



GENDER EQUALITY

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Capacity Development Initiatives with Local Elected Representatives



Photo Credit: Center for Dalit Women Nepal

The Government of Nepal is committed to ensure that all provincial and local governments are fully functional, sustainable, inclusive and accountable to their citizens in the new federalist state structure. As more than 40 per cent of the elected representatives at the local government level, women now have an unprecedented opportunity to advance gender equality and social inclusion. In its efforts to support the vision of an inclusive country, members of the International Development Partners Group's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Working Group are currently implementing several initiatives to support the capacity development of elected women representatives across the country. This Gender Equality Update showcases some of the ongoing and planned initiatives.

Active Citizens for Accountable Local Government

Location: Eight Palikas (Gaunpalika and Nagarpalika) of Dailekh, Jajarkot, Kalikot and Mugu districts - Karnali Province (6)

Timeframe: January 2018 - December 2020

Implemented by: HELVETAS Swiss Inter-Cooperation Association and Nepalese partners

Funded by: Delegation of The European Union to Nepal

The general objective (impact) of the project is to support the creation of an enabling environment for greater engagement of citizens in local level governance and development processes thereby enhancing local democracy, rule of law and good governance. Further, the specific objective (outcome) is to support local level governments as well as civil society in eight selected Rural Municipalities in Dailekh, Jajarkot, Kalikot and Mugu districts of Karnali Province (6) in working on human rights and democratisation so as to enhance political representation, participation and accountability at local level



Photo Credit: Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Nepal

BENEFICIARIES: Approximately 16,000 households in the selected eight Rural Municipalities, including economically poor and socially excluded households, approximately 600 other elected representatives in the Rural Municipalities, and local cadres of political parties.

Main outputs:

A. At least 150 elected women representatives (EWRs) are capacitated for their effective participation and leadership in local governance and local development processes.

B. At least 1000 citizens especially women, Dalits and other minority groups are capacitated for their improved access to information about civic rights and entitlements, local governments and its services.

C. Eight selected Rural Municipalities are supported in the process of plan formulation, resource allocation and delivery of services following participatory and inclusive methodologies.

D. Two social accountability tools - budget/expenditure tracking and satisfaction score card survey - are applied to monitor the performances of Rural Municipalities and learnings are shared.



Photo Credit: Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Nepal

Political Empowerment of Elected Dalit Women Representatives' Project (PEER)

Location: Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Palpa and Arghakhanchi Districts
- Province 5

Timeframe: December 2018 - November 2019

Implemented by: Centre for Dalit Women Nepal

Funded by: Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Center for Dalit Women Nepal (CDWN) has been working to strengthen meaningful participation of Dalit women in democratic governance. The purpose of this one-year pilot project, is to achieve a sustainable mechanism to ensure meaningful participation and leadership of the elected Dalit women representatives (EDWRs) in democratic governance and more equality and equitability in public decision-making.

This project adopts two approaches: mentorship and outcome mapping. Mentorship is a continuous learning and supporting mechanism for EDWRs considering the capacity gaps, training needs and barriers/challenges at individual, family, community and institution level. This strengthens EDWRs access to meaningful participation in democratic governance, both before and after the next round of elections. Similarly, Outcome Mapping (OM) is a tool adopted for monitoring, evaluation, learning to document properly and measure changes brought through the project. A total of 200 EDWRs from 23 rural and urban municipalities of four districts in State 5 will directly benefit from this project.



Photo Credit: Center for Dalit Women, Nepal

Expected outcomes:

- A. EDWRs are enabled to participate in decision making, implementation and oversight mechanism of local governments (at Palika and Ward levels) in State 5.
- B. Local political leaders and local governments are sensitized on the issues of women, Dalit and other marginalized groups and on the role of local governments in addressing those issues.
- C. Family members of EDWRs, especially men, and non-Dalit youth, are supportive for meaningful participation of EDWRs in local government.



Photo Credit: UN Women Nepal



“People think that women cannot take or fulfil responsibilities so they don’t give any responsibility to women. However, how can a person say that without ever giving responsibility to women? We have fought a lot to win the trust of people and to get in the position that we are today. Now I have started realising my responsibilities through different trainings which also contributed in boosting my confidence that I can do many things.”

- Woman ward member,
Province 7

“Hamro Netritwa”: Collaborative Leadership of Elected Women Representatives

Location: Kailali and Doti Districts- Sudurpashchim Province (7)

Timeframe: November 2018 - April 2019

Implemented by: Search for Common Ground, Nepal

Funded by: Embassy of Finland; UN Women

Through its implementing partners, Search for Common Ground, Nepal, UN Women Nepal is rolling out a pilot initiative of comprehensive support to elected women representatives (EWRs) and increasing gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)-awareness in local governments in five urban and rural municipalities of Kailali and Doti Districts in Province 7.

The pilot project provides capacity development support to 87 EWRs at the municipality and ward-levels, including trainings on gender-responsive governance, women’s leadership circles and networking opportunities, as well as promotes public dialogue on key GESI issues in the specific context. Further, the pilot project seeks to establish and support linkages between EWRs and other women leaders and groups at the community level, as well as to engage elected men representatives in dialogues about gender-responsive governance. Key findings of the pilot project will inform UN Women Nepal’s future engagement to support EWRs and promote inclusive and accountable local governance.

Overall Objectives:

A. Enhance the capacity of locally EWRs to promote women's effective political participation and leadership for developing, implementing and monitoring gender-responsive laws, policies, budgets, and services, and to promote inclusive and accountable local governance.

B. Promote an enabling environment for inclusive and accountable local governance for advancing GESI.

C. Strengthen women's, in particular from excluded groups', capacity, voice and agency to demand accountability and transparency for inclusive local governance.



Photo Credit: UN Women Nepal



Photo Credit: Center for Dalit Women, Nepal

The proposed project aims to enable 781 elected women representatives (EWRs) in local governments to exercise their political rights and leadership capacity with the support of their family members, including men, boys and community leaders. The primary beneficiaries are the EWRs in 40 local governments in State 1.

Secondary beneficiaries are family members (370 M, 370 W) of EWRs, 411 men elected representatives, Civil Society Representatives (805), 400 young men and community leaders, and 782 political leaders (60 W, 722 M). A total of 3138 (835 W, 2283 M, 20 LGBTI) of secondary beneficiaries will benefit from the project.



I used to just sign the minutes of the meetings that I was not invited to or that I did not attend. However, from now on I will make sure that I will attend all the meetings and in case I don't attend, I will not sign the meeting minutes.

- Woman ward member,
Province 7

She Leads

Location: 40 local level governments - Province 1

Timeframe: April 2019 - December 2022

Implemented by: International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

Funded by: Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Australian Embassy, Nepal - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen leadership and meaningful participation of women in political decision making in Nepal. The specific outcomes are:

- A. Elected women engage effectively in political dialogues at the local level.
- B. Family members of women leaders ensure and encourage women's political participation.
- C. Political parties ensure women's involvement in political discussion and dialogues at the local level.

Key Outputs

- Improved knowledge, attitude and skills among EWRs on their political participation;
- Women leaders run evidence-based policy advocacy forums at the local level;
- Improved knowledge of EWRs on sectoral programmes and associated committees and their functions in their municipalities;
- Family members of women leaders are committed to share the responsibilities in households;
- Mayors and Ward Chairpersons support an environment for women counterparts to participate in decision-making of local governments;
- Men, boys and community leaders agree to support for women's roles and participation in politics;
- Improved attitudes and perceptions of local level party leaders on gender equality, inclusion and women's empowerment in politics;
- Women leaders participate in local level political dialogues and party committees;
- Local media promote political inclusion and women's engagement in political parties;

Planning for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion - Roles and Responsibilities of Local Elected Representatives in Nepal's Federalism

Location: 57 local government units - All seven Provinces

Timeframe: September 2018 - February 2019

Implemented by: Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA); Sankalpa Women's Alliance for Peace, Justice and Democracy

Funded by: MoFAGA; Embassy of Norway

In close collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) and the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen (MoWCSC), the International Development Partners' Groups' Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Working Group (IDPG GESI WG) developed a workshop package to promote the localisation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) from a GESI lens. Following the first seven pilot workshops (one in each province) implemented by Sankalpa in September-October 2018, MoFAGA took on leadership in implementing an additional 50 pilot workshops between November 2018 - February 2019. Provinces 2, 6 and 7 were selected as target areas and rural municipalities were prioritised.

In total, the 57 workshops involved 2,238 participants (48.9 % women), most of whom were local elected representatives. The participants raised a number of key issues and needs, including inability of local government units (LGUs) to draft the 35 required laws and acts; disputes and unclarity related to concurrent responsibilities between different levels of government; negative perceptions among male elected representatives about EWRs and representatives from marginalised groups, including perceptions that they are not capable to serve as leaders; and lack of collaboration between elected representatives and bureaucrats resulting in high turnover of staff.

A common suggestion emerging is to organise future workshops with both elected representatives and bureaucrats, as in real life they will have to work together. Such occasions could provide an opportunity for them to discuss challenges and exchange ideas. Further, it is clear that many of the EWRs are very excited to improve in their roles and to do a good job, as they have never had this opportunity before. Excitement appear to be much higher among the EWRs, compared to male representatives. Related to this, a suggestion emerging from many LGUs was to establish GESI networks, either at the local or provincial level and including both elected representatives, bureaucrats, civil society leaders and community groups.



Photo Credit: UN Women Nepal

The training has sensitised Ward Chairpersons and other men elected representatives to support and collaborate for the upliftment of women and other marginalised communities. We will focus on developing plans and policies that ensure gender friendly governance.

- Deputy Mayor,
Province 7

Overall objectives:

A. Share information and discuss key Constitutional provisions, national policies and international frameworks, the SDGs, and other national and international commitments relevant to advancing GESI;

B. Generate context specific information on, and discuss, capacities, challenges and needs in relation to the roles and responsibilities of local elected representatives, in particular in relation to planning and budgeting, SDG localisation and GESI in local governance;

C. Provide initial support to equip elected women representatives (EWRs) with understanding and networks/platforms for mentoring and peer-learning to be effective leaders for inclusive and equitable local governance;

D. Inform future plans and actions including future capacity development efforts of development partners, targeting EWRs.