

## Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project

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Issue 12

# CS:MAP Newsletter

### A few words about this issue:

This newsletter is significant in that it coincides with the completion of two and half years for CS:MAP. It helps to remind us that we are now past the half-way mark, and are poised to demonstrate increasingly more achievements that address project results. As always, I take immense pleasure in bringing to you this issue of the Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP) monthly newsletter. I sincerely hope that this 12<sup>th</sup> issue will help us to reflect upon activities and achievements from the past, share, learn and accomplish better and 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 Enabling Environment for Civil Society and Media Organizations in Nepal

### TOR of Judicial Committee Members Reviewed from GESI Lens

On September 21, 2018, Samjhauta Nepal and Media Advocacy Group completed a GESI review of the terms of reference (TOR) of the local level Judicial Committee members and shared the review report with six Deputy Mayors and Judicial Committee members from Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts.

The Constitution of Nepal - 2015, has provisioned for the creation of Judicial Committees in each of the 753 local units, to be headed by the Deputy Mayor in municipalities and the Vice Chairperson in *gaunpalikas*, to deliver timely justice on local disputes. The three-member committee consists of two members elected by the members of the Village Assembly or Municipal Assembly from among themselves. To deliver justice to the local people, it is crucial that the committee handles cases of disputes guided by gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) principles.

Deputy Mayors of Lalitpur Metropolis; Kageshwori Manahara Municipality, Kathmandu; Nagarjuna Municipality, Kathmandu; Mahalaxmi Municipality, Lalitpur; Chandragiri Municipality, Kathmandu; and Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Bhaktapur participated in the event and shared their reflections on the challenges they have faced in heading the Judicial Committees.

Through the review of the TOR of the Judicial Committee and analyzing the trends of cases reported at the local level, some of the key issues raised were the need to be sensitive to GESI issues - such as confidentiality when it comes to sensitive cases related to girls and women.

Some of the Judicial Committee members shared that women and girls feel more comfortable to share the details of their cases with women members and having majority of Deputy Mayors as women has helped in understanding the intricacies of sensitive cases.

The participants acknowledged that although there is ongoing confusion regarding the nature of cases to be handled by the Judicial Committee, it would ultimately lead to easier public access to justice. They added, however, that there was a need for partnership with civil society to raise awareness about this mandate of the Judicial Committee.

### **Civil Society Interacts to Improve Governance**

On September 18, 2018, Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) organized an interaction among CSO leaders in Kathmandu to discuss internal governance and self-regulation within Nepali CSOs. The interaction included participants from 14 earthquake-affected districts and national-level CSOs.



Executive Director of the NGO Federation of Nepal, Daya Sagar Shrestha presented an overall picture of the situation of Nepali CSOs, focusing on their internal governance and self-regulation. By using the self-assessment tool, Shrestha organized a reflection session among the participants on the practice of internal governance within organizations and issues for improvement. Executive Director of INSEC Bijaya Raj Gautam said that INSEC had been raising the issues of good governance in Nepal and practicing within the organization since its establishment. He also said that the organization had been operating program at provincial level for formulating human rights-friendly laws and rights-responsive governance.

Thirty-nine participants (18 female) went through a process of self-evaluation by using the self-assessment toolkit developed by the NGO Federation of Nepal. Participants agreed that transparency in fund-raising was crucial for Nepali CSOs' governance. The participants included officials and chairperson of NGO Federation of Nepal along with the active CSO members from 14 earthquake-affected districts.

### **Revisiting Representative Character and Future Direction from GESI Perspective**

An interactive dialogue on 'Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: Revisiting Representative Character and Future Direction' was held on September 17, 2018 in Kathmandu. The objective was to enhance dialogue and discussion on the extent to which inclusive principles had or had not been adopted and adhered to by political parties during recent local, provincial and federal level elections and the resulting situation of representation.



Speaking at the interaction organized by National Election Observation Committee (NEOC), former chief election commissioner Surya Prasad Shrestha stressed on the importance of free, fair, inclusive and credible elections for political stability. The current constitution stipulates that the electoral system should be inclusive, he added. Former chief election commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety said that the principles of inclusion should also consider mechanisms for ensuring suffrage for eligible Nepali voters residing abroad in 120 countries. He suggested that at least two periodic elections should adopt full proportional representation system by amending the constitutional provision to ensure representation of all ethnic groups, gender, regions and communities.

Parliamentarians Laxmi Chaudhary and Khem Prasad Lohani along with other stakeholders expressed their views on election and inclusion issues. NEOC's Vice Chair Professor Kapil Shrestha moderated the session participated in by 57 representatives including electoral experts, parliamentarians, civil society leaders, rights activists, academicians, researchers, advocates, resource partners, Election Observation Coordination Group (EOCG) members and journalists.

## Government Engagement for Effective Public Resource Use and Service Delivery

### Social Audit: A Step Toward Ensuring Accountability

CDC Nepal organized a Social Audit on September 16, 2018 in Nuwakot with an objective of promoting transparency and accountability, setting an example of walking the talk. The Social Audit of CDC was perhaps the first of its kind in the district.



Executive Director of CDC Nepal, Bishnu Nepal presented a brief concept of social audit and its process, introduction to the organization and major achievements of CDC in the last fiscal year, strengths, lesson learned, challenges and future plans.

DCC Chair Shanta Man Tamang, and former parliamentarian Bahadur Singh Lama, were the guests at the program. The District Coordination Committee Chief, Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of *gaunpalikas* as well as representative from Rasuwa District, among other participants, appreciated the event and also committed to conducting Social Audits of local governments. Representatives from

local governments requested CDC to provide technical support for conducting Social Audits.

### IRDS Conducts Social Audit

With an objective of ensuring transparency and accountability through self-regulatory practices, Integrated Rural Development Society (IRDS) conducted a social audit to assess overall institutional performance, with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders including members of civil society and others on September 25, 2018.

Major organizational achievements, contributions to social development including progress and challenges faced in the last one year were presented and discussed with the beneficiaries and stakeholders in the district.

District Coordination Officer Pralhad Pokharel, said the social audit conducted by IRDS should be taken as an example by other CSOs in the district to promote accountability and transparency. "Other CSOs should also conduct social audits", Pokharel said, adding, "good governance should be maintained by both the government and non-government sectors for improving mutual accountability and transparency".



Providing feedback, stakeholders said that the social audit report should include entire activities done by IRDS in the past fiscal year. A total of 105 representatives from media, law, civil society, the private sector, and government participated in the social audit.

### Enhancing CSO Understanding through Video and Drama

Interface Nepal organized a Civil Society Video Screening and Awards Ceremony in Kathmandu on September 24, 2018 as a part of the CS:MAP Public Outreach Campaign (POC) for improving public understanding about civil society and media.

Fifteen best video reports were selected for the screening that included Winner - *Darchula Tuin* by Ram Dutta Mishra; 1st Runner Up - *Bal Bibah* by Bal Krishna Adhikari; 2nd Runner Up - *Shuvadra* Foundation by Sundar Shilpakar, and Special Mention - *Setu Bandai Chitrakala* by Asmita Rizal. These video reports were selected by a jury panel consisting of CEDAW member Bandana Rana,

Editor of Madhesh Vani Dr. Rajesh Ahiraj, and Editor of Himalaya TV Binod Dhungel.





Chief of Shahid Lakhan *gaunpalika* in Gorkha requested SOCH Nepal to organize similar orientations for the *gaunpalika*. He assured at least 50% financial contribution for such events from the *gaunpalika*. The Municipality also made financial contribution to make the orientation program effective. The orientation targeted all representatives of the Gorkha municipality, civil society organizations and team of District Coordination Committee of Gorkha.

Similarly, SOCH Nepal also organized social accountability tools orientation for Molung *gaunpalika* of Okhaldhunga on September 13, 2018. Other *gaunpalikas* are also requesting for organizing orientation on SA tools in their municipalities and *gaunpalikas* and SOCH Nepal has showed interest in collaborating with them.

### Photo Exhibit to Raise Awareness on Public Service Delivery

To raise awareness about citizen role in the oversight of public service delivery at the local level and to urge local authorities to take action, a one-day photo exhibit was organized by FHI 360, Equal Access, HRPLSC and IHRC at Nepalgunj, Banke on September 25, 2018.



Forty-nine photographs taken by trained CS:MAP Community Reporters were put up for display, depicting the situation of public service delivery in different districts related to the health, education, agriculture and disaster risk management sectors.

The photographs showed how gaps and challenges in public service delivery can affect the daily life of women, children, persons with disabilities and other traditionally marginalized groups.



Around 250 visitors including government officials, civil society and media representatives, students and the general public observed the photo exhibition with keen interest.

Inaugurated by the Chief Administrative Officer of Nepalgunj Sub-metropolis, the event was covered by various local newspapers and national dailies like Annapurna Post and Nagarik, FM radio stations and online news portals.

### Good Governance Barometer to be Implemented in Kapilvastu

With an objective of improving the governance in Suddhodhan *gaunpalika* in Kapilvastu district, Indreni Rural Development Center, organized a workshop to implement the Good Governance Barometer (GGB) on September 21, 2018. GGB is a social accountability tool that is used to measure overall public service delivery standards through scores given by citizens and public service providers.



The workshop was the first in a series to implement GGB and was actively participated in by Ward chairpersons, secretaries, and members; health post officials, teachers, and community people.

The twenty-seven participants who took part in the workshop were oriented on the basics of good governance barometer and further steps to be taken to complete the entire GGB cycle.

To identify major issues in GGB implementation, participants were divided into three groups. They actively discussed issues in agriculture, education and health. The identified issues were prioritized, based on which Pataria Ward 1 of Suddhodhan *gaunpalika* was selected for implementing GGB related to health issues.

The participants expressed satisfaction on the knowledge of GGB gained through the workshop and made commitment to launch and complete the GGB cycles with active participation in upcoming GGB workshops. “I am very positive about it and want to implement GGB in my Ward immediately”, said Tilak Yadav, Chair of the Ward Office. The workshop also identified a list of participants for a second GGB workshop to be held in October 2018.

### Bi-annual Summit

CS:MAP conducted a bi-annual summit on September 27, 2018 to link its advocacy works done at the local level with the national advocacy partners and wider civil society networks working in the same areas. The summit was attended by 29 CS:MAP partners including FHI 360 and Equal Access. Two panel discussions included eight prominent civil society leaders working in the sector of Health, Education, Agriculture and DRR and representing wider networks. The declaration made at the summit will help guide future advocacy efforts on CS:MAP.

## Capacity Building of CSOs and Media

### Training in Resource Mobilization and Financial Sustainability

NEPAN organized a four-day training in resource mobilization and financial sustainability on September 17-20, 2018 in Kathmandu with the objective of strengthening the CSOs' capacity in developing good proposals for securing diverse funding from local and external donors.

The training aimed at building the capacity of executive directors, chairpersons and resource mobilizers of 14 CSOs. The training focused on writing winning proposals rather than giving theoretical concepts only. A draft proposal from each CSO was expected as an outcome of the training.

Theoretical concept on fundraising, its process, method and strategy and elevator speech; a short effective way to communicate/connect with donors to introduce organizations were emphasized. A session on concept note, and use of social media for crowd-funding were also discussed.



After the theoretical session, participants developed their own proposals and they were peer reviewed and presented in a plenary. Each organization committed to submit at least one proposal and explore fundraising at local level to tap local resources. Twenty-eight representatives (6 female) from 14 CSOs participated in the training.

### Editorial Team

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