

# ***A REPORT ON***

Institutional Development of Federated Groups with Advocacy Capacity  
Building in Udayapur, Saptari, Sunsari, Ilam and Jhapa Districts of  
Eastern Development Region

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## Executive Summary

Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) had been implementing a programme, 'Institutional Development of PCRW Federated Groups with Advocacy Capacity Building in fourteen Village Development Committee (VDC) areas in five districts of the Eastern Development Region. The five districts are Udayapur, Saptari, Sunsari, Ilam and Jhapa. Financially supported by the UNICEF Eastern Region Field Office (ER-FO), the programme is aimed at the institutional development of the federations formed under the Production Credit for Rural Women (PCRW) programme. The main objective of the programme was to strengthen the capabilities of the women members of the PCRW programme to establish grass roots institutions and to undertake women and child development activities.

The project was initially designed for a period of one year effective October 2000; however, it took additional two months to accomplish the designed task. It was delayed by two months due to the frequent replacement of the Women Development Officer of the Jhapa district.

This report presents the impact and short-term outcome of the programme for a period of fourteen months. The programme has helped the participating groups federated under the PCRW programme and its members to identify their advocacy needs and the possible solutions for improving women's conditions and position in society; to understand the importance of the parenting role in child development; and to understand the importance of institutional development of women's organizations. In this process, a wide range of knowledge and skills related to these subjects were imparted to the participating members through training and workshops and through preparation and implementation of annual plans of action. The participating federations members were encouraged to carry out different activities such as door-to-door visits as a part of awareness-raising; perform street drama and other cultural programmes; develop linkages with different development agencies; take advocacy actions on some pertinent issues, etc. Advocacy actions were taken on some of the major issues such as discrimination against girls in education; inadequate parenting role in childcare; and violation of women's and children's rights. The participating members from cooperatives/federations successfully organized several public events during the one-year programme period.

The institutional support under this programme has eventually helped to enhance the cooperatives/federations' women members' access to various economic opportunities and resources; enhance their decision-making ability; and equip them with advocacy skills to advocate for their rights. It has also sensitized the male members of the community towards their parenting role. The participating women have been successful in registering the federated groups under the Cooperative Act and have established their own cooperative institutions. Of the fourteen federations covered by the programme, only five

were registered as cooperative institutions before the implementation of the programme. The remaining nine federations were registered after the programme intervention. The members of the cooperative institutions have become able to identify different advocacy issues relevant to their lives as well as their possible solutions. In this context, different types of advocacy actions related to several social malpractice, gender inequality, accessing to and benefiting from different resources and services, etc were carried out by the participating women members. Women now feel encouraged to undertake future community development endeavours with greater participation. They have increased their linkages with different development agencies such as the District Development Committee (DDC), VDC, District Forest Office, District Cooperative Office, NGO-CC, etc.



