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## Irrigation Development Experience of Rural Based NGOs from Chherlung I

B.B. Saru<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction to Chherlung Tallo Kulo Irrigation System

When the Thulo Kulo started delivering water in 1989 B.S., the villagers downstream demanded water from it but they were denied the water because of low discharge available from that system. Then the construction of Tallo kulo was started through the initiative of Mukhiya/Jamdar Pratap Singh Saru and Mukhiya/Jimwal/Lieutenant Hastabir Saru. The construction contract was given to the same group of Agri workers who had constructed the Thulo kulo. The contract amount was Rs. 5000 and four years was taken for completion.

The water was then distributed among the shareholders based on the capital contribution. Each one was entitled to receive one share for his contribution of Rs. 100. In total, fifty-five shares were established. One share meant one inch of water (the size of a thumb was taken as one inch for the purpose). The wooden weirs (sancho) were constructed to distribute the water proportionately. It was also established that the water shares can be sold. Nowadays, one water share is sold for Rs. 10,000.

All necessary tasks of canal operation, resource mobilization, conflict resolution and water distribution was left as the sole responsibility of the two leaders themselves.

A seven-member committee was formed in the year 2026 B.S. for regular cleaning, information exchange, resource mobilization and assisting Mukhiya and Jimwal.

About 2.5 kms length of canal was washed away by landslide in the year 2034 B.S. Since water could not be obtained from the canal, the water was brought from Taplek Pokhariya canal after widening the damaged portion of the canal. Later on, the canal was extended to Atrunga village (the total length being 9 km.) with the financial assistance of Rs. 95,000 from the District Panchayat and Rs. 62,000 raised from the beneficiaries themselves in the year 2036/37 B.S. The water share was increased to 59 inches. The increased amount of 4 inches was given to Atrunga village with the arrangement to provide 16 laborers for maintenance in return.

Water is distributed continuously for the rice season while rotational practice is observed for the winter crops. Two watchmen are hired from Shrawan to Kartik. For other periods the water users manage the canal themselves. Users are appointed on a paying a basis from the month of Shrawan to Kartik to take care of canals. Maintenance works which need about 10-12 persons are done by using the Khetala while for bigger works, Jhara or Mahajhara is summoned. As per rule of Jhara, one share holder needs to contribute one labor.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chairman, Chherlung Tallo Kulo Committee.*

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Maintenance works are carried out every year during the month of Jestha. Mass meetings are held in the months of Kartik and Jestha. The tasks of reorganizing the committee, presenting the income expenditure account, making future programs, modification or addition or omission of rules and regulations are done during the course of such meetings.

The members enjoy remuneration for services rendered to the organization. The Chairman is waived the khetala equivalent to one share while the secretary and other members are waived the khetala amount worth Rs.30.

About 394 visitors from various national and international organizations involved in the field of irrigation have visited this irrigation system for training and research programs.

The chairman and other farmers of the system have attended various seminars and training programs as resource persons. The chairman attended the workshop "Irrigation Management in Nepal" organized by IIMI and IAAS held in Chitwan in 2043. Likewise, the chairman participated in training activities on construction of wooden weir (gates) in Sindhupalchowk Irrigation Project by organized by WECS and IIMI. The chairman and others have also participated in other training programs as resource persons for farmers of Second Hill Irrigation Project of Doti and Dipayal District, and also in training programs organized by ILC for different members from Kaski, Lamjung, Gorkha and Syanja districts.

This organization has gathered experience of about 60 years relating to various irrigation activities such as construction, development of local technology, distribution and division of irrigation water, water share or water rights issue, the selling of water shares, land development, mobilization of internal and external resources, repair and maintenance, conflict resolution, formulation of rules and regulation and participation in training program as trainee or resource persons. This wealth of experience has strengthened the organization and enabled it to be sustainable as a non governmental institution.

There should be an effort from the government in promoting non governmental organizations. Some of the suggestions in this matter are as follows:

- simple procedure for registration in Local Administration Office,
- autonomy and no interference from the government bodies,
- financial assistance from time to time, and
- provision of credit facility with minimal interest rate.