

# THE FEDO POST

Official Newsletter of Feminist Dalit Organization



## Conference on "Roles and Responsibilities of Locally Elected Dalit Women" Held

Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) organised two-day province-level conference on "Roles and Responsibilities of Locally Elected Dalit Women."

The conference took place in Janakpur, the capital of Province 2 on 19-20 August, 2019. The conference begun with the inaugural ceremony witnessing lighting lamp by the Chief Guest of the session, Chief Minister of Province 2, MD Lal Babu Raut, followed by the speech delivered by the Chief Guest, Special Guest Minister for Finance, Province 2; Founder President of FEDO, Durga Sob, Vice President of FEDO, Shanti Paswan, among others. President of FEDO Kala Swarnakar made closing remark on the occasion.

The conference aimed at reviewing the roles, responsibilities, authority and jurisdiction of locally elected Dalit women in addressing the various issue of Dalits as well as in conducting various development activities in their respective local units. The conference also aimed at bringing out their level of understanding on the same and on the various newly introduced acts, laws and policies. Moreover, the conference also aimed at enhancing their capacity in decision making.

## OTHER NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS:

**FEDO'S 25TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CONCLUDES**

**FEDO PREZ ATTENDS ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON LOCALISATION OF AID**

**FEDO FORMS PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY**

**WOMEN ORIENTED ON ADVERSE EFFECT OF CHHAUPADI**

**TRAINING ON COMMERCIAL FARMING CONCLUDES**

**INTERACTION ON GRB HELD**

**DIALOGUE WITH JUSTICE COMMITTEE HELD**

**WOMEN TRAINED ON DETERGENT MAKING**

**SWEING AND TAILORING TRAINING BEGINS**

**STORY OF SUCCESS: KUSUM BAIGAR**





The conference was divided into different sessions, each of which aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the participants on the present issues and or topics. On the first day, a session on “Socio, Economic and Political Status of Madhesi Dalit Women,” was conducted. In this session, the participants exchange their view on Socio, Economic and Political Status of Madhesi Dalit Women and also suggested how it can be improved. On the same day, another session was conducted on “Criminal and Civil code.” In this session, the participants were made aware of types of criminal and civil offence, newly introduced acts and laws related to these how they as an elected representative could deal with these within their jurisdictions. The participants were also provided with the information on various judicial procedure.



The second and the final day of the conference was focused on orienting the participants on ‘Roles and Responsibilities of the Locally Elected Women.’ In this connection two different session were conducted. In both of the session, the participants were provided information on how the three-tier government of Nepal works, what are their duties, functions and jurisdictions; how does the decision making process take places; roles and responsibilities of locally elected representatives in developing policies, making laws, budgeting among others at the local level. It was found that the participants had no or very limited knowledge in this regard.







The event brought together more than 50 locally elected Dalit women from the all 8 districts of the province 2 along with the various experts, activists, lawyers, media persons among others.

The conference provided a unique opportunity for the participants to build a network among themselves to realize their own strength and weakness collectively build resilient trajectory for the future. It widen the knowledge and expand the capacity of the participants in connection with their roles and responsibilities in decision making including budget allocation and formulation of various policies. It provided proper space to the participants to share their knowledge and experiences and stories so as to inspire and motivate others.



***"In the course of various session, it was found that the locally elected Dalit women have no or very limited knowledge about their roles, responsibilities, authority and the jurisdiction. Moreover, being Dalit they are facing discriminatory behavior from their colleagues at their work place due to which their meaningful participation in decision - making is still afar-fetched reality."***

## FEDO's 25th Annual General Meeting Concludes



The 25th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) has been concluded on 8 September, with 60 members of FEDO from various districts participating in person at FEDO's central office, Kathmandu.

The AGM was inaugurated amid presence of Parliamentarians: Nira Jairu, Laxmi Pariyar, Aasha BK, Bimala BK and Parvati Bishankhe as the guests. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the event, the guests thanked FEDO for its continuous effort for bringing positive change in socioeconomic and political status of Dalit women since 25 years and wish for successful years ahead.

The AGM approved the annual report presented by the FEDO's General Secretary Renu Sijapti during the closed sessions after holding discussion on it. The AGM also hold discussion on the future strategies of FEDO.

Likewise, the AGM decided to expand its networks and working areas while following vision, mission, goals, objectives and core principles of FEDO in the upcoming days.



## **FEDO Prez Attends Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Localisation of Aid**



President of FEDO, Kala Swarnakar participated in the Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Localisation of Aid, held in Jakarta.

On the occasion, she shared her view on importance of localization, several opportunities and challenges associated with it. She also suggested several measures to achieve.

The event was attended by various humanitarian actors, donors, and international aid agencies among others.

## **FEDO Forms Provincial Committee**

In a bid to expand its network, Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) formed provincial committee in Province 2.

The committee that comprise of 8 members is headed by the Sharmila Mahara as a President while Kismati Ram being her deputy. Geeta Das and Nirmala Pasman has been bestowed with the responsibility of Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The other members of the committee includes Nila Ram, Binda Pasman, Pravati BK, and Premshila Pasman.

The committee will coordinate with the central committee and will facilities to carry out various activities of FEDO in the province 2.



## Women Oriented on Adverse Effect of *Chhaupadi*

A discussion program aiming to raise awareness about the adverse effects of Chhaupadi was organised at Godawari Municipality in Kailali on 26 August.

A total of 20 women from Himal Dalit Women Group participated in the discussion program where they shared the hardship they always go through while having periods.

They complained that whenever they had period they are compelled to stay in a shed, commonly known as 'chhau goth' facing several health and security challenges.

During the discussion, knowledge on how to maintain cleanliness during menstruation so as to avoid any health problem associate with it was also shared among the participants. Likewise, the participants were also made understand that menstruation is a natural process and it should not be seen as a taboo.

Following the program, the participants expressed their commitment to make effort to end the practice of chhaupadi at least within their community.

*"We are not allowed to stay inside the house, we are not even allowed to touch the tap and to use the toilet, and by any chance we dare to challenge this then we get threat of excluding from society"*





## Training on Commercial Farming Concludes

With an aim to improve livelihood of Dalit women by providing cash-earning opportunities through agriculture, FEDO organized two-day training on commercial farming in Tulsipur Sub-Metropolitan, Dang.

The training was focused on the nursery farming; tunnel farming; farming of various vegetables such as potato, bean, cucumber, bitter gourd, cabbage, cauliflower etc. Information on different insecticides, pesticides available in the markets and their proper use were also shared with the participants during the meetings. Likewise, use of organic compost, its preparation and importance were also shared.

*"Overall, the participants were trained on how to produce maximums with small amount of investment."*

Following the training, the participants said that they are highly motivated to transform their traditional way of farming into commercial farming as they gained plenty of knowledge and the required skills for it from the training. A total of 25 Dalit women were benefitted from the training.





## Interaction on GRB Held

Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) organised an interaction program on “Gender Responsive Budget at the Local Level.”

The interaction conducted with the locally elected Dalit women of Lalitpur district dwelt on the importance of GRB and its various approaches; tools for gender budget analysis; gender budget initiatives and practice in Nepal and gender and economics issues.

The participants at the program opined that GRB is an essential element in achieving gender equality concluding that there is need to build understanding of GRB as a tool for promoting gender equity, accountability to women's rights as well as efficiency and transparency in budget policies and processes. They also expressed the commitment to lay out GRB approaches to align budgets with requirements for the achievement of women's rights.

## Dialogue with Judicial Committee Held

A Dialogue with the judicial committee on addressing discrimination and violence faced by the Dalit women in their day-to-day life held in Badaiyataal Rural Municipality, Bardiya.

The dialogue focused on: various types discrimination and violence faced by the Dalit women and its impact on their personal and social development; the different dimensions of discrimination and violence that should be of greatest concern; various acts and laws related to this and the most effective ways to address these issues as well as role of judicial committee in reducing discrimination and violence.

Participants at the program opined that Dalit women are more prone to the violence than the non-Dalit women due to their low social and economic status. They urge that the judicial committee should play very effective role to reduce discrimination and violence against Dalit women.

The event was attended by the members of the judicial committee of the Badaiyataal rural municipality along with various Dalit and non-Dalit frontline leaders, activists, concerned authority and the stakeholders.





## Women Trained on Detergent Making



A week-long training on detergent making has been concluded in Rupandehi.

The training was organized by FEDO in collaboration with Rural Education and Environment Development Center (REED Nepal) and Green Tara Nepal in order to support the mother of the girl child of Dalit and other marginalized community to acquire some financial independence.

In the technical session, Detergent Powder making was taught and demonstrated step by step to the trainees. Likewise, the trainees were also given hands on practical by distributing ingredients to them and made to prepare the dish wash and detergent powder by themselves.

Following the training, the trainees expressed confident that with the skills they gained from training they are able to start their own enterprise or work as a paid worker in related industries.

## Sewing and Tailoring Training Begins

A three-month long sewing and tailoring training has begun in Kapilvastu.

The training aims to uplift the socio-economic status of these marginalized women and enhance their access to income generation opportunities by equipping them with the skills in tailoring and sewing. The training covers the basic course on tailoring and sewing.

A total of 20 Dalit women are participating in the training organized by FEDO along with Green Tara Nepal and REED-Nepal.

The participants of the training are looking forward to using the skill that they will gain from the training practically in the future.



## Story of Success: Kusum Baigar

*"Everyone awe my achievement; but I don't want them just to awe me! I want them to encourage them to acquire skills, become financially independent."*



Kusum Baigar was forced to leave her studies as she was married off only at the age of fourteen. Despite discontinuing her studies in the middle, she was always determined to stand on her own feet and support her family financially. In this connection, she went to India with her husband to work as a laborer in a factory, however, her strong determination to have her own enterprise did not let her stay there for long.

Luckily, she managed to get the basic training on tailoring, riding on which she bought a tailoring machine and started small business of tailoring for her home. Meanwhile, she also took the advanced training on tailoring and gained confidence and desire for opening a tailoring shop in the market. However, due to financial issues, her desire was yet to meet. In the meantime, she joined the Dalit Women Group formed by FEDO in her village and gradually become an active member of it. She took the loan from the seed money of the money to open her shop that now consists of clothes for sale and two new tailoring machines that she brought.

Kusum is setting an example to a lot of other women from her group. "During our meetings, I share my experience of running my business to other women and tell them how I am enjoying my financial independence.

Kusum not just is becoming financially independent but also has earned respect from her family and community. Today she earns as equal to her husband and is able to run her family fulfilling the earlier unmet needs. She has even thrown away the idea of going abroad for making a living. Being a part of FEDO and establishing this business has only got me into benefits- she claims.

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