supported each other, though different methods were applied for the different groups for the study.

### **3.8 Limitation of the Study**

This study has been based on following limitations:

- ) This study has been limited to the freed *Kamaiya* of Lalmatiya VDC, Dang Deokhuri in 3 and 4 ward numbers.
- ) Out of 132 household only 40 household has been selected for the study. Those 40 household with red card has been selected for the study.
- ) This study has been limited with one particular freed *Kamaiya* settlement as a small sample. So it can not be generalized to all settlement or all freed *Kamaiya*.

## CHAPTER - IV

### STUDY AREA, THE PEOPLE AND PROGRAM

#### 4.1 General Overview of the Study Area

The district Dang is originated from the Tharu King Dangisharan Tharu. It is extended from 27° 26' 00'' to 28° 29' 00'' north longitude and 82° 02' 00'' to 82° 05' 00'' east longitude which cover an area of 2955 square kilometers. This district is like a frog shaped valley which is surrounded and protected by mountains on all sides of drained by the Rapti River and the Babai River.

Lalmatiya VDC of Dang district is one which lies in eastern part of the district. It is located about 77 km away from the head quarter of Dang district (Gorahi). There are two valleys in Dang district. First one is Dang valley and second one is Deokhuri valley. Lalmatiya VDC is located in the Deokhuri valley. In east Kapilvastu and Pyuthan districts are situated. Gobardiha VDC is located in southern part and western part is covered by Sisahaniya VDC to the Lalmatiya VDC. The Rapti River flows along the Southern border of the VDC separates from the Goberdiha VDC.

There is one marketing area called Bhalubang. This bazaar is situated in the bank of Rapti River. In the business aspect the bazaar has bright future because, it is a break of bulk point of Pyuthan and Rolpa district.

The village is accessible by gravel road transportation in all season. There is regular bus service from Bhalubang and Kathmandu also. There is telephone, postal service as a means of communication and health center for health service. Electricity facility is not available in all parts of this VDC.

#### 4.2 Muktinagar Freed Kamaiya Settlement

The Tharu word '*Mukti*' means liberation in English language and '*nagar*' refers the community or society. So this community is called '*Muktinagar*'. This settlement was developed to resettle the freed *Kamaiya* families those who come from the different villages. It is situated in the Lalmatiya VDC in 3 and 4 wards.

There are only two freed *Kamaiya* settlement in Dang district. One of them is '*Muktinagar Freed Kamaiya Settlement*' and other is '*Ambapur Freed*



*Kamaiya* Settlement' which are located in Lalmatiya VDC and Tribhuwan Municipality respectively.

The study area Muktinagar is in northern part near by Mahendra Highway. We can find the various social services and facilities in this settlement. The 132 household settlements is composed by different caste and ethnic group like *Tharu, Magar, Rawat, Kumal, Chhetri* etc. but most of people are from Tharu community. They came from different VDCs. The settlement is occupied 32 *Bigha* of land. 695 people are living in this settlement and in which there are 351 male and 344 female.

#### 4.2.1 Demography

In this section, table 1 describes the overall demographic features of Muktinagar Freed *Kamaiya* Settlement of Lalmatiya VDC Ward No. 3 and 4. (132 HHs).

**Table 1 : Population Structure by Age and Sex (N = 132 HHs)**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
0-15	141	40.17	151	43.90	192	42.01
16-59	192	54.70	178	51.74	370	53.24
60 above	18	5.12	15	4.36	33	4.75
Total	351	100.00	344	100.00	695	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 1 shows that out of total population of 132 households, young population (the age group 0 – 15 yrs.) comprises 42.01% and economically active population (age group 16 – 59 yrs.) is 53.24% and only 4.75% are in age 60 and above.

## **4.2.2 Social Service**

### **Education Facilities**

A new primary school building is constructed within the settlement. So now the freed *Kamaiya*'s children have access to primary education facility in their own community. Besides this, there are also other primary school, secondary school and private school within the VDC. After primary level, freed *Kamaiya* children have to go to the other school that is accessible within the VDC area. There is also an Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers supported by Plan International Nepal and BASE. Almost freed *Kamaiya* children have been participated in that ECD centers.

### **Communication and Transportation Facilities**

There is a small market at the Lalmatiya bus stop very close from the freed *Kamaiya* settlement. Although market is small but about all facilities have been found there. There are many PCO centers for telecommunications. Some Freed *Kamaiya* have own mobile phone within the settlement. Many different kinds of modern means of communication are in accessible distance. Muktinagar Freed *Kamaiya* Settlement is located in less than half kilometer from Mahendra Highway. So each and every household are easy to access to moterable road. Beside these facilities some freed *Kamaiyaa* household have television sets and they kindly invite their neighbors to watch television program.

### **Heath Facilities and Services**

There is small medical shop near by the freed *Kamaiya* settlement. Most of the freed *Kamaiya* families firstly go to that clinic for minor treatment. If they have major health problem they have to go to health post at the Sisahaniya VDC which is near by the settlement.

### **Irrigation, Drinking Water and Sanitation Facilities**

Different infrastructure has been constructed in the settlement. Almost all freed *Kamaiya* families have access to safe drinking water through many public taps supported by different development organizations like NEWAH, Plan Nepal etc. Every freed *Kamaiya* has constructed a hygiene toilet in their

household and use by all family members supported by GTZ. GTZ has provided pumping sets for irrigation purpose. They use pumping set on rotation basis. But it needs electricity to pump the water from the ground and it includes cost that they feel expensive and many families could not afford it.

#### **4.2.3 Socio-Cultural Setting**

In the settlement the dominant religion is Hindu. Mostly Tharu people celebrate the biggest Hindu festival *Dashain* and *Tihar*. Beside these, they celebrate other Hindu festivals such as; *Maghe Sakranti*, *Chaite Dashain*, *Shiva Ratri*, *Fagu Purnima*, etc. before liberation they celebrates ‘Maghi’ as contract renewal day for next year. Now most of the freed *Kamaiya* celebrate this day as their ‘Liberation day’ instead of contract renewal day. They even do not want to remember their past days. Traditionally most of the Tharu people like to stay in a densely located own ethnic community.

#### **Family Structure**

Before liberation of majority of *Kamaiya* families lived in joint family. Mainly the land distribution scheme announced by the government has encouraged them to live in single and small family size. Every *Kamaiya* family must register their name in Land Reform Office to get the land ownership certificate legally. At the time the clever *Kamaiya* family members registered their name separately and received the land with ownership certificate from government. It helped them to change their traditional joint family structure in to single family structure.

#### **Language Spoken**

Usually they speak their mother tongue with in their family and society; they also speak Nepali language to communicate other people. Tharu is the dominant and Nepali is the secondary language in the settlement. Mostly the men can speak and understand and even write easily both language but fewer women are able to do so due to low female literacy rate. They have no separate script in their own mother tongue ‘Tharu’.

#### **Dresses and Jewelry**

The traditional dress of male Tharu is *Languti*, which is made by white cotton and female Tharu traditional dress is *Lehenga Khurtha*, *Gatia*. The new

generation don't like these dress. So now a day it is being loose. Mostly the young male like *shirt, pant, vest, sweater, jacket* and female like to wear *blouse, sari, salwar Kurtha, Dhoti, lungi* etc. Traditionally Tharu young girl wears *Kurtha* backside bottom and after marriage she wears *Kurtha* with front bottom. Now a day both married and unmarried girl prefer to wear *Kurtha* with front bottom. They wear *Kurtha* bangles in hands, *Kanfata* in ear *thumk* (a chain if silver worn or head) *Chardrahar* worn on neck (which is the garland of silver or bronze coins *ghughahat*) it is occasionally used specially in wedding ceremony. They put *tiki* called '*Bindi*' on forehead. These all are special ornaments of female. But the young generation girl left such self decoration practice, because they feel unsecured if they wear such heavy ornament.

## CHAPTER – V

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION

This study focused on freed *Kamaiya*'s situation in general and particularly the changes in their lives after liberation. The study thus emphasize inclusion of both freed *Kamaiya* male and female as respondent as they are the central part of the study. Therefore this section particularly describes the socio-cultural and also economic feature of the sampled freed *Kamaiya* families (40 households) in general and respondent in particular.

#### 5.1 Population Composition

The term 'Population Composition' defined as the character of the population for which quantitative data especially census data are available. The population composition is considered to be very important because it shows economical, social, cultural and educational status of the society. Different types of population composition are age, sex, education, religion, marital status etc. This information is important for suitable planning for the development of the society. Therefore, table 2 shows the population composition by caste/ethnicity.

**Table 2 : Population Composition by Caste / Ethnic Group**

S.N.	Caste / Ethnicity	Male		Female		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	Tharu	98	73.13	110	90.16	208	81.25
2	Magar	10	7.46	12	9.84	22	8.59
3	Chhetti	5	3.73	4	3.28	9	3.52
4	Dalit	7	5.22	4	3.28	11	4.30
5	Muslim	3	2.24	3	2.55	6	2.34
Total		134	100.00	122	100.00	256	100

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Table 2 shows that the total population of Freed *Kamaiya* of 40 sample households is 256 out of surveyed total population. Tharu comprises about (81.25 %) which takes place the first position, (8.59%) is of *Magar* in the second position, *Dalit* is (4.29%) in the third position, *Chhetri* is (3.5%) in the fourth position and (2.34%) of Muslim covers very nominal population of the total population. It should be clear the *Kamaiya*

system is not associated with only the Tharu but non Tharu households had also entered in to the system.

**Table 3 : Status of Family Size with Number of Households**

Family Size	No. of households	Total Population
Less than 4	0	0
4	2	8
5	9	45
6	14	84
7	7	49
8	4	32
9	2	18
10	2	20
Total	40	256

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

From table 3, it clearly shows that no person can live alone i.e. s/he need life partner for generation existence. Therefore, every person should get marry and have at least a child. They give a birth of child minimum two or more than two. So less than 4 family sizes are null. The maximum family size is six whose households number us 14.

### 5.1.1 Marital Status

Information on marital status is obtained for all those members of sample households. All respondent were taken from both male and female who were married having one or more children. The collected information is presented below.

**Table 4 : Marital Status of Sample Households (N = 40 HHs)**

Marital Status	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Unmarried	58	43.28	44	36.07	102	39.84
Married	76	56.72	78	63.93	154	60.16
Total	134	100.00	122	100.00	256	100.00

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Table 4 shows the marital status of total population of sample household. Out of 134 males and 122 females 58 (43.28%) males and 44 (36.07%) females are unmarried. Similarly 76 (56.72%) males and 78 (63.96%) females are married.

### 5.1.2 Literacy Status

The term literate means ‘able to read and write with simple numeric skill.’ The CBS confines that the ability to read and write own name may have also been interpreted as being literate. This section briefly describe about the literacy status of the total population of sample households. The data are collected those entire member of the households aged 5 years and above.

**Table 5 : Literacy Status of Sample Households (N = 40 HHs)**

Literacy Status	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Literate	68	50.75	42	34.43	110	42.97
Illiterate	66	49.25	80	65.57	146	57.03
Total	134	100.00	122	100.00	256	100.00

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Table 5 shows that out of total population of sample household (57.03%) population of illiterate and (42.97%) are literate. The percentage of literate male (50.75%) is higher than female (34.43%). The percentage of literate male is (50.75%) and illiterate is (49.25%). Similarly the percent of literate female is only (34.43%) and (65.57%) are illiterate.

### Education Attainment

Education has key role in national development. The extent to which education will be able to support the process of national development depends on socio-cultural and economic aspect of an area. It will not only help in the individual development but also provides knowledge and skill to develop the community and nation as well.

Before freedom *Kamaiyas* lived in the house of landlord. Due to the debt, they were not free from landlord. Poverty forced most of the children of *Kamaiyas* are working at very early age to support themselves and parents. Many children were unable to attend school because their parent couldn't offer the monthly fee, uniform, stationary

and text book cost. Therefore the children were far from light of education. There was no school for *Kamaiyas*. But after freedom, many changes have come in the *Kamaiyas*' lives. A primary school has established for the freed *Kamaiyai* in 2060 B. S. at Pakhapani Ward No. 3.

**Table 6 : Education Attainment by Sex (N = 40 HHs)**

Educational Attainment	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Primary	29	42.65	16	38.10	45	40.91
Lower Secondary	4	5.88	2	4.76	6	5.45
Secondary	2	2.94	1	2.38	3	2.73
Non-formal	33	48.53	23	54.76	56	50.91
Total	68	100.00	42	100.00	110	100.00

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Table 6 shows the educational attainment by sex of sample household of freed *Kamaiya*. The total number of literate people in different level of educational institution is 110. Among them 40.91% have been attending primary school and some of them have dropped out after completing the primary education. Similarly, 5.45% have been attending lower secondary and only 2.73% have been attending secondary classes and 50.91% have got non formal education. Among them, 42.65% male and 38.10% female have been going to primary school. Likewise 5.88% male and 4.76% female have been attending lower secondary and 2.94% male and 2.38% female have been attending secondary school and 48.53% male and 54.76% female have been attending non-formal education.

### **5.1.3 Economic Activities of Sampled Household**

This section briefly describes about the sources of income of sampled households in general and respondents in particular.

### **Land Ownership Pattern of Sampled Household**

There were many types of *Kamaiyas* before the abolished the *Kamaiya* system. The government divided them into different categories. The *Kamaiya* were given the



different identity card by the government. Then the process was started to resettlement.

Land is one of the major components of economic activities of freed *Kamaiya* families. Government has classified freed *Kamaiya* into four different groups and provided them different identity card and land in different size as per groups. However only one group (with a Red ID card holder) has been living in this settlement. Therefore all respondents are selected from this one group, who has received 5 *Kattha* land from the government.

Total respondent have ownership of 5 *Kattha* land those who were identified by red color of ID Card. Now they became an owner of that land though it is small in size. They cultivate seasonal crops and vegetable in their land, but it is inadequate for their family for the whole year. They have been struggling to search alternative sources of income to manage their family expenses.

### Major Occupation

Occupational distribution plays the vital role in the economic status of household. Freed *Kamaiya* have small size of land which is not adequate for their family for the whole year. They have no any regular source of income. Mainly the member of the respondent's family engaged in different occupations.

**Table 7 : Source of Income and Earning Members (N = 40 HHs)**

Source of Income	Total no. of family member	No. of male members	No. of female members	Percentage
Occupation of respondent's family members				
Seasonal labor (skilled/ unskilled)	34	28	6	19.43
Small scale business	7	4	3	4.00
Carpenter	7	7	0	4.00
Tractor Driver	2	2	0	1.14
Foreign employment	9	9	0	5.14
Seasonal farming (vegetable)	104	94	66	59.43
Mason work	9	9	0	5.14
Job (Volunteer)	3	2	1	1.71

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 7 describe about various income source number of earning members of sampled households. The majority 59.43% of economically active population from respondent families are engaged in seasonal farming work and vegetable farming. Most of them sell product in Bhalubang Bazaar which is nearest market area from the settlement. The second major occupation of the respondent's family is seasonal labor work (skilled and unskilled) where 19.43% of total economically active populations are engaged. Similarly 5.14% of total economically active population are engaged in foreign employment and mason worker. Among them, 4.00% are engaged in small scale business and carpenter 1.71% is engaged in ECD volunteer and 1.14% is engaged in tractor driving.

Out of total economically active population of sample household, mainly male members of the freed *Kamaiya* family go outside from the community to work as mason worker, carpenter, tractor driver and skilled and unskilled labour work and female member are engaged in labour work in close area from their settlement. They became more responsible to perform the seasonal farm activities. It clearly indicates that mostly member of the respondent's family are engaged in agricultural farming activities.

## 5.2 Duration Spent as *Kamaiya* (Before Liberation)

This section describes about the previous status of the respondents. How long they spent their life in landlord's house and particularly what they work when they were there. The details are as follows:

**Table 8 : Duration Spent as *Kamaiya* (Before Liberation)**

No. of landlord changed	No. of respondents	Duration spent (in month/ year)		Work as	percent
		Minimum	maximum		
1 only	2	1 yr.	5 yr.	Kamlhari	5
2	2	5 yr.	12 yr.	Kam. Bukrahi	5
3	10	2 yr	20yr	<i>Kamaiya</i>	25
4	6	2 yr	7yr	<i>Kamaiya</i>	15
5	7	2yr	5 yr	<i>Kamaiya</i>	17
7	5	3 yr	12 yr	Bukrahi	12
9	6	3 yr	12 yr	<i>Kamaiya</i>	15
12	2	2 yr	22 yr	<i>Kamaiya</i>	5
Total		40			100

Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Table 8 shows, out of total 40 respondents 2 (5%) had worked as *Kamlahari*, 2 (5%) had worked as *Kamlhari* at first and *Bukrahi* later, 31 (78%) had worked as *Kamaiya*, 5 respondents had worked as *Bukrahi* when they were in landlords house. They spent their life as *Kamaiya*, *Kamlhri* and *Bukrahi* in landlord's house. The range of the duration spent in landlord's house found various form minimum 1 year to maximum 22 year. Out of 40 only 2 respondents worked with only one landlord as *Kamlhari* and others worked with different landlords. The majority 38 (95%) of the respondents had changed 2 to 12 landlords and spent minimum 1 year to maximum 22 years in landlord's house. Maximum numbers of the landlords they changed is 12. Out of total respondents 78 % were *Kamaiya* by birth or they born in a *Kamaiya* family.

### 5.3 Duration Spent in Landlord's House after Being Freed

Government announcement them, freed in middle of monsoon and without any proper plan for their resettlement. Therefore many *Kamaiya* families were in confusion. So respondent were asked about it during household interview to know the situation how freed *Kamaiya* managed their earlier days immediate after being freed which are as follows :

**Table 9 : Duration Spent in Landlord's House after Being Freed**

Duration spent in landlord's house	No. of respondent	Percentage
Immediate left	9	23
2 to 4 month	14	35
5 to 8 month	17	42
Total	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 9 shows, out of total 40 respondents 9 (23%) respondents said that they left landlord's house immediate, and 14 (35%) respondents lived with landlords comparatively longer (2 to 4 months) than other respondents. Similarly 17 (42%) respondents lived with landlords for 5 to 8 months after announcement. Mostly the respondents who were badly treated by landlords before liberation left landlord's house immediately and the respondents who were relatively treated better stayed few months longer and treated as previous during that period..

#### 5.4 First Place & Duration Spent after Leaving the Landlord's House

Freed *Kamaiya* families those who left landlord's house immediate after the announcement made by the government had to go to spend their life in different temporary camps set up in different places and different condition. Among the respondents of this study those who left landlord's houses immediately where they went first and how long they stayed there are explained as follows:

**Table 10: First Place after Leaving Landlord's House and Duration Spent**

First place after leaving landlord's house	No. of respondents	Duration spent that place	Percentage
Parents house	4	6 month	10
Relatives house	6	7 month	15
Camp in roadside	10	9 month	25
Muktinagar Settlement	20	Permanently settled	50
Total	40	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 10 shows that out of total 40 respondents, 4 (10%) respondents' families went to live in their parent's house. They spent 6 months in their parent's house. 6 (15%) respondents families live in their relative's house. They spent 7 month and 10 (25%) respondents' families spent 9 months time in the temporary camp that was set up in different places like roadside camp, near their relative house etc. Similarly out of 40, 20 (50%) respondents' families permanently settled in Muktinagar Settlement.

#### 5.5 Development Interventions in the Settlements:

This section shortly describes about the various development interventions have been launching by national and international organizations for the development of freed *Kamaiya* families. More than a dozen of organizations are involved in this settlement with different development interventions, which are as follows:

- ) Ministry of land Reform an Management
- ) District Forest Office

- ) Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH)
- ) International Labour Organization (ILO)
- ) Backward Society Education (BASE)
- ) Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)
- ) PLAN International
- ) Rural Community Infrastructural Work
- ) Social Awareness Centre (SAC)

### 5.6 Kamaiya Focused Program

This section describes about *Kamaiya* specific development interventions which have been launched by various organizations before and after liberation. Following data were obtained during household survey.

**Table 11 : Kamaiya Focused Program before and after Liberation**

Program Implementation	Before liberation		After liberation	
	Implemented	Not implemented	Implemented	Not implemented
Percentage	8	92	94	6

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 11 shows, only 8 % respondent were aware about *Kamaiya*'s saving group in their village before liberation and 92 % were unknown about it. But after liberation 94 % respondents are aware about saving group, and 6 % are also known about it, but knowingly they do not save. However after liberation those 94 % respondents are making saving group and they do save some money monthly. They do meeting every month and save some money like Rs. 10 to 20 in their saving group. Many programs have been running with in their settlement. Among these program, some program are particularly for the women only like pig farming, goat borrowing, some are for the men only like house wiring, driving and some programs are for both male and female like group formation and saving and investment and vegetable farming etc. Those activities and program has been shortly describes as follows:

### **A. Awareness Raising Program / Activities :**

After liberation mainly the NGOs and INGOs have been working with freed *Kamaiya* with different awareness programs; like health hygiene awareness campaign were conducted by various organizations like NEWAH, PLAN etc. Regular hygiene education classes' for the freed *Kamaiya* families were also conducted and many freed *Kamaiya* were trained on that subject matter. *Kisori Sachetana Karyakram*: SAC, a NGO has been conducted this program that targeted to the adolescent aged (between 12 -19 years of age) girls from freed *Kamaiya* settlements. This program includes the issue of HIV/AIDS, women's right, reproductive health, family planning, violence against women, child marriage, advocacy etc. They have planned to establish a "*Kisori Club*" in near future. Till now 10 girls are enrolled in formal education after attending the *Kisori Sachetana Karyakram* from different freed *Kamaiya* settlement.

### **B. Skill Development and Income Generating Activities**

- ) *Muda* (sitting tools) making training
- ) *Maseura* (dry food items) making training
- ) Pig Farming
- ) Goat borrowing
- ) Adult literacy Training

Besides these above mentioned programs freed *Kamaiya* were also partly involved in other activities like vegetable farming, poultry farming, cycle, radio repairing, house wiring training, driving training and awareness activities with the support of many other donor agencies like GTZ, *Chetana Club*, ILO, Poverty Alleviation, Human Welfare and Environment Protection Ministry etc.

## CHAPTER – VI

### KAMAIYA PERCEPTION OF BEING FREED

Changes in freed *Kamaiya* lives before and after liberation are studied in general. Both positive and negative changes are studied. In this respect role of various development interventions and freed *Kamaiya* perception on intervention are also studied. Semi-structure interview, key informants from different concerned organization and community are also interviewed with a checklist particularly to get qualitative information.

Based on all the above mentioned tools and technique, collected data and information from the field regarding changes in the freed *Kamaiya* lives are divided into two main categories of positive change and negative changes and which are described as follows :

#### **6.1 Positive Changes**

This section mainly describes the positive change in *Kamaiya*'s lives which they have experienced and perceived after being freed from bondage labour system and simultaneously it also deals with *Kamaiya* perception on various development interventions which brought positive changes in their lives.

##### **6.1.1 Work Burden and Work Pattern**

Before liberation *Kamaiya* has to work average 16 -18 hours per day in the landlord's home. They had free time only during lunch and dinner and for short sleep at night. Sometimes in rainy season they worked hard in agriculture field till late night (12 PM). *Kamaiya* women even had to work during her postnatal period too. They expressed their bitter feeling during the time of interview and said that they had to perform difficult or risky work. They even could not say they couldn't do this or that always in fear. Anyhow they had performed the given task and sometimes they felt they had to work like an 'ox'. But their work was never valued. Sometimes they cried alone.

Now freed *Kamaiya* women have to work 13 – 14 hours per days on the average. They have enough free time to take care for their children and maintain their personal hygiene as well. They rarely found that chance before liberation.

Now *Kamaiya* work burden is heavily reduced by 5 hours and they have enough leisure time. Sometime they spend the whole day free if they do not have any work. They can take rest or they can talk among each other, visiting relatives and friends, more time to take care of their children family and maintaining their personal and domestic hygiene condition which helps them to improve their overall physical, mental and social health status.

They expressed their feeling during household interview and they said that when they were with landlord's house as *Kamaiya*, *Bukrahi* or *Kamlhari* they had to work longer hours but they never had chance to involve in community role. They were not allowed to go outside for their own purpose, they were permitted by their landlords with very strict rules and it was very hard to get such permission for more than one or two days. They had even no time to rest or maintain personal hygiene, to take care of their children and family in planting and harvesting season. After being freed they have got opportunity to interact with different officials and public and participate in various development activities. Besides their regular works they participate in literacy class, community meeting and visiting different government and non-government official / office etc.

Now they feel that their work burden is significantly reduced than before liberation. They have small piece of land for agricultural work and not enough work has to perform. Most of them grow green vegetables in their land and go to the Bhalubang bazaar near by their village to selling vegetable. Sometime they go outside community for labor work (brick collection, unskilled labor work) however it always not possible. More than 100 women from *Kamaiya* families have now involved in goat raising and poultry farming program supported by Veterinary. From all above information we can include that the community role (participating in community meeting, group meeting and other development planning and decision making process with their family member) are increased than before.

### **6.1.2 Increased Exposure to Outside World**

Exposure to outside world is one of the major factors to bring the change in human life. Normally women are more restricted than men to make a trip to out side from household or village in our society. Most of the cases, women need to take permission mostly with the male members like husband or father. In case of married women they



also need to ask with their mother in law or father in law. During household interview, respondents expressed that they became freed to go to outside from the house or village than before which one of the greatest change they observed in their lives after being freed.

**Table 12 : Permission Seeking to Go Outside**

Before	percentage	After	percentage
Kisan	16	No permission needed	80.00
Landlord (male)	27	Husband's permission	8.00
Landlord (female)	27	In law's permission	12.00
Landlord both (m&f)	30		100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 12 indicates that all respondents had to ask for permission either from landlord or *Kisan* before liberation. Out of total respondents 30 % said that they had to ask with both husband (*Malik*) and wife (*Malikni*) of landlord family, another 27% had to ask with female members of landlord's family and 16% had to ask with *Kisan*. If one landlord has many *Kamaiya* one most senior *Kamaiya* Tharu male among them had been selected as a leader; those who is called '*Aguwa Kisan*' in Tharu language / tradition. If that was the case all other *Kamaiya* men or women had to ask with *Kisan*, when they needed to go to outside for their own purpose or wanted to take free leave for few days. When *Kamaiya* asked for permission, landlord had ordered them, to complete their assigned duties first and then they could get leave. Landlord battered them; asked detail purpose of leave and finally permission was given with very strict rules.

Out of the total 80% respondents now freely make their own plan to go to out side and 20% have to take permission from their family members. In case of female members / respondents 20% have to take permission with their family members; whereas 8% ask with their husband and 12% with their in law's whoever available in the household. Mainly those women who can freely decide themselves their husbands have gone outside from the village to work as a labor. Therefore they became more responsible to manage all family matters as they said.

Participants said that they were never permitted to go outside for their own purpose, only they were permitted to go outside for outdoor activities for landlord since early in morning around at 4 am. (In their local language after having *Kaluwa – Kaluwa* in Tharu language means breakfast in English) till late afternoon (around 5pm). In addition, they expressed in that they were even not permitted to visit their parent’s house once or twice a year. They had to participate their own cultural program only at night time. They never allowed being free during day time. If someone absent from his / her work he or she had to face any kind of penalties. They never had permission to participate in any community or public meeting. If someone goes, landlord battered them and sometime they were beaten too. Only 4 respondents said that sometimes (if landlord is good) they permitted one or two days free leave but with very strict rules. If they spent more days they would loose their wages or landlord could deduct their regular wage either in cash or in kind.

**Table 13 : Kamaiya’s Visiting Places before and after Liberation**

SN	Visiting Place	Before Liberation	After liberation
1	Parents house (within and outside village)	28	40
2	Bhalubang Bazaar	6	40
3	Lamahi Bazaar	10	40
4	Ghorahi	2	36
5	Tulsipur	-	7
6	Butawal	-	8
7	Chanauta	-	10
8	Kathmandu	-	4

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 13 shows that the majority of the respondents, 28 visited to their parent’s house within or outside there village. They were given permission for the short time like one or two days if their parent’s house was outside village. Beside this, 4 respondents visited Lamahi Bazar, another 2 had visited headquarter Ghorahi and 6 visited Bhalubang bazaar before liberation. Buying cloths and other personal goods were the

main purpose of their visit in market areas and the frequency of the visit also found very low, only once or twice a year. Similarly, the same table shows that all respondents could visit their parent's house and 4 respondents visit Kathmandu, 10 respondent visited Chanauta, 7 respondents visit Tulsipur and 8 respondents visited Butawal where they had never visited before being freed. When they shared their experiences, it was observed that they excited and very happy.

Freed *Kamaiya* participants said that they had never been outside from the landlord's house before liberation. Only a few 18 respondents said that they had visited market area like Lamahi, Bhalubang, Ghorahi for their own purpose (i.e. buying cloths and other personal goods). Most of the participants and respondents (male and female both) said that now they can freely decide to go outside for the day trip. Sometimes in case of female, they need to consult with their husband and elder people (mother or father in laws) whoever also available in the house, if they need to stay with their relatives or friends over night outside from the home.

Based on the above data and information we can say that *Kamaiya* had very few chances to go outside from the landlord's house for their own purpose. The landlord would not permit them to go out even for two hours to have rest or to talk with friends. *Kamaiya* usually got permission for very short time. Few landlords allowed one or two days absence from their regular duties. If *Kamaiya* need more than two days leave for their own purpose, either they had to replace another person to perform her duties during her absence or landlord could deduct her salary or wages.

Freed *Kamaiya* now become free to go outside from the village for work or for any other purpose like entertainment or marketing. However majority of the freed *Kamaiya* women still need to ask for permission from their husband or elder family members and it may not always bad it may good and one of the major characteristics of the whole patriarchal society. We can say that mobility of the women's also found significantly increased than before liberation.

### **6.1.3 Land Ownership**

In *Kamaiya* system, all *Kamaiya* families had to work in agricultural farm but most of the case they had no land ownership. They had to work on annual contract basis. Each year they had no sign in contract with their existing or new landlords for the whole year. It depends upon contract or agreement between landlords and *Kamaiya* at the

beginning stage. Some landlord provided certain piece of land out of the total land, which a *Kamaiya* cultivates, was separated and he was entitled to receive the total production of the piece of land as his remuneration of the whole year, some provided certain food grains as *Kamaiya*'s remuneration on yearly basis. It depends on the total land of the landowner and the number of working members of family of the *Kamaiya* concerned. The following table shows the comparative pattern of land ownership of *Kamaiya* families before and after liberation.

**Table 14 : Land Ownership Pattern before and after Liberation (N = 40)**

Land holding pattern	Before liberation		After liberation	
	No.	%	No.	%
No landownership of all	36	90	-	-
No any kind of land for the <i>Kamaiya</i> family	19	48	-	-
Land without ownership – sharecropping	16	40	4	10
Less than on <i>Kattha</i> (7-10 Dhur only)	-	-	-	-
1 to 2 <i>Kattha</i> land with ownership	-	-	-	-
2 to 4,5 <i>Kattha</i> land with ownership	-	-	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

(Note: during the discussion time multiple questioned were asked, therefore the total number is more than 40)

Table 14 shows that 90% *Kamaiyas* have no own land. Out of the total 40% respondents said that landlords had given land only for managing day to day subsistence for *Kamaiya* family but *Kamaiya* had no ownership of that land and 48% of respondents said that the landlord did not give any kind of land for *Kamaiya* family. They only provided them certain food grains as their remuneration on yearly basis. Most of them said that the remuneration was normally one third (it s called *Tikur* in their own language) of the total grains production. Similarly the table shows that all respondents have their own land after liberation. All respondents expressed their happiness being an owner of that land which is provided by the government. They want to utilize this land maximum as much as they can. At least they are now

standing that position they can say they have some own property. All respondents have ownership of 5 *Kattha* land. In Muktinagar Freed *Kamaiya* settlement of the Lalmatiya all freed *Kamaiya* family have received 5 *Kattha* land and identified by Red ID card. Due to small size of land they do not have sufficient food for their family for the whole year. Therefore out of 40, 4 respondents said that they are still engaged in sharecropping with their previous landlord however that terms and condition was not as previous.

All participants and key informants also stated the same. They said “**we can say it is our own property, previously we worked in big pieces of land but we did not have own land now at least we have a piece of land as our property.**”

#### **6.1.4 Annual Wages of Kamaiya before and after Liberation**

In *Kamaiya* system there were different types of wage payment system. It was vary in the same place and same family in terms of quantity and types of payment. In *Kamaiya* system *Kamaiya* had got separate wage, the *Kamaiya* women who works as *Bukrahi* was also entitled to get separate wage to be added to the wages of the *Kamaiya*. *Kamaiya* were given their son as *Gwala*, *Chhegrahawa* etc, and daughter as *Kamlhari* with same landlord or other landlord, they also get separate wage. Therefore in *Kamaiya* system there are different types of wage payment system. Some were paid *Masura* (it includes all items like rice, Daal, mustard oil etc.) and some were paid *Bhutti* (it includes only rice and no other items included) and some were paid in cash. Quantity of *Masura* or *Bhutti* was fixed based on number of working members of concerned *Kamaiya* family and total land of the landlord where *Kamaiya* family had to perform all agriculture activities for the whole year.

**Table 15 : Annual Wage of Kamaiya (No = 40)**

Wage of payment system	Quantity of annual salary	No of respondents	<i>Man</i> converted into kg. ( <i>Man</i> = 15kg.)	Percent
<i>Masura</i>	36 Man	28	540kg	70
<i>Bhutti</i>	9 – 17 Man	7	135 – 255kg	17
Cash	4000 - 5000	5	Rs. 4000 - 5000	13
Total		40		10

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 15 predicts that out of the total 40 respondents 28 (70%) respondents were paid 36 *Man* (540kg) *Masura* as their annual remuneration, 7 (17%) respondents were paid 9 – 17 *Man Bhutti* as their annual remuneration and only 5 (13 %) were paid in cash (Rs. 4000 – 5000 yearly) who worked as *Kamlhari*. Normally those *Bukrahi* who had more working members (5 to 11) they had got 4 – 5 *Boras* (*Boras* converted into kg, 1 *Bora* = 70, 300 – 400 kg) as annual remuneration and who had less working members or small family, they had got 3 – 4 *boras* (225 – 300 kg) as annual remuneration. Respondent who worked as *Kamlhari* were paid cash as salary and in addition they got two meals a day in landlord's house and also got maximum two pairs of cloth per year.

After liberation majority of the freed *Kamaiya* are moving towards different types of occupation and average earning also found vary. If they got full day labor work they earns 100 – 120 rupee per day, it depends the nature of work. If they find the labor job in construction area comparatively they earn higher than the normal agricultural labor. In average how much they earn in a month was also asked but majority respondent could not say in amount however they were satisfied with the current situation and they said that was for better than the past one.

Participants expressed their views and highlighted that getting labor job became a big challenge. Many internally displaced people from the mid-west hill district have been migrated to Bhalubang due to conflict situation. *Kamaiya* could not go far from the village to search the labor work and the migrated people replaced their possible working places. They started that they became free from the bonded labor that was great in their whole life and for their children. They seem satisfied though they have many challenges in these days.

They expressed that the annual wages given by the landlord to them was very low compare to the market rate, their hard work and the annual standard wage rate (60 Rs.). The insufficient amount of food grains received by the family from their landlord was too low to survive the family for the whole year. On the other hand, the system did not allow to work outside to earn extra money for their family and consequently they are compelled to borrow more money or food grains from necessary expenses (marriage, medical, festival etc.). Most of them said that they had always food problem and they had to borrow money to manage for the whole year. Few respondents said that they were supported by their parent's house those parents

who were relatively better of economic condition. They have to borrow money from their neighbor or from the saving groups and manage their day to day life. They expressed their happiness and satisfaction than before.

#### **6.1.5 Increased Level of Awareness and Confidence**

Key informants mentioned their overall observation about the changes that have been taken place in freed *Kamaiyas'* lives after liberation. *Kamaiya* had no opportunity to participation in any formal and informal education or training classes.

They were innocent and unawareness about health, hygiene and other human right issues and they were voiceless within and outside house at all. They were also unknown about their reproductive health. Now they became aware about health and hygiene, child marriage, family planning, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and women's and child right through various training and awareness program like *Kisori Sachetana Karyakram*, health hygiene awareness campaign, community literacy program conducted by various NGOs. They become vocal and confidently they raise their voices against child marriage, multi marriage, and domestic violence. They became aware about their rights.

They expressed that these different types of training and awareness program helped them to aware and more vocal. Now a day they understand the important of such awareness and training program and they liked to participate as much as they can. However many freed *Kamaiya* families have no access to information, though many training opportunities come for freed *Kamaiya* men and women. Very few families have access to information about training and both husband and wives have participated from the same family, who were informed by the leaders.

The key informants also said that the freed *Kamaiya* women also have started to raise their voice and action against violence and other issue like child marriage and multi marriage. They are organized through micro credit program and many other local groups and committee for particular issues. There are many saving group are establish within the settlement and almost all freed *Kamaiya* household are involved in the different groups. Their saving practice is increased. They can mobilize their own money within their groups and no need to go to bank to borrow loan with high rate of interest. They became safe from economic exploitation from local money holder like *Zamindar*.

### **6.1.6 Increased Freedom**

Most of the respondents expressed that they became freer than in many aspects of their life. Therefore this section describe about freedom from their perspective. Almost all expressed the same views, which are presented as follows.

#### **Freedom to Speech**

All respondent started that they were restricted to speak, they always feared to speak with outsider. In case of female *Kamaiya* they even afraid to talk with their husband or male members of the family in front of the landlords. If *Kamaiya* people talked with any outsiders, landlord had asked with them in detail. So, if some one asked their name (*Kamaiya* women) they always hesitate to tell them. They were totally bonded and could not share feeling and experiences with others. All respondents said that now they are free to raise their voice and issue at household and community level as well. No felt shy to speak outsiders and no hesitation at all. They can freely talk among family members and neighbor. They can raise their voice and issue in public meeting as well. Now they became more vocal and have more confidence to talk with everybody and everywhere.

Key informants said that they became vocal and confidently they can raise their problems themselves. They started to raise their rights and issues particularly *Kamaiya* were totally unknown about it before liberation. Now they became organized through saving group and collectively and confidently they raise their voice and issue in public forum as well.

Based on above information it can be conclude that the freed *Kamaiya* feel more freedom to raise their voice at community level than before. Both male and also female *Kamaiya* were participated in liberation movement actively and they became more confident after liberation. They also encourage to other *Kamaiya* to involve in group activities and particularly the saving credit groups supported by outside agencies helped them to organize and raise voice collectively.

#### **Freedom to Choice Dresses**

This information was also captured during household survey. Some *Kamaiya* were treated badly by landlords because of their good looking and beautifulness. Dress and jewelry also related with their good and beautiful looking and jewelries are considered



as property as well. Respondent's experience regarding this subject matter were as follow.

**Table 16 : Freedom to Choice Dress**

Freedom to choose dress and jewelry	Before liberation		After liberation	
	number	percent	number	percent
Yes	14	35	40	100
No	26	65	-	-
Total	40	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 16, out of total 40 respondents 26 (65%) respondents expressed that directly or indirectly they were restricted to wear good cloths and jewelries. Now *Kamaiya* both male and female are free to choose the dress and jewelries what they want to wear. Mainly older women wear the *sari*, *blouse*, and *Lehanga* and the younger generation wear *salwar* and *kurtha*, *dhoti*, *sari*, and *Lungi* and t-short and but the younger male generation wears shirt / t-shirt and paint. School girls and boys wear the uniform as school's requirement.

### **Freedom to Choices the Occupation**

In the *Kamaiya* system, *Kamaiya* worker were not allowed to work outside to earn extra income. They had to follow their annual contract, which had made between landlord and at the beginning of the year. After liberation they observed that they are free to choose the occupation as per their need and interest as well.

**Table 17 : Occupation of Kamaiya before and after Liberation (N = 40)**

S.N.	Occupation	Before liberation		After liberation	
		Number	percent	number	Percent
1	Agriculture labor ( <i>Kamaiya</i> )	32	80	-	-
2	Agriculture labor (partly)	-	-	19	48
3	Retail shop / business	-	-	5	12
4	Job (Volunteer)	-	-	3	8
5	<i>Kamlhari</i>	8	20	-	-
6	Other wage labor	-	-	13	32
	Total	40	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 17 predicts that out of total 40 respondents, 32 (80%) respondent said that they worked as agriculture labor and 8 (20%) said that they worked as *Kamlhari* in landlord's house before liberation. As per the *Kamaiya* system and rules of their contract they were not allowed to work outside. After being freed 19 (48%) freed *Kamaiya* are mostly engaged in agricultural labor partly. Similarly 5 (12%) said that they are engaged in small business/retail shop within the settlement, 3 (8%) respondents expressed that they are mostly engaged in other seasonal labor work as daily wage earner within and outside the settlement.

From all above finding it can be conclude that after liberation freed *Kamaiya* feel to choose the occupation as per their interest and need. They can decide themselves what is better for their family and how to earn more money to maintain their daily life and for better education for their children as well. However it is very difficult and challenges to get the job as per their choice.

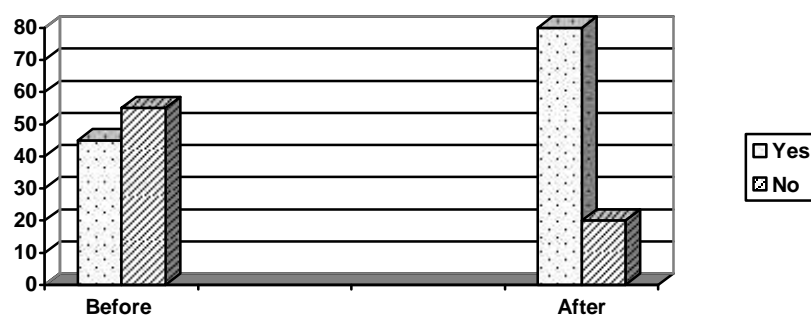
### **Freedom of Financial Decision Making**

The respondents said that they had to work 24 hours for landlords and they could not make any decision about their labor and their income too. It always depends on landlord's decision. *Kamaiya* family always had to wait order from landlord. Without landlord's order or permission *Kamaiya* workers were not allowed to do anything of their liking. Now they can freely decide for their own life and for the family. Their income doesn't need to share with any other people beyond their family. They can work whatever they want. Some person get employment opportunity like volunteer, community group leader for goat raising program etc. and now they are free to make decision on how to use their own income in appropriate way. They mentioned that financial freedom also one of the greatest changes taken placed in their lives after liberation which was almost totally controlled by their landlords before being freed from *Kamaiya* system.

#### **6.1.7 Food Sufficiency**

Before being freed most of the *Kamaiya* families had often faced food insufficiency which contributed to bond them with generation debt. During household interview they also expressed their feeling how they have been tackling this issue after being freed.

**Graph 1 : Food Sufficiency before and after Liberation**



Sources : Field Survey, 2008.

Graph 1 shows that out of total 55% percent respondents said they has sufficient food supply and no tension about what to eat today and tomorrow, though landlord battered them whereas more than half of the respondents said they had not sufficient food for their family. Similarly 80% respondents said now they have sufficient food for their family whereas 20% said no and said they manage by borrowing from their neighbor or friends and will return later when they earn more money. Previously they had to borrow money from landlord for additional food supply and that helped to bond them, after sometime they will pay back and free from loan easily. Due to this deference they perceived it as a positive aspect.

### **6.1.8 Reduced Financial Exploitation**

Most of the participants said that whole *Kamaiya*'s families were dependent on *Saunki* if they need more money to fulfill their family requirements they had to borrow loan from their landlords with high rate of interest. Due to illiteracy of *Kamaiya* workers, sometimes landlord tried to cheat them by writing the higher amount in the receipt than that of actual amount received by *Kamaiya* from him. *Kamaiya* worker never been paid reasonable wages or remuneration in compared to hard work. They had to work almost 24 hours for landlord but they did not get anything at last except bitter scold. What they have been experiencing after liberation was also discussed with the same participants. They expressed that almost all freed *Kamaiya* families are now organized in different saving groups supported by different organizations. Out of many saving groups some groups are included both male and female and some are included only women. Freed *Kamaiya* highlighted that they are more benefited from saving groups. Now they are capable to mobilize their own

money for their own purpose and they also became safe from high rate of interest of local money holders like landlords. It was a great change that they found after liberation.

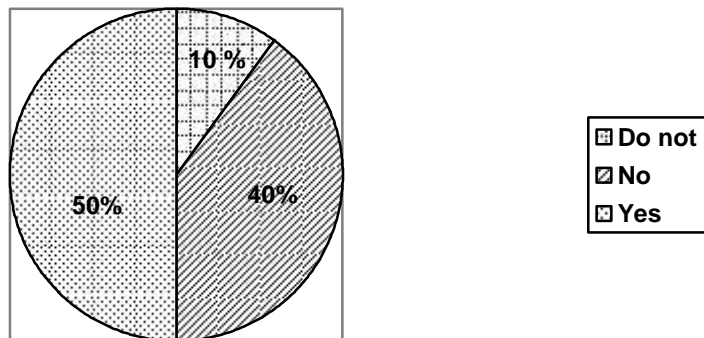
### 6.1.9 Increased Facilities

This section describe about some physical facilities which were taken as positive part of being freed from *Kamaiya* system by the respondents.

#### Educational Facilities

*Kamaiya* families were not allowed to participate in adult literacy program however some organizations conducted adult literacy class in their respective village previously. Similarly their children above 7 – 8 years had to work as *Gothala* in landlord house. They had no chance to go to the school. After liberation, they feel that they are free to send their children to school and few organizations have provided some additional facilities for education.

**Graph 2 : Additional Facilities for Education after Liberation**



Source : Field Survey, 2008.

Graph 2 shows that almost half of the total respondent 50% said that some additional facilities are provided by few organizations particularly for their children though it is not adequate. Another 40% said no and 10% were unknown about it and for what they considered as additional facilities for their children in this settlement have been explained in detail as bellow.

**Table 18 : Types of Education Facilities**

SN	Educational facilities	No. of respondents	Supporting agencies
1	School building within settlement	16	Plan Nepal
2	School uniform	10	BASE
3	Stationary support	4	BASE
4	ECD class & day time	6	Plan & Chetna club
5	Discount in monthly fee	4	Schools.

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 18 shows that in household survey more than half of the respondents said that there are some additional facilities provided for the freed *Kamaiya* children. Among them 16 respondents considered that the school building constructed within their own settlement as a educational facilities for their children, 10 said that BASE supported school uniform for their children, 4 respondents said that BASE also provided stationary support, 6 respondents said that ECD classes including day time tiffin provided by Plan International Nepal and *Chetana Club* and 4 respondents said some schools provided discount in monthly fee and they have to pay only exam fee for their children. Most of the participants expressed that there is no any specific educational package for *Kamaiya* children yet though it is one of the most important and greatest need for *Kamaiya* families. They also expressed that if free education up to 10 grades for their children, it would be better. At least now they became more aware about the important of education and they want to try to send their children to the school as much as they can.

### **Drinking Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Facilities**

Access to drinking water and sanitation facilities are also closely linked with every human's day to day life because if these services are not accessible women are the first who suffer most and they have to spend more time to collect water from the far distance. Following are the finding:

**Table 19 : Access to Drinking Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Facilities**

Basic services	Before liberation			After liberation		
	Yes	Yes but no access	No	Yes	Yes but no access	No
Drinking water	40	-	-	40	-	-
Latrine facilities	4	9	27	40	-	-
Irrigation facilities	40	-	-	40	-	-

Source: Field survey, 2008.

Table 19 shows that the above table shows that all respondents were provided drinking water and irrigation facilities when they were *Kamaiya* in their previous landlord's house. Out of total 40 respondents, only 4 said that they had practice to use latrine when they lived as *Kamaiya* in the past and another 9 respondents said that there was latrine in landlord's house but *Kamaiya* people were not allowed to use the same latrine. Majority of the respondents 27 said that there were no toilet facilities for both landlord and *Kamaiya* family.

The same table predicts that all respondents said that various INGOs / NGOs (Mainly NEWAH and Plan) provided them adequate public and private hand pumps and taps for drinking water purpose and they have been using safe and clean drinking water from taps. Similarly all households have access to latrine facilities at their own house which was supported by various organizations. They felt easy to use these water and sanitation facilities and also said that their settlement has nice and hygienic environment. All respondents know that GTZ provided 3 pumping sets to the group for irrigation purpose. They use these pumping set on rotation basis. They have small land and generally they grew green vegetable for business purpose in their land. They use these pumping set to irrigate vegetable garden but some of them found the pumping set inappropriate for their use. Because it needs electricity and they could not afford the charge of electricity and the other.

Almost freed *Kamaiya* families in this settlement have access to drinking water, irrigation facilities. Only very few freed *Kamaiya* had access to latrine facilities and had practice of latrine using before liberation and now almost they have access to hygienic latrine facility in each individuals household. Most of the freed *Kamaiya*

men, women and children were participated in health and hygienic awareness activities conducted at community level and became aware about hygienic and sanitation aspect. Personal hygienic of freed *Kamaiya* men women and children has been observed in better condition that helps to improve their overall health status as well as social prestige and status. Because of all these facilities, this settlement looks like a well planned and well managed in general.

### Housing Facilities

**Table 20 : Facilities Provided for Housing (N = 40)**

Facilities for housing	Before liberation		After liberation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Land provided for house construction	40	100	40	100
Cash contribution	-	-	40	100
Construction materials	21	53	40	100
Other support	-	-	28	70

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 20 shows that out of total all respondents said that the landlords provided them land construct a residential hut and for kitchen garden (*Chheuti*) to the homeless *Kamaiya* for the whole contract period. But *Kamaiya* family did not have ownership of land. Out of total 40 respondents 21 respondents said that the landlord provided some other additional material needed household construction like wood and bamboo. But after liberation, all respondents said that the Land Reform office provided 2 to 4 *Kattha* land to construct a house and farm activities and Rs. 10,000 cash to each freed *Kamaiya* family to construct a house. Additional 35 cubic fit woods from Forest Office and 2.5 quintal rice. Food Security Program was also supported to these *Kamaiya* families those who have red color ID Card. *Kamaiya* who received only 2 *Kattha* land are not distributed these additional facilities. In my study area Muktinagar Freed *Kamaiya* settlement in Lalmatiya VDC, there are only Red color ID card *Kamaiya* families, therefore they have got maximum facilities which are mentioned above.

## Clothing Facility

**Table 21 : Clothing Facilities**

Support for clothing	Before liberation	After liberation
Yes (%)	48 %	85 %
No (%)	52 %	15 %
Total (%)	100 %	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 21 shows that out of total 48% respondents said that they were given one or two pair of (new cloth especially for women) new cloth in a year. Usually they were given second hand cloth to the *Kamaiya* men, women and children which were already used by landlord's family members. 52% of respondents said that landlord even did not give them any cloth to *Kamaiya* family. Sometimes rarely they gave children's ware in winter season before liberation. After liberation 85% respondents said that they are given different types of cloths immediate after liberation that includes children's cloths; men and women cloths, mosquito net, and blanket from different organizations and 15% respondents said that they did not get any kind of support for clothing from the outside agencies.

### **6.1.10 More Opportunity to Participate in Community Development Activities**

Almost all respondents of this study said that they never got any opportunities to participate in community meeting, trainings and other development process and activities at all. It was also highlighted that they were totally unaware about the group concept and other community development process. Only male members participated if needed. Male *Kamaiya* workers also were not allowed to attend such meetings or training except in exceptional cases, though there were many opportunities around their village. The following table represents the situation of *Kamaiya*'s participation in development activities only after liberation.



**Table 22 : Training Receiving by Respondents**

Name of Training	No of Respondents	Percentage
Vegetable farming training	18	45.00
Pig farming training	12	30.00
Cycle repairing	6	15.00
Radio/ TV repairing	4	10.00
Maseura making training	8	20.00
Health & sanitation Training	7	17.50
Poultry farming training	16	40.00
Driving	2	5.00
Community literacy training	2	5.00
Bamboo tool making	8	20.00
<i>Aguwa Kisan</i> training	4	10.00

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 22 shows that *Kamaiya's* participation on various development interventions were found to have significantly increased after liberation. Out of total respondents some are participated various training programs supported by different organizations. Some are participated on income generating related training like 10 respondents are participated in vegetable farming training, 12 are participated in pig farming training, 6 are participated in cycle repairing training, 4 are participated in radio / TV repairing, 8 are participated in *Maseura* making training, 16 are participated in poultry farming training, 2 are participated in driving training and 8 respondents participated in bamboo tool making training 7 respondents are participated in health and sanitation training, 2 are participated in community literacy training and 4 respondents are participated in leadership development related training, i.e. *Aguwa Kisan* training. In this way the above table predicts that total respondents have access to various training opportunities after liberation.

They are proud as they considered as equal stakeholder of development. However freed *Kamaiya* felt to organize *Kamaiya's* group should be stronger in future. Beside these trainings, various groups and committees are formed at community level and some freed *Kamaiya* have also been holding some key position of that committee.

From all above data and information it can be conducted that before liberation there were no opportunity to all *Kamaiya* men and women to participate in development related activities like community meetings, trainings and planning and decision making process. But after liberation we see the greater participation of women and men as well in various development related activities like training, meeting, planning and decision making process. Now almost all the freed *Kamaiya* women and men have various opportunities to participate in all kinds of social / community meeting and development process. It constitutes a great change; however, there is still much room to increase the participation of women in decision making position. Only freed *Kamaiya* women have also been holding key decision making positions. Most of them are also interested to get involved in skill development training and income generation related activities and they requested to all supportive organization to implement such activities or program by which freed *Kamaiya* could get self-sustainable employment opportunities in the future.

#### 6.1.11 Increased Social Status

There are many factors related to social status of *Kamaiya*. Directly or indirectly it affects *Kamaiya*'s lives from both positive and negative sides. Similarly, this study tried to capture *Kamaiya*'s view about their social prestige and status in general before and after liberation.

**Table 23 : Social Status of Kamaiya Respondent**

Social Status	No of Respondents	
	Before Liberation	After Liberation
Permission to talk outsiders	7	38
Permission to attend social gathering	5	39
Time available to respect the guests	7	36
Abused by landlord	28	-
Beaten by landlord	24	-
Women decision making	4	32
Leadership	6	28

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Table 23 shows that out of total respondents, only 7 respondents said that they were permitted to talk with outsiders before liberation where as 38 respondents said that

now they are free to talk with outsiders. Similarly only 5 of the total respondents said that they were permitted to attend social gathering within their own village before whereas 39 out of 40 respondents said that they freely and frequently attend in such gathering within and outside village after liberation. 7 respondents said that they had no time to respect their guests or relatives though they wanted. But now they are free to invite and respect their guests when they want, there was no any restriction in this subject matter. More than half respondents 28 said that many *Kamaiya* were abused by their landlord, 24 *Kamaiya* said they were beaten by landlord and now they feel very safe from such abused. After liberation women participation is also increased in household decision making and the table predicts that 32 out of total respondents make all kind of household decision because usually male members are always outside from the village for earning. Similarly now both male and female became leader at community level by which they are encouraged and feel more social respect. They are respected by all community people and by outsider's agencies as well.

One *Kamaiya* said "Landlord had always complained and ordered not to spend time in talking and entertaining guests, he became very angry. Now they feel free to organize social gathering among their family members and relative at any time if they want. They feel relax and more secure when they meet each other frequently, because they can share every situation among each other that helps them to feel more secure.

They feel that the social status of freed *Kamaiya* is increased. Many officials know them very well, respect them very well. They are participated in various development process and activities actively. They can visit different organizations alone and can talk confidently with them without hesitation. Some of them became community leader and visiting many places within and outside community. Therefore they feel proud and said they never expected even in their dream to see these days in their own life. After being freed they got new life and if they compare the situation between before an after they feel that they are living in the heaven now they do not want to remember the past life spent as *Kamaiya* bonded labor.

The whole *Kamaiya* families were control by the landlords by all aspect before liberation. They were socially, physically and economically exploited and had low social prestige. They were exploited and abused by landlord. Some times landlord tried to rape them. *Kamaiya* family could not do anything against landlord even landlord rapid them. *Kamaiya* were suffered from violence. After being freed they

observed that their overall status has increased and they have been participating in all kinds of activities within and outside community and that helps to understand outside world and they became more aware in all aspects of their life in general.

## **6.2 Negative Changes**

Freed *Kamaiya* experienced and perceived some negative changes too in their lives after being freed though they feel free from bondage. This section mainly describes the negative changes and their perspective regarding these changes which, they have experienced their own life after being freed from bondage labor system.

### **6.2.1 Having no Access to the Process of Work**

Though some freed *Kamaiya* have got the access places for work, the most of the problems of freed *Kamaiyas* witness in Nepal. Since they got free from the *Kamaiyas* on 2<sup>nd</sup> Shrawan 2057, they are working laboriously in different places facing difficulties to survive their families in the community.

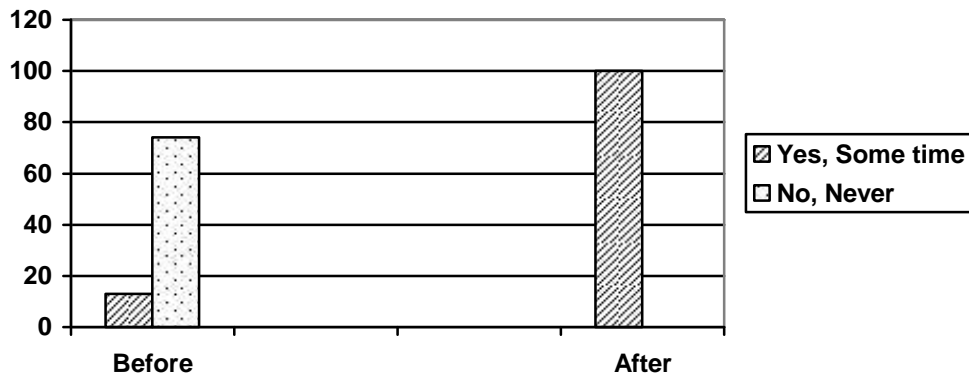
Though the government has provided land to the freed *Kamaiyas* is insufficient. Usually they got 5 *Kattha* land each household by the government which is difficult to sustain their jointly families of freed *Kamaiya*. If the government would distribute the lands to the freed *Kamaiyas* on the basis of family members rather than in households some problems would be solved. Further more if they would be shifted at near agricultural farm, they could utilize their labor because they mostly involved in agricultural activities.

The freed *Kamaiyas* are settled down out of access places for work to earn the money for surviving their families after the declaration of liberation. Before shifting them, the government would be determined the working places for them even though they got technical skill from governmental and non governmental sectors would be better. Now they became do or die so it has great problems. Therefore freed *Kamaiya* experienced and perceived this situation as a negative change in their own life after being freed.

### **6.2.2 Less Access to Health Services**

Access to health service is closely related with the level of awareness of the people and facilities or services available within reach. For the *Kamaiya* families of this settlement health institution like Health Post and Hospital are also available in accessible distance but they feel that the services were unaffordable for them.

**Graph 3 : Availability of Health Services before and after Liberation**



Source: Field Survey, 2008.

Graph 3 shows that out of total respondents 74% respondents said that they never got medicine support or treatment cost from their landlord and only 13% said that they got few support for medicine from their previous landlord. It may be the landlord was widow women or very older person and they needed *Kamaiya*'s family support for all indoor or outdoor activities. Another 13% of total respondents said that they got support only in exceptional case, though it was very nominal (Rs. 50 – 100). In most of the case, *Kamaiya* families were compelled to borrow loan from landlord in order to emergency expenses like someone gets sick in the family he/she had to borrow money for treatment.

There was no any kind of support regarding health improvements to *Kamaiya* from any governmental or non governmental organization yet. All respondents said that the problems of freed *Kamaiya* family have become more complicated than before liberation. In the past landlords provided partial support and looked after their *Kamaiya*. If someone fell seriously, the landlords used to bear the partial cost for medicine and treatment. One health clinic was set up near the settlement and they visit that clinic for minor treatment and if they need to do any major treatment it became impossible at all due to lack of money.

They also expressed their exceptions on their reproductive health. Health service are also available near by the settlement, however they could not afford such expensive service because almost they became jobless and have been facing hand to mouth problem in these days. There is no any special provision for the poorest people like *Kamaiya*. Therefore they expect that if government or any other agencies provide

support for them for the time being would be great. They stressed their problems and also said that they have only one option that is “die without any treatment or medicine.”, if someone get sick very seriously.

In this matter informants put their views differently and said that after liberation freed *Kamaiya* families received a lot of support from various organizations. Initially it was needed too. However they became more dependent an expected everything from outside agencies which won't be possible for long term. Most of the interventions were also designed and launched for short term. Therefore it needs to be improved from both sides from the development side and from the *Kamaiya* side. Development intervention should be designed for long term and targeted more skill oriented vocational training for sustainable livelihood and *Kamaiya* families should not be more dependent with outsiders.

### **6.2.3 Overload & Internal Conflict due to Development Intervention**

This finding came particularly from discussion with *Kamaiya* and key informants interview. *Kamaiya* participants expressed that various development intervention have been launched by various organizations and it also helped them in many aspects. They also highlighted that without these interventions they even could not survive till now. However every organization they came in to the settlements and requests to form local group to implement the activities as per their rules. It was good but it also helped to create the problems. Various groups are formed in the settlement and the some selected persons occupied the key positions in different groups. Sometime it is difficult to organize the meeting because they could not manage their time. It automatically helped to make them more powerful. Sometime it was difficult to get information particularly about the trainings. Committee people selected their family members or relatives for good training because they were paid during the training. It might help to break the good relationship among neighbor and invite internal conflict among them.

Similarly key informants have also observed and faced that problem. Now freed *Kamaiya* started to say “**Previously they were *Kamaiya* of landlord and now they became *Kamaiya* of many NGOs**”. From this saying of *Kamaiya* we can easily understand how they were feeling overloaded. They observed that the *Kamaiya* families were overloaded too due to many interventions. They said that immediate

after liberation of *Kamaiya*, many governmental and non governmental organizations involved to Freed *Kamaiya* rehabilitation and relief program. Mainly the program was focused on shelter, food, drinking water supply. Freed *Kamaiya* families were in terrible condition and that was also highly needed. Many positive changes have been taken places in freed *Kamaiya* families, however in the mean time they also overloaded too. Because freed *Kamaiya* family also needed to involve in every program and activities. Participating in different training and taking allowances became as their main duty. Slowly *Kamaiya* family has lost their hard working habit and they became as a doting son and daughter. But the programs were not sustainable, just came and finished the activities and stopped. Almost the nature of programs were short term and for the welfare of *Kamaiya* family. Some of the clever freed *Kamaiya* are highly benefited from these programs compare to all others.

#### **6.2.4 Increased Financial Dependency on Male**

Out of total respondents, most of the female respondents in household interview highlighted this issue as the major and negative change during field. Women of this study area have been facing this situation particularly after liberation. Most of the participants expressed that before liberation the whole *Kamaiya* families were fully involved in farm activities. They had no leisure time and mostly both husband and wife worked together in landlord's farm. They managed their families from their joint income. They understand each others problems and co-operated to each other. But after liberation particularly women have been facing unemployment problem and they have to spent their time without any productive work. Due to lack of enough land for farm activities and no any regular job sometime they spend the whole day free. There are limited places to go to work for women. They only get seasonal labor work and it is also very hard to get, because of many internally displaced people migrated from different part of the mid west hilly and rural areas. Generally the male members from their families go outside village or country like Butwal, Bhairahawa, India. But women can't go outside independently. As a result women economically became dependent with their male counterpart.

Productive roles of freed *Kamaiya* women is reduced because of less agricultural work in small size of land of the family in these days. They perceived it as negative affects of their life particularly after liberation. And they expected some skill based and sustainable training by which they could be self-employed for long term. Few

organizations have already started to provide skill based training and other income generating activities in the settlement that could be help to fulfill their expectation to some extent.

From all above data and information we can conclude that the freed *Kamaiya* families became more vulnerable condition in this aspect, though they enjoy with their freedom after liberation.

In this way *Kamaiya* have been experiencing various changes in their lives after liberation and it concludes both positive and negative changes. Comparatively they perceived more positive changes and felt better life after being freed though they still have many challenges. In order to uplift the overall status of *Kamaiya* families various interventions have been launched in the settlement. To some extent interventions have contributed to bring these changes, however, there is much room for improvement to bring the sustainable changes or impact of the intervention into *Kamaiya* life. In general, *Kamaiya* have perceived the role of the interventions very positive except in some cases.

## **CASE STUDY**

### **Case Study One: That was the Happiest Day in My Life**

Tek Bahadur Rawat a 34 years old freed *Kamaiya* has been living in the *Muktinagar* freed *Kamaiya* settlement in Lalmatiya VDC since 2058 BS. He has one 12 years old son and one 8 years old daughter and wife in his family. He was born in *Kamaiya* family since his parents were *Kamaiya* from three old generations. He worked as cow herder till his 9 years of age and he got married at his 15 years of age and started to work as *Kamaiya* from his childhood. As he knows, he worked with two landlords from minimum 5 to maximum 12 years of period. During that period he experienced many difficulties and bitterness.

He said “we had to work for landlord for all time but landlords always battered us instead of saying thanks. Sometime I felt if I had a small size of land to build a house I could manage my family and I would never come back to such landlord. But we could not do anything because of our generation old debt. When I heard the announcement made by the government from Land Reform Office. I became very happy that was the happiest day in my life when we first heard that news, our family



was in confusion and we also thought that what landlord would say if we leave them immediately. But NGOs members' advice us and we left landlord house.

When I came up here in this settlement, we were facing the problem of food, shelter and cloth due to separate from landlord's house. Slowly after I found many opportunity to participate in different development activities launched by various organizations to uplift the freed *Kamaiya* families. Now I became literate through community literacy program and I am able to read and write. I am selected as chairman of the *Muktinagar Kamaiya Samaj* and also chairperson of our saving group. I also now I work as leader *Muktinagar Freed Kamaiya Settlement*. I usually have to go to attend regular group meeting. I have to submit all account in details to all. Sometime I do not have time to stay at home. I usually busy in such community activities however I am very happy and proud of me. I think about possible alternatives for the income sources. I have to perform my other social responsibilities besides my family work."

#### **Case Study Two: I Never Expected that These Days Will Come My Life**

Chameli Chaudhary, 24 years old freed *Kamaiya* women, has been living here in the *Muktinagar Freed Kamaiya Settlement* since 2058 BS. She has one small daughter and husband in her family. She expressed her feeling and experiences before and after liberation and said, "I got married at 14 years of age. Before marriage I lived two landlord's house. When I was in landlord's house, most of my time spent in work for them, no time to rest even I work for them. I had to work hard. I had to carry heavy load. May be the cause that I could not save my children's life and lost my 3 children."

Now, I became a women leader of goat borrowing program supported by District Veterinary Office. They provided three goats for 70 freed *Kamaiya* families here in this settlement. So women from those families get engaged with these goats. If we could increase the number of goats properly in coming days, we would have enough money and we would own more goats from the production of these three goats. I feel very proud being a women leader of these days, because I have got opportunity to participate in many development programs activities after being free. Now I am confident and I can talk with them without hesitation, I can go to the office alone, as a leader I have to sign the bank cheque up to Rs 50,000 look after the distributed goat

and manage medicine if required and record keeping of all these activities I have to perform. Veterinary provided the medicine facilities. Doing those all social responsibilities, I can manage my time as per my need and I can take care of my children. I never expected that these days will come in my life, so I am very happy and proud of me and thank to the government for good decision for betterment of *Kamaiya* families.”

### **Case Study Three: We Enjoy with New Occupation**

Hari Chaudhary, a freed *Kamaiya* has been living in the Muktinagar settlement since 2057 *Chaitra*. He has two sons; one is 11 and other is 6 years old. He was also born in *Kamaiya* family since his parents were *Kamaiya* from old generations. He expressed her feeling and said, “Although we were not scarcity of food, shelter and cloth. Landlords provided these types of facility where we worked. We could not raise of freedom in front of landlords, freely could not speak and walk. These types of problems were existed before the emancipation of freed *Kamaiya*.”

After the emancipation of freed *Kamaiya*, immediately we were facing many problems. Anyway we have become free physically and can raise our voice for welfare in front of any concerned authorities. Similarly we can speak and struggle on behalf of human rights in any kinds of media and mass.

Initially I have started a small retail shop in my house within the settlement area. Later on I took cycle repairing training and started to repair the cycle. I found financial benefit form this activity and I encouraged to continuing it. Now we are managing our family very well and enjoy with this new occupation. Everybody trusts me in the village and I feel proud.”

Three case study have been taken for this study. All participants of the case study had differently expressed their own views and experiences. The main content of the case studies are perspective of *Kamaiya* after being freed, their perception about the interventions launched to uplift them and changed, they have been perceived in their lives after being freed.

From above study, it shows, before being freed *Kamaiya* had to work for landlord for all time, they have no time to rest. They have not got any opportunity to participate in different development program and activities. They were never permitted to go outside for outdoor activities. They have experienced many difficulties and bitterness.

But after freedom, they found many opportunities to participate in different development activities launched by various organizations to uplift their family. They have started other new occupations. Many changes have come in their lives.

## CHAPTER - VII

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter mainly describes about the summary of the finding from the data analysis that has been done in previous chapter of this study and conclusion of the whole research. This study is mainly based on primary data gathered from the perception of the 40 households using the semi-structured interview.

#### 7.1 Summary of the Finding

The settlement is occupied 32 *Bigha* of land and the total population of the study area is 695. Out of whole total population, the total population of sample households (40 HHs) is 256, where 134 are males and 12 are females.

The overall literacy rate is found to be 42.97 percent (for population of five years of age and above) in freed *Kamaiya* settlement of the study area. The major occupation is agriculture. Almost 59.43 percent of economically active population of respondent families are engaged in seasonal farming work and vegetable farming. The second major occupation is seasonal labour work (skilled and unskilled), where 19.43 percent are engaged. Among them few population are engaged other different occupation like small scale business, carpenter and volunteer job.

There are many types of *Kamaiyas* before the abolished the *Kamaiya* system. The government divided them into different categorize. The government has classified freed *Kamaiya* into four different groups and provided them different identity card and land in different size as per groups. However, only one group (with a Red ID Card holder) has been living in this settlement.

This study has particularly focused to asses the changes that freed *Kamaiya* observed in their lives after being freed from *Kamaiya*. It provides the information about the perspective of *Kamaiya* after being freed from *Kamaiyahood* and to explore their perception with regard to interventions launched to uplift them. Both positive and negative changes were experienced and observed by the *Kamaiya*, which describes as follows.

#### ) Positive Changes

Work burden of freed *Kamaiya* found significantly reduced by 6 hours in a day in average. *Kamaiya* had to work 16-18 hours a day in average when they

were bondage labour. Now, they have to work 13-14 hours a day in average they have enough leisure time. *Kamaiya* never take chance to involve in community role before liberation. After being freed their work pattern also found changed. Most of them grow green vegetable in their own land. Some women have now involved in goat borrowing, pig farming and so on.

*Kamaiya* have participated in different types of training, meeting and awareness campaign and became more vocal and confident. Out of total respondents, they are participated various training programs supported by different organizations. Some are participated on income generating related training like 45% respondents participated in vegetable farming training, 30% in pig farming training, 15% cycle repairing training, 10% radio/TV repairing training, 5% driving, 5% community literacy training and 10% participated in *Aguwa Kisan* training. Beside these trainings, various groups and committees are formed at community level and some freed *Kamaiya* have also been holding some key position of that committee.

Out of total respondents, 90% have no own land, 40% found that landlords had given land only for managing day to day subsistence for *Kamaiya* family but *Kamaiya* had no ownership of that land and 48% respondent expressed that the landlord did not give any kind of land for *Kamaiya* family before liberation. But after liberation all *Kamaiya* (100%) have ownership of 5 *kattha* land. In Muktinagar, Freed *Kamaiya* Settlement of Lalmatiya all freed *Kamaiya* family have received 5 *kattha* lands and identified by Red ID Card.

In *Kamaiya* system, there were different types of wage payment system. It was vary in the same place and same family in terms of quantity and types of payment. Out of total 70% respondents were paid 36 *Man* (540 kg) *Masura* as their annual remuneration, 17% respondents were paid 9-17 *Man Bhutti* and only 13% were paid in cash (Rs. 4000 - 5000 yearly) who worked as *Kamthari*, physically they had to work long hours and received low wages before being freed and the wage given by landlord was very low compare to their hard work and market rate as well. But after liberation, they earn 100 - 150 Rs. per day, it depends upon the nature of work. If they find the labor work in construction area comparatively they earn higher than normal agricultural labor.

Most of the respondents expressed that they became free than in many aspects of their life. Before liberation, they were restricted to speak, they always feared to speak with outsider. Out of total 65% respondents expressed that directly or indirectly they were restricted to wear good cloths and jewelries. *Kamaiya* were not allowed to work outside to earn extra income. They had to work 24 hours for landlords and they could not make any decision about their labor and their income too. It always depends on landlord's decision. But after liberation, all freed *Kamaiya* (100%) expressed that they feel more freedom to raise their voice at community level, free to choose dress and jewelries, free to choose the occupation as per their need and interest, free to make decision on how to use their own income in appropriate way, they can freely decide for their own life and for the family.

Out of total, all freed *Kamaiya* family (100%) in this settlement have access to drinking water, irrigation, and hygienic latrine facility in each individual household. Land Reform Office provided Rs. 10,000 cash to each *Kamaiya* family to construct house. Additional 35 cubic fit woods from Forest Office and 2.5 quintal rice. Almost half of the total respondent (50%) said that some educational facilities are provided by some organization particularly for their children.

#### ) **Negative Changes**

Freed *Kamaiya* experienced and perceived some negative changes too in their lives after being freed though they feel free from bondage labour. This section mainly describes the negative changes and their perspective regarding these changes which they have experienced their own life after being freed from bondage labor system.

Though the government has provided land to the freed *Kamaiyas* is insufficient. Usually they got 5 *kattha* land each household by which is difficult to sustain their jointly families of freed *Kamaiya*. The freed *Kamaiyas* are settled down out of access places for work to earn money fro surviving their families after the declaration of liberation. Now, they became do or die so it has great problems. Therefore, freed *Kamaiya* experienced and perceived this situation as a negative change in their own life after being freed.

For the *Kamaiya* families of this settlement health institution like Health Post and Hospital are also available in accessible distance but they feel that these services were unaffordable for them. There was no any kind of support regarding health improvements to *Kamaiya* from any governmental or non-governmental organization yet. So, respondents expressed that the problem of freed *Kamaiya* family have become more complicated than before liberation.

Before liberation the whole *Kamaiya* families were fully involved in farm activities. They had no leisure time. But after liberation, due to lack of enough land for farm activities and no any regular job, generally the male members from their families go outside village or country. But women can't go outside independently. There are limited placed to go to work for women. There is no any regular work. They only get seasonal labour work and it is also very had to get. Sometimes they spend the whole day free. As a result, women economically became dependent with their male counterpart.

From above data and information we can conclude that the freed *Kamaiya* families became more vulnerable condition in this aspect, though they enjoy with their freedom after liberation.

In this way *Kamaiya* have experienced various changes in their lives after liberation and it concludes both positive and negative changes. Comparatively they perceived more position changes and felt better life after being freed though they still have many challenges. In order to uplift the overall status of *Kamaiya* families various interventions have been launched in the settlement. To some extent interventions have contributed to bring these changes, however, there is much room for improvement to bring the sustainable changes or impact of the intervention into *Kamaiya* life. In general, *Kamaiya* have perceived the role of interventions very positive except in few cases.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

*Kamaiya* perceived the announcement made by government in July 2000 as an unbelievable event for them. When they first heard about their liberation most of them were in confusion and worried too. Mainly they worried about food and shelter because it was the middle of the monsoon season. Most of them had spent extremely terrible life under the plastic roof almost 9 months. But now they have perceived

various changes in their lives after being freed however it included both positive and negative changes. Mentally, physically and socially they felt easy and comfortable life after being freed but economically they have many challenges. Economically freed *Kamaiya* became more dependent than before. They became jobless and feeling more stressed and challenged in these days. The food security and economic status was found still low however they are free and they have opportunities, choice and feel to talk and think for their own sake an improvement of quality of life. After being freed they perceived that their social status is increased.

Various kinds of development interventions have been launched in order to uplift the lives of *Kamaiya* in social and economic sector. Initially most of the interventions were focused to provide the emergency relief services to the freed families. After the liberation mainly the NGOs and INGOs have been working with freed *Kamaiya* with different awareness, skill development and income generating programs and activities. *Kisori Sachetana Karyakram* is one of the important awareness programs and its aim is to establish a *Kasori Club* near future. Such awareness program helped to aware about *Kamaiya*'s issues. Similarly various skills oriented and income generating related activities has been running in the settlement. The settlement is going to be developed as a Model Village for vegetable farming. Freed *Kamaiya* perceived that some of their basic needs like shelter, drinking water, sanitation are fulfilled and food, basic health, education services were partly fulfilled and the expected external supported for the time being. They felt that they are highly participated in various development activities and found only short term solution. The visible impact after liberation seems in a tremendous manner; however inner development is equally important for the long run development. The biggest changes after being freed are that freed *Kamaiya* are recognized as other citizen in the society and they became an owner of their own land. It was observed that when they were expressing their feelings, experience during interview they were very excited.

They need more skill based and job oriented training and activities by which they could get self employment for the long term. *Kamaiya* became jobless after liberation. They are looking various possible options as sources of income for sustainable livelihood. Some organizations have already started their activities with long term vision. If they play their role effectively and seriously, certainly it will help to fulfill their desired demand within some certain period. Economic status plays the crucial



role to increase the overall status of *Kamaiya* family and society as well. Therefore they highly demanded such intervention by which they could get sustainable economic benefit.

Freed *Kamaiya* themselves should be stronger and aware to identify their needs. Problems and issue to uplift their overall status. They should organize and capable to raise their voice collectively which will be more effective than the single voice. Similarly, society should recognize them as other citizen. Development agencies should support to strength their organization. Development intervention should be designed to address their needs and they should be actively participated in all planning and decision making process of the intervention which will be launched for their betterment. State should also play the key roles to uplift their socio-economic status for the long run. Basically they need the basic health services, education facilities for their children and employment opportunity. State formulates some certain policies and guideline particularly to address the freed *Kamaiya*'s needs.

In this way if the joint effort could implement effectively, certainly it will be easy to reduce the negative changes which *Kamaiya* have perceived and they will be able to live in more comfortable and better life within some year.

### **7.3 Recommendation**

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings of the study.

#### **Recommendation to I/NGOs**

I/NGOs have made efforts to support farmer *Kamaiyas* who have been expelled from the homestead of the landlord. They have launched the short term and primary relief program such as ; construction of temporary huts, distribution of food grains and clothing and arrangement of drinking water, health care and schooling of children. Most of the NGOs are mostly concentrated on education and awareness activities targeted at child of freed *Kamaiyas*'. The income generation program of NGOs are mostly related with saving schemes pig/ goat raising, vegetable farming etc. But these programs are sustainable as well as insufficient. So the coming up programs should be focused on the essential needs such as education, health and employment in order to make them independent. The following suggestion should be implemented for that.

- ) INGOs should start immediately skill development program and income generation activities on the basis of market and capacity of freed *Kamaiyas*.
- ) INGOs should help to establish health clinic and schools in each freed *Kamaiyas* settlement and should provide free medical treatment.
- ) As they have not any property to mortgage, they should be provided loan in the minimum or free interest rate to start any business or profession.

#### **Recommendation to Central Government**

- ) Even though the government did band the practice of keeping *Kamaiya / Kamlhari*, there are many landlords keeping them new terms and condition. It is needed to use the existing laws to punish those who still maintaining this practice.
- ) The allotted land size to freed *Kamaiya* should be increased that it would be sufficient to sustain a family. Otherwise, at least five *Kattha* land should be granted to all landless and homeless freed *Kamaiyas*.
- ) The government should develop strong policies for promotion for freed *Kamaiyas*.

#### **Recommendation to Local Government**

- ) Some *Kamaiya* families have not got land certificate from LRO, Dang yet. Without land it is impossible to get other facilities. Thus LRO should work immediately to provide land certificate to those *Kamaiya* families who have no.

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## APPENDIX-I

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**1. Personal and family information of respondent:**

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1.1 Household's head name:                 | 1.2 Respondent's name: |
| 1.2 Age:                                   | 1.4 Sex:               |
| 1.5 Occupation:                            | 1.6 Religion:          |
| 1.7 Language:                              | 1.8 Education Level:   |
| 1.9 Municipality/VDC:                      | 1.10 Ward No.:         |
| 1.11 Kamaiya Identity Card:                |                        |
| i) Red                                     | ii) Yellow             |
| iii) Green                                 | iv) White              |
| 1.12 General information about the family: |                        |

S.N.	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Education Level	Relation with household's head

**2. Information about the Freed Kamaiya before being Freed:**

- 2.1 Why did you become Kamaiya/Kamlhari?  
 i) Age:                      ii) Year:
- 2.2 How many landlords did you serve since you know?  
 .....
- 2.3 How many years did you serve as a Kamaiya/Kamlhari?  
 i) till 0-3 years                      ii) till 3-6 years  
 iii) till 6-9 years                      iv) till 9-12 years  
 v) more than 12 years
- 2.4 How did landlord treat you when you stayed with them?  
 i) good                      ii) fine                      iii) bad
- 2.5 How many days did you get for holidays?  
 .....
- 2.6 What types of work did you work in landlord's house and how long did you work?

Works	Working hours
1.	
2.	
3.	

- 2.7 What kind of help did he use to your family? (Yearly)  
 .....
- 2.8 Wad the help given by landlord enough or not for your livelihood?  
 i) Yes, it was ii) No, it wasn't
- 2.9 If not, how did you spend your life? What did you do other works?  
 .....
- 2.10 What was the enumeration, when you were Kamaiya in landlord's house?  
 .....
- 2.11 Had you had some land in your name, when you were Kamaiya?  
 i) Had ii) Hadn't
- 2.12 If had, how much did you have?  
 i) Bigha ..... ii) Kattha ..... iii) Dhur .....
- 2.13 What was the reason being decreased land?  
 .....
- 2.14 What did you have received advantages and disadvantages when you were working in landlord's house, than before?  
 i) Advantages .....  
 ii) Disadvantages .....
- 3. Information of first stage after being freed:**
- 3.1 How did you know about the news of being freed for the first time?  
 .....
- 3.2 What did you know about freed?  
 .....
- 3.3 How long did you spend your Kamaiya life in landlord's house?  
 .....
- 3.4 Where did you live for the first time when you came out from the landlord's house and how long did you live there?  
 .....
- 3.5 What did you feel when you had lived there or what were the difficulties, you had faced there?  
 .....
- 4. Information of Freed Kamaiya after they came in camp:**
- 4.1 Where did you come from here?  
 District:  
 V.D.C.:
- 4.2 When did you come to live here?  
 .....
- 4.3 How much land did the government provide your family after being freed?  
 Bigha ..... Kattha ..... Dhur .....



- 5.4 Do you feel secure in this village?  
 i) yes                                  ii) No  
 If don't then from whom .....
- 5.5 What kind of social security was in the farmer place and is in this place?  
 .....
- 5.6 What kind of treatment do the outer society to you?  
 i) good                                  ii) Moderate                                  iii) Bad
- 5.7 What do you do to sole social problem?  
 .....
- 5.8 Which profession are you doing now?  
 .....
- 5.9 What are the other skills you have?  
 .....  
 If you have, then which profession do you prefer to do?  
 .....
- 5.10 Do you spend you children to school or not?  
 .....
- 5.11 Is it easy to send you children to school or not?  
 .....
- 5.12 Had you opened any kind of group earlier before being freed or not?  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No  
 If you had, what kind of group and what are the works does it?  
 i) .....  
 ii) .....  
 iii) .....
- 5.13 After being freed, have you opened any group or not  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No  
 If you have, what kind of group and what are the works does it?  
 i) .....  
 ii) .....  
 iii) .....
- 5.14 Before being freed, had any organization (NOG/INGO) helped or conducted programs for Kamaiya or not?  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No  
 If they had, what kind of help and programs were conducted?  
 i) .....  
 ii) .....  
 iii) .....



- 5.15 After being freed, do any organization (NOG/INGO) have conducted any program for Kamaiyas?  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No  
 If they had, what kind of programs were conducted?  
 i) .....  
 ii) .....  
 iii) .....
- 5.16 Have you taken any training from NOG/INGO in the present time or not?  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No  
 If you have, name the training?  
 i) .....  
 ii) .....  
 iii) .....
- 5.17 Is there any problem of Nepali language in your community?  
 i) Yes                                  ii) No
- 5.18 What kinds of problems do you feel when you lived in this camp?  
 i) .....                                  ii) .....
- 5.19 How do you solve those problems?  
 .....
- 5.20 Before and after being freed, can you tell about any extra facilities and problems, if you have experienced?  
 .....

Thanks

## **APPENDIX - II**

### **Checklist for Key Informants Interview**

1. What did you have received advantages and disadvantages when you were working in landlord's house, then before?
2. What are the differences you have felt in your life before being freed and after being freed from Kamaiya life?
3. Before being freed, had any organizations (NGO/INGOs) helped or conducted programs for Kamaiya or not?
4. After being freed, do any organizations (NGOs/INGOs) have conducted any programs for Kamaiyas?
5. What kinds of problem do you feel when you lived in this camp?
6. Before and after beign freed, tell about extra facilities and problems, if you have experienced?