



Better Skills for Better Resources: Small but Sustainable Steps for NGO Resource Mobilisation in Nepal

In January 2007, Skillshare International placed development worker Sameer Zuhad to work with three partner organisations in Kathmandu, Nepal until April 2008. The aim of Sameer's placement is to support ABC-Nepal, SAATHI and Shakti Samuha to become sustainable in terms of skills as well as resources by adopting new methods of resource mobilisation.

For many years, NGOs in Nepal have been committed to a community-based approach and working for sustainable development. However, the sustainability of their own financial resources has not matched this commitment. NGOs in Nepal have depended too heavily on foreign donor agencies for funds; and limited skills in writing proposals and reports have worsened the situation for many.

Skillshare International initially worked with the three partner organisations to identify their strengths and constraints in achieving financial sustainability. The partners recognised that for too long they had been too dependent on foreign funding and when donor agencies started to withdraw from the area as a result of political conflict, the NGOs found themselves in a quagmire. It was at this point that they started to explore alternative sources of funding.

A set of ideas aimed at sustainable resourcing was shared with the partners, including practical examples from India on micro-finance, private sector collaboration, corporate social responsibility, public and private fundraising campaigns and online research and development. *"Relationships with foreign donors can, of course, be very positive and we encourage them as one method of raising funds, but not as the only way,"* explains Sameer. The partners also favoured the idea of a donor tracking team and donor database appropriate to the Nepalese context. Through workshops, they have adopted a positive attitude and new focus on diversification of funding.

Resource mobilisation is a long-term process but even in the first three months of his placement, Sameer has observed a change in perspective of the partner NGOs. *"We knew the shortcomings of a donor-dependency model. We knew some of the alternative ideas for raising funds, but we were a bit unconvinced. These examples have helped. We can certainly start working on them,"* said one of the participants at a workshop.

A donor tracking team has already been established, with Sameer providing training to build the capacity of the local NGO staff to lead it themselves. Sameer is also working with them to develop a donor database. He explains, *"Skillshare International has actively pursued funding opportunities for these NGOs and is assisting them to develop proposals on a range of issues such as anti-trafficking, enhancing women's political and economic participation and strengthening community-based institutions."* Sameer believes that *"the need is to continue encouraging NGOs to make consistent efforts in this direction and highlight success stories to them through joint meetings and workshops."*



Sameer Zuhad

By the end of this placement, it is expected that the partners will have a range of new skills and tools to enable them to achieve financial sustainability. *"The process of sharing skills will improve the effectiveness of the NGOs and give them the confidence to realise their potential"* explains Sameer.