

RENAISSANCE SOCIETY NEPAL

The Renaissance Society, as called *Punarjagaran Samaj* in Nepali, is our movement to integrate the disadvantaged people into the democratic mainstream through their empowerment with skills, wealth, income, institutions, justice, and the rejuvenation of heritage.

Background

Nepal's manifold heritages like the nice people, Lord Buddha, Himalayas and abounding resources are far from enriching the majority of people. Ironically, most of the people live with less than one US\$ daily and the status of women, children and ethnic people is more severe. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) call for an active role of the civil society to improve this situation. In this process, a team of multi-disciplinary experts founded the Renaissance Society Nepal (RSN) in 1994 as a non-governmental organization (NGO).

RSN has addressed the issues of deprived communities, gender empowerment, regional disparities, equitable distribution of resources, conflict management and peace building. It also raised the livelihood status of over 50,000 disadvantaged people like women, children and ethnic communities in remote areas, and has empowered them to build institutions.



Non-formal education session

Vision

RSN envisions a Nepalese society where all people enjoy opportunities for their progress with justice, equality, peace and prosperity. Appropriate institutions would be in place to create a prosperous, just and forward looking society.

Mission

RSN mission is to develop the entrepreneurship and self-governing institutions for improving the lives of the rural poor, particularly women, small farmers, oppressed communities and ethnic minorities, and bring about their socio-economic empowerment.

RSN **aims** to empower the people so that they can attain self-reliance and confidence for long-term sustainable development. It strives to release the people's boundless potentials for enhancing their productive and organizing abilities for their own development. RSN initiates the activities to empower peoples' organizations as core activity, which is integrated and community based.

Strategy

RSN has a three-pronged strategy:

- 1. Partnership:** Work with the civil societies and community based organizations (CBOs). Raise awareness, campaign, advocate and lobby at the local, national and international levels for addressing the issues of poverty, and for the right to development and participation in decision-making.
- 2. Resource mobilization:** Enable the people to explore, generate and mobilize the natural, human, financial, social, physical and political resources.
- 3. Institution building:** Organize the user groups as CBOs, co-operatives and business groups. Form their federations. Build linkages with the line agencies, business organisation, NGOs and local governments.

Objectives

The specific objectives of RSN are as follows:

- ❖ Conceptualize, develop, execute and evaluate income generating livelihood programmes.
- ❖ Create awareness in the diverse sectors such as education, environment, human rights, self-governance, resource mobilization, micro-finance, gender parity, and health issues with special focus to the HIV/ AIDS and mother-child health.
- ❖ Implement the development projects on sustainable agriculture, food security, community based social and agro-forestry, livestock production, safe drinking water, renewable energy, irrigation, institutional development, entrepreneurship and rural infrastructures.

- ❖ Work with the local people to evolve new organizations and strengthen the existing ones so that the self-organization, self-governance and self-reliance are promoted.
- ❖ Promote the indigenous knowledge, skills and resources to strengthen the process of self-development, conservation of natural resources, environment and bio-diversity.
- ❖ Advocate, lobby and form networks at the local, national and international levels for the great cause of people.
- ❖ Conduct the training, workshops, seminars and develop the human resources.
- ❖ Carry out the action-research on socio-economic conditions and other aspects of the community.
- ❖ Carry out the evaluation/studies of development projects, programmes, models and approaches.
- ❖ Disseminate the issue-based information pertaining to contemporary national concerns, sustainable development, democracy, human rights, gender, bonded labour, health effects and impacts of agro-chemicals.
- ❖ Publish the people-oriented, IEC-materials (information, education and communication) for mass education.



People transport materials for water supply (and happy couple enjoy it in the inset).

Holistic Approach

RSN has adopted the principles of integrated development to maximize benefits from the complimentary relations and synergy effects. Its development activities synthesize the

following major components:

- ❖ **Livelihood and micro-enterprises**
- ❖ **Education**
- ❖ **Health**
- ❖ **Self-governance**
- ❖ **Human rights, and**
- ❖ **Environment**

Such a holistic development would contribute significantly towards the long-term structural poverty alleviation. RSN follows a participatory, bottom-up approach to the project planning, implementation and monitoring through the animation and formation of people's organizations.

Organizational structure

RSN has a general assembly consisting of development experts and volunteers. General assembly elects the executive committee (EC) in every two years. The EC nominates advisors for the organization. RSN has offices/ programmes in the Parsa, Pyuthan, Bhaktapur and Dolakha districts. The project volunteers report to their respective field offices. The EC and auditors present their progress and financial reports, respectively, in the general assembly.

Strength

RSN has a multidisciplinary team in the areas of agri-business, micro-enterprises, livelihood, food security, marketing, micro-finance, social forestry, environment, water resources, bio-diversity, renewable energy, infrastructures development, training, co-operatives, institutional development, resource mobilization, legal aspects, human rights, advocacy, gender, good governance, ethnic issues, social mobilizations, education, health, conflict management, participatory systems, M & E systems, indigenous knowledge, etc.



Farmers in milk collection centers

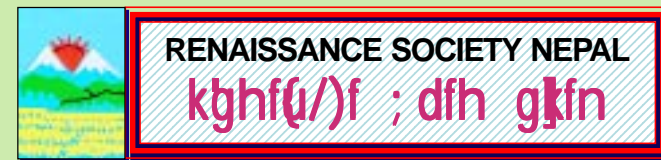
Work experience

RSN has worked with different organizations as follows:

- UNICEF, PACT, World education and CARITAS: Non formal education programmes;
- Royal Danish Embassy: Poverty alleviation through cooperative development;
- Canadian Co-operation Office: Wetland management and out of school children programme;
- Rural Water Supply Fund Board: Drinking water supply and sanitation education schemes, pre-feasibility assessment and site appraisal of water supply schemes of different NGOs, trainings to the experts of NGOs and consulting organizations on pre-feasibility study and site appraisal, community action planning (CAP) trainings to the field staffs of different NGOs;
- CARITAS Nepal: Women's and tribals' sustainable development programme;
- CECI: Community ground water irrigation sector project;
- READ/Nepal: Community library;
- Ministry of Local Development: Indigenous community upliftment programme, and target group development programme;
- Swiss Disaster Relief Fund: Rehabilitation of irrigation project;
- CECI and Women Development Division: Micro credit project for women;
- UNDP/Social Welfare Council: Sustainable women development programme

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RSN



Wetland Management, Chandrawoti, Parsa

**Brochure: 1996, 2nd Edition
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**"The Human mind is like an umbrella,
it works best when open."**

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