

**A REPORT  
ON  
THIRD ENTERPRISE  
DEVELOPMENT NETWORK  
MEETING**

**JANUARY 16, 2004**

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## **1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We thank and acknowledge the dynamic participation of all the members who attended the meeting on Enterprise Development Network, January 16, 2004 and shared their views and perceptions and fervently interacted.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Network meeting on Enterprise Development was organized on January 16, 2004 at Hotel Summit. A total of forty members attended the meeting.

Mr. Suhrid Prasad Chapagain moderated the meeting. Mr. Eelco Baan recapitulated on the first meeting and second meeting that was held on 12 September 2003 and November 21, 2003 respectively.

Three presentations were made in the meeting. The first one was made by Ms. Sharada Rijal. The presentation was on - **Experiences learnt from Milan Garments**. The presentation focused primarily on the adventurous journey of Ms. Rijal in the garment business. She shared the various problem faced by her and the way they were tackled. Ms. Sharada Rijal said that vision and commitment to the business profession has made her to be crowned as the Top 10 entrepreneur by BOSS magazine.

The Second Presentation was made by Mr. Sushil Sharma, Industrial Enterprise Development Institute (IEDI). . Mr. Sharma presented on -**Gender Equity and Microenterprise Development**. He had participated the training on gender equity and microenterprise development, held in Bangkok during April 2003. He presented the synopsis of training he had attended. He presented the key issues of the micro enterprise development and gender equity. There was discussion on the best practices of micro enterprises of different countries, compiled from the presentation by the other delegates.

The third presentation was "**Entrepreneur's Experience**". Entrepreneurs Ms. Malika Shrestha of Samasti Handicraft and Ms. Divya Tara Tuladhar shared their experience about their business and the problem they were facing. They highlighted on the need and advantage of having support mechanism for the women entrepreneurs.

Mr. Suhrid Prasad Chapagain, byawasayi moderator, invited all to become the member of byawasayi yahoo group.

Towards the end, Mr. Sujeev Shakya of Soaltee Group proposed March 19, 2004 for the next meeting, which was agreed by all the participants. Technology Transfer as the thematic area of discussion was agreed by the majority of the participants. The need for the various committees under the different thematic areas was highlighted. The committees will do the effective follow-up of the meeting and also work in the concerned thematic areas.

### 3. RATIONALE BEHIND THE MEETING

The fundamental philosophy of initiating this meeting was to recognize the significance of networking which is deficient in a country like Nepal, to play a pivotal role in creating effective networks and to get the network progressing and create an environment where commonalities would be identified and in the long run, working groups are expected to form.

#### Objectives of the enterprise development Network

During the first meeting on 12 September 2003, the following major objectives of the enterprise development network were identified:

- Facilitate sharing of experiences, ideas and information on enterprise development in Nepal;
- Support and coordinate lobbying and advocacy activities regarding enterprise development in Nepal;
- Facilitate identification of common interests and development of joint programs and activities related to enterprise development;
- Support knowledge exchange and development on strategies, methods and tools regarding enterprise development.

## 4. PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING

### 1. Review of the first and second Enterprise Development Network Meeting

Mr. Suhrid Chapagain, Assistant Manager Networking Initiatives of Lotus Opportunities moderated the Third Enterprise Development Networking meeting. He introduced himself and welcomed the members presented. He provided the overview of the programme and requested Mr. Eelco Baan, MSME Advisor of SNV/N to deliver the welcome speech and recapitulate on the first and second Enterprise Development Networking meeting that was held on September 12, 2003 and November 21, 2003 respectively.

Mr. Baan welcomed the participants and greeted the New Year 2004. He reviewed the issues and decisions of first and second meeting and mentioned that the following thematic areas were identified for the third network forum:

- Public/Private Partnership
- Marketing
- Financing
- Entrepreneurs case study and
- Technology Transfer.
- Women and Enterprise Development

The thematic area decided on second meeting was 'Women and Enterprise Development' as the theme for third networking meeting.

### 2. Women Enterprise Development as the theme for the Third Enterprise Development Network Forum Meeting

The First Presentation was done by Ms. Sharada Rijal, Managing Director of Milan Garments on **Experience Learnt from Milan Garments**.

She expressed her gratitude for being provided the floor to share her experiences. She shared her 15 years of experience as a women entrepreneur. She started her career as a teacher and her strong desire of independence turned her in to an entrepreneur. She shared the problem faced and how she tackled. The major problems faced were lack of marketing, inadequate finance, lack of skilled manpower and lack of raw material.

The Boss Magazine awarded her with the title of Best Women Entrepreneur of the year 2003. She mentioned the following reasons behind the winning the award:

- Good management
- Problem solving skills
- Employee relation
- Innovative product
- Recognition as a “hat lady “
- Working for upgrading Women

- Social Activities

She acknowledged that her role has now become more pivotal for the development of enterprises. She showed readiness to act as a role model for having the ripple effect in enterprise development.

## **Discussion:**

The participant's queries and comments were discussed after the presentation made by Ms. Rijal. She was asked that how she empowers other women entrepreneurs. Ms. Moushumi Shrestha from SNV/N asked -Did she face competition from the Chinese market? – she replied that her way of dealing the client is very flexible in order receiving, she use to accept any quantity of order- may be that was the reason she manage to compete with others. Sushil Sharma from IEDI asked - who did inspire her to become an entrepreneur? – she replied that its her interest to be independent and create her own identity. After completing 10 year of experience in teaching, she entered in to business and till two years she faced big loss in garment business. But however, her zeal didn't let her down. She went on trying until she succeeded. - What are the challenges faced during the period and how did she tackled? – absence of market research & support, due to her multi profession (teaching and business), inadequate finance were the problems she faced and she solved it through family support and contacts. She commented that one should do work in which she/he has strong interest then only one can succeed.

How many people are benefiting from her company? – about 100 to 150 people are benefiting. What is the major problem faced by women entrepreneurs at the current scenario? – she replied that, business is the field where gender does not matter. Tackling problems for family and business is the major problem that women entrepreneur face. How did she train staffs? – she provides on the job training for 3 months, if they succeed to learn during the period then only they are recruited. - Do government and private sectors give their attention to the entrepreneurs? - she replied they need to be more focus on the crux of the problem , the raw material and technology are the major area for the government and private sector to pay attention.

Who provides the designs for the company? - Buyer themselves provide design and sometime she herself creates new deigns. What does she expect from the government? – help in raw material supply. Rishi Shah from Lotus Holdings asked – What is the strategy behind marketing? - Showroom, local exhibition, buyer through buyer reference. She is also thinking to participate in international trade fair. She received a big support from Lotus BizPort in marketing. Did she ask for help from Government? – She has not asked with government but requested to I/NGO and they are helping her.

The Second Presentation was made by Mr. Sushil Sharma, Coordinator of Gender in Entreprise, IEDI on **Gender Equity and Micro Enterprise Development**. Mr. Sharma thanked for the opportunity to share his experience on gender equity and microenterprise development. He informed that IEDI has established a gender unit recently, for which the credit goes to SNV/N. He thanked SNV/N for providing him an opportunity to participate the training in **Gender Equity and Micro Enterprise Development**, held in Bangkok

during April 2003. He presented the synopsis of training he had attended. He shared his experience of the training through the presentation. He mentioned that the Gender unit is working to empower women in hilly region of Nepal. He presented the key issues of the micro enterprise development and gender equity, the best practices of Micro Entrepreneurs of different countries presented by delegates in the training.

## **Discussion:**

Moushumi from SNV/N - Did they find the role model for sensitization of the unit? – he replied that they did survey to find role model, and still continuing that. Role model is necessary to go to communities. Some shared the benefit and disadvantage of role model. Benefit of role model is it inspires others and other negative aspect is people do ditto copy of the model. - What kind of marketing linkage is there between Thailand & Nepal? – Thailand is a country with many resource, infrastructure and technology. But in Nepalese context, there is lack of infrastructure. Shyam Badan Shrestha – Is IEDI developing a roadmap for women entrepreneurs? – not yet, but need to develop roadmap. What kind of roadmap are they going to develop? – the detail discussion from all the all the professionals is requested for the effective roadmap.

Mr. Sharma thanked for the opportunity provided and mentioned that the presentation was made in very short time as he was not very clear about the networking forum. He said that he found this forum very interesting and fruitful.

Mr. Suhrid informed about byawasayi group-email, he asked the present members to be enlisted in the byawasayi email-group. The floor was opened for two women entrepreneurs to share their experiences. They are Ms. Malika Shrestha from Samasthi Handicraft and Ms. Divya Tara Tuladha from Annapurna Handmade Papercraft.

Ms. Malika Shrestha thanked for the opportunity to share her experience amongst the members. She mentioned that Samasthi Handicraft was established on 2054, with the partner Ms. Shanti Vaidya.. She started the business with Rs. 1,500, she shared the struggle she faced being the women entrepreneur. She said Ms. Syam Badan Shrestha had been the great support behind the Samasthi. She has recruited 12 staff till the date and produce handicrafts of allo, hemp, Dhaka. The specialized product of the company is ladies shoes. She exports the product in countries like Japan and Australia. She said the easy way of marketing has been through local exhibition and though local marketing in hotel. She mentioned that Lotus BizPort has been great help in managing accounting system in the company. The major problem faced was lack of technology, lack of financial support, difficult to gain belief from the people for women entrepreneurs.

Ms. Divya Tara Tuladhar from Annapurna Handmade Papercraft also shared her experience. She began her career as a teacher in sewing and initiated a Nepali paper product like paper bags. In the initial stage, the business started with the small order from Australia. Then she took loan of Rs. 30 thousand to grow her business. She felt the need of market research for further marketing. The main problem for her in the business is getting raw materials. She also developed raw material from cover of banana. Exhibition

is the main source of marketing and developing network. Lotus Bizport had helped in accounting system of the company and now they are following it.

## **Discussion:**

What could be the solution of producing fine threads out of allo plant? – Ms. Sharada Rijal added (as being member of HAN) that she has already shared the problem in hemp/allo fiber with the Nepal Handicraft Association and it has planned to explore the new technology for producing fine allo/hemp fiber in China but the idea was slacked due to lack of fund. She requested if anyone can help for funding.

## **3. Key issues for enterprise development network and follow-up forum**

Mr. Sujeev Shakya from Soaltee Group delivered the key issues for enterprise development network. He asked for the comments/suggestions on the Enterprise Development Forum and provide thematic area and the date for next meeting.

Mr.Santosh Acharya of MEDEP commented that the focus of the Enterprise Development Forum has to be clearer and he suggested focusing more on small enterprises and microenterprises in rural areas. Regarding thematic agenda he suggested technology transfer will be the good topic for the discussion

Mr.Shiddha Raj Pant asked to have discussion on Public Private Partnership in next meeting. Ms.Sulo Shrestha Shah said it is high time to search for the raw material in the country though we have a lot of resource in the country. It is true allo is big demand, we need matching technology. So, she advised to talk about technology transfer in next meeting. Mr.Rishi Shah mentioned that specialty should be developed and capability should be there to move ahead. He asked to pass on the problems to him so that he could pass it up to RONAST.

## **Miscellaneous**

Networking activities took place and the refreshment was served. There was discussion regarding the enterprise development and the related issues.

## 5. DECLARATION

Declarations are:

- The thematic area for the fourth Enterprise Development Network Meeting is chosen as **Technology Transfer**
- The sub committees for the intervention areas are needed to be formed. These committees will do the effective follow-up of the meeting and also work in the concerned thematic areas.
- The next meeting will be held on March 19, 2004.

## 6. ANNEXURES

### I. List of Participants

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## II. Photos

