

Food Sovereignty as Peoples'  
Fundamental Right:

## **Nepalese Perspective**

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## Publishers' Note

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## 1. Introduction

Food and hunger are the oldest of problems human society faced. Actually, it was hunger that forced the Man to move from jungle to stone-age down to farming and agriculture bringing great changes in human society and his culture. Even in developed countries where there is age of high mass consumption and affluence. The problem of food scarcity, hunger and starvation is continuing. The problem of food insufficiency and need to modernized traditional agriculture in underdevelopd countries is felt urgent.

The concept of food security' began to appear in policy discourses after the World Food Conference of 1974. Following decades saw many twist and turns until the World Food Summit of 1996 which duly recognized food security management as member states own responsibility. Theoretically, it was a bold step but in practice it was irresponsible as it stressd on maintaining a small buffer stock of food in hunger-prone areas. Such supply side responses can not solve the food probleme for long on the other hand, the food producers – small and marginal farmrrers, land less peasants, the *Dalits*, fisher folks and pastoral herders and farm labourers- fall prey to hunger and starvation. At the same time, the Millennium Development Goals( MDGs) declared of halving hunger by 2015 (MDG: 2000)as its first priority. On people's side, the MDGs ignited the fire

ofnew hopes to solve hunger by strengthening the right of food producers themselvs by asserting scces to land and other food producing resources . The mass peasantry along with civil society discarding the public supply system based food security approach, proposed the more comprehensive conceptual term 'Food Sovereignty'. Actually, there emerged people's resistance movement under the flag post of Food Sovereignty discarding food as mere trade commodity for corporatized profit. The movement upholds the thruth that peasants and tiller farmers better know the value of land, water and environment to produce food as they have harnessed, developed and conserved more and more food items suitable for consumption enriching the asthetics of human food culture from time immemorable.

Food Sovereignty literally signifies the movement to put together peasants' food and food producing resources, both natural and man-made, under their own control on humanised terrain in holistic pattern to wipeout the problem of hunger from the earth. United Nations encouraged all governments to consider food sovereignty, "*as an alternative model for agriculture and agricultural trade in order to meet State obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food*".

Holding high the concept of food, the life sustaining nourishment, as embodiment of social, cultural, economic and ecological relationship, the movement of Food Sovereignty, especially after the WFS + 5 in 2002, emerged as a popular transcontinental resistance movement enthusiastically participated by food producers at tens of millions of peasants and small farmers, fisher folks and wild fruits and nuts collectors, women farmers and indigenous people and others. Nepal, where around 80 percent of population is farmers, consciously and rightfully engaged in this

movement by holding culmination ceremony of People's Caravan for Food Sovereignty in Kathmandu on 13 September 2004 which had begun in Malaysia on 1<sup>st</sup> of the same month. Now Food Sovereignty has been recognised by some governments as their food policy and has increasingly been well received as thematic movement, both nationally and internationally. In this paper, we shall analyze the existing problems, emerging issues thereof and discuss the role of different stakeholders to realize the mission of Food Sovereignty in the context of Nepal

## **2. Nepalese context:**

Nepal is situated in southern slope of majestic Himalayas with a span of 800 km east- west and irregular shape of 180 to 250 km north -south. Ecologically, Nepal is divided in three parts – Northern Himalayan Region comprising 15 percent of land surface and southern Terai region expanding 17 percent of land and remaining 68 percent Middle Mountain and hill region. These ecological belts have their own system of farming, own stock of people, caste, cultures and social norms. Politically, there are five development regions and 14 zones and 75 districts. around 3915 VDCs and 58 municipalities Altogether Nepal's stock of people has reached 24.2 million by 2001 with annual growth rate of 2.3 percent harboring more than hundred ethnic indigenous groups and a multitude of more than five dozens of languages and dialectics and distinguished traditions in equal numbers.

In Economic sphere feudalism is sustaining its life joining hands with comprador capitalism. Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country where 23% of land surface is cultivated. Additional 10% of land can be brought under plough totaling to 4 million hectares of cultivated land. Of this only 700 thousand hectares of land undergoes commercial farming rest being in

subsistence farming. 76% of total population depends on agriculture and 84% live in rural areas. The distribution of land is uneven, 10% of population controlling 56% cultivable land and 60% of population controlling remaining 20%. There is a problem of absentee landlord. About 2.3 million peasants are landless laborers encroached in rural sectors. About 2 million landless farmers have no huts of their own. The so called liberated Kamaiya (bonded labourer) numbering 200 thousands are still cattle herders without any access to better employment opportunities. Therefore, farmers in Nepal are persuading their struggle for right to land since 1950 and this movement has been transferred to movement of Food Sovereignty in Nepal.

Up till now, a few TNCs of developed countries and US origin are operating in Nepal. A few agricultural farms are operating in government and private sectors. Though we are rich in water resource and biodiversity, our effort to explore and exploit them is seriously limited due to resource lack. As a result the problem of rapid deforestation is mounting on as the wood serves the only fuel in rural areas. After the royal retrogression of 2002 many treaties undermining the independent nationhood has been concluded. Of them accession to WTO in 2003 is the glaring example. There is no enactment of legal provisions to safeguard biodiversity of Nepal. We have no patent right itinerary yet developed. We have no strong national market system and untimely change in government has been hampering smoother processes to strengthen different sectoral niches of the national economy.

In this context, Nepalese farmers are seeking to open new horizons in their struggle through movement for food sovereignty. Farmers in Nepal are consciously trying to turn this movement into a success because in

its success the 20 million Nepalese farmers can win their livelihood. Nepal earns US\$ 6.50 billion GDP of which \$3 billion comes from agriculture sector. Foreign remittance amounts near to \$1.5 billion in which 95% of labour migration comes from farm population. If it is added as a contribution of agriculture sector then, 60% of GNP comes from agricultural sector. Peasants in Nepal have to reassess their pivotal position and accordingly help convene struggle for food sovereignty in their own perspective. Their success paves the way for Nepalese peasants' prosperity as an example of grand achievement.

### **3. Challenging issues:**

The issues facing the country are her underdeveloped agriculture and rising stock of population. Regarding the food insufficiency in Nepal a master plan was charted for 20 years in 1995 popularly known as agricultural perspective plan (APP). Commercialization of agriculture and income raising of common farmers are two main objectives proposed by this ADB funded master plan based on chemical fertilization and irrigation as major inputs. But the plans objectives are not bringing practical results as expected. The GDP growth rate for last five years averages 2.1% which is less than population growth rate of 2.3 percent per annum. So agriculture sector growth faces institutional and social problems rather than bio-chemical and techno-hydrological problems. Besides, the withdrawal of subsidies provided to chemical fertilizers and shallow tube well irrigation system has denied the access of small and marginal farmers to these basic inputs. This has further worsened the poverty situation of agriculture sector. Realizing these weaknesses, the Tenth plan (2002-07) targeted agricultural sector growth modifying these practical problems. But still the subsidy is not there and

the program fails to support the cause of small and marginal farmers. At the same time, Nepal has been the first Least Developed Country (LDC) to enter into World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2004. Now the official dogma of Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization ( LPG ) has different meaning. The only agro-tool producing unit, Birgunj Agricultural Tools factory, was sold to private sector under this slogan which is liquidated to great loss of farmers. Liberalization, for practical purpose, signifies trade liberalization in the interest of developed countries and privatization means selling public corporations into private hands in weak economies of developing countries. It meant free flow of capital and technology in the fertile land of under developed countries but not allowing another factor of production labour which UDCs possess.

### **Nepal ,WTO and Food**

Uruguay Round of trade talks in 1989 came to conclusions to facilitate unfettered movement of goods and services across borders ushering into free trade arena around the world. After six years of homework, developed countries somehow succeeded to establish World Trade Organization (WTO) in spite of gruesome reservation from developing countries. The bone of contention was agreement on Agriculture (AoA). Though AoA is said to intent for a 'fair market oriented agricultural trading system and to provide for substantial, progressive reduction in agriculture support and protection sustained over an agreed period of time, resulting and preventing restrictions in world agriculture Markets" (AoA preamble). However, the *modus operandi* through patent right (TRIMS) and sanitary provision on agro industrial product (SPS) bound virtually against the interest of farmers in underdeveloped countries (UDCs). It is also to be noted here that during the working parties meetings and

negotiation before getting WTO membership the developed countries especially the US try to impose WTO plus conditions on Nepal. However, the civil society groups including peasants' association came strongly opposing the UPOV model as the precondition for the accession of WTO membership which led to its withdrawal for Nepal. Besides, agriculture in UDCs also relates with common pool resources such as fisher folk operations, specialized pastoralis, mixed mountain agro pastoralism, forest dwellers and medicinal herbalist where privatization snatches away livelihoods of most vulnerable majority of indigenous poor people of the local areas concerned.

Under WTO regime, farmers in UDCs face more burdensome problems due to treacherous attitude of developed market economies to safeguard their respective agricultural interests at the expense of formers. Somehow they have managed to keep their agricultural subsidies through financially sound deep gullies but subsidies in UDCs were forced to stop which weakens the competitiveness of the latter (See box 1). Similarly, agro industrial products from UDCs are barred out of the market reach in developed countries not through tariff and other fiscal measures but through SPS quality measures. Even the home market for agro-product in UDCs is seriously jeopardized through massive inflow of investment via TRIMS provisions and unchecked inflow of foreign agro goods in their own local market via TBT provisions.

**Box no. 1**

1. Everyday 840 million people go hungry, more than 1.3 billion people are half fed and more than 2 billion people suffer from dietary deficiencies.

2. Agricultural subsidies in developed countries costs \$1 billion per day. OECD countries allocate \$2 per day per cow.
3. Mali, a LDC in Africa, received \$37.7 million as development assistance but lost \$43 million in cotton revenue due to lowered prices. The value of non-fuel commodities exported by Africa in 2001 was half their 1980 value.
4. One in seven children born in poor countries die before the age of five. 12 million children die every year for want of vaccination.
5. On average, women earn 50% of the average male salary in developing countries and 80% of the average male salary in developed countries. At least 1 out of every three women have been abused or raped in the world.

*(Source: Social Watch, 2004)*

The threatening challenge comes over UDCs more strongly from TRIPS and UPOV provision as the farming community lacks their control over their own genetic resources which they have been able to conserve, develop and protect for generations. Besides, there is danger of bio-piracy. As a result, the international inequality has widened much during the last century. The critical status of poverty in south Asia witness the ugly international scenario wherein reside the highest number of poor people.

**4. Food Sovereignty and Nepal**

Food sovereignty insures farmers control over land, forest and medicinal herbs. Farmers should be the owners of his land and he can protect his forest. Only farmers can make a sustainable use of land and forest for the benefit of people at large. Up till now peasants are responsible for the conservation of biodiversity and medicinal herbs and in future also they have to look after their natural wealth. In agricultural sector, women

do come forward of men in conserving seed, soil and plants. So, female population deserves equal footing with males.

Movement for food sovereignty serves as best alternative to contest jointly in civil perspective. In face of such crisis a single and narrow approach to address the problems in agriculture is not enough. "A more comprehensive resistance against corporate domination in agriculture and food production is needed.... Food sovereignty creates a reality where the food producer, farmer is in control over land and has access to resources to ensure food production" sustainably. Therefore it proudly pronounced the banner slogan WTO, out of agriculture and designs alternative policies to better manage the world resources in favor of farming community food for all to ensure.

Besides Nepal is the home for Ayurvedic Chinese, Tibetan and Unani medicines and the traditional medical knowledge systems which are developed out of the biological as well as cultural diversity flourished in the Himalayas. Sixty-seven (67) plant species and 290 herbal drugs were documented in the Vedas in the earliest from about 4,500-600 B.C. for the treatment of various diseases. Even these days, it is estimated that 70 percent of the medicinal plants and animals in the Himalayas consists of wild species. Seventy to 80% of the populations in the Himalayas still have to rely on traditional medicines for health care. Chinese and Indian healers are found to have used 2,294 and 2,500 plant, animals and natural minerals for the treatment. The biological diversity resources in the Himalayas have contributed greatly to the development of modern medicine throughout the world. Anti-malaria Artemesinine (From *Artemisia anua*); the lung cancer curative drug Podophyllotoxin-Etoposide (from *Podophyllum* and *sinopodophyllum* spp.); the new anti-

cancer drug 'Taxol' (from *Taxus wallichiana* and *T. yunnanensis*) and recently developed 'Memory Plus capsule' (from a brahmi herb *Bacona manniera*) are naturally gifted medicines by the Himalayan biodiversity. Only in Nepal, ten bio-climatic zones, 118 ecosystems, 75 vegetations and 35 forest types have been identified so far within a short span of 180km. There are about 250 plant species in Nepal found nowhere in the world and about 1000 plants in Nepal are with medicinal properties. Nearly 1,600 land races (strains) of rice have been identified in Nepal along with Jumla red rice grown at the highest elevation in the world. The red jungle fowl (the only progenitor of the present day chickens in the world), about 10 local varieties of banana found in the Arun valley and wild mangoes of Nepal bear the wonderful gene pools second to none in the world. The local varieties of cow known as *Achhame* Cow which is not taller than three and half feet but provides 20 litter of milk daily ,.....(*Lapsi*), Marphali green paper, golden apple of Jumla and Mustang and many other indigenous products are yet to be defined scientifically and establish them in international market Every nook and niches in this Himalayan country has such typical biodiversity records endemic to the region. In addition, people in the Himalayas are prospered by the sustained biodiversity's contribution to the industry, agriculture, tourism, health care system, culture, and civilization. It is crystal clear from the above-mentioned data that the values of biodiversity for people's prosperity are beyond description in words, but in feelings.

Now it is clear that Nepal has got immense potentiality of biodiversity. But the problems lie in preserving and getting patent rights registered in required forms of WTO provisions. It needs high skilled expertise well versed in scientific knowledge and technique and legal formats which can not be met

indigenously. Besides, there is time limitation which requires huge amount of budget to fulfill the pledges made at the time of accession.

It is at this background of issues and problems regarding food concern of Nepalese people that the government of Nepal, civil society and CBOs has to play meaningful role.

It has been continuing its efforts to maintain hegemony over the natural resources, bio-diversity and the local markets in the developing countries.

## **5. Food Sovereignty and Farmer**

Peasants toil their sweats to work hard in the field. They make land fertile and green. They work in the field all the seasons and all the days and hours. They are born on the soil, they are brought up in that soil and they begin to work and produce food on that very soil at their earliest youth with their tireless labour. However, those very peasants are land less, marginal farmers, squatter dwellers, and agricultural workers and even bonded laborers. They are dying of hunger and starvation. They have never become the owner of the land where they worked generation together. The land is in the hand of few feudals and landlords who possess entitlement rights by name but have never touched the land and nor seen the land so precious!

Peasants are exploited, discriminated and even tortured by the feudal and landlords in the rural areas. They are cheated and discriminated by the feudal bureaucracy when they approach to the concerned authorities for redressal.

A vast majority of toiling peasant comprising of land-less, marginal farmers, sharecroppers and agricultural workers produce food for everybody in our

nations but the irony is that they do not have their own basic human rights to feed themselves fulfilled.

Women are dominated in all aspects in agricultural as well as other sectors of society. Women's work in the field and in the households are considered invisible and unproductive labour despite women's labour constituting at least 50 percent of the total work in agriculture. Women also have limited or no economic rights. Women, in general are not given equal rights over property including land. Furthermore, women do not readily have access in most cases to credit facilities to Banks, education and training thus they are not able to pursue any economic activity independently for themselves. Even working as land laborers, women still receive less than half wages to men despite the workload of both being equal. Peasant women suffer double or even triple problems as peasants, as mothers, as sisters, as wives and as female child, etc.

It is also a reality that no other sector except agriculture permits new labour entrants unless their contribution to output is higher than or equal to the wages they get. Therefore the labour force, not absorbed by other sectors, remains in agriculture creating and aggravating the heavy pressure on unevenly distributed and ill managed / mismanaged land use pattern. . The structure of power which coincides with land properly in countries like Nepal can not be expected to go in favour of social justice and to create positive effects in reducing poverty. In fact, the greater the concentration of land and powers of land holders, the greater the neglect of food production and the high ignoring of distributional effects on poor. In spite of varying political and economic conditions, 70 percent of the 63 developing countries, which introduced structural adjustment programmes in

financial and productive sectors, have failed to maintain their 1970's level of food production per head. Thus the situation, where the inverse relationship between land holding and poverty is dominant, should be changed by intervening in the land ownership and tenure system. The productive land use system based on long term vision and design is necessary for overall change of rural based economy which upholds tiller farmer's access to land resources

## **6. Role of government:**

The government has recently framed and launched Tenth Plan (2002-2007) which is actually the poverty reduction plan for Nepal. Analyzing the poverty, the regional disparity of incidents comes first in case of Nepal. The incident of poverty in mountain is as high as fifty six percent but in urban areas it is 23 percent only. Similarly, the incident of poverty falls hard on ethnic groups, scheduled castes and occupational caste groups. The average years of schooling is 2.3 for Nepal while indigenous people of Terai (Rajbansi, Tharu, Ahir etc.) have only 1.7 years and the scheduled castes of the hills have still less 1.2 years. Similar disparities regarding health and other infrastructure is visible. The life expectancy of Mugu, a district in the Far Western Development Region is 37 years while it is 74 in the Kathmandu valley (NHDR: 2004). Against this background, the Tenth Plan proposes different programs. The main objective of agriculture development is to grow the economy, and raise standard of living by reducing poverty through the increment in income and the employment, to develop additional infrastructure for commercialization and gainful products and production system. Diversification of the agriculture by cultivating high value crops is expected to create conducive environment for the participation of the private sector and farmer's user

groups and reduce poverty by increasing the agriculture production and employment opportunities. The thrust of the approach is to transform subsistence agriculture into commercialization and develop the strong basis for industrialization. Following are the sectoral objectives of the plan:

1. Reduce poverty by increasing production, productivity and income in the agriculture sector and contribute to food and nutritional security.
2. Contribute to the sustainable production and growth by adoptive research and development of the technology to be used in agriculture, protect and use of agro-biodiversity and balance the environment by reducing pollution by use of the external inputs.
3. Develop internal market and promote export opportunities by promoting agro-based industries and enterprises with the participation of cooperatives and private sector.

Government of Nepal has promulgated national agricultural policy 2004. The policy based on the objectives and targets of Tenth Plan has stressed on speedy action to enable agriculture system along competitive lines. It stresses on increasing agriculture production and productivity, enable the agriculture sector along business and competitive line in response to the opportunities rising in regional and world market and to protect and promote environment friendly utilization of biodiversity. For this purpose, government has designed a distinct application and monitoring system. The policy takes into consideration the problems of targeted groups such as small, marginal and landless farmers, indigenous farmers, common pull property dependence with due regard. Directives have been issued both on central and local level to implement the policies and programs with a motive of

serving people. In spite of all these programs the situation is not very encouraging. The Maoist insurgency has affected almost all districts of Nepal limiting the government approach to urban areas and district headquarters. Still there are 18 districts in Nepal which are untouched by road transportation. Including them, 24 districts of mountain and hilly areas are food deficit areas where government has to make special provision for food supply. Traditionally government is providing transport subsidies in these areas. (See the map in annex) And different international institutions including FAO are conducting food for work programs. The majority of these districts fall in Mid Western and Far Western Development Regions where the Maoists are most active. As these are inaccessible areas hidden in deep mountains dales and gullies no one knows what is the people's hunger status there?

Actually, the government documents like APP and 10<sup>th</sup> plan are confined to files as the access is limited to city and district headquarters only. The administration is corrupt and non-transparent and lacks local base as the most VDCs are controlled by Maoist insurgents. Besides, the rural youth are fleeing out of their villages to escape from insurgent's conscription which has created labour shortage leaving the farm land uncultivated resulting in food deficit. At the same time the government is not allowing the movement of ready made foodstuff those areas. In such situation people have no alternative, but to organize their own civil organizations? Here in the role of civil society and CBOs have important mission to play.

## **7. Recent Changes and Role of civil society:**

Now the political scenario in Nepal has changed drastically. The heroic 19-day long peoples' peaceful demonstrations under the leadership of 7-Party Alliance with close collaboration of Maoist, has subdued

the King on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2006, stripped off his royal prerogatives transferring sovereignty of state at people's shoulders. Parliament, the House of Representatives, has been reinstated that exercises the sovereignty on people's behalf. Since then, a number of declarations have been made to strengthen democracy and people's rights including the election for constituent assembly to frame and enact new constitution. Maoists have agreed to come into restructured main stream national politics and all are preparing a *modus operandi* to manage the arms and armed forces under UN supervision.

It is at this background that the role of civil society and CBOs has to be defined in Nepal. There are many CBOs and professional mass organisations functioning in Nepal in this direction. ANPA, being a mass based organization of farmers at grass root level is dedicated to uplift peasant's livelihood since 1951. AS such ANPA has been regularly carrying out awareness programs both on local and national level such as Mechi –Mahakali March (farmer's movement from east to west boarder of Nepal crossing through every villages and rural communities *en route*), People's Caravan – 2004, with reference to Food Sovereignty International Conference on Food Sovereignty, Alternatives to Corporate Globalization in Food and Agriculture, A talk program on 'Biodiversity for Food Sovereignty ' to celebrate World Food Day, An International Seminar on Peace, Democracy, Food Sovereignty and Road to HongKong and follow up meetings and seminar at different regions and districts, mass celebration of International Farmers Day.

The main theme of these programs were marked by mass movement denouncing excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides shouting the slogan 'WTO, out of Agriculture', Assert the right of farmers to food and land etc..

The farmers in organized processions demanded irrigation facilities , subsidy to farm inputs, credit and soft loan facilities, conservation of biodiversity, common pool right to fisher folks, and called for immediate stoppage of privatization of Agricultural tools Factory of Birgung , and different Agro-based public enterprises.

Some results of these movements and mass awareness programs have already been visible in the rural areas where farmers have develop the role on pesticide mixing cattle urine with local herbs (*Titepafi*) They have gradually been abandoning use of chemical fertilizer in favour of locally prepared organic manure.

Most of the CBOs in Nepal are city centered and political biasness limits their functional areas. An independent status acceptable to both insurgents and ruling parties is to be forged for the time being so that they can develop people based activities whether under insurgents' or ruling establishment which is very likely in view of the warm understanding getting on. So, UN and related international bodies including human right commission and Red Cross can play a positive role in this regard .The multi-dimensional approach of such kind may facilitate the starving people of the food deficiet and hunger-prone areas that may ventilate their grievances and utilize minimum services that make positive contributions for their survival.

## **8. Post HongKong Scenario**

The Sixth HongKong Ministerial, as expected, could play no decisive role in dealing the issues long overdue as there was serious lack of homework on the part of concerned parties. But the overarching concern of the developing counties regarding the issues on agriculture, NAMA, S DT forced the North to retreat back to force any harsh obligation on weaker South. As

compared to Cancun, the North retreated back very cunningly post-pending their move to decide latter in July but forwarding some chips of concessions to developing countries towin their favour, such as, free access to 97% of products from LDCs in DCs market, congruence to massive cutdown of tarrif on specified time-bound frame

## **9. Burning Issues**

CBOs, and mass based organization should promote concept of food sovereignty and launch programs of creating awareness, helping local people organise themselves and strengthen their working style by enhancing capabilities and solving their voicelessness through wide range hearing access to their grievances at policy levels. The topical issues are:

- a) Access to food productive resources as peasant's right
- b) Denial of harmful health hazards and desertification of farm fertility through excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides
- c) Promote sustainable agriculture productivity through organic manure use and training requirements
- d) Strengthen peoples' mass movements for 'WTO, out of agriculture' and discard GMO system exposing lofty corporate profit at the expense of poor farmers' hunger and starvation
- e) Highlight the role of women in production, preservation, conservation and use of seeds and value add in food preparation

- f) Assert local farmers', including *dalits*' common right to traditional use and conserve forest, herb, water, pasture, and fallow land
- g) Act immediately to frame Peasants' Law and organise Peasants' court in Nepal
- h) Demand for state obligation to provide soft credit and loan and other farm inputs such as electricity and fuels
- i) Call for flow of remittance resources into agro-based industrial ventures and agro-trade business firms.
- j) Assert indigenous people's right to common pool property and their traditional occupations helping to produce z-goods suitable to modern market taste across the globe.
- k) Constitute Peasants' Commission immediately

The civil society needs to take leading role in such a conflict harmonising situation. First they have to pay attention to the poverty situation of Nepal which will guide their future course of action.

Poverty in Nepal is rampant and its incidents is high especially in Mid Western and Far Western Development Regions. Therefore, mass based organisations like ANPA, its various subject spesific associations and CBOs have to be active in these areas and play a meaningful role to solve the food problem therein.

There is high incidence of poverty in rural areas. The income poverty is reducing in cities but its resulting impact is not transferring to rural areas. They can play agency role in this transformation process.

The level of poverty is high with marginal and small farmers in general, but it is not limited to them

only. It is extended equally to unskilled people and households headed by women. Poverty spoils the life of schedule caste especially the dalits (oppressed occupational caste). They have definite role to work with such excluded people with social mobilization at mass level.

The awareness program followed by capacity building and participatory approach to program implementation should be the opening avenues of intervention through these organisations as their mass based opens better access in this process. Logically, such CBOs alongwith human rights organizations and Red Cross with international net-working need to work together where the larger space of activities are mounting on.

## **10. Conclusions:**

Food sovereignty is a positive program which promises to solve the rigidities of feudal agricultural system of Nepal transferring it to modern peasant-led profitable and respectable occupation. The right based approach to solve the food problem of peasants and fisher folks have to be ultimately translated onto their communities in the social setting they are forced to live. Food sovereignty has dependable message for their rightful sharing of the fruits of food production and marketing process. The awareness movement which has already been effective in Nepal should be well-guarded and promoted through repeated mobilizations and movements under democratic institutional structures. The challenge is to pressurize the government to accept the conventions of Food Sovereignty in its programme. The movement is to be encouraged by ANPA in close co-ordination with other CBOs in common concert with international movements to call for an international convention on Food Sovereignty in order to enshrine its principles in

international legal documents addressing food and agriculture as food insecurity is the result of increasing inequality and food deficiency is related with denial of human rights. A new interpretation of PRS, macro-economic modeling and national strategy for Nepal are other sectors where immediate actions are necessary. In this perspective Food Sovereignty can play meaningful role in solving the agricultural problems along genuine agrarian reforms.

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