

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, it was observed that poverty is the overarching issue that affects all other six goals. Most people featured in the profiles believe that their problems related to health, education and environmental protection could be solved if income was to increase and regular sources of income were ensured. Most cases taken up in the profiles are consequences of the age-old system and structure, and they can be addressed only with serious political will. However it was also observed that gender discrimination is not limited to poverty alone. This is a complex issue and relates to other social norms and practices.

Maternal health cannot be improved by just providing pregnant women with iron tablets.

Since there is a realisation about the importance of latrines and the consequences that one must face due to poor sanitation, individuals, NGOs and the government have been making every effort to increase sanitation coverage. The concept of Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS), shared latrines, ecological sanitation, linkage of the latrine component to savings and credit, poverty-focused sanitation programme and sanitation mart have recently been initiated to accelerate the pace of sanitation coverage in Nepal.

For reasons unknown, people were reluctant to talk about the effects of the conflict on the individual or the family. Most people, despite admitting that the conflict had an impact on them, would only explain the effect at the community or district level

and not at the family or individual level.

The impact of the conflict as explained by the people in the profiles includes loss of business opportunities due to the frequent *bandhs*, migration of young people to the nearby towns in search of safer havens to avoid harassment by the conflicting forces and also lack of employment opportunities. Interestingly, most communities wanted to project their villages as being safe from the conflict. Nevertheless, some people mentioned in the profiles were either injured, disabled or had lost a family member. The reluctance of the people to express the impact of the conflict on their lives could be due to the fear of impending danger.

Based on this participatory study, the following is a set of recommendations to overcome the situation of poverty and achieve the intended development objectives:

- Introduce a mandatory mechanism in every development or service delivery project to identify the poorest of the poor through a participatory process like poverty mapping so that access of the excluded community is enhanced.
- Generate employment at the local level or promote self-employment through skill development so that the people can start a business on the basis of locally available resources.
- Given the importance of non-formal education in the overall development process, classes that focus on the communities in the remote areas should be made more effective and functional. And a needs based

- functional literacy programme should also be promoted at the community level.
- Ensure the regularity of poor children in the school. The school tiffin programme should be made available to the poorer communities at least for about four months when there is shortage of food.
 - Awareness on child rights should be promoted and a child-friendly environment should be built in all the primary schools through appropriate and cost effective means of communication.
 - A strong and effective local mechanism to monitor and act against extreme forms of domestic violence in the community should be developed and operationalised. It could be done through local paralegal committees by delegating some legal powers to them so that they can solve minor problems.
 - A massive awareness raising activity should be conducted down to the grassroots level. There should be provision for strong legal action with a strong participatory monitoring process.
 - There should be massive awareness regarding event registration such as marriages and births immediately after they take place so that no woman or child is denied registration.
 - Victims of alcoholism feel that 75 per cent of the problems in the home are due to excessive drinking. Some legal provision could be developed and implemented to effectively control alcoholism.
 - Health issues cannot be addressed in isolation, so maternal health, TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria should be linked to development activities that help improve the socio-economic condition of the poor and ensure their access to food, clothing and health services. Awareness campaigns should focus on the high-risk groups and on the rural areas. Counseling and voluntary HIV testing and ARV drugs should be provided free of cost through the peripheral health facilities so that the poor can avail of such services in their locality.
 - Multi-pronged strategies and a multi-sectoral approach are necessary to meet the development goals, such as the MDGs, and address those health problems of the mother and child that are due to the poor socio-economic environment.
 - The total sanitation approach focuses on at least stopping open defecation and giving subsidies to those clusters where 100% of the households have latrines.
 - Accelerate poor-focused programmes to create alternative job opportunities and income generating activities deemed necessary to reduce pressure on the forest.