

A person is holding a tablet computer. The screen displays a dashboard with various data visualizations. On the left, there is a pie chart labeled 'Item 3'. In the center, there is a horizontal bar chart labeled 'b' with five items listed: 'Item 1', 'Item 2', 'Item 3', 'Item 4', and 'Item 5'. On the right, there is a vertical bar chart with a scale from 0 to 30. At the bottom, there are two more bar charts labeled 'Item 2' and 'Item 4'. The person is wearing a light-colored, striped shirt.

**Consolidated Summary
Findings of Evaluations and
Holistic Audit carried out in
2019**

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ACRONYMS

AA	ActionAid
AAN	ActionAid Nepal
CFUG	Community Forest Users' Groups
CRSA	Climate Responsive Sustainable Agriculture
CER	Citizen's Education Report
CWES	Child and Women Empowerment Society
DADO	District Agriculture Development Office
DJKYC	Dalit Jana Kalyan Yuba Club
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRC	Human Resource Center
JJA	Janachetana Jagaran Abhiyan
LDRMP	Local Disaster Risk Management Plan
LRP	Local Rights Programme
MAM	Mahila Adhikar Manch
NRs	Nepalese Rupees
PEACEWIN	Participatory Effort at Children Education and Women Initiative Nepal
PLiP	People Living in Poverty
PNGO	Partner Non-Government Organisation
PRRP	Participatory Review and Reflection Process
PRS	Promoting Rights in School
PVA	Participatory Vulnerability Assessment
RDC	Rural Development Centre
ReFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SC	Siddharta Club
SMC	School Management Committee
SRDCN	Social Resource Development Center Nepal
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat
TDS	Tax Deducted at Source
UCW	Unpaid Care Work
VDC	Village Development Committee

GLOSSARY

Chhaupadi: A conservative social practice for women in certain districts of Western Nepal, which prohibits a woman from participating in normal family and community activities during menstruation, as she is considered impure.

CRSA: Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture is a strategy aimed at making small holder farmers less vulnerable and more resilient to future climate shocks. It is based on the science and practices of agroecology, and it contributes to both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Dalit: A person considered to belong to so called "lowest caste" in the Hindu caste hierarchy. The Dalits are also often referred to as untouchables.

Guthi: An association formed by groups of people based on kinship, caste or territorial aspects for the establishment and maintenance of religious and cultural functions.

Haliya: An exploitative wage system of hiring people for ploughing landlord's land at extremely low wages paid in grains on yearly basis. In some cases, these poor people are simply forced to plough the land as a repayment of loans taken by them or their ancestors.

HRBA: Our human rights-based approach supports People Living in Poverty to become conscious of their rights, to organize themselves to claim their rights, and to hold duty bearers to account. AAN builds on international human rights law, but goes beyond a legal or technical approach, supporting people to analyze and confront power imbalances and take sides with the PLIP.

Kamaiya: Agricultural bonded labourer, particularly those that existed in Western Nepal but abolished after the promulgation of Kamaiya Labour (Prohibition) Act, 2002.

LRP: Our long-term programmes in particular districts and communities; AAN refers to all of its programmes as rights programmes, which may be implemented at local, national and international levels.

Off-farm livelihood: Engagement in formal or informal skill-based works or enterprises that contribute the household incomes. For example: carpentry, mason, plumbing, etc.

On-farm livelihood: Direct involvement in the agriculture and/ or livestock rearing sector and considering it as a major source of income. For example: vegetable farming, poultry, etc.

PLIP: We avoid talking about 'poor people' which has an element of condescension. 'PLIP' emphasises a common humanity and poverty being a state that people are living in, which ActionAid is trying to end.

PRS: It is a framework produced by the Right to Education Project together with ActionAid's International Education Team, aimed at actively engaging parents, children, teachers' unions, communities and local civil society organisations in collectively monitoring and improving the quality of public education. It offers a set of practical tools, to track 10 core rights of school education that can be used as a basis for mobilisation, advocacy and campaigning.

ReFLECT: Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques-an innovative approach to adult learning and social change, which focuses on the theory of Paulo Freire and uses participatory rural appraisal methodologies.

1.0 BACKGROUND

ActionAid is a global federation working to end poverty and injustice with thousands of communities and millions of people across the world. With more than 45 national members and country programmes worldwide, ActionAid focuses the majority of its resources on working with the poorest and most excluded women, men and children - taking sides with them, making long-term commitments to advance their human rights and to transform the world in which their children grow up.

ActionAid Nepal (AAN) has been working in Nepal since 1982. The mission of AAN is to end poverty and social injustice by facilitating the process of empowering and addressing basic need of the poorest and most marginalized people. AAN works particularly with women, children, Dalits, highly marginalized indigenous people, disaster affected community and among others. AAN has adopted a human rights-based approach with focusing to enhance the capacity of the poor and marginalized people. It has used network and collaborated with other civil society organisations committed to equality, social justice and poverty eradication. It is a locally rooted and globally connected organisation, which adopts human rights-based approach with an aim to enhance the capacity of the people living in poverty and exclusion to claim and exercise their rights to live a dignified life.

The Evaluation studies were carried out in LRP – 33, Bardiya and LRP – 34, Sankhuwasabha. Likewise, the mid evaluation of AAN programme was conducted by the Government of Nepal as per the agreement between AAN and the government in 2019. The Holistic Audit was also carried out in LRP -35, Doti, which aims to observe the organisation in line with programme and its functional implementation and its efficiency, governance practices, effective financial and accountability practices to ensure the effective partnership, effective and efficient programme implementation. This process provides areas to improve internal control system, identify the gap between policies and practices, and provide space for effective management or programme response.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the studies is to ensure the effectiveness of the programme/activities implementation, partnership, process and the impact it brings. Likewise, the general objective of the mid-term evaluation carried out by the government of Nepal was to check the effectiveness against the target and compliances mentioned under 5-year agreement (MoU) between government of Nepal and AAN.

The specific objectives of studies are:

- To monitor the inputs and outputs of the activities;
- To assess the progress against actual Annual Plan and Budget (APB);
- To assess how LRP and other organisational priorities programme is contributing achieving CSP results and how it is linked with our global strategy;
- To reflect the proper implementation of our strategy and identify areas for further improvement for community empowerment and programme sustainability; and
- To identify programme, partnership, financial management and governance issues and provide recommendations for appropriate measures to improve systems and practices.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The evaluations and holistic audit were performed using various instruments. These included but were not limited to desk review, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, and observation. Local partner agencies' annual reports, mid-term evaluation reports, learning documents, appraisal package and agreement documents among others were referred for desk review. SWOT analysis of individual Partner Non-Governmental Organisations (PNGOs) was also

performed in the process. Satisfactory rating, Programme theory model and Most Significant Change Techniques were applied during evaluation studies. Policy review, Summary reports of annual, semi-annual and monthly reports, holistic audits, preliminary assessment reports, financial management policy, bilateral partnership meeting minutes, monitoring reports of the partners, Local Rights Programme (LRP) strategic plan, audit reports, financial report and information were reviewed and analysed.

4.0 CONTEXT PRIOR TO PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Due to open border with India, there were incidents of girls trafficking, sexual abuse, exploitation, dowry system, especially in Madhesi community. Many issues of domestic violence were not considered as violence and society divided household work for women and other works for men, depriving or sending girls to government schools and sending boys to boarding or expensive schools. Women were not involved in decision making processes. Few women groups that existed were dominated by some elite women groups. Less involvement of women in finance related matters and women group did not claim for their rights to share of income. Most women did not have information of reproductive health and had no medical visits during pregnancies. The situation of women was painful following discriminatory traditions, cultures and practices in the village. There were harmful cultural practices where women were supposed to stay in a cowshed (Chhaugoth) during their menstruation/ postnatal period and were forced to conceive unwanted pregnancy until they give birth to a son.

No child clubs were there, even if few existed, were not operational. There was no concept of empowering students, all the activities were led by teachers themselves. Schools did not realize the importance of students' participation in decision making process in schools. Child marriage was accepted as social norms. There were no campaigns for admission of children to the schools and no concept on safe schools. No initiation on quality education, no concept of earthquake resistant infrastructures was there. After the local election, the accountability for basic public services has gone under the local governments but the government was not effective to stop levying fee in public schools.

Food scarcity due to inability to use land due to guthi issues was prevalent in Sankhuwasabha district. Fair wage was not in practice at that time. Use of excessive chemical fertilizers in agriculture was prevalent. There was no awareness on organic farming, at that time, only elites had reach to being leaders, and only few elite people were able to take services provided by the government. There was no system of making the budget transparent at those times. Discrimination and untouchability existed prominently, and no active organisations were working to end caste discrimination. Poverty and unemployment due to migration was normal. It was found that even the government projects failed to ensure the fair wage to the labour.

Before programme implementation, there were significant number of cases of natural disasters such as wildfire, earthquake, dry soil erosion, landslides, thundering and lightening, wild animal attacks, storms etc. since there was no mechanism worked on to reduce or mitigate those disasters. There were not any groups of organisations to face those natural disasters, there was no awareness amongst the community people at all. They were not aware that few disasters were induced by human themselves. No preparedness was seen in government level but there were relief committee to provide some relief materials to the affected ones. Only police were involved in the relief distribution process. Community were not involved in such activities.

5.0 KEY FINDINGS

5.1 Women's Rights

Women representation in formal and informal institutions has increased and are representing in different local level government (ward and municipality level). Budget allocation for women and



children have become easier due to reach of the women who have been working for women rights. Women are becoming able to trap the local resources and plans. Receiving fair and equal wage is the right of every working women. Hence, women are raising this issue and have conducted policy dialogues with local government, construction company and women's group. Being aware of their rights, adolescent girl groups and child clubs have started campaigns to stop child marriage. Child clubs are continuously conducting campaign against

child marriage; as a result, the number of child marriage cases has decreased. AAN continues its activism to stop Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) through capacity building initiatives and sensitisation programmes on VAWG, dowry and chhaupadi to raise awareness. As a result in 2018, 162 cases were reported in AAN's working clusters, 86 of them got resolved through legal process. They also initiated the rehabilitation of freed kamaiya who are still out from the rehabilitation package.

Sensitisation programmes on menstrual health and hygiene was conducted in AAN working areas led by AAN partners. Along with sensitisation, the training on making handmade sanitary pad was also done. In Aaurahi, Siraha, a health camp was organised focusing on SRHR issues of women, in which many women were diagnosed with uterus prolapse and in Badikhel, Lalitpur, around 230 women were benefitted from the health camp organised in 2018 in collaboration with REFLECT Circle, Women Friendly Safe house, Ward and local Health Post. Out of 230 women, pelvic organ prolapse was seen in 156 of them and few have started medication.

In Doti, adolescent girls' group went ahead to submit plans to the local government to train girls on homemade sanitary pads and to distribute them in schools. Addressing this demand, KI Singh Rural Municipality allocated NRs 50,000 for the training and ensuring availability of sanitary napkin at schools. In Kathmandu, the girls who were trained on making hand-made sanitary pad reported it to be cost effective and light to use. The practice has helped to reduce girls' school absenteeism as well.

To ensure safe childbirth and minimise maternal mortality, women were encouraged to visit health post for pre-natal care and child delivery. Ward no. 3 of Mathagadi, Palpa has been declared as zero home delivery zone with joint initiation of Mathagadi Rural Municipality, ward office and Social Resource Development Center Nepal (SRDCN), AAN's local partner. Similarly, MAM has succeeded in declaring zero home delivery in Shikhar Municipality by establishing two roomed Urban Health Centre in Doti.

The recognition and sensitisation of unpaid care work were enhanced in the family, community and state level. Women have reported the decreased amount of time spent in Unpaid Care Work (UCW) in the working areas. Men are now helping women in their household works, decreasing rate of discrimination between sons and daughters, people have started sending daughters to schools and marrying them after 20 years of age is also being common practice in Sankhuwasabha district. Regular filling up of time diaries regarding UCW has helped in enhancing women literacy too. Key intervention to address UCW to build women friendly infrastructure and alternative buildings such as Community

Child Care Center (CCCC), grinding mill, drinking water management etc. The government representatives declared that they will bring the childcare center under the education policy of the local government. Badaiya Taal and Geruwa Rural Municipalities allocated NRs. 21,00,000 for childcare centers.

AAN has established 7 Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) in Lalitpur area. WFSs has been facilitating to support women to cope out from trauma, tension and violence through sessions such as, legal orientation and counselling training against violence, etc. to empower women of community (WFS members), build confidence and self- esteem with their own potential to be leader in their lives as well as in their community. Similarly, safety booths were established in various working areas with the display of posters, pamphlets and information on violence and legal procedures including the available services to seek. Mobilisation of communities on redistribution of workload among household members was done. As a result, 143 households have seemed to reduce the workload of women in Doti. A reserve tank was constructed as most of the women had to spent around 4 hours to fetch a bucket of water. Community Child Care Center was established to help women whose family's male members were abroad in Doti. Equality Development Center (EDC), our local partner at Doti has also supported equipment and furniture for 5 birthing centers. EDC had provided training to adolescent girls to make home-made sanitary pad and supported in some public schools to construct girl friendly toilets. Five-year plan for chhaupadi eradication has been developed in Doti district where EDC has played an important role. Campaign against Chhaupadi has been conducted in coordination with local government and rights activists. It is role of AAN to make clear the position of MAM whether to register at the local entity as many other MAM are also negotiating with the MAM secretariat to get registered. Community Child Care Centre initiative in Bardiya have allowed mothers to engage in their productive work without having to worry about their children.

Balkumari recounts an incident when her son had gone missing. "When I and my husband returned home after work, we couldn't find our boy anywhere," she says. The panic-stricken parents were only relieved after finding that a relative of theirs had found their child playing alone in the village and brought him back home. "That incident still shakes me to the core and leaving our kids alone was out of question from that moment on, she says."

"We can now work at ease knowing that our children are in safe hands. The centre also teaches the value of good habits in children while engaging them in reading and other extracurricular activities to help their personal development, feeding nutritious food and maintaining cleanliness and personal hygiene."

5.2 Education



To implement minimum benchmarks in public schools and ensure quality education, model community school initiative was undertaken in coordination with District Education Office (DEO) and local stakeholders. Further, promotion of Child Centred Learning (CCL) has supported to create better learning environment within the school along with an improved quality of education and creativity of the children. The Government of Nepal has included Early Childhood Development (ECD) in school education after Eighth amendment of Education Act and AAN is promoting it with orientations and trainings to the teachers on CCL and support for CCL kits to raise learning interest of children.

For ensuring quality education rights, AAN conducted mass conscientisation on Promoting Rights in School (PRS) to the children, parents and school authorities. As a result, the School Improvement Plans are prepared in line with charter of 10 rights and are implemented in most of the schools. Some schools started to adopt Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based teaching to create better environment for class. The learning achievement of public school has increased from 57% to 60%. School is also promoting physical activity and sports where 3 students of the school had also participated in 8th National sport tournament. Therefore, various activities were supported and awareness raising programmes have been organized in the school such as orientation on promoting rights in school, safe school, child rights and social audit in Doti. The overall learning environment of the school has been improved and school regularity has been improved after providing cushion and making better seating arrangement in Doti. Engaging representatives of various stakeholders of the community to watch the quality of education is a good practice in Doti. These groups were capacitated on various education related issues including PRS, CER and tax issues and are effectively mobilized for monitoring quality of education regularly in the certain selected schools of the community. However, after the phase out of NORAD project, the group doesn't seem as active as before.

Significant improvement in girls' school enrollments and reduction of their absenteeism at times of menstruation was noticed after gender friendly toilets in most of the schools were constructed with the provision of clean drinking water, first aid and sanitary pads. A focal female teacher for the counselling during their menstrual periods was also assigned to help the girls. Schools also established gender desk and the ward office supported to construct girl's friendly toilet and financial support to buy sanitary pads. The initiatives helped to reduce their school absenteeism.

The school-based child clubs were actively engaged in activities such as anti-child marriage campaign, hygiene campaign and sports activities. Child clubs were continuously producing wall magazine in the contemporary issues of the communities and conducting campaign on school enrollment and anti-child and early marriage. Wall publications were done by child clubs to raise awareness against child marriages and child labour. Free education campaign was conducted in Bardiya where schools were charging fees to students which was against the constitution. They filed PIL to supreme court which created some vibration in the working areas. Parents and students were leading the process. Child centered learning process were implemented in schools to increase learning achievement. Citizen education report was also prepared. KMJS supported 1 computer, 1 printer, 1 projector, 1 speaker and books. This support was provided under IT support to build up the English language lab in this school to make school as model. Due to this, student numbers have been increased in respective schools.

Likewise, Kalika Secondary school have started providing free sanitary napkin to girls in school in initiation of child clubs. Tax power campaign for quality education was conducted in four Palikas (Gulariya, Rajapur, Geruwa and Badhaital) of Bardiya with the slogan "*Sarkar lai kar tirau, saral sulav ra gunastariya sarbajanik sewa ka lagi khabardari garau*" (pay tax to the government, make them accountable for easy, accessible and quality public services) led by youths. The campaign supported to drag attention of policy makers, implementors of Local Government teacher, parents, students, civil society members, journalists, and CBO members to increase the funding in education as education is the basis of development of the country.

School Management Committee (SMC) plays a vital role to ensure quality education and better governance in public schools. For instance, day meal to the children of Kalika Basic School, Palpa was supported by Ribdikot Rural Municipality after it was recommended by the SMC. Youth engagement and mobilisation was prioritized in each of the AAN's working areas, keeping in mind the integration of their concerns as well. They were involved in community level REFLECT circles and were encouraged

to fight back existing injustices. They were also oriented on Right to Information and encouraged to make an appropriate use of it.

During the Global Action Week on Education, youth engagement in tax power campaign has raised the discourse on tax collection and its fair investment in public services such as education and health. Further, AAN in coordination with National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal) has jointly agreed and is initiating to advocate for progressive investment on public education through education financing mapping exercise and budget tracking at national level. AAN and its partner NGOs are also coordinating with the school and local stakeholders to conduct regular social audit of schools to ensure free education. Different activities like Disaster Management Committee (DMC) formation at school level, Participatory Vulnerability Assessment and preparation of disaster management plan and school safety plan, capacity building to teachers, parents and students, simulation exercise, small scale support for mitigation etc. were also implemented to promote safety and DRR in schools.

Keeping in mind the negative consequences of junk food, their consumption was restricted in the schools, parents were encouraged to send home prepared food for their children. Likewise, 14 Child Learning Centres are established in Kathmandu to provide extra support for those children whose

“it is possible to convince parents to enroll their children to school by conducting interaction discussions on quality education with parents and teachers. The ratio of admission has also increased after such programmes. The schools which were in the verge of getting merged are now getting more than 150 regular students.”

- Ms Kamala Dahal, Principle, Balmandir School

parents are unable to guide them in their studies. The centres have benefitted more than 363 children.

Interaction on why to send your children to school was also done before beginning the sessions. This has helped school to be well

disciplined, dignified and accountable. This has also helped parents to admit their children to the school compulsorily and choose better schools for them.

5.3 Livelihood



Increasing number of women from the collectives are accessing financial services and getting aware of the legal bank procedures. In Bardiya, women are experiencing the increase in their income status by using the revolving fund in very low interest rate, enhancing skills through trainings and received supports to start their small business. AAN has been campaigning to address the issues of landless, tenants and marginal farmers in the policies. As a result, the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation finalised Land Policy, in which

AAN's key advocacy issues of joint land ownership, land to landless, use right of public land for livelihood of landless, Kamaiya and Haliya rehabilitation has been addressed. Similarly, in Bardiya, 15 ex- Kamaiya have been rehabilitated in this year. So far, 10,714 Ex-Kamaiyas out of 10,797 Ex-kamaiya HHs have been rehabilitated till date. At the same time, the Food Security, Food Sovereignty and Right to Food bill has been implemented by the federal government, in which AAN's demands for securing food for all, access to and control over natural resources and access to all means of production has been incorporated. Campaigns on joint land ownership, securing tenancy rights, Haliya and Kamaiya Rehabilitation were organized to ensure landless, poor and marginalized people's access to and control over land and natural resources. AAN considers the entitlement of land as a source of power

to live with dignity. In Sankhuwasabha, farmers are now finally able to consume their products by their own, which earlier had to provide certain amount of their production to the people of Guthi.

Series of capacity building initiatives on organic farming, soil and water management and procedures of making organic pest control manures were organized for lead farmers to promote Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA) and ensure farmer's engagement in it. For this initiative, AAN's local partner, Dalit Awareness Society (DAS) supported equipment and materials like sprinkle, plastic pond, plastic tunnel etc. As a result, farmers succeeded to produce vegetable and other cash products comparatively high through CRSA model in limited land. Upon receiving the training on sustainable vegetable farming, women developed their skills with modern technologies of farming. To promote sustainable agriculture, modern agro technologies like using drip irrigation, plastic tunnel, bio pesticide and shed improvement have been practiced. Livelihood through organic farming has been approached by 30 groups of people including 144 farmers in Sankhuwasabha.

The middleman in marketing has affected the farmers. The agriculture concept should be linked with market and value chain and our livelihood concept should be focused on entrepreneurship because farmers produce grain and vegetable, but the businessman tags brand and the farmers don't get benefit from this branding. Opportunities for IGA should be given to those farmers who were not involved in such farming before. To raise the issue of working-class women, MAM in working areas are conducting fair and equal wage campaign. Women in Doti were able to raise daily wage from NRs 150 to NRs 450-500 which is now equal between men and women. But it is not legally mentioned by the local governments. AAN's The Mahila Network Project (MNT) has also provided revolving fund for women groups to explore the new income generation initiatives in Doti. EDC has provided NRs 150,000 as seed money (revolving fund) to 8 women's groups across the working areas to develop their entrepreneurship.

HomeNet Nepal (HNN) is focusing on women home-based worker into entrepreneurs where they analyze the requirement and the needs of the community, assess their capacity, market and develop long-term support mechanism for its sustainability. Series of skills development trainings (Basic Training to CTEVT certified) were provided and linked everyone to associate with the labor rights forums for advocating their issues. HNN has initiated establishment of

Mahangi Tharu says, " we used to spend our time mostly in domestic work and labor work but these days we are involved in vegetable farming and other IG activities, we think we are becoming more independent and confident to start our own small income generations. We could manage the household expenses and even society is recognizing us now".

'Home creation' for branding of the products, where accessibility of the workers is becoming an easy process for minimizing the challenge of marketing and middle man in markets as home-based workers are benefiting directly by sending their products in Home creation. Recently, three party agreement has been done between HNN, National Cottage and Small Industries and FNCCI for the promotion of local products made by home-based workers and small microenterprises. Similarly, advocacy for fair and equal wages is also going on and success to some extent has been achieved. Wage for women has increased from Rs 200 to 600 in Sankhuwasabha due to regular advocacy of women's group.

By receiving technical and financial support, the number of women interested to start various income generation alternatives is increasing. From 23 collectives in Bardiya, altogether 586 women are involved in income generation alternatives. During this period, 145 new women are involved in income generations. Allo clothes is also one of the main income generating sources in Sankhuwasabha. Due to the effects of climate change, the crops which were cultivated before could not be grown now due to which people were attracted towards allo. Collective members are regularly accessing the

government service securing and enjoying their right to get public services. They are working to minimize out migration from the place due to drying up of water resources and wild animal attacks. Different ideas are being implemented to minimize losses by many ways such as conservation of water resources, making plastic ponds, bucket campaign, plants which require less water are being cultivated. Not using insecticides and pesticides have induced insects' disaster in farms. They are trying to minimize the effect by using organic pesticides and insecticides by using urine and different medicinal plants.

Through AAN's 'Making it Work for Women project' and in collaboration with local partner KMJS started working in Basghadi and Rajapur Municipalities and Badhaiya Taal and Geruwa Rural Municipalities of Bardiya since 2014 with an objective of increasing women empowerment through various income generating activities. AAN introduced the concept of farming for business among freed Kamaiya Women by mobilizing 20 women groups in the district by providing them training on various activities such as vegetable farming, mushroom production, animal husbandry (pig, poultry), traditional basket weaving and most importantly, market connection. The women are now able to manage their products and market them independently. The women report that the initiative has made them financially independent and confident to pursue entrepreneurship.

Water management for irrigation and preparedness of multidisaster



5.4 Disaster Risk Reduction

AAN in coordination with National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), Government of Nepal provided GESI focused livelihood trainings and material support to 240 community people of 6 earthquake affected districts. In Siraha, 965 cold wave affected senior citizens, pregnant and lactating women were supported with warm clothes coordinated by AAN's local partner, Dalit Janakalyan Yuba Club (DJKYC) with Dhangadhimai Municipality. Similarly, Disaster Management Committee (DMC) of Aurahi Municipality provided emergency support to 3 pregnant women for the treatment and birthing in hospital.

In 2015 earthquake affected districts, 12 disaster resilient schools with gender and disable friendly infrastructures (2 each in Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Rasuwa and 3 each in Kavrepalanchowk and Dolakha) were reconstructed and handed over to the school authorities. The total amount invested for reconstruction was NRs 14,13,22,218. Two schools of Chhathar, Terhathum and one of Chainpur, Sankhuwasabha prepared school based DRRMP after basic vulnerability assessment was conducted in them. Further, AAN has also supported NRs 80,000 to maintain playground in the school.

AAN's local partner KMJS is playing role as District Lead Support Agency (DLSA) and is supporting and facilitating in coordination with District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in updating the district disaster plan and its effective implementation. In Bardiya, KMJS had been providing technical support to prepare LDRMP of Rajapur Municipality. This document is used by municipality as a guiding document for planning disaster risk reduction. As a result, 2 plans have been prepared to address DRR. Local Emergency Operation Center (LEOC) has been established in coordination with Rajapur Municipality and DDMC Bardiya to enhance the early warning system since Rajapur area is one of the flood prone areas. In Bardiya, 10 Ward level DMCs have been formed on 4 Palikas: Rajapur, Bansgadhi, Geruwa and Badhaiyatal. Similarly, 29 community level and 10 ward level disaster management committees have been formed in Sankhuwasabha. Also, community level 15 trusts and ward level 2 trust have been established to raise money for disaster preparedness. The trust has recently helped 30 people affected by different forms of disaster. Getting education in safe environment is the right of every children. Hence to strengthen the school safety, KMJS had constructed compound walls in

Saraswati Padma and Namuna Basic schools of Rajapur and Geruwa. 42 schools in LRP 34 have been trained and First aid box has been provided to the schools to remain prepared and minimize the effects of natural disasters. In 15 communities and 6 wards of Sankhuwasabha, ropes and tents etc. have been provided for disaster management.

To strengthen the organisational capacity to respond the humanitarian and overall disaster risk reduction cycle, organisational level Emergency Preparedness Response plan was developed by KMJS. With this plan, KMJS is planning to enhance the internal capacity building of staff and board and make organisation equipped in terms of understanding and preparedness. AAN and KMJS established a community based mobile siren in Sangharsanagar, Bardiya as a pilot project in collaboration with local government authorities including security forces. It has been observed that this siren is very useful to community members to get together quickly and respond the emergency. This device is also helpful to reduce cases of violence against women in the community. Community people have started taking steps towards minimizing disasters and organised bucket campaign for controlling fire, drawing lines to limit the disaster of wildfire, maintaining community level cleanliness, drinking boiled water at the time of monsoon, switching main switch off while thundering and lightning, earthing the wires. Three places in Sankhuwasabha have been identified as open governmental space – regular drill for emergency preparedness. Eighteen people have been trained to provide first aid and 24 people to remain prepared for disasters.

Farmers are nowadays attracted towards cash crops, cardamom and fruits like orange, lemon, which need less water and are less affected by wild animals, less affected by climate change, less infected by insects and pests. The working areas of Sankhuwasabha has been divided into 5 clusters to practice climate resilient sustainable agriculture. They are planning to promote CRSA and other livelihood initiatives i.e. goat farming, lemon farming, vegetables farming and mushroom farming and developing separate pocket areas. Community empowerment on its preparedness was conducted by AAN in which regular activities like cleaning around homes, storing water for emergency, preserving water source, collecting rainwater, avoiding cooking in open places etc. were discussed. AAN also facilitated to establish disaster management fund at local level with guidelines in the working areas. While developing Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP), AAN facilitated to enhance the capacity of district stakeholders and local government representatives across Bardiya district. AAN along with its local partner, KMJS has been taking responsibility of District Support Lead Agency (DLSA) for Bardiya district since 2015.

6.0 OTHER ORGANISATIONAL INITIATIVES OF OUR LOCAL PARTNERS

AAN believes in sustainability of the partner organisations and therefore supports in institutional development to promote their independence. AAN is responsible for coordinating activities of its partners to achieve programme outcomes. The local partners are there to carry out the focused programme specific activities, primarily concerned with day-to-day functions, AAN should focus equally on all the aspects of programme management from programme delivery, capacity building of the partners, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, team mobilisation/management and donors and stakeholders' communication liaison. Therefore, AAN is the overall custodian of the programme and holds the responsibility of accomplishing the stated programme objectives. The major responsibilities of AAN are to prepare the detailed programme management plan and to ensure the programme's overall objectives, targets at various key stages along with monitoring performance against the plan. Likewise, AAN also ensures various compliances within and outside the country.

6.1 Organisational Governance and System Audit

Our local partner EDC has developed several policies (Admin Policy, Finance Policy, Child Protection Policy, Anti-Corruption Policy, Complain Guideline and MEAL Guideline etc.) for smooth operation of its day-to-day management and for better internal control system. It has amended Admin and Finance

Policies four times so far to make the policies vibrant. Various Board sub-committee were formed with specific responsibilities which was a good practice. However, while reviewing the documents and during the discussion, it was felt that such sub-committees were not functioning effectively. Therefore, while making any decision, proper follow up and the mechanism needs to be ensured to implement the decisions properly and to make such committees functional.

6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation System

Monitoring and evaluation committees have been formed at partner's level which monitors their respective programme. The field monitoring report is prepared after the field visit based on their observation and discussion. The report is shared in the board meeting as well as in the monthly staff meeting. Beside the internal monitoring, external monitoring such as DPAC and MPAC by the government had also been conducted by KMJS where stakeholder and government personal participate in the process. The team also gives feedbacks and reports of the visit. Then report and observations are shared within the organisation board and staff and recommendations are followed up accordingly.

SWOT analysis of TST was conducted where improved strategy with proper rules and regulations was considered as one of the strongest factors of TST. Sustainable resource generation was considered its weakest part. Opportunity to broaden the working area was identified as the most feasible opportunity by TST and exit of well-trained staffs from the organisation was felt as the main challenge for the organisation. Joint monitoring visit should be taken as an important part for programme implementation and informal meetings with the specific groups would rather give more result-oriented discussions. The social audit done through the involvement of external consultant does not seem to critically analyse the reports. SWOT analysis of EDC was also conducted to find that availability of required organisational policy procedure was greatest strength while its implementation portion was considered the weakest.

Before programme implementation, AAN conducts context analysis/baseline studies to identify situational analysis, problems and challenges based on which, further plans and strategies are derived. Regular supervision and monitoring both from the partners and AAN will then follow once the programme is commenced. AAN conducts mid-term evaluation in every 3 years and a long-term impact study once the programme is complete, in most cases, after 10 years. In between, holistic audit, which includes four key audit pillars namely, Governance, Finance, Social/Public and Programme audit is also organised to ensure the partners' overall programmatic, financial and functional efficiency. AAN strongly believes in the principles of shared learning and values it to the utmost level. It organizes Participatory Review and Reflection Processes (PRRPs) at Community, Regional and National levels to provide space for local communities, partners and AAN to review and reflect on programme interventions and generate new learning and insights for improved actions. PRRPs are taken up as events for regular monitoring and shared learning. Through these forums, AAN ensures accountability and transparency towards its target people as well as its partners since they participate and share their opinions and views are addressed right from the programme planning stage. This also helps to develop priority-based plans. Apart from PRRPs, AAN also participates partner organisations on different capacity building forums.

6.3 Child Sponsorship Management

KMJS and TST have managed 660 and 692 child sponsorships respectively and have been regularly collecting child message and sending community voice as required. To enhance the children's capacity and to strengthen the child sponsorship, various capacity building initiatives and fun activities such as picnic, quiz competition and drawing competition were conducted. These events have impacted on the quality of the child message and child's engagement in various initiatives. EDC was managing 1204

sponsored children in Doti supported by Greece. The sponsorship related information was delivered effectively in the community. The community was aware on the funding process and they could brief about the linkage between sponsored child and the supporter. They knew that the sponsored child is the ambassador to bring income for the community development.

6.4 Internal Control System

PNGOs have developed Finance, Personnel and Child Protection Policies. These policies direct the overall good governance practices of the organisation and supports for the transparent way for procurement process. KMJS formed procurement committee of Secretary, Treasurer and member of board which initiates the procurement process. To manage the overall programme and to ensure the quality delivery of programme and project, Programme Management Committee had been formed comprised of chairperson, Programme Director, Programme Coordinator, Project officer and Finance and Admin Officer. The committee conducts regular meeting and engage in the overall programme development, implementation and monitoring. Proper management of coding durable materials and supporting documentation management of expenditure settlement are required in LRP 34, Sankhuwasabha. Improper documentation, procurement process, inconsistent expense pattern, lack of adequate Internal Control etc. were observed in Doti.

Internal control system is not so strong as multiple advances have been given and settlements are not made in time by staff and board members in case of Doti. Several claims were made late (up to 5 months), few programmes conducted without taking advance and claimed directly, booking of amount without expense realisation, support provided without adequate documents, several invoices or minutes with correction made on dates, no proper verification before making payments, incomplete monthly financial reports, acceptance of corrected/overwritten bills, bills on plain paper, change of Accountants, charging of cost to wrong heading etc were observed in Doti during the evaluation.

The mid-term evaluation team found that adequate effort had been put by AAN to comply with its procurement procedures as mentioned in the Procurement Policy Manual, and to get the goods and services at minimum possible prices. However, in some cases, procurement was made without purchase order and requisition. Hence it is recommended to strictly follow procurement procedure.

Double entry system of account keeping, regular and timely payment of tax and E-TDS and use of FAMAS software were observed as some of the good practices applied in the partner organisations to maintain financial disciplines.

By the review of financial documents from mid-term evaluation, it was found that AAN as well as its implementing partner is deducting the applicable TDS & depositing same in the government account. During on-site observation of the office of ActionAid and its implementing partner it was found that in most cases they were depositing the deducted TDS and filing the E-TDS return regularly. Very few cases of failure in deduction of tax, delay deposition and filing of E-TDS return were noted. Hence, it was recommended that those organisations strictly comply with the provisions of tax laws in Nepal.

Review of Internal Control System was done through Rules by laws, Meetings, Semi- Annual meeting, Yearly review meeting, Senior Management and Financial Reporting System. From the previous audit management letters, AAN and its implementing partner's financial governance is satisfactory in all financial matters including compliance with the local laws. Though there is some non – compliance with the tax laws, AAN's implementing partners are making progress in ensuring the compliance with such laws and policies. It was also found that the variance between budgeted and actual expenditure seems acceptable in aggregate, but activity wise use of budget does not seem effective. Budget is over utilized in some instances and underutilized in other.

6.5 Accountability, governance and Social Audit

In the existing context, the transparency and accountability of the local government is a challenge. They don't want to share public local level policy and programme details. Due to this problem, the community is facing challenges to develop their plan and demand their development issues. AAN is supporting for both software and hardware activities. Hardware activities are supported to complement HRBA work addressing their immediate needs as means to achieve their basic rights. Many hardware activities have been linked with local government's plan and priorities. A tripartite agreement between AAN's PNGO, the local government and community is done to take this initiative forward with clauses of the supports and other provisions. Despite its effectiveness in many areas, it is becoming a challenge to implement planned activities in time due to various government provisions and hurdles. As a result, EDC is not been able to utilize its planned budget in a proper manner.

The local government is in the process of preparing local policies. Therefore, it is right time for EDC to be more engaged in the process. Previously, most of policy advocacy initiatives were not effective due to the lack of people's representatives at local government, now since the people's representatives in government is in place with full of authority, the partner must grab this opportunity. It was also discussed that the local government is biased while providing opportunities and resources. The participants shared that the local government representatives provide support to the people based on their political and personal relation.

7.0 THEORY OF CHANGE AND POWER SHIFT

7.1 Building Power of PLiP

Empowerment and building active agencies are key of our rights programme. Change is possible through working with people who are excluded, marginalized and discriminated to making people's active agency in their leadership. Through empowerment process, people are able to lead the movement building initiations. Without active and empowered citizens, intervention might become failure. Hence, our right based programme has taken it as an entry point. Based on this understanding, we have done empowerment and agency building work. For example, ReFELCT circle as learning forum has been created, where people living in poverty (PLiPs) discuss on life affecting issues and alternatives for better solution to their problems. The empowerment of agencies has helped to shift the power and their access to decision making level.

Sustainable transformation is possible only when there are active agencies of the people who are discriminated. Hence, different groups of women, girls and children are formed, strengthened and mobilized. The agencies were capacitated with skills and information of policies so that they can raise their voice through campaign and advocacy for women rights and gender justice. With the effective leadership, women agencies like MAM and women group have been able to fight and confront against gender-based violence. Women agency has been expanded to fight against violence and second generation is emerging and knowledge has been transferring to second generation by older generation to maintain the legacy of power to fight against inequality. Women group along with MAM and their networks have been successful to tap local resource for various income generating activities and construct community building initiatives, emergency fund etc.

Communities were capacitated and informed about government programme and policy and oriented about how to access local resource. They have been empowered through capacity building training and supported to build their agency and network like Land rights forum, farmers Group and its network. They mobilized their agency and network for authentic dialogue with government and stakeholders to claim their rights. Partners are also coordinated with local government for resource matching so that community people can be benefited more.

Our approach is to keep women, young people and children at the center for the risk reduction initiatives. The vulnerable community has central role in disaster risk reduction where the community takes responsibility to lead the overall process from planning to implementation phase. As a result, number of community based DMCs are actively involved in risk assessment process that empower them to take action for risk reduction activities mostly led by women. The evidences show that DMCs have become integral part of women leadership development platform and mobilisation at community that is complementing agency building process. The practice of emergency fund set up at community is a good example of promoting humanity and solidarity at the community level. KMJS Bardiya also has been piloting the mobile siren in Rajapur for emergency and also connecting to combat violence against women as alternative building. Another good example of community from Siraha launched a campaign about fire awareness through local cultural event. The community uses their local knowledge and resources for preparedness of fire hazards.

Need of meaningful engagement with men and boys is recognized to advance gender equality. It is necessary not only for women's empowerment, but also to transform the social and gender norms that reinforce patriarchy and inequality and harm both women and men. Hence engagement of men and youth were given priority especially in programmes and campaign to shift the invisible power relations. Our action has brought solidarity from different civil society, networks, local government and political parties to amplify women issues to address in policies and provision. Engagement and solidarity with local government and other key stakeholders also played a vital role. As a result, the practice of discriminatory wages has been discontinued at many places across the working areas.

It is important to enhance meaningful engagement with local government and schools and taking solidarity and support of different education stakeholders is prime to make change in public schools. Hence, engagement with local government has given priority especially in programmes, sharing and learning and in policy discourses. For instance, 34 schools were supported for school infrastructures in support of local government. CCL training was provided to 27 teachers from ECD class to class eight from nine proposed model schools in coordination and support of Education wings of Budinanda Municipality, Bajura. Besides, KI Singh Rural Municipality of Doti has passed the policy and programme from council to build 5 model schools with taking solidarity of our model school initiatives in Doti.

Partners were engaged in alternative model buildings which supported women to reduce and redistribute the unpaid care work burden along with recognition of the work. Partners had constructed community childcare centers in Bardiya, Doti and Tehrathum and have shared its best achievements with local government. This kind of alternatives have replicated in other parts of the community by local government. Similarly, other alternative models such as water tap, improved mills, grass cultivation, gender friendly technologies, and improved stoves were also undertaken to reduce unpaid care work.

Further, advocacy for gender responsive public services and gender friendly markets were also conducted by partners as alternatives for gender focused development initiatives. Similarly, gender friendly toilets were also constructed in schools to minimize school absenteeism among girls and promoting a provision of gender desk in schools has helped to share girls' SRHR issues.

LRP partners were engaged in alternative model school buildings, which will support in transforming process of public schools. For instance, the KI Singh Rural Municipality (RM), Doti replicated our model school initiatives and passed the policy and programme from council to build 5 similar model schools in the RM. Sound Speech Picture (SSP) teaching methodology has been initiated in Palpa as a new innovation of learning process in schools and as a result, 8 schools have increased learning achievements to 60%.

AAN has been promoting sustainable livelihood through agroecological approach by implementing CRSA as a major tool. For this purpose, the programme has been linked with local and national government with lobby and advocacy with them to increase public financing on agroecology, climate justice and prioritize it in research and extension. AAN is also focusing on gender sensitive value chain, which allows women's access to markets. Evidence based advocacy and knowledge generation is our key alternative supporting small holder farmers and their agencies, movements and issues. Model plot initiative has also been implemented to set an example and influence local government to promote it.

ActionAid Nepal believes that strengthening local leadership in humanitarian response, especially by women is key to the effectiveness of such responses. Advancing women's rights in emergencies is a central pillar of ActionAid's HRBA in emergencies, recognising that disasters increase women's vulnerability to violations and denial of human rights, including exclusion from decision making and access to resources. Our humanitarian signature-women leadership, shifting power and accountability to affected people were applied and successful during the response. AAN responded Bara windstorm through women led humanitarian response. Establishment of women friendly spaces in Bara has created a platform for women's agency and enhance their leadership. As a consequence, the women are starting to challenge such discriminatory practices in their society and amplified voices of women' participation in decision making.

At the community level, though women are engaged in disaster management committee, task forces, and other forums, their meaningful participation and contribution is still a challenge due to socio-cultural barriers. Women often are the first responders in emergency and are integral to the survival and resilience of families and communities. In disaster preparedness, response and recovery, women's leadership and capacity are agents of change. Therefore, it is high time to build the active agency of women leadership in emergency preparedness and response.

7.2 Creating Enabling Environment

After having the active agencies of women and girls they have initiated campaign like anti chhaupadi, child marriage, fair and equal wage and safety and security of women and girls in the public and private sphere. Along with this, the agencies have raised the voice on the meaningful participation of women at all levels. Thus, women also succeeded to increase the number of their representations in various formal and informal structure. Through the advocacy and campaign, many achievements and transformation have been brought at local and national level. The case of working with religious leaders in anti-child marriage campaign shows that how the communities we work are making visible power accountable and shifting the hidden power because religious leaders are influencing communities to stop child marriage.

ReFLECT circles and adolescent girl groups in our working areas have initiated various campaign related works which has made them able to pool resources from local government for community hall construction, adolescent girls led activities and model school initiative. Most importantly, they organized their voice to challenge against gender-based violence and break other discriminatory practices. Similarly, the regular discussion and conscientization process in ReFLECT circles has helped to be empowered and voice out against discrimination and exploitation. Mainly, they conduct dialogue and bring consensus on issues and confront with collective actions like rally, policy advocacy to make the concerned authority accountable.

Community based people's agencies are initiating various advocacy works. There are different initiatives organized e.g. collective school enrollment campaign, free and compulsory education, anti chhaupadi, child marriage free zone, model school initiatives, education financing and tax power and

quality education in school. As a result, Bara Bardiya, Geruwa and Gulariya of Bardia and Budhinanda, Bajura and KI Singh, Doti's Palikas have made decision on free education in school.

Since, shifting the power is an overarching theory of change of AAN to transform the social power relations and ensure the rights of PLiPs, our programme has consciously intervened to enable the poor, landless and smallholder farmers, especially women to claim their rights in various layers of government and make the visible power accountable towards poor and marginalized farmers and youths.

7.3 Access to rights, resources and services

The landless, small holder farmers and marginal farmers were supported through different community forums like ReFLECT circle, demos and model farms to support the scaling up of agroecology. As a result, the practice of agroecology and CRSA has been well internalized and implemented.

After adoption of federal structure with the vision of establishing strong local government with greater authority, there was a huge opportunity to make local government more accountable and democratic in favor of PLiP. The LRPs proactively worked with local governments and influenced policy process. Reflecting the experiences of few LRPs who had been engaged with local government for developing DRR policy and plans, it seemed quite positive and progressive in terms of collaboration and commitment on DRR. It had been a great opportunity to collaborate and influence local government through DRR initiatives and beyond.

On the other hand, there were many pertinent questions and challenges related to capacity of the local government to execute their functions, required legislation and adequate staff; and also, capacity of LRP partners to engage on policy work at local level. In addition, LRPs have been advocating to integrate climate change aspect through promoting sustainable agriculture and climate induced disaster though it has been overlooked along with less attention of the local governments. The haphazard road construction caused landslides and drying the source of spring water in the LRPs means ecological sustainability component needs to be further embedded on programming and policy advocacy.

Our actions have challenged structural causes of gender inequality such as patriarchy and have engaged to fight against gender-based violence. It has also challenged harmful practices such as child marriage, witchcraft and chhaupadi practices which made women and girls inferior and impure. Along with this, our actions have focused to transform gender division of labor and gender stereotype roles among men and women through intervening of unpaid care work. Campaigning against harassment of women and girls in public space through safe city campaign, talking openly on menstruation taboos, campaign against alcohol consumption, challenging gender roles that has restricted women's mobility and unrecognition of their effort on unpaid care work are some of the works we worked to bring the change and shift the power from house to society and nation, at large. Caste based discrimination and social hegemony created unjust power relation and hence the actions against caste-based discrimination took significant progress in the communities.

Our actions are challenging discrimination between boys and girls in schools and violation of their right to education. For instance, Bansbote community of Laligurash Municipality in Terhathum has broken the discriminatory wages after series of meetings and dialogues. LRP partners intensively engaged in school enrollment campaign with different active agencies working on education and as a result, the campaign was successful to enroll 90 children in the school. Along with this, our actions have focused to transform gender-based discrimination and exclusion between boys and girls in schools in the name of caste, chhaupadi and in their participation and leadership. Beside this, Kalika Secondary school of Bardiya provided free sanitary pads to girls, Budinanda Municipality of Bajura provided training to

schools and girls on preparing homemade sanitary pads in order to make schools free from chhaupadi and KI Singh Municipality declared itself as child friendly Municipality.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The mission of AAN is to end poverty and social injustice by facilitating the process of empowering and addressing basic needs of the poorest and most marginalized people. AAN works particularly with women, children, Dalits, highly marginalized indigenous people, disaster affected community and among others. AAN has adopted a human rights-based approach focusing to enhance the capacity of the poor and marginalized people. AAN reaches the targeted communities through local NGOs and community organisations. AAN provides financial as well as technical support to the NGOs to achieve goals of the interventions.

The entire programme seems to be effective and successful in bringing changes and building capacity of the people living in poverty and exclusion to claim their rights. The programme seems to be successful in organizing poor community people together into various groups/forums including women groups/Forums, child clubs, youth networks, women savings and credit groups, cooperatives, etc. These groups have been oriented and mobilized for various rights issues including campaigns, movements, awareness building, personal health and hygiene, livelihood supports and skills development activities.

Community empowerment was strongly taken together at the time of programme implementation, which facilitated the ward office to lead in disaster relief itself thereby allocating budget for the same. Programme building is a continuous process for which change in the implementation process according to the need of time should be done. The community must be aware on where the programme is leading and what their requirement is. Thus, if the community can lead by adopting the programme as their own responsibility, it will be lot easier to meet the objectives of the programme.

TST has been conducting human rights based programmes to bring change in the rightful people's lives in partnership with AAN. Many groups such as children group, women group, farmers' group, disaster risk management committee have been formed to raise voice for their rights and receive various facilities provided by the government. Campaigns to reduce violence against women, campaigns for land rights etc. have led in achieving those rights. Now environment to start new income generating ways have been created. Various disaster risk reduction committee have been formed to cope with disasters.

Very less progress has been observed under DRR priority in Doti district due to limited fund and other priorities. The basic level progress can be observed but intensive work requires money in Doti. To bring the change, EDC has conducted orientations and sensitisations in groups and collectives and has practiced time diary which helped them to internalize and motivate in work-load redistribution linking all 4Rs (Rights, Resilience, Redistribution and Representation) of the unpaid care work. The budget allocation in specific issues/groups has been shrunk as a large chunk of budget has been utilized for infrastructure rather than for the development of women and children which need to be more alert to make government responsible and accountable for allocation of gender budgeting. Very less progress has been observed under DRR due to limited fund and other priorities in Doti. In many communities, power redistribution has been observed as women are taking lead role in implementing the community plans securing budget from the local government and service providers.

AAN contracted with too many organisations or local NGOs to implement the interventions based on four themes. Distributing limited amount of money among too many organisations and activities means each activity or organisation has received a very small amount of money to implement the intervention. Due to allocating very small amount, local NGOs select small group of targeted people

to work with them. It seems successful intervention; however, poverty is public goods and it has spillover effects. AAN provides trainings to the partner organisations on various areas such as Human Rights Based Coordination and collaboration with the local government and stakeholders during programme implementation is also well maintained.

Even though it has utilized most of its budget, it is observed that mobilisation of fund is not effective. Since, over-utilisation and under-utilisation of budget is seen in many cases. With the analysis made so far, we can conclude that the overall progress of the programme was satisfactory and would like to recommend on following matters to make its programme more effective.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- AAN RC/programme team should ensure the proper use of resources that KMJS provides to the communities during their monitoring visits. Resource and benefit sharing within groups and communities should be more democratic, transparent and targeting the right person. KMJS should review time to time on the beneficiaries/PLiPs on who is getting the services. They should strengthen their monitoring mechanism and practice to assess the outcome of their programme. They should have follow-up mechanism to analyse whether the support they provide to the communities is properly utilized/working or not. Accordingly, they could readjust or reform their programme intervention strategies.
- During the first meeting with women's collectives, most of the members just reflected on the income generation part. It would be better to focus on how gender roles are transforming in their communities. While participating in the discussion, it was realized that the real integration among priorities were somehow missing. Some collectives members were not daring to start up income generating work so collectives could facilitate on the possible options and could create favorable environment for starting the income generation options and create favorable environment for them.
- Visible impact from programme should be seen in the communities and the internal governance of the groups, structures such as cooperatives and another entrepreneurship should be strengthened. Before proceeding to the livelihood options, detail need assessment along with risk assessment had to be done.
- EDC has been working in the existing areas for quite a long time. Having visited there and discussion with the community gave expression that EDC needs to think about shifting its programme in the new cluster. In view of this, a coordinated effort is required to minimise duplication of the activities and to capture the real poor of the communities. Therefore, planning needs to be done consciously so that resources could be best used.
- The study team rarely observed the visibility of AAN in the working area though the partner was visible. It is recommended to ensure the logo and visibility of AAN along with partner wherever applicable so that AAN is known in the district and working areas through EDC's programme.
- It was observed that EDC has planned many activities under its priority and was difficult to show effective outcome. Therefore, planning needs to be focused in the specific areas with limited activities and effective social mobilisation. Likewise, social movement and campaign work were very less observed in EDC where the potentiality for such initiatives were huge. Therefore, EDC need to engage in such initiatives making its ReFLECT Circles more effective and vibrant.
- There was lack of proper coordination between MAM and adolescent girl's groups. To take forward the issues of Chhaupadi and other social evils, the proper coordination in needed in Doti.

- Too many people in the communities are receiving various types of income Generation related trainings but the success rate was quite limited. In view of this, it is recommended to PNGO to have a market research about the potential or scope.
- Capacity of partner staff need to be developed and continued with updated local level policies and provisions to deal with the local government effectively and the achievements should be measured and mentioned in the partner's annual reports.
- In Doti, acceptance of plain paper bill, overwritten bills, minutes should be stopped. Use of same supporting document for more than one claim should be avoided and if required, should mention proper reason/s. When monthly salary of staff is different from earlier month or regular figure, explanation should be given, and the Accountant / Programme Coordinator should ensure it.
- Activities and implementing areas should be prioritized and focused keeping in mind the community priority. Cost conscious measures and effectiveness should be adopted while preparing budget.

10.0 ANNEX: CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: Mahila Adhikar Manch: Producing leaders to fight against ill practices

The Mahila Adhikar Manch (MAM also known as women’s rights forum), at Mudhegaun, was formed in 2014, in close collaboration with AAN Mahila Network Project and EDC, to empower women and strengthen access to their rights and information. The project simultaneously started operation in five administrative clusters—Mudhegaon, Mudhbhaada, Kaparlekhi, Bhumiraj and Durgamandal and Deepashree. Since its inception, the MAM has set its course to empower and mobilise



Conducting meeting of Mahila Adhikar Manch in Doti

women from rural and disadvantaged background by—informing them about their rights, identifying and eradicating prevailing problems and issues faced by women, creating awareness about unpaid care work, domestic violence, child marriage, Chhaupadi, maternal health, and increasing their access to every sector, including social, education, economic, political, and more.

“Women are the most exploited ones in a society, no matter where they live. Many lived in fear of their own family members and had no one to rely on in their entire lives. Such was the plight of rural women,” Kanta Devi Bhatt, a member of Women’s multipurpose cooperative and a health worker of the village. She further adds, “But by the changing times, now no unjust behaviour towards women will be tolerated at any cost.”

Since long, various women support groups alike to Mahila Adhikar Manch and others such as Aama Samuha (mother’s group) have been instrumental time and again in addressing and resolving issues faced by women. When they started raising their voices against the ills of their community, they had to face harsh criticism not only from the villagers, but also from their own

families. But despite being deprecated by the community, the MAM has continued to raise issues regarding child marriage practices, Chhaupadi, domestic violence, and so on.

According to the members of the MAM, the practice of child marriage has reduced to a good extent. Nowadays, the concerned candidates are consented to get married only after they’ve reached 20 years of age or above. Chhaupadi, a harmful practice, which was practically a grave issue is abolished from this community and many villages, including Mudhegaon, which has been declared as Chhaupadi-free zone. Because women had to live like outcasts during menstruation period in a cowshed, the practice had very negative effect on mental and maternal health and at most times stirred fear among women as they also risked being attacked by wild animals, snake and even being raped. With raising awareness, women today are more conscious of their health issues during such times—maintaining personal hygiene, eating healthy diet, not stressing over heavy work, etc.

The atrocities spread by gambling and drinking alcohol usually amounts to husbands abusing their wives especially in rural communities. As the women became more adamant about uprooting the cause of domestic violence, they led campaigns to close gambling houses and places that manufactured and sold alcohol. The campaign to improve relations between mother- and daughters-

in-law (Sasu-buhari abhiyan) was also widely organised. As a result of such efforts, the community has experienced sharp decline in abuse and violation of women.

The MAM also advocates women's access to property rights and helps them acquire joint land titles of their property which helped to shift power at the household level. So far, 19 women have already obtained joint land titles of their property. Other programmes conducted by the MAM include skill development training, leadership training, accounting, sexual and reproductive health awareness, interaction programmes about joint land titles, time diary exercise to redistribute the share of workload between men and women, understanding unpaid care work—also working with political parties to spread the word about it.

“When I was first approached by EDC’s mobilisers to be part of such women empowerment groups, my body trembled with fear by just having to introduce myself. That was almost more than a decade ago. Where I am today is only because of EDC’s support,” says Bishnu Nepali, president of the MAM. “I am not an educated person, but because I had access to information through support groups, I was able to understand and exercise my rights and teach others about it too.” Bishnu Nepali won the recent local elections and represents the Dalit community. She believes that other women should also take a proactive approach to politics and hopes to inspire others to follow her example.



Showing street drama in Doti

The other MAM members are equally grateful to agencies like EDC to have guided them to countless possibilities. Various programmes conducted in the agency's support such as leadership development training, capacity building training, etc, has helped them become confident and financially independent. Moreover, women are today more informed about their rights, budget allocation and can stand up to wrongdoers of the community. And even those who didn't know how to write their name can proudly introduce and represent themselves in front of masses.

“If it weren't for continued support from agencies to groups like MAM, women would have never believed that they also have the power to reform their lives, they would've given up on the cause long ago,” says Radhika Shahi, secretary of the MAM.

The agency has timely supported MAM whenever needed - in terms of finance and infrastructure—like helping to build office infrastructure and provisions to organize programmes and the like. The group has also not had to suffer financial problems to support themselves. “When we first started the group, the matter of saving a mere ten rupees per month was a topic of ridicule for the others who didn't understand our motive. Today, we've been able to save up to NRs 1000,000 to 1500,000 in our funds to much dismay of those who thought us lightly. Such a development has only fortified our ambitions even more.” says Chandra Rawal, member of the MAM.

But the agency's support works in curious ways for these women. "Somehow when people find out about the involvement of outside agencies in women group, it sort of commands fear, and respect, in the community, and the group is showed more leniency." says Radhika. At most times, as Kanta Devi puts it, they just fear that these agencies might punish them or something if they don't support their cause. Otherwise, Radhika explains, they will be seen as no more than a group of women bickering about whimsical stuff.

To further its objectives, MAM has recently received a budget of NRs 200,000 from the ward office and NRs 100,000 from the municipality. In this way, the next leadership of women are strengthening in Doti and they are fighting against the ill practices despite all the challenges.

Case Study 2: Towards Girls Friendly Public School in Aathrai, Terhathum

"Since many years we are studying in this school. But after the management of girls' friendly room in it, we feel the school like our home during our menstruation."

This is the statement of Parvati Oli who is also a Chairperson of Kishori Network in Iwa, Aathrai. Oli continued, "I always feel uncomfortable and am mentally stressed when I get my periods during classes. I used to get upset whole day in the class. I used to make different reasons and leave for home. Every month, I used to drop the classes for 3-4 days". After SRHR training provided by Deurali Society (AAN's local partner of Terhathum) followed by mobilisation of Kishori sanjal (Adolescent Network), they started negotiating school management to allocate a separate room to rest. The management was convinced and decided in favour of the Network. Moreover, a focal person (female) is also provided to counsel the girls during their difficult times.

Case Study 3: Vegetable farming helped support my children's education

Mina still shudders when she talks of the past—how they felt like they were thwarted into a whirlwind of bewilderment and a deep sense of foreboding when they finally thought they were free from the exploitation. "As far as we can remember, we've served the landlords. Even though the government declared freedom for us, we had no clue as to how to lead our supposedly free lives," she recalls. "We had no land to call ours where we could settle or cultivate, and no other way to get any income other than do labour work for very low wages. And the land allocated by the government near Godhaura River was beyond use--infertile and plagued by floods during monsoon." More than a decade after the declaration, Mina came to know about the Mahila Network Project, initiated by ActionAid Nepal and Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Society Nepal, and its various women support groups - Gurash Women Group and Suryamukhi Kacheri Centre--in Pashupatinagar. The women groups helped to aware Mina and others like her about their rights, provided training programmes to create various employment opportunities, and urged them to create a savings fund. "In our group, we started by collecting NRs 10 every month from each member of the group. The saved funds allowed us to plan how to use those savings effectively to help empower women by creating new business possibilities," explains Mina. "Furthermore, the group gave us a workshop on farming vegetables and animals, buying good seeds, using agricultural tools and adopting new technology in agriculture to maximise benefits. Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj also funded NRs 200,000 (rotational fund) to buy seeds." The group now organizes an interaction programme with an agricultural expert whenever possible.

Mina was also elected as the president of Suryamukhi Kacheri Centre. The centre is instrumental in the community in fostering leadership qualities and public-speaking skills in women. Many discussion programmes are held at the centre where women can freely voice their concerns, issues of health, time management and such, benefits of service-oriented work over labour works, and so on. "We now understand that if we want others to change, we first have to change ourselves," she says. "We discuss about all these issues with our families as well because without the support and understanding of each

other, we cannot hope to sustain the goodwill in the community.” Mina is proud of the fact how her husband and family members are together in her endeavours, whether it be working in the fields or at home. Her husband also works as a daily wages worker to support the family, and together they’ve been able to save his earnings (NRs 80,000 according to Mina) while Mina’s income sufficiently takes care of the household expenses.

“I feel so proud when I can pay for my family, especially my children’s necessities—health facilities, education—and provide them whatever they want with the money that I’ve earned,” she beams. Bishal Chaudhari, Mina’s son, says how things have changed for them since Mina started working. “Back in the day, my parents couldn’t afford anything—mother used to scold me whenever I asked her to buy stationeries. And when me and my sister had to wear worn-out school uniforms to school, other students always ridiculed us because we were poor. I didn’t feel like going to school at all.”

“This season alone, I earned NRs 20,000 from vegetables, and NRs 32,000 by selling piglets—I recently sold eight of them!” Mina doesn’t have to go far to sell her farming produces and manages everything from the comfort of her home. She has also recently bought 1 kattha (18,225 sq feet) of land for farming. In the future, she wants to open a general store for her son.

Case Study 4: Kharbaari dobhane community turning towards Disaster resilient

Kharbaari dobhane with 27 households lies in the bank of Henwa khola in ward number 4 of Chainpur Municipality, Sankhuwasabha. The community constitutes of Rai, Limbu and Tamang castes and are economically and socially backward even if the area lies near the Chainpur city. Since the area lies in the sloppy landscape, erosion occurs yearly in that area. In recent 20 years, 4 big floods have occurred. Though there were no human casualties, big number of pigs, goats, chickens and houses were swept away. There was a programme for disaster risk reduction under the partnership of ‘Ready for Anything’ project implemented by ActionAid. The project had formed a group under the leadership of women. The most threatening case identified was the sloppy area of Kharbaari Dobhane. Different measures for the risks reduction from flood were implemented. Trainings on disaster risk reduction, participatory vulnerable assessment training, formation of disaster relief fund were done. In search of resource, district administration, district development committee, municipality, water induced disaster division office, soil conservation office etc. were approached through many meetings, interactions and dialogues. Information received from those offices empowered us even more. ‘Self-confidence seems to increase when asking for own rights to the related office’ says chairperson of the disaster management committee Walimaya Limbu.

After the identification of sloppy area as the most vulnerable one, with the support from District Disaster Management committee, soil conservation office, Arun Gulm Armed Police Force, embankment of 20 metre length and 5 metres height was constructed through resource mobilisation. The resource not only means money but the labour work sought from Armed Police Force, Police station, neighbouring village and TST for 3 days was instrumental. The embankment has helped to reduce the loss from flood to large extent. Since the river flows throughout the area of the community, there still arises the threat from the flood. For further risk reduction, fund and labour force have been collected like before for construction of another embankment. The residents of the Kharbaari Dobhane have no other place to migrate, nor they have money to buy land in other safe place. Due to this Disaster Risk Management Committee, they have felt some amount of relief. Bucket campaigns and management of other materials to cope with disaster risk reduction has not only helped reduce risk, but also have strengthened the relationship between the villagers. They now refuse to leave their settlement because they are assured of the disaster risk committee. To sway away wild animals eating their crops, they have changed the crop with citrus cash crops. They are also united to develop their areas as pocket areas for various cash crops.