

Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights

Impact Documentation and Lessons Learned from the three year Project Cycle
(March 2013 – February 2016)



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Supported by:



ABBREVIATIONS

CA: Constituent Assembly
CAC: Citizen Awareness Center
CBO: Community Based Organization
CDO: Chief District Officer
CPN (UML): Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist and Leninist)
CEDAW: Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Woman
CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child
DD: District Dialogue
DDC: District Development Committee
DEO: District Education Officer
DPH: District Public Hearing
FNCCI: Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
HRT: Human Rights Training
IPFC: Integrated Plan Formulation Committee
LGBTI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
LGCDP: Local Governance and Community Development Project
LSGA: Local Self Governance Act, 2055
MCPM: Minimum Conditions and Performance Measurement
MDC: Mock District Council
MoFALD: Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoYS: Ministry of Youth and Sports
MP: Member of Parliament
MVC: Mock Village Council
NGO: Non-government Organization
NYLP: National Youth Legislative Parliament
ODF: Open Defecation Free
RTI: Right to Information
SHP: Sub-Health Post
ToT: Training of Trainers
UCPN (M): Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
VDC: Village Development Committee
WCF: Ward Citizen Forum

Terminology:

Citizen Charter: Information board that gives procedures and requirements for services provided
by government agencies
Directives: Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069
HimRights: Himalayan Human Rights Monitors
Ilaka: Cluster/area of 4 to 10 VDCs
Janajati: Indigenous community
Namuna VDC: Mock VDC
Tole/Basti: Borough
Sida: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Table of Contents

Abbreviations	2
Introduction	4
Project	5
Project Objectives	5
Stakeholders	6
Project Cycle	6
Activities and Impacts at a glance	8
Activities and Objectives at a glance	9
Participants	10
Results and Achievements	11
Sustainability	29
Lessons Learned	30

ENHANCING THE EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALISED YOUTH FOR INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY AND THE GREATER REALISATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

INTRODUCTION

HIMRIGHTS has formulated a series of workshops, Mock Village, District Council and Parliamentary sessions that focus upon the workings of national, district and local levels of governance. Youths from marginalised groups are targeted in order to help facilitate their future participation in decision-making bodies at local, district, and national level. The core of the programs for marginalised youth are:

- Training on Human Rights, Democracy, Good Governance and Nepal's Legal System
- Mock Village Councils
- Village Public Hearings
- Village Dialogues
- Mock District Councils
- District Public Hearings
- District Dialogues
- National Youth Legislative Parliaments
- National Dialogues

Workshops on human rights, democracy, the legal system, the structure and responsibilities of government at the national, district and local level, participatory planning processes, and good governance through accountability and transparency measures form the knowledge base at the heart of the program.

The more practical and experiential base at the heart of the program comprises public hearings and dialogues conducted at the national, district and local level. Public Hearings and Dialogues are aimed at creating a safe space for marginalised youth and women to voice their grievances and raise issues, and importantly to gain experience in the workings of bureaucratic structures and processes.

An important aim is not only to educate and help facilitate good governance that rests upon transparency and accountability, but also to begin building social capital through lasting partnerships between marginalised youth and government agencies so that they may work in a collaborative fashion for inclusive and democratic, governance and development.

PROJECT

HimRights recently conducted 'Enhancing the Empowerment of Marginalised Youth for Inclusive Democracy and a Greater Realization of Human Rights in the districts of **Banke, Makwanpur, and Bhojpur** between March 2013 and February 2016 working with marginalised youths from 90 VDCs and 5 Municipalities of three project districts and 27 other districts in national programs.

MISSION

The project aims to increase awareness of policy, programs and decision-making processes at the local, district and national levels and increase marginalised youth's meaningful participation and social capital in the political process.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

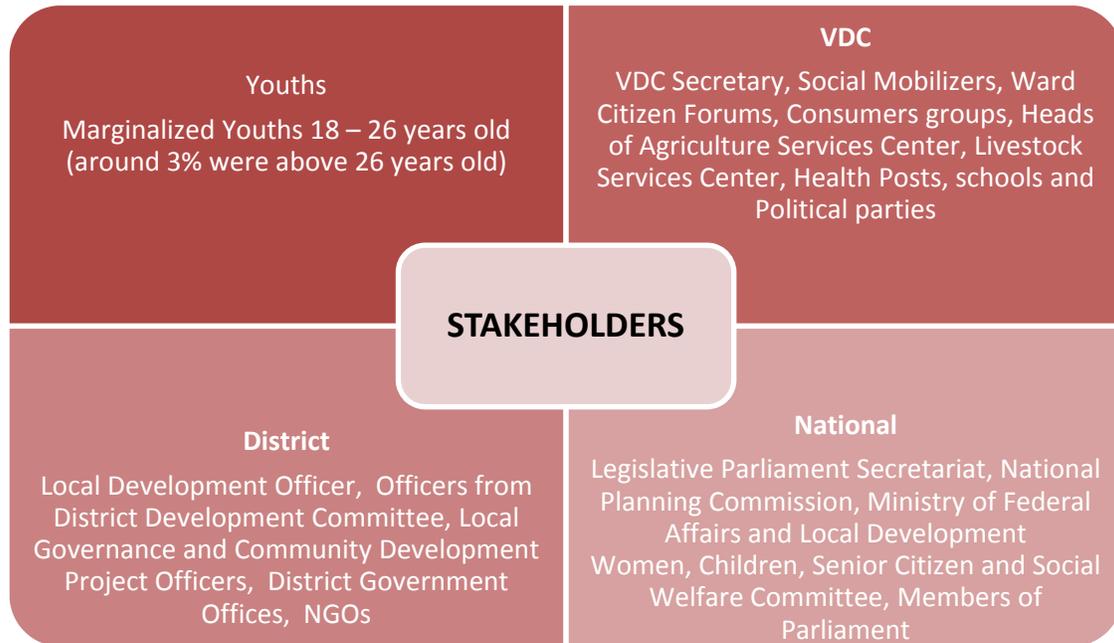
***Objective 1:** Enhance the understanding of marginalised youth, women and other disadvantaged groups on Human Rights, Nepal's Legal System, Inclusive Democracy and Good Governance that promotes accountability and transparency in local, district and national government authorities. The aim of objective 1 is to encourage the internalization of human rights, democratic norms, inclusive values, civic responsibility and the principles of good governance.*

***Objective 2:** To build the confidence and leadership skills of marginalised youth so that they may transcend their comfort zone in public spaces.*

***Objective 3:** Increase meaningful participation and the visibility of marginalised youths, women and other youth in the political process at the local level.*

***Objective 4:** Create linkages and build social capital between marginalised youths, women and local government agencies and other interested stakeholders towards developing sustainable partnerships for good governance that rest upon transparency and accountability.*

STAKEHOLDERS



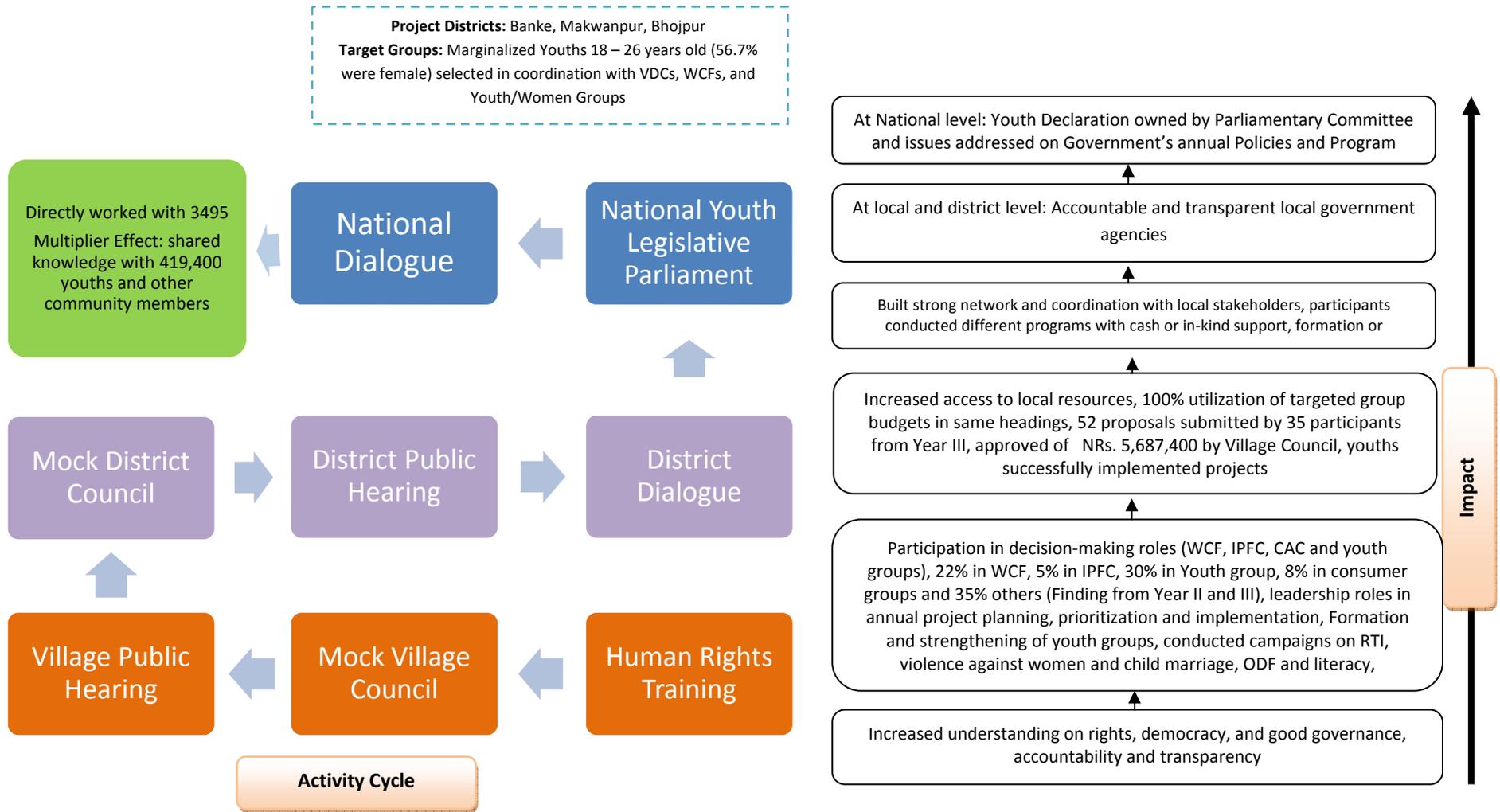
PROJECT CYCLE

Within the project cycle, participants gain a greater understanding of their human rights, build their confidence and create a positive self image, come to understand the participatory planning process at VDC and district levels, develop the ability to demand their rights and raise issues during public hearings and dialogues, insist on commitments from duty bearers and follow up to see what has been implemented. In addition, they gain the confidence to demand transparency and accountability in regards to programs (planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring) and how budgets are being used. The most effective and visible change is happening at Village Development Committee (VDC) level especially when public hearings are conducted. At District level things are changing, but slowly. At National Youth Legislative Parliaments and National Dialogues, youths had exposure to theoretical and practical aspects of formulation of national policies and laws and parliamentary procedures of the Parliament. The National Dialogue provided youths opportunity to put forth their issues with stakeholders from National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Health, and Members of Parliament. It not only created linkages between youths and national stakeholders but also gave stakeholders opportunity to listen to youth issues and issues and impacts of Nepal Earthquake particularly in the third year. The following chart shows annual activity cycle and objectives fulfilled by each of the activities:

The following chart shows annual project activities from VDC to national level. The same cycle was repeated in for three years in different VDCs. The chart also gives objectives fulfilled by each of the activities.

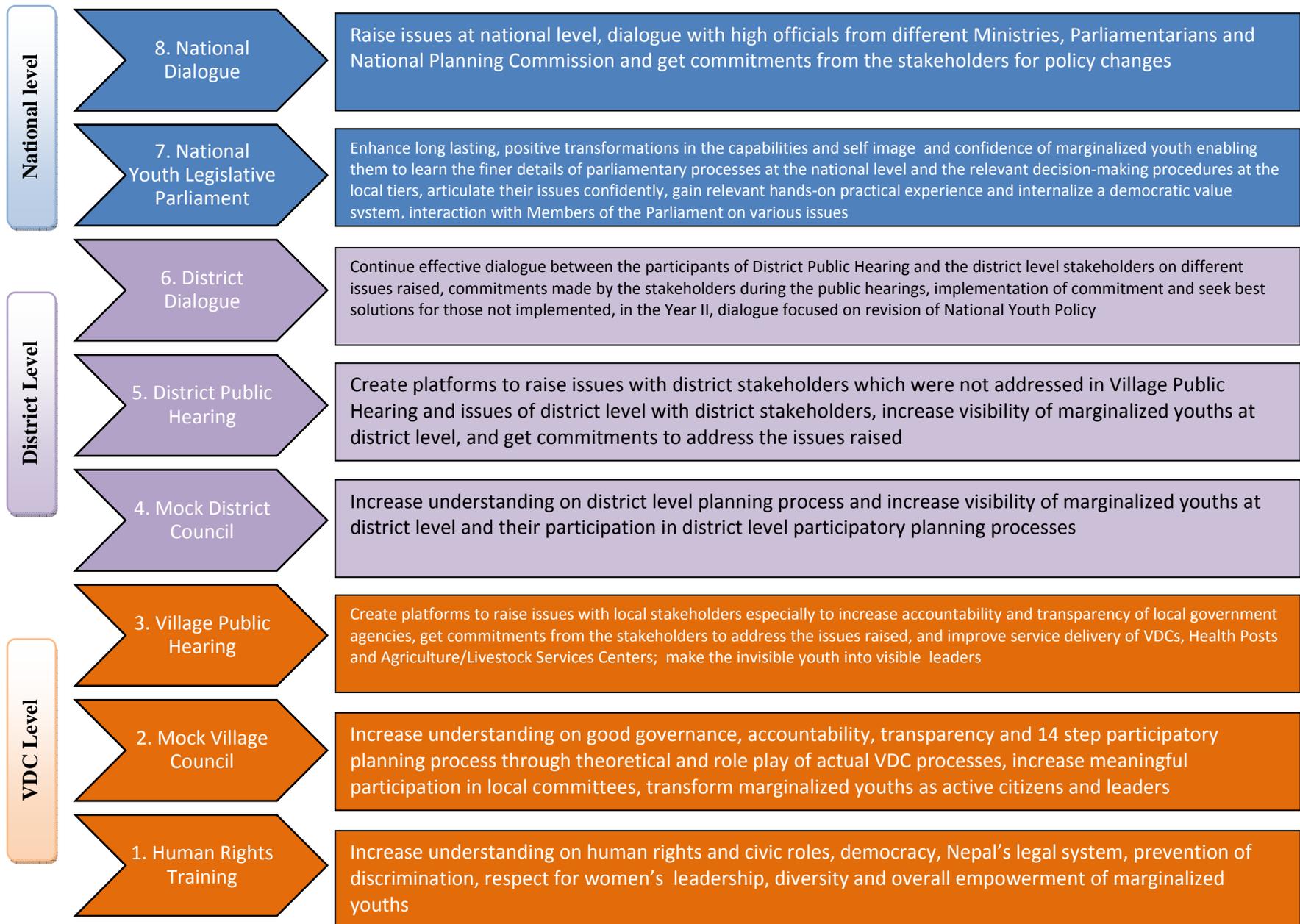


ENHANCING THE EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALISED YOUTH FOR INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY AND THE GREATER REALISATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (March 2013 – February 2016)
Activities and Impacts at a glance



The figure shows project cycle and how the project brought major transformation amongst marginalized youths, their community, local development processes and at national level.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE



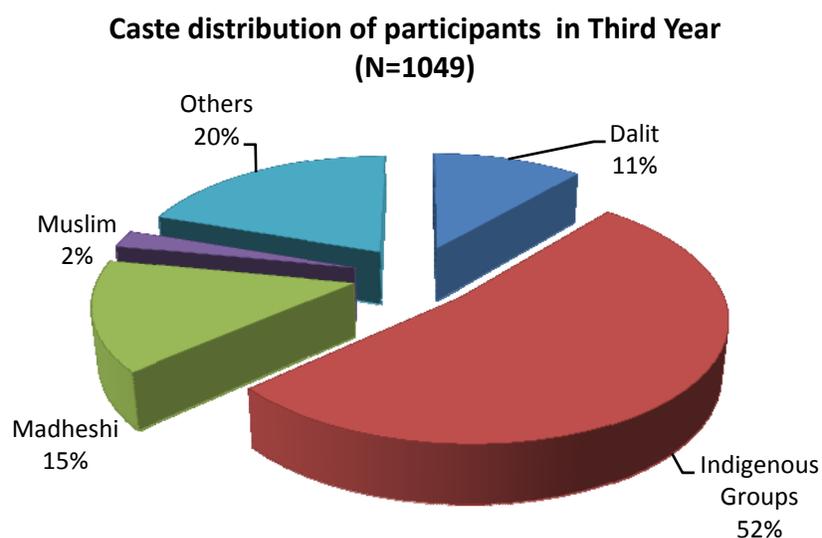
PARTICIPANTS

The primary target group of the project is youths from marginalised groups with women making up at least 51% of participants. Participants were selected in extensive consultation with VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forums, local youth groups, participants of previous programs and local political leaders. Moreover, the prospective participants were met and/or telephoned and informed about objectives of the program and their roles in their community after the program.

During the three year project period, we worked in 90 VDCs and 5 municipalities of Banke, Makwanpur and Bhojpur and 27 other districts – the number of marginalised youths we have reached to as direct beneficiaries are 3,495 with all castes and ethnic groups involved.

The third year database chart shows 52% of the participants were from indigenous groups, 11% were from Dalit, 15%

from Madheshi, and 2% from the Muslim community. Although 20% of the participants were from higher caste Brahmin and Chhetri groups, only those were who did not have a voice and access to the political process were included. In addition, we included participants from extremely disadvantaged groups, such as Chepang from Makwanpur, Thami and Jogi from Bhojpur and marginalised Terai Dalits. Similarly, disabled and LGBTI were included in different programs. The following chart and table displays participant cultural and gender demographics:



Gender distribution of participants

Programs	Year	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Makwanpur	First	89	35.5	162	64.5	251
	Second	194	40.4	286	59.6	480
	Third	124	40.1	185	59.9	309
Banke	First	118	43.7	152	56.3	270
	Second	264	48.3	283	51.7	547
	Third	191	53.7	165	46.3	356
Bhojpur	First	142	36.0	252	64.0	394

	Second	149	43.2	196	56.8	345
	Third	131	44.4	164	55.6	295
National Programs	First	37	46.8	42	53.2	79
	Second	35	43.8	45	56.3	80
	Third	40	44.9	49	55.1	89
Total		1514	43.3	1981	56.7	3495

RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The three year project has successfully enabled meaningful participation by marginalised youth from 90 VDCs and 5 municipalities of three project districts. The youths have been actively engaged in local planning processes and decision-making. Once they were invisible and voiceless; now they are recognized and respected as stakeholders in local development by government agencies and political representatives. They have made project proposals and seen them implemented successfully. Moreover, their active participation in the local governance process has had a significant multiplier effect in their respective communities. Similarly, at national level, participants from 30 districts including project districts were able to raise burning issues surrounding youths, women, children, participatory planning processes with national stakeholders and this has had a direct impact on Youth Policies (2015) and in National Policies and Programs (2016) and Budget (2016) of the Government.

The figures below provide brief information on the impacts and achievements of this project in relation to the stated objectives.

Objective 1: *Enhance the understanding of marginalised youth, women and other disadvantaged groups on Human Rights, Nepal's Legal System, Inclusive Democracy and Good Governance that promotes accountability and transparency in local, district and national government authorities. The aim of objective 1 is to encourage the internalization of human rights, democratic norms, inclusive values, civic responsibility and the principles of good governance.*

Increased understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youths have gained a theoretical and practical understanding of human rights, the roles and responsibilities of active citizens, democracy and democratic behavior, good governance through accountability and transparency, participatory planning processes at VDC and district level. Youths have an increased understanding of the National Parliament and its procedures and the workings of politics at national level. Youths now realize the importance of national politics and how important it is for them to be involved towards the development of Nepal into a fully fledged inclusive democracy with broad based economic development.
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Objective 2: To build the confidence and leadership skills of marginalised youth so that they may transcend their comfort zone in public spaces.

The evidence for the fulfillment of Objective 2 is located in the results of Objective 3 and 4 below.

Objective 3: Increase meaningful participation and the visibility of marginalised youths, women and other youth in the political process at the local level.

<p>Youths in Participatory Planning Processes and Decision-making Roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are now actively engaged in Ward Citizen Forums (WCF), Integrated Plan Formulation Committees (IPFC), Citizen Awareness Centers (CAC), Youth Groups, Women's Groups, Consumer Groups and political parties • WCF, IPFC and CAC are important institutions in the Annual Planning Process at VDC level. • Sample Survey's conducted estimate that the participants have shared their knowledge and experiences with nearly 420,000 others across their respective communities over the three years. • Youth have facilitated ward level meetings and many have submitted proposals and had them prioritized in Village Councils. • Youth have instigated both the formation and structural transformation of Ward Citizen Forums towards following due process and insisting upon transparency and accountability. • Youth have monitored the implementation and progress of development projects in their VDCs helping ensure transparency and accountability.
<p>Youths against Gender Based Violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth have substantially increased the number of annual proposals on women rights and empowerment, gender equality, children's rights, and have been actively involved in promoting the human rights and empowerment of all marginalized and disadvantaged groups. • Youth from Banke are conducting a campaign against child marriage in coordination with the Women and Children's Office and District Police Office. The VDC and ward offices have allocated NRs. 163,000 (USD 1,630) for campaigns against child marriage and training sessions on gender equality. Youth from Bhojpur are in the process of organizing campaigns against gender based violence. • Youth have played a crucial role in rescuing women and children from forced unpaid labour in a brick factory in coordination with the Women and Children's Office in Banke. • Youth have been actively involved in community campaigns against unequal wages, misogyny and polygamy. These issues are now

	<p>openly discussed in WCFs and CACs, and serious cases are reported to the Police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths in the community of Makwanpur have helped mediate between those accused of witchcraft and the accusers in the community, and successfully resolved allegations of witchcraft and restored harmonious relations between the accused and the accusers.
<p>Youths Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Local Government Agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths have conducted Right to Information Campaigns and submitted RTI applications to the heads of Local Health Posts, Agriculture Services Centers and Local Schools. • Youths have raised issues surrounding annual budget allocations for women, children and marginalized groups and their utilization. • Youths have raised their voice against corruption and other irregularities in local government authorities. • Committees were formed after Village Public Hearings to monitor the implementation of commitments made during the hearings. The Committee members worked closely with stakeholders to make sure that they addressed their commitments and also conducted monitoring visits to Local Health Posts and Agriculture Services Centers towards helping ensure smooth service delivery. • The annual budgets allocated for women, children, and targeted groups are spent on respective headings in all project VDCs.
<p>Youths as Social Campaigners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths engaged in the formation and strengthening of Youth Groups, Social Clubs and Child Clubs. • Youths are now involved in many social campaigns and working in close coordination with VDCs and different NGOs and CBOs • RTI campaigns (Filed RTI applications in Health Posts and Schools) • Open Defecation Free VDC Campaigns (Door-to-door awareness campaigns, rallies) • Plastic Free VDC Campaigns (Door-to-door awareness campaigns, rallies) • Alcohol Free VDC Campaigns to end Violence against Women (Door-to-door awareness campaigns, making posters and wall murals with messages. • Campaign to achieve 100% literacy (Door-to-door awareness campaigns, informal classes, school admission campaigns)
<p>Objective 4: <i>Create linkages and build social capital between marginalised youths, women and local government agencies and other interested stakeholders towards developing sustainable partnerships for good governance that rest upon transparency and accountability.</i></p>	
<p>Increased Coordination and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths are recognized as development partners by VDCs, local political parties and CBOs, their roles in the local development

<p>linkages with Stakeholders</p>	<p>process were highly appreciated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Public Hearings (Village and District) youths directly raised issues with VDC Secretaries, Heads of Health Posts, Agriculture/Livestock Services Center, political parties (VDC), Local Development Officer, Heads of District Public Health Office, District Agriculture Development Office, District Education Office, Women and Children Office and political parties (District) and the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Health, Members of Parliament (National). • Youths have enhanced the social capital of marginalized groups in the political process. • Youths worked in collaboration with local government agencies. • Village Dialogues were conducted as a follow up activity of Village Public Hearings • VDCs have supported in cash or in kind to conduct the Dialogues. • The result of increased collaboration is a significant increase in the number of proposals and a significant increase in funding for youth proposals. • The 52 successful proposals by 35 participants garnered \$US 56,874.
<p>National Youth Legislative Parliament and National Dialogue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NYLP, National Dialogue and the closing sessions with Members of Parliament were a platform where youths raised issues on youth participation in the participatory planning process, the accountability and transparency of local government agencies, National Youth Policy, and Earthquake related matters to national stakeholders. It was opportunity for government officials and parliamentarians to listen to the burning issues of youths from 27 districts. • The Declaration Paper from the NYLP was submitted to the ‘Women, Children, Senior Citizens and Social Welfare Committee’ of the Legislative Parliament. The Chairperson of the Committee committed to address some of the issues raised in the Paper. (Year III) • The Hon. Ranju Jha, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee, said that this program should be implemented in the 8 problematic districts in the Terai to positively transform the radicalized Madhesi youth. This Committee owned the Declaration and will raise issues in relevant Parliamentary processes. • Similarly, the Hon. Minakshi Jha stated that the program was very effective in transforming youths into leaders. She added that all youths should be encouraged to participate in politics and local development and that the programs should be organized in all

	<p>districts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and National Dialogues conducted in Year Two were focused upon revising the National Youth Policy of 2010, and some of the issues raised were integrated into the revised policy. • Self employment loans to be issued to youths with their academic certificates as security integrated in National Policies and Program 2016 and Budget 2016 • National stakeholders were very impressed by the relevant and succinct questions coming from the participants and the respectful manner in which they raised their questions. • Some of the participants from the national programs were elected to positions within the political parties and their student and youth wings.
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HimRights believe that building the capacity of youths to participate in the political process at the national, district and local level will enhance human rights and democracy in Nepal. From the youth of today will come tomorrow’s leaders and it bodes ill for the future of Nepal to exclude this up and coming generation from the political process. Positive guidance and real experience in understanding processes relating to the formation and implementation of policies at various levels of government, along with a sound knowledge of the current legal system are essential. As are an understanding of the importance of human rights, the new constitution and federalism in Nepal. The adoption of a new constitution means that Nepal is moving towards federalism. The issue is no longer whether Nepal should be a federal state, but what sort of federal state it will become. In a country where gender, caste, ethnic and economic inequities within and between regions are salient social and political divides, it is up to Nepal to develop a model of federalism that is based on human rights, social inclusion and democratic principles for broad based economic development and enduring political stability. It is hoped that through our efforts the youth of today be well positioned to lead this country further along the path of sustainable peace and inclusive democracy.

Increased understanding

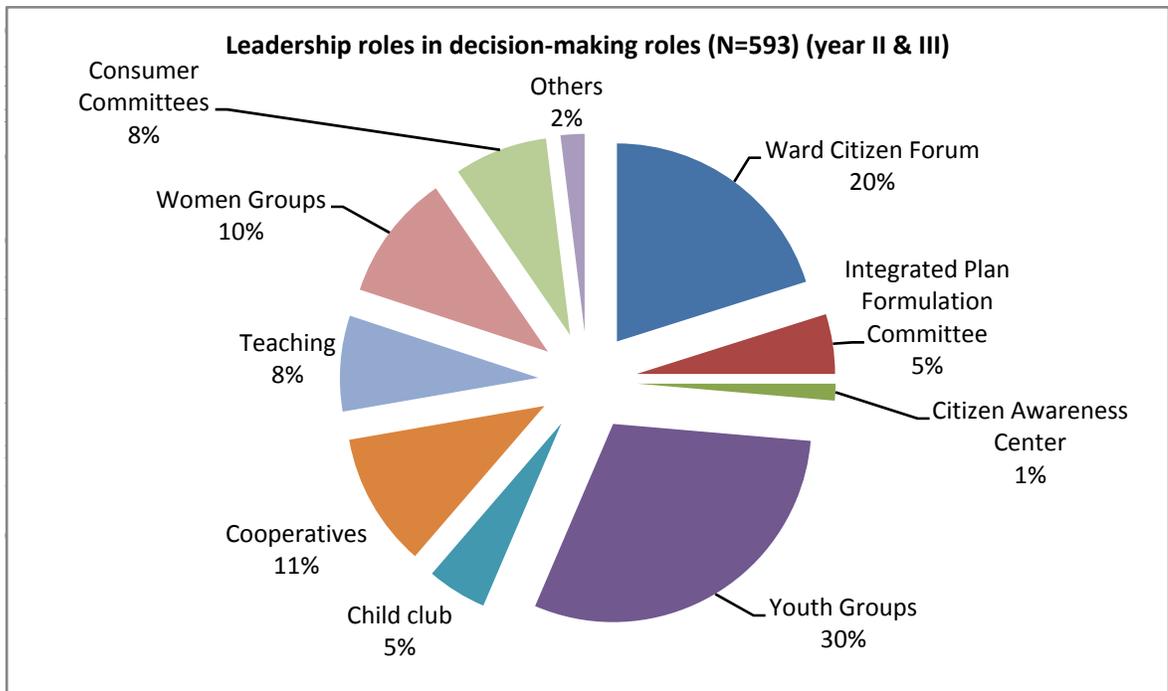
- Youths have gained better understanding on human rights, roles and responsibilities of active citizens, Nepal’s legal system, democracy and democratic behavior, good governance, accountability and transparency and participatory planning process at VDC, district and national level through series of activities of Human Rights Trainings and Mock Village/District Councils and National Youth Legislative Parliaments. This has helped them build self-confidence, leadership skills and internalize democratic norms, values and civic duties, accountability and transparency. There is significant increase in level of interest and participation of participants in local governance process.

- Youths have been sharing their knowledge with other youths and adults in their communities in different forums. They have been sharing in Ward Citizen Forums, youth clubs, child clubs, Child Protection Committees, surveillance groups, District Youth Club Networks, Women’s groups, cooperatives, Citizen Awareness Centers, Village Mediation Groups, schools and colleges. The survey conducted with 593 participants from second and third year found that each of the participants have shared their learning with 120 other youths and adults on average. With this average, the participants have shared with 419,400 youths and adults in three years. We distributed training manuals and DVDs of most of the activities to reach to more and more people.

Gagan BK (Banke) was working as an advisor in a child club; the chairperson of Youth Awareness Centre and the member in local Sukh Shanti Child Club. Unlike other Dalit youth, he used to attend VDC level meetings on issues regarding to youth and children but due to lack of knowledge he could not present his ideas and issues in such meetings. After participating in Mock Village Council, he has been sharing his learning on participatory planning process in the local level in Ward Citizen Forums and Citizen Awareness Center. He actively participated in ward level meetings and facilitated community to identify their issues/problems; write proposal on identified issues; and submit at Ward Citizen Forums. There was significant increase in proposals on women, children and other targeted groups (Dalit, disabled, minority groups, and elders). (Year II)

Youths in Decision-making Roles

- Ward Citizen Forums are the government unit established in absence of elected local r



to carry out local development activities through social mobilization and participatory annual planning process. All local development projects are supposed to go through WCFs before submitting to Integrated Plan Formulation Committee and Village Council for final prioritization and approval. Hence, the Forum plays crucial role in managing local development activities and regulation annual planning process. Similarly, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee and Citizen Awareness Center are also significant parts of local development process. For many years, these institutions were run by local political heads or community elders. Though there is provision of integrating youths in these committees, it could not turn to reality. We systematically interviewed 593 participants from Year II (370) and Year III (223) on how they were able to reach to different positions in decision-making level and the findings were very outstanding. After participation in different programs, many of the marginalized youths became members/coordinators of Ward Citizen Forums (20%), Integrated Plan Formulation Committee (5%), and Citizen Awareness Centers (1%) and interestingly they are playing very active and decisive roles in these institutions.

Similarly, other youths are involved in Youth Groups (30%), Child Clubs (5%), Cooperatives (11%), Teaching (8%), Women Groups (10%), Consumer Committees (8%) and Others (2%). Similarly, Om Prakash Chauhan (Banke) was elected as Ward Secretary of Nepali Congress; Namrata Maharjan (Kathmandu) was elected as Central Committee member of All Nepal National Free Students Union and Amrit Devkota (Kaski) was selected as Secretary of Foreign Affairs Department of Youth Federation Nepal, Central Committee.

Youths in Participatory Planning Process

- Marginalized youths participated in submission, prioritization and implementation of development projects in annual planning process which resulted to significant increase in number of proposals on women, children, and other targeted groups in most of the program VDCs. Youths followed all steps of annual planning process and lobbied at VDCs to follow the actual process. With these active roles in the community, they have been recognized by VDC, local political parties and adults who barely had trust on them and had strong belief that the young minds cannot contribute in community activities.
- Formation and reformation of Ward Citizen Forums: Youths were involved in formation and reformation of Ward Citizen Forums in their VDCs. Many of the youths started to inquire about WCFs in their VDCs after participating in the programs. Most of the WCFs were inactive and in many places WCFs were not inclusive. Youths from Tungechha VDC, Bhojpur has reformed four of its inactive WCFs in Ward No. 1, 2, 3 and 9. Those WCFs were not functioning well and did not hold regular meetings in the communities. Hence, they reformed WCFs and included active youths in the committee. Many

participants from Tungehha and other VDCs got selected as member or coordinator of WCF. Similarly, youths from Manthali, Makwanpur also reformed inactive WCFs.

- Usha Chaudhary, Mina Thapa and Til Kumari Basnet from Raniyapur VDC, Banke successfully facilitated the Village Council (2015) meeting which was almost postponed due to serious disputes among political parties. They talked with everyone and convinced them to resume the meeting peacefully. VDC acknowledged their effort to conduct the Council successfully.
- Youths were actively engaged in proposal writing, submission and prioritization, along with monitoring the implementation and progress of development projects: Many of the participants from all three districts have followed the participatory planning process thoroughly and submitted proposals got prioritized and allocated budgets for their proposals. Many of the participants submitted proposals to on women, children, youth and targeted group budgets. Following is the list of participants and the names of projects gone through all procedures of annual planning process and their proposals got prioritized in Village Council. 35 participants were able to get total of NRs. 5,687,400 (USD 56,874) from different VDCs from Makwanpur and Bhojpur. (We are still collecting data from Banke.)

SN	Name of the participants	VDC	Projects	Amount Rs.	Amount US\$
1	Sanu Bahadur Titung	Gadhi-9, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building construction of Bihani Bal Bikash Kendra • Citizen Awareness Center building • New Khohoriya drinking water planning- lift system • Water Tank construction 	40,000 50,000 200,000 30,000	400 500 2,000 300
2	Bina Yonjan	Gadhi-7, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samari Khola Brihabhumi Churi Danda large Irrigation Project 	1,000,000	10,000
3	Sabitri BK	Gadhi-3, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goat rearing 	7,000	70
4	L.R Syangtan	Gadhi-3, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goat rearing • Irrigation Project 	6,000 25,000	60 250

5	Arjun Sapkota	Gadhi-6, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New water Tank 	200,000	2,000
6	Gauri Subedi	Gadhi-8, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football ground for child Health Camp 	30,000	300
7	Shyam Bd. Moktan	Budhichaur-4, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Construction 	25,000	250
8	Manju Karki	Manahari-1, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge, Path road Construction: Drinking water tap 	150,000	1,500
9	Umesh Puri	Manahari-7, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of branch road/Kriya Bhawan/Drinking Water 	50,000	500
10	Subarna Neupane	Sukaura-2, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge Construction 	100,000	1,000
11	Mina Thakuri	Sarikhet-3, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road (Simpani-Deukot) Drinking water tap 	450,000	4,500
12	Januka Timalsina	Manthali-2, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Hydropower 	100,000	1,000
13	Sarina Lopchan	Manthali-3, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School bench Co-operative building construction 	5,000 250,000	50 2,500
14	Ranjana Moktan	Manthali-5, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortcut road construction (Thingan-Manthali) 	200,000	2,000
15	Laxmi Thing	Sisneri-1, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Construction (Sisneri to Kulekhani) 	100,000	1,000
16	Channu Maya Bhlon	Sisneri-8, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soap training/Temple Construction 	200,000	2,000
17	Shova Singh Thakuri	Markhu-5, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road construction 	125,000	1,250
18	Nisha Lama	Markhu-8, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports material for children 	260,000	2,600
19	Mithhu balami	Markhu-6, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irrigation (not conform), Pipe 	40,000	400

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> repair of Drinking water • Skill Oriented Training for Women 	271,000	2,710
20	Shanti Syangtan	Markhu, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water 	50,000	500
21	Riya Syangtan	Phakhel-5, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Construction • Training of Soap & Cushion 	12,000 192,000	120 1,920
22	Sunil Lama	Phakhel 6, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road construction 	125,000	1,250
23	Nani Maya Syangtan	Kulekhani-6, Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road repair 	70,000	700
24	Sudhir Rai	Dhodlekhani, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child friendly furniture • Sound system for children • Orientation on child nutrition • Capacity building training for children • Orientation for guardians on creating child friendly environment 	90,000 35,000 45,000 45,000 40,400	900 350 450 450 404
25	Rabin Thapa	Ranibas, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Friendly VDC Campaign • Youth Empowerment activities 	70,000 30,000	700 300
26	Pankaj Rai	Nepaledada, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal writing training for youths 	40,000	400
27	Mana Bhujhel	Chhinamakhu, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewerage construction and Bridge construction (Proposal submitted) • Ward level awareness raising program on child 	20,000	200

			rights		
28	Manita Khimdung	Chhinamakhu, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar set purchase for child club 	10,000	100
29	Karina Magar, Sandya Rai	Bhulke, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth empowerment project 	20,000	200
30	Dhyan Bahadur Rai	Basikhora, Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports competition 	60,000	600
31	Baburam Tamang	Manebahanjyang Bhojpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz Contest with Child Clubs Orientation on Child Nutrition 	35,000 50,000	350 500
32	Arjun B.K., Dilip Harijan, Roshani Mahatara	Samsergunj, Banke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Computer Training 	40,000	410
33	Rohit Kumar Verma, Sangita Kaushal	Bankatti, Banke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth awareness Program 	20,000	200
34	Om Prakash Chauhan, Rukmini Chauhan	Udaypur, Nepalgunj-18, Banke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra-curricular activities for youth 	75,000	750
35	Rukmini Chauhan	Udaypur, Nepalgunj-18, Banke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Construction 	450,000	4500

NB: Data from third year only. (US\$1= NRs. 100)

Similarly, participants successfully implemented several projects in their communities with the budget from received from VDC. Some of the projects were: training on human rights; training on child rights; extra-curricular activities with child clubs; irrigation and drinking water, road improvement; and awareness raising rallies.

Youths Promoting Good Governance, Accountability and Transparency in local government Agencies

- Right to Information Act, 2007 was promulgated with aim to make responsible and accountable to the citizen; to make the access of citizens simple and easy to the information of public importance held in public bodies; to protect sensitive information

that could make adverse impact on the interest of the nation and citizen, and for the necessity to have legal provisions to protect the right of the citizen to be well-informed and to bring it into practice. This is an effective tool to make public institutions more accountable if implemented practically. Youths from Banke and Makwanpur filed RTI applications in Health Posts, Schools and VDCs and the result was outstanding.

During Village Dialogue organized on December 3, 2014 in Indrapur, Banke, youths raised issue of irregularity on scholarship distribution in Nepal Rastriya Lower Secondary School. It was found that the school had not provided scholarships to its students for several years. After the dialogue, Shovaram Kurmi, Arif Salmani, Ramanand Tamauli and Mira Das filed an RTI application in the school. After the application, the school management admitted that they have not distributed scholarships for more than four years and they made commitment to distribute in two months. After a month of application, the school distributed scholarships to students from marginalized communities in February 2015. According to Tirtharam Varma, Principal, the school distributed NRs. 76,725 (USD 767.25) from fiscal year 2014/15, NRs. 52,000 (USD 520) from fiscal year 2013/14 and NRs. 55, 000 (USD 550) from fiscal year 2012/13.

45 participants from 7 VDCs of Banke filed RTI application in their Health Posts for justifiable reasons on closure of their health services before 2 pm. The application was submitted on the same day and same time as mass campaign. They forwarded copy of the applications to District Public Health Office too. The campaign was widely covered in local newspapers. After few days, the Health Posts justified stating that they do administrative works after 2 pm rather than medical. They committed to provide emergency health services after 2 pm and improvise health facilities.

Umesh Puri, Manju Karki, Sushila Nepali and Prem Bahadur Praja from Manahari filed RTI application in VDC office for transparent information on use of VDC annual budget and internal revenue raised from natural resources. Manahari is one of the richest VDCs in the district in term of internal revenue collection. Initially VDC Office denied to provide information. Then they submitted the same application at District Development Committee; the officials from DDC asked Manahari VDC to provide the information sought by the youths. Later, VDC provided them the information.

- Raised local issues relating to annual budgets allocated to women, children and targeted groups and their appropriate utilization and transparency in public institutions: Village and District Public Hearings and Dialogues were the best platforms to raise issues/problems with relevant stakeholders and seek possible solutions. During the

Hearings, youths raised issues relating accountability and transparency of local government agencies including utilization of annual budgets, implementation of and/or irregularities in development projects, service delivery of local government agencies, and overall local development process. Participants are working further to promote accountability and transparency even after these programs.

During Village Dialogue in Raniyapur VDC, Banke, youth had raised several issues on drinking water and sanitation problem, lack of youth participation in VDC processes, declaration of ODF village, construction of public toilets, and effectiveness of services being provided by the VDC. The VDC Secretary and political leaders committed to address those issues as soon as possible. A month after the Dialogue, the VDC installed several drinking water pumps, and built public toilet in several places in the VDC.

Aslam Nau, a Muslim youth from Titihiriya VDC, Banke, has been teaching in Maderasa (Muslim school) as a volunteer for three years, and strives for quality education for Muslim children. He participated in the Mock Village Council organized by HimRights in May, 2013.

He had not been much aware of functions of public institutions and good governance, nor was he concerned about the roles, responsibilities and rights of the School Management Committee (SMC). At the Mock Village Council he learned about government financial assistance to Maderasa for students, teachers, educational materials and construction works.

After the program, he went back to the school and collected all information about government assistance. He found out that no election has been held for more than five years; a SMC Chairperson has ruled for many years. Moreover, the financial transactions were not transparent. The School has received funds for teachers and building construction from the District Education Office, but teachers were paid and the building had not been constructed. He organized a meeting with local stakeholders to discuss several issues regarding Madarsa. With their collected effort, the SMC was restructured, and there is now a new Chairperson. The financial process is transparent and hope the government assistance will be used for targeted purposes. Aslam says, "I was inspired to work on reformation of Madarsa. Some people were angry. I got threats from them."

Presently this Madarsa is one of the best in Banke with 140 children in English medium.

HimRights conducted Village Public Hearings in one VDC per cluster and significant changes were seen in VDCs after the Hearings. Firstly, it created strong connection between youths and local government stakeholders and political parties. Secondly, it significantly helped government agencies to be accountable and transparent. Several VDCs have installed Citizen Charters in their premises and established complaint boxes after Hearings.

Manita Khimdung and Mana Devi Bhujel of Chhinamakhu, Bhojpur formed 'Chhinamakhu Youth Network' after participating in the programs. The Network strongly raised voice against the irregularities that VDC Assistant has been making with VDC resources. He was found to be guilty of producing fake documents of senior citizens and getting their social security allowances. He has been doing this for many years. Similarly, he did not show actual income and expenditures of the Office. With youth's strong confrontation, he was dismissed from the office. It was found that he illegally accumulated the amount of NRs. 700,000 (USD 7,000). Currently, he paid back NRs. 100,000 (USD 1,000) so far to the VDC office. The campaign for return of usurped amount was effectively raised by Manita Khimdung and another participant Mana Devi Bhujel.

Youths to prevent Gender Based Violence

Banke in mid-western development region has been facing a rise in incident of Gender Based Violence. In 2014, 7 women were reportedly burnt in Banke within 7 months, whereas rape, domestic violence, child marriage, eve-teasing are rising every day. It has mixed society of Madhesi, Muslim, Janajati, Dalit and Pahadi Brahmin-Chhetri communities. The society doesn't perceive domestic violence as incidents of crime or child marriages as violation of child rights. Now marginalized youth from different communities have decided to change the scenario with different activities and campaigns.

Campaign against Child Marriage

Rukmini Chauhan, Udaypur, Banke is actively involved in a campaign against child marriage in which she informed the Women Development Office and District Police Office regarding 4 incidents of child marriage and was able to stop them. The VDC allocated NRs. 83,000 (USD 830) for training and campaign against child marriage and training on Women Rights for adolescent girls to support her campaign. Meanwhile **Asha Gurung**, Secretary, District Women Rights Forum has been leading a campaign to make Chisapani as a Child Marriage Free VDC. She has also been facilitating victims of domestic violence and polygamy to access the justice. She has also been working on strengthening Ward Citizen Forums, Women Groups, Citizen Awareness Forums and police to address cases of gender based violence.

Actions against Eve-teasing

Youth have also taken actions against eve-teasing and have hand-overed the perpetrators to the police. Two participants from Radhapur VDC from Banke, Phattekumari Jaisi, Member of District Women Rights Forum and Radha Thapa, Chairperson of VDC Women Rights Forum, reported 5 men for eve-teasing. Their stand against verbal abuse is an example for other women to come forward against any kinds of violence against women.

Girl Empowerment:

The local government bodies are impressed by youth capabilities to fight for women and girl empowerment in the VDC level. As the participants learnt about VDC budget in the MVC trainings; they were able to develop proposals to empower women. **Uma Thapa Magar** from Radhapur VDC was able to get NRs. 40,000 (USD 400) for training on gender equality for youth. Additionally, **Pushpa Sunar** from Bageshwori VDC also received NRs. 40,000 (USD 400) to run the campaign against child marriage and training on Gender equality for adolescent girls.

Rescuing Children and Right to Equal Labor payment:

Women and children have been exploited of their labor and youth from Banke have also come forward to fight against it. **Om Prakash Chauhan** from Udaypur VDC rescued 12 children from brick factory in coordination with women development office and district police office and was able to get their salary of 7 months. **Radha Thapa**, Chairperson, VDC Women Rights Forum, Radhapur has also been conducting discussion on equal salary for men and women in the same works.

Similarly, Youths have been dedicatedly involved in different social campaigns. Sarina Tamang, Secretary of Kriyashil Women's Group of Sarikhet VDC has been working on women empowerment. She is actively working against social malpractices. One of the women in her VDC was accused of being 'witch' and started to discriminate and exclude her from the society. Sarina, as a women leader, had meeting with the accusers and tried to resolve the case. Being proponent of that woman did not make the accusers happy. They started to proclaim her as witch instead. She was very annoyed with them and asked them to produce evidence if she and that woman is a witch. Later, the accusers dropped their accusation and apologized with both of them. Now, the woman is living in her place happily without any discrimination.

Youths as Social Campaigners

Youths have formed youth groups or strengthened or merged and reformed existing youth groups after participating in different programs. This has brought them together to work collectively for social causes. They are working in close coordination with local stakeholders in different social campaigns. They worked on Open Defecation Free Zone campaigns, plastic free zone campaigns, literacy campaigns and anti-alcohol campaigns in different VDCs. Some of the participants were involved in campaigns against child marriage and social malpractices.

- Open Defecation Free VDC Campaigns (Door-to-door awareness campaigns, rallies): Participants from Nepaledada, Pyauli, Bokhim, Yangpang (Bhojpur); Chisapani, Udhrapur, Sonpur, Betahani, Shamshergunj, Belhari (Banke); and

Daman, Chhatiwan, Manthali, Sarikhet (Makwanpur) were actively involved in Open Defecation Free VDC campaigns. They conducted door-to-door campaigns, rallies, and mass awareness activities in their VDCs.

- Plastic Free VDC Campaigns: Youths from Naubasta were involved in campaign to make Plastic Free VDC in coordination with VDC Office.
- Alcohol Free VDC Campaigns: The participants are conducting different social campaigns in VDCs. Participants from Basikhora VDC have started a campaign to ban alcohol and gambling in the VDC with exception to traditional cultural practices. They are planning to ban gambling activities in the VDC as well. Similarly, youths from Ranibas have conducted meeting with VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, Teachers and guardians to ban alcohol consumption and gambling during day time (10 am to 4 pm) in VDC Office premises. They also decided to ban selling alcohol and cigarettes in school area. They conducted door-to-door mass campaigns and distributed pamphlets to control such activities.

Here are some stories of participants in social campaigns:

Kopila Gupta from Betahani VDC actively worked on School Admission Campaign in all wards of her VDC. In coordination with VDC, local school, political parties and District Education Office, she lobbied at School Administration to conduct Public Hearing to promote admission of children aged 6-13 years. She continues to be actively involved in the campaign. She wants no children of her VDC to be deprived of education. Her leadership roles in the campaign made her visible in the VDC. She said, *"I was normal women from Betahani VDC. Hardly anyone knew me in my VDC before I participated Mock Village Council. The program inspired me to work on community issues. My role in School Admission Campaign has established me as a public figure. I will continue my active roles in community activities."*

Bina, a Young Leader from Makwanpur Gadhi

Bina Yonjana, 19 year, indigenous young woman who was home bound, invisible and inactive, has become respected leader in her community, the local and district officers. She is from Makwanpur Gadhi-7 few hundred meter above the River Samari. The main problem of her village is water, both for drinking and irrigation. She raised the issue during Village Public Hearing and District Public Hearing. During District Public Hearing, the representative from District Agriculture Development Office committed to provide some support if they approached formally with an agriculture group. After returning to her village, she tried to form women's agriculture group. With 21st attempt she successfully formed the "Namuna Women's Agriculture Group" with 28 members.

She said, *“Nobody in my village trusted me and my proposals in the beginning. I approached Agriculture Services Centre of my VDC and some other government officials, none of them believed in me. It took me 21 efforts to form a group. After formation of the group, the officials didn’t believe me when I went to register the group. They questioned me many times as they thought I am too young for all that work. I was not even allowed to fill the form.”*

She faced many obstacles but she did not quit. The group started to collect NRs. 100 (USD 1) per month as seed money to establish saving group. After participating in District Public Hearing organized by HimRights, she expressed the necessity of large scale irrigation project in VDC with Sangeeta Sapkota, District Irrigation Officer, who put forward Ms. Yonjan's request before the Local Development Officer (LDO). A month later Devendra Bahadur Pathak, Chief of Agriculture Service Centre called her and informed that the district office approved a 6 inch pump for her group. Similarly, after formation of the agriculture group, they received vegetable seeds from District Agriculture Development Office.

Bina is currently working as WCF Secretary and she is very active in social activities. Her dream is an effectively functioning Agriculture Group and bring irrigation project in her ward so they can start commercial vegetable farming in her village which would improve their financial and living status. Recently Village Council has allocated NRs. 1,000,000 (USD 10,000) for the irrigation project.

Samikshya Gurung from Puraini, Banke started a discussion class for illiterate women in a mixed community of Muslim, Pasi and Teli after participating in the trainings organized by HimRights. She discusses about Human Rights, Violence of Human Rights, facilities and services provided by the local service provider government agencies, budget planning process in local level and even been running adult learning classes. She shared her experiences as, *“Teli and Pasi women from Hindu Communities and Muslim women didn't get along in the beginning but both are backward due to lack of education than political flaws. During the classes, I was able to form unity between them.”* Now, Dalit women have come out of their veils and Muslim women from *Burkhas*. They are more aware of their children’s education. Most importantly, children from Dalit communities are also able to attend the schools without any discrimination.

Om Prakash Chauhan of Udaypur, Banke has emerged as young leader and RTI activist of the district. Very recently, he was elected as Ward Secretary of Nepali Congress. He shared, *“Earlier, I did not care about the VDC or the*

community or the development activities. I used to think that development activities are sole responsibilities of the political leaders and parties." He is now very active in local development activities. He lobbied VDC and local political parties to allocate NRs. 250,000 (USD 2,500) to build children's park in unused public land. Similarly, he played significant role in rescue process of 10 brick factory laborers including women and children. They were exploited without paying any wages. He informed Women and Children Office about the exploitation. They instantly rescued them and took action against the Factory. They were paid for their work and the children were sent home. He is very happy for what he did to help get justice and payments.

Increased Coordination with Stakeholders

- Participants are working in close coordination with local and district stakeholders which included VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, Coordinator/Members of Ward Citizen Forums, Coordinator of Citizen Awareness Center, Heads of Health Post, Agriculture/Livestock Services Center and political parties in VDC level and Local Development Officer, Program Officer at DDC, District Agriculture Development Office, District Public Health Office and district leaders of major political parties at district level. As the participants are contributing to increase citizen's participation in participatory planning process and in achieving goals of LGCDP program and they are facilitating ward level meetings and planning process which was appreciated by relevant stakeholders. They were recognized as partners for local development.
- Some of the participants have developed their leadership skills to reach to different positions in political parties. It is an opportunity for political parties to strengthen their institution in local level. Om Prakash Chauhan, Udaypur, Banke was elected as Ward Secretary of Nepali Congress. Similarly, Sharmila Thapa Magar, Manikapur, Banke is active member of Rastriya Prajantra Party Nepal. Namrata Maharjan from Dattu, Kathmandu was elected as women member in All Nepal National Free Students Union and Amrit Devkota, Kaski was selected as Secretary of Foreign Affairs Department of Youth Federation Nepal, Central Committee.
- During Public Hearings (Village and District) youths directly raised issues with VDC Secretaries, Heads of Health Posts, Agriculture/Livestock Services Center, political parties (VDC), Local Development Officer, Heads of District Public Health Office, District Agriculture Development Office, District Education Office, Women and Children Office and political parties (District) and the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Health, Members of Parliament (National). This has enhanced the social capital of marginalized youths in the political process.

SUSTAINABILITY:

We found the participants have shared their knowledge with other youths and adults in their communities. They shared it with more than 420,000 persons in three districts in three years. The excellent multiplier effect shows the participants have been transformed as active citizens and leaders from invisible youth. They will continue to share their knowledge and experience to others in future too.

26% of the participants are in decision-making roles of Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Plan Formulation Committees and Citizen Awareness Centers, which means they will be playing active roles in those positions for at least next two years. This will help those institutions to work systematically and effectively for positive changes in local development process and community. Furthermore, it strengthened a formal collaboration between participants and local government agencies to work in cooperation, coordination, and collaboration for local development and effective and systematic implementation its projects which will be continued in years to come.

Youths have formed youth groups or strengthened existing youth ones, child groups, CBOs, Women/Agriculture Groups and conducting several activities in their communities like RTI, child marriage, violence against women, alcohol free zone, plastic free zone and open defecation free zones. They will continue these and other relevant campaigns to make a difference in their communities.

Youths have established themselves as leaders in their communities restructuring traditional hierarchy. Local government and non-government agencies and political parties have accepted them as proactive and informed active citizens who have major roles in overall process of community development. Some of the VDCs restructured their WCF to include youth.

Most of the youth internalized they have a responsibility to develop their own communities and feel migration to cities or foreign countries is not a solution which is very important to prevent brain-drain/labour shortage, especially amongst male youth.

Their positive leadership has been visible in their communities, district and national level.

Youth's voices have been integrated in National Youth Policy and Youth Declaration from National Youth Legislative Parliament has been owned by the Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare. Some of the issues of the Declaration have been integrated in annual Policies and Programs, and Budget of the Government.

The impacts of this project on the will sustain and outlive far beyond the project period.

LESSONS LEARNED:

We changed some of the program implementation strategies based on the learning from previous year. Following are the lessons learned and changes made following year:

Participant selection: We found younger participants were less active in their communities and most of them are inactive upon return to their community. Furthermore, they migrate for higher education or employment opportunities. On the other hand, older participants tend to stay back in their communities, have more influence and are taking active leadership roles. Hence, older participants aged 20-26 years were selected. We found the participants from second and third year are very active compared to the Year One. Likewise, VDC Secretaries, WCF Coordinators and Members, Social Mobilizers and some political leaders were also consulted for participant selection and to forge better linkages between them and participants and for joint activities in future for the sustainability of the program.

Similarly, we selected participants from same locality for the national programs from the second year. Selecting participants from same locality is advantageous as they can meet regularly, learn, share, conduct programs, and effectively lobby and advocate their issues. We brought participants from three districts of Kathmandu Valley as part of our own social accountability to where we are located. In the third, year, we selected participants from 12 out of 14 earthquake affected districts to create platform for them to raise their issues and share the impact of the disastrous earthquake with the Parliamentarians. Likewise, we added extra session on 14 Steps Participatory Planning Process especially for the participants from non-project districts to facilitate their participation in local development process and VDC.

Village Public Hearings were extremely effective but it was budgeted for one event per cluster. In order to create similar platform Village Level Dialogues were conducted as follow-up activities with small support from HimRights and encouraged to raise rest from VDC. Several Dialogues were conducted per cluster in three districts. These Dialogues have brought about major positive changes in the VDCs where participants along with local youths held dialogues with local government stakeholders to seek addressal for their burning issues. Moreover, it created strong linkage between them and local government stakeholders. Participants conducted Dialogues with cash or in-kind support from the VDCs this will help them to learn to fund raise, forge continuation of the activities and future relationships.