

Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project

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Issue 11

CS:MAP Newsletter

Word from the Chief of Party, Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project

I take immense pleasure in bringing to you yet another issue of the Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP) monthly newsletter. I sincerely hope that this 11th issue will help us to reflect upon activities and achievements from the month of August 2018, share with and learn from one another, cherish the collective results that we have achieved this far, and aspire to do more towards advancing the Nepali public interest. As with the earlier issues, we anticipate that you will enjoy going through this edition, and provide feedback on making future editions even more interesting and fruitful.

Happy reading!

Bishnu Sapkota
Chief of Party, CS:MAP; Country Director, FHI 360 Nepal

Strengthening the Enabling Environment for Civil Society and Media Organizations in Nepal

GESI Checklist for Policy Analysis Handed over to Minister



At a time when the Government of Nepal is formulating many laws and policies required by the constitution, CS:MAP has been engaged with key stakeholders to ensure that the new laws reflect the spirit of the constitution in terms of fulfilling Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) requirements. CS:MAP National Advocacy Partners, Samjhauta Nepal and MAG have been analyzing existing policies related to CSOs and media through GESI lens and sharing the GESI Checklist for Policy Analysis, developed under CS:MAP, with important stakeholders to ensure that the laws, policies and guidelines address the GESI concerns.

On August 8, Samjhauta Nepal and MAG handed over the GESI Checklist to the Secretary of the National Women Commission, Anil Kumar Thakur; to 30 prominent parliamentarians on August 16; and to the Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Gokul Prasad Baskota on August 26 with the objective of advocating for integration of GESI principles within the drafts of national laws and policies by the Government. The handover to the GESI checklist to the Minister for Communications and Technology was in an attempt to make the upcoming Umbrella Mass Communication Act more GESI-friendly. Babita Basnet, President of MAG briefed about the Checklist for Policy Advocacy. Dr Usha Jha, Member of the National Planning Commission spoke on the importance of the Checklist in drafting Acts, policies and plans.



CSOs and GOs to Disclose Information

CSOs and government agencies in Rukum, Rolpa, Salyan and Pyuthan districts agreed to proactively disclose 20 kinds of information through their respective notice boards and websites. They took this initiative jointly while observing the 11th National Information Day on August 19, 2018. This was initiated by HRPLSC, a local partner of FHI 360 for CS:MAP, through a coordination meeting with local stakeholders.

In order to make the attempt successful in the district, HRPLSC organized a meeting to orient district-based CSOs including the media and government agencies on mandatory provisions of the Right to Information Act.



District Administration Office of the four districts wrote to all government agencies to disclose the information proactively. Likewise, District Coordination

Committee wrote to all local government units to disclose information proactively on a regular basis as required by the law. CSOs, government agencies and the media agreed to publicize 20 types of information proactively through their notice boards and websites on a quarterly basis in future.

National Information Day Marked

DEC Nepal marked the 11th National Information Day disclosing its information on August 19, 2018. It also conducted meetings with Siddhalekh *gaunpalika*, Dhading, Manahari *gaunpalika*, Makawanpur and orientated the participants to the importance and legal provisions of proactive disclosure of information by public institutions. Elected officials from both local units committed to disclose information as per the existing laws.



Neelkantha municipality in Dhading has started digital system to make its information public and has launched a mobile application 'MERO NEELKANTHA MERO MOBILE'. Besides, CDC, HRPLSC, HURADEC, IHRICON, RWDC, FMDC, Sundar Nepal, IHRC also observed the Day.

LDAG provides support to Sickle Cell Anemic people

Masuriya Radio Listening Discussion and Action Group (LDAG) of Gauriganga municipality in Kailali organized a meeting with Gauriganga municipality to discuss the sickle cell anemia found mostly among the Tharu people. Masuriya LDAG was formed comprising the Tharu people of Ward no. 11 of the municipality. Realizing the gravity of the problem, the LDAG started campaigning on the issue.

LDAG members visited the Ward Chair Binod Chaudhary to draw his attention and the attention of other local representatives to the disease. The LDAG members urged him to allocate budget for the treatment of the disease. The Ward chair put forward the issue at the Municipal Council. The Council acknowledged the problem and earmarked Rs. 50,000 to Ward No. 11 and coordinated with Ghodaghodi Hospital, Kailali to conduct a health camp.

The LDAG members have been engaged in identifying sickle cell anemic people. They also informed the villagers of the organization of a camp and encouraged the people to participate in the free check-up camp as many Tharu people had developed the primary symptoms of sickle cell anemia. Out of 15 potential patients of sickle cell anemia, two females and one male were diagnosed with having the disease.

LDAG members are happy with their attempt and they are coordinating with the Ward chair to organize similar free check-up camps for Tharu people of other settlements of the municipality. FMDC is advocating for life-long treatment for sickle cell anemic people at municipal level.

Dalit Advocacy Issues Identified

CS:MAP ISO partner NNSWA organized a two-day workshop from August 27 to 28, 2018 at Nepalgunj, Banke with the objective of identifying Dalit issues in Province 5 and the Karnali Province and to advocate for addressing them at the local and provincial levels. Twenty-five Dalit rights organizations participated in the workshop.



CSOs working for ensuring the rights of Dalit community, DNGOCC, DNF, RDN, journalists and Dalit politicians took part in the event.

The constitution of Nepal has many provisions on the rights of Dalits, but those provisions are not implemented. So, the participants of Karnali Province and Province 5 decided to advocate for the following issues at provincial level:



Province 5:

1. As per the constitutional provision on equal opportunity and inclusion, Dalits should be ensured access to all structures and government services. In order to ensure that this quota is fulfilled, it should be specifically incorporated within the provincial policies.
2. The constitution has guaranteed 33% participation of female at all levels. Dalit community demands that out of 33% female participation, 25% should be provided to Dalit women.
3. Effective implementation of Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2011.
4. At least 20% budget allocation for Dalit welfare by provincial and local governments.

Karnali Province:

1. Higher and technical education should be free for Dalit students.
2. Provide land and residence to landless and homeless Dalit people.
3. As per the constitutional provision on equal opportunity and inclusion, Dalits should be ensured access to all structures and government services. In order to ensure that such quota is fulfilled, it should be specifically incorporated within the provincial policies.
4. Increase Dalits' access to and control over community owned forests, and involve them in environment and climate change protection.

A Model Initiation on Waste Management

Waste Management has become one of the important agenda of the local government. The people and their representatives have realized that if not managed properly, waste can have negative impact on public health and environment. The concern of waste management was raised in CA meeting of Ward no. 8 Gorkha municipality. Most of the members had no idea of how to manage household waste piled up and stinking.

Considering the concern raised by CA members, SOCH Nepal, a CS:MAP CSO partner, organized an orientation on Waste Management. Environment Officer at the municipality oriented the residents on August 18, 2018.

The participants learnt about separating bio-degradable and non-degradable waste. The Officer cited the waste management by Waling municipality as a best practice of separating bio-degradable and non-degradable waste.

The training was effective enough to encourage participants to start scientific waste management in the village immediately. Participants made a schedule to clean their village at least once a month, and to separate the bio-degradable and non-degradable waste.

After a week, a cleaning campaign was launched with the participation of the Chair of ward no. 8 Krishna Bahadur Khatri. Khatri committed to support the campaign and make Ward no. 8 a model Ward in Waste Management.



Social Development Officer of the municipality, explained the process of budget allocation and acquiring fund through users committee. The participants also learnt about acquiring fund of local government for the development of their community.

Advocacy for Providing Land to Landless Thamis

Saraswoti Basnet, member of Parliament of Province 3, has urged Bhimeshwor municipality to expedite the purchase of land for the landless people of Bhimeshwor Ward no. 2, Phulapa, Dolakha.



Because of not having land ownership certificate, 64 households of Phulapa have been deprived of the assistance provided by the state to the earthquake-affected people meant for reconstruction.

Speaking at a face-to-face program organized by HURADEC Dolakha in collaboration with Kalinchowk Community FM on August 24, 2018, she urged Kamala Basnet, Deputy Mayor of the municipality to initiate the process of providing land to the earthquake-affected landless people soon and to provide Rs 200,000 for purchasing land and Rs 300,000 for reconstructing individual houses. Basnet said that she would invite the

members of the municipality to initiate the process.

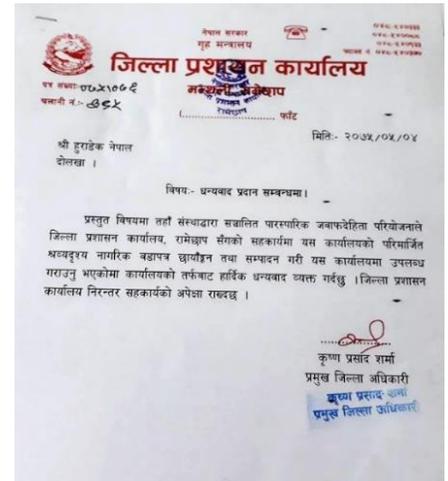
The 64 households belong to the marginalized Thami community who have been sustaining their livelihood working on others' land for generations. As they lack land ownership certificate, they are not entitled to the government subsidy of Rs. 300,000 for reconstruction of houses. HURADEC Dolakha is advocating for the implementation of the 'Guidelines for purchasing land for the earthquake-affected landless people, 2018' which has the provision of providing Rs 200,000 to landless people to purchase land.

DAO Sets up Audio-visual Citizen Charter

District Administration Office (DAO) Ramechhap in collaboration with HURADEC Dolakha has developed and set up an audio-visual citizen charter at its office premises. It was developed in keeping with the complaints made by people that the service providers were not responsible to the people and did not pay enough attention to maintain transparency in their work. The citizen charter was inaugurated on the occasion of 11th National Information Day, August 19.



Chief District Officer (CDO), Krishna Prasad Sharma said that the office had been maintaining citizen charter though it was not much useful to the illiterate people. He also added that even educated people don't have the habit of reading the charter. Therefore, we thought that the audio-visual



charter would be useful to both educated and uneducated people and set it up. A television set has been hung on the wall of waiting room so that people can watch it while waiting for their turn to get services.

Some of the government offices had brought audio citizen charter into practice, but this audio-visual citizen charter is the first attempt of the DAO.

The audio-visual citizen charter introduced on August 18, 2018 operates 24 hours. The CDO said that the DAO was committed to facilitate the people to seek and obtain information from the office.

Capacity Building of CSOs and Media

CSOs Oriented to Federal and Local-level Policies, Acts and Regulations

ISO partners MITRA Samaj and NNSWA organized a two-day program on August 7-8, 2018 where 34 civil society activists from 34 CS:MAP districts were oriented to 'Local Government Operation Act, 2018' and policies and provisions related to health, education, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction (HEAD).



The program aimed at capacitating CSOs to identify issues of concerns that need constructive dialogues at national and subnational levels to drive policy advocacy to form, reform and implement policies.

During the program titled 'Orientation to HEAD-related Federal and Local Level Policies, Acts, and Regulations', Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration Purushottam Nepal, Senior Agricultural Economist at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Development Dal Prasad Pudasaini, Joint Secretary at National Reconstruction Authority Krishna Prasad Duwadi, Chief at Policy, Plan and International Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Health Mahendra Shrestha, and Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Education Dr Hari Lamsal spoke on federal and local level policies, Acts and regulations and challenges. The orientation enabled participants to constructively engage with the government, create synergy and develop advocacy plans.

Workshop on Advocacy Strategy Building and Action Planning

NEPAN conducted a four-day workshop on 'Advocacy Strategy Building and Action Planning' for program officers and district focal persons of 14 CSOs from August 2-5, 2018 in Kathmandu. The objective of this workshop was to find out the status of ongoing advocacy issues through sharing experiences, progresses, and challenges faced while advocating on various issues and to prepare detailed plan of new advocacy issues of the districts.

Each district staff presented progress and challenges of current advocacy issues and two new issues; and developed a detailed action plan of each issue. Each issue was discussed in the plenary and inputs were incorporated to make the plan more realistic. Later, in coordination with CS:MAP, NEPAN prepared a detailed advocacy plan of advocacy issues which 34 districts will implement in coming days. 40 participants (9 female) from 34 districts took part in it.



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