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

Project Annual Report
(Banke, Makwanpur, Bhojpur)
March 2013 – February, 2014

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Supported by:

Sida
Executive Summary

In this program year, we have successfully conducted six Human Rights Trainings; six Mock Village Councils; six Village Public Hearings; 1 Mock district Council; 1 District Public Hearing; and 1 District Dialogue. During these activities, we have reached to 510 participants from 45 Village Development Committee (VDC) of three program districts. There was inclusive participation of youths from Dalit community, indigenous, disabled, and marginalized groups. More than 61% of them were female participants. They were from marginalized communities and represented diverse groups. The series of activities has successfully transformed long lasting impact on youth participants as the issues discussed during the program are directly linked with their community public lives and decision making bodies. VDC, the basic government unit, delivers services and decision making for the people as based on various laws, regulations and directives. The program also has long lasting impact on local level government institution. Youths are now more conscious about good governance, transparency, and accountability of these institutions. Most importantly, they have understood importance of youth participation, their roles, and involvement in local development processes. Youth participation has been significantly increased especially after the program. They have started attending ward level planning meetings, Ward Citizen Forum meetings, and Village Councils and playing active roles. With understanding of how these agencies function they are able to write proposals for development activities, meaningful discussions at the community meetings and lobby at different levels for approval. Youth participants from Bankatawa, Binauna, and Chisapani of Banke and Pyauli and Tiwaribhanjyang of Bhojpur have successfully lobbied at Village Council to allocate budget to conduct youth related activities. One of the participants from Makwanpur was asked by VDC Office to give talk on participatory planning process at VDC meeting. Likewise, a participant from Banke has conducted 6 training sessions on participatory planning processes. These are, in fact, remarkable recognition of participants’ knowledge on these issues. The local and district stakeholders are very positive with our project programs and have been cooperating with our participants. They have recognized youths as partners of local development.

With series of follow-up activities, monitoring visits and continuous support, the youths participants are believed to bring substantial changes in their community and established themselves as the real ‘change maker’.
Abbreviations
CAC: Citizen Awareness Center
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
Directives: Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069
DPH: District Public Hearing
FNCCI: Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
HRT: Human Rights Training
IPC: Integrated Planning Committee
HimRights: Himalayan Human Rights Monitors
LGCDP: Local Governance and Community Development Project
MDC: Mock District Council
MoFALD: Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MVC: Mock Village Council
Sida: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SHP: Sub-Health Post
UCPN (M): Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
VDC: Village Development Committee
WCF: Ward Citizen Forum

Terminology:
Ilaka: Area covered by 3-5 VDCs
Namuna VDC: Mock VDC
Citizen Charter: Information board that gives procedures and requirements for services provided by government agencies
Guthi: a social organization or simply a clan that is used to maintain the social order of Newar community
Janajati: Indigenous community
### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process:</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Village Council</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Public Hearing</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Public Hearing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants Information</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes/Impacts</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders at Village and Districts level:</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Finding</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons Learned/Challenges</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNEX: I Programs in brief:</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success stories</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-steps of Participatory Planning Process:</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories of Caste/Ethnicity</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Coverage</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction
Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights

According to National Population and Housing Census, 2011, almost one fifth of the total populations (17.7%) are youths aged between 16 to 24 years old. They could be the real change agents if their capacity and potentiality are identified and taken advantage of. Despite being significant segment of the population, they are completely excluded from democratic development processes at local, district and national level. Usually, youths are not encouraged to take part in these processes nor are they provided with adequate information and access to these systems. Local Self Governance Act, 2055, Local Self Governance Rules, 2056, Directives on VDC/DDC Working Procedures, 2067 and Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069 are some of the legal provisions with very effective and participatory processes to increase people’s participation in local development and strengthening local governance. Due to lack of effective implementation of these procedures they are just limited to words.

With the overall objective of contributing towards fortification of democracy; enhancement of the right to access to information and freedoms of opinion, expression and communication; reduction of various forms of discrimination and oppression; and the creation of an overall socio-political environment conducive to equal access to justice in Nepal, HimRights is conducting a project ‘Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights’ in association with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) from March 2013 to February 2016.

The programme aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

a) Increase in the awareness of legislative and other decision-making processes at the local and national levels among young people from the marginalized, vulnerable and oppressed groups in Nepal.

b) Increase in the realization of the importance of the National Parliament, District Councils, Village Councils and the consultative, deliberative and decision-making processes associated with activities of public significance such as the formation of laws and allocation of budgets for programs at different levels among the youth from Nepal’s marginalized groups and the attendant increase in their participation in the legislative, consultative, deliberative and other relevant decision-making processes at the local and national levels.

c) Internalization of democratic norms, values, civic duties and accountability by the youth from Nepal’s marginalized groups.

d) Enhancement of the overall leadership qualities, positive self-image and confidence of the youth from Nepal’s marginalized groups.

e) Political empowerment of the youth from Nepal’s marginalized groups, especially in the forms of significant improvements in their capacities to advocate and lobby for their
issues of concern, tap the access/nodal points to the policy apparatus at different levels, raise their voices more effectively, contest future elections at various levels and assume meaningful leadership roles in the public sphere,

f) Increase in the awareness of fundamental rights, Nepal’s legal system and international human rights principles, frameworks and mechanisms among the youth from Nepal’s marginalized groups.

Program Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-western Region</th>
<th>Central Region</th>
<th>Eastern Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Target Groups:
- Youths (16-24 years old) from marginalized communities
- Village and district level stakeholders (VDCs, VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers, and District Development Committees)
- Political parties at local and district level

A general estimate of the numerical strength of the core target group in our 3-years-long program would be around 2000 people.

Annual Program Activities:
1. Training on international human rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal’s legal system (HRT)
2. Mock Village Councils (MVC)
3. Village Public Hearings (VPH)
4. Mock District Councils (MDC)
5. District Public Hearings (DPH)
6. District Dialogues (DD)
7. Mock National Parliament (MNP)
8. National Public Hearing (NPH)

In the first program year, we have conducted 6 Human Rights Trainings and 6 Mock Village Councils, 6 Village Public hearings in three districts and 1 Mock District Council, 1 District Public Hearing and 1 District Dialogue in Bhojpur.
Process:

Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal’s Legal System
The three day training on International Human Rights Framework and Mechanisms and Nepal’s Legal System has the main objective of increasing understanding amongst the youths on human rights with focus on women and child rights; national and international human rights mechanisms; and right based development approaches.

Process Summary:
The first day was focused on historical development of human rights, the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human rights and five major rights: civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights with special focus on women’s and child rights and nine big treaties.

The second day consisted of sessions on women’s and child rights with specific reference to CEDAW and CRC; the United Nations and domestic implementation of international treaties; human rights in Nepal, Nepal’s Interim Constitution, 2007; different national commissions established to promote human rights e.g. National Human Rights Commission, Nations Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Information Commission etc.

On the third day, sessions on practical aspects of human rights equipped the participants with implementation of learning/knowledge into practice. It included sessions on rights based development approaches, human rights defender and their roles and responsibilities and do-no harm principle. The sessions were conducted in participatory method including group activities. Audio and visual materials were appropriately used for greater realization of the issues delivered.

By the end of the 3-day program, youths were able to articulate their voice against human rights violations in their community.

Six Human Rights Trainings were successfully completed (2 programs in each district) which included 180 youths (116 female and 64 male) from 30 VDCs. Following chart shows distribution of participants.
Annual Report: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)
Mock Village Council
The main objective of the program is to increase understanding of planning, budgeting and implementation process of development activities and increase their participation and involvement in these processes in the Village Council. The youth participants will internalize democratic norms, values, civic duties and accountability with increased realization of the importance of Village Councils and the consultative, deliberative and decision-making process associated with activities of public significance. The program also aims to provide youth participants with clear picture of Village Council procedures and increase their involvement and engagement in these processes. The VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, Heads of Government Offices, and coordinators of different committees are selected from the participants.

Process Summary
The first one and half day was spent on theoretical base for the Mock Village Council. With different tools and methods, sessions were conducted on democracy and democratic behavior, good governance and accountability, right to information, 14 steps of participatory development, VDC and its process and the different committees of VDC. These were the basics required for the exercising mock sessions.

The remaining two and half days were devoted on Mock Village Council sessions. It starts with nomination/election of VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, Heads of Government Offices, and coordinators of different committees followed by formation of six wards, Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), Integrated Planning Committee (IPC), VDC Board. The public officers are selected with consensus or election process if there were more than one contender for a post. After selection/election of the officials, series of meetings were held exactly the same way as they are held in real VDC. Meeting minutes were prepared and signed. Next session was on project proposal writing for local activities supported by VDC. There is budget allocation for targeted population, women, children, indigenous, dalit, disabled, promotional activities, physical infrastructure and agriculture. The session was to develop their skills on writing proposals for development activities in their own community. This is one of the most important sessions with long term practical significance and impact for the participants and

Duration: 4 days
Participants: 45
Contents:
- Democracy and democratic behavior
- Good governance and accountability
- Right to information
- Village Development Committee and Budget allocation at VDC
- 14 steps of participatory development
- Introduction of VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizer and their roles and responsibilities
- Different committees of VDCs: Citizen Awareness Center, Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and their roles and responsibilities
- Mock Village Council sessions:
  - Formation of Mock VDC
  - Division of wards and toles (smallest area unit, several toles makes a ward)
  - Nomination/election of VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizers, Heads of Govt. offices
  - VDC board meeting,
  - Formation of Ward Citizen Forum and Integrated Planning Committee
  - Proposal writing and prioritization of development proposals
  - Ward/tole, WCF and IPC meetings,
  - Mock Village Council meetings,
  - Closed session of MVC (VDC board meeting),
  - Formal Closing session
their communities. All the participants were asked to write a proposal on any category provided in the Directives. The proposals were then submitted to Ward Citizen Forum where they were prioritized in participatory method. All the members of WCF have equal right to select or reject proposals. The lively discussions added depth in the mock sessions. The selected proposals were submitted to Integrated Planning Committee before submitting to VDC. The VDC with consultation from IPC finally allocated budget to the prioritized proposals. Finally the Mock Village Council formally sanctioned the proposals with appropriate allocation of budget.

The formal closing session was organized in presence of representatives from District Development Committee, political parties, NGOs and journalists. The closing session was chaired by the Secretary of Mock VDC.

Six Mock Village Councils have been successfully completed (2 in each district) which included 268 youths (167 female and 101 male) from 30 VDCs. The following chart indicates details of the participants in each district.
Sessions on Mock Village Council and Mock District Council are primarily based on 14 steps of Participatory Planning Process. The process is followed by National Planning Commission (NPC) as well into its annual planning process. We conduct mock sessions from Step 5 to 12.

### 14-steps of Participatory Planning Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Receive budget ceiling and directives</td>
<td>District line agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>2(^\text{nd}) week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review of guidelines</td>
<td>Heads of line agencies, DDC Officials</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>3(^\text{rd}) week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-planning preparation workshop</td>
<td>DDC officials, heads of line agencies, banks, FNCCI, NGOs, VDCs</td>
<td>DDC and heads of line agencies</td>
<td>Last week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>VDC/Municipality meeting</td>
<td>VDC, DDC, representatives of line agencies</td>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>2(^\text{nd}) week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community-level project planning</td>
<td>Community, NGOs, CBOs, consumer groups, ward chiefs</td>
<td>Ward chiefs and ward members</td>
<td>3(^\text{rd}) week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ward Committee meeting</td>
<td>Ward members, chiefs, CBOs, consumer groups</td>
<td>Ward committees</td>
<td>Last week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>VDC/Municipality meeting</td>
<td>VDC officials, representatives of line agencies</td>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>1(^\text{st}) week of January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Village/Municipal Council meeting</td>
<td>Members of Village Council</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>2(^\text{nd}) week of January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Area (Ilaka) - level planning workshop</td>
<td>Area members, VDC chairperson, vice chairperson, ward chief, Mayer, Vice-Mayer, heads of line agencies, banks, NGOs</td>
<td>DDC, Area members, VDC, Line agencies</td>
<td>1(^\text{st}) week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sectoral planning meeting</td>
<td>Coordinators of thematic committees, NGOs, Line agencies</td>
<td>DDC and line agencies</td>
<td>2(^\text{nd}) week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Integrated plan formulation meeting</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, DDC thematic committee coordinators, line agencies, NGOs</td>
<td>DDC, line agencies, NGOs, Private sector</td>
<td>3(^\text{rd}) week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>DDC meeting</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, members</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>1(^\text{st}) week of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>District Council approval</td>
<td>District Council members</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Implementation of DDC plan</td>
<td>National Planning Commission, MoFALD, Sectoral Ministries</td>
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Village Public Hearing
The main objective of Village Public Hearing is to create a common platform to hold meaningful dialogue between youths from marginalized groups and the local stakeholders on various issues of public significance. The dialogue especially focuses on transparency, accountability and good governance of government duty holders and increasing youth’s participation in participatory development process at VDC levels. The program creates safe and dignified space for youths to raise issues important for them with the government stakeholders and political parties; make them accountable to address these issues. Moreover, this program facilitates the stakeholders to recognize youths as young citizens whose voices need to heard and identify them as future potential leaders.

Process Summary
An orientation was conducted on the first day of the program. The participants were provided with orientation on the several issues of public significance pertaining to good governance, accountability and transparency of local government bodies; role of youths in participatory development, VDC committees and the technical public hearing process. On the same day, discussions were held on possible issues for the Public Hearing (as prioritized by the participants) and preparation of model questionnaires.

On the Public Hearing day, the youth enthusiastically raised several issues of public importance to local stakeholders; VDC Secretary, Heads of Health Center, Agriculture Services Center and Livestock Services Center, representatives of local political parties, social mobilizers, coordinators and Ward Citizen Forums and other VDC committees. The program started with presentation of ‘Working Paper’ on the existing status of youths in the VDC, planning, budget allocation and implementation process of development projects in the VDC, youth’s participation in these processes.

The participants raised various issues to the panel of stakeholders. They answered and made commitments to address the issues. The commitment paper was prepared and later submitted to the stakeholders to be addressed. A ‘Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee’ was formed including participants from 9 wards of a VDC. The Committee regularly followed-up with the relevant stakeholders and lobby for the implementation of commitments.

Duration: 2 days (Day one: Orientation and Day two: Public Hearing)
Participants: 50

Contents of the VPH:
- Good governance, accountability and transparency at local government bodies
- Right to information and youth’s role
- Role of youth participatory development
- VDC, VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer and their roles
- Different committees of VDC: Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Citizen Awareness Center, Village Council and their functions and importance of youths’ role in these committees
- Technical aspects of Public Hearing:
  - What is Public Hearing?
  - Roles and responsibilities of panelist guests (stakeholders)
  - Questioning skill
  - Rules and regulations of the program
  - Issues for discussion
Six Village Public Hearings were successfully completed (2 in each district) which included 324 youths (188 female and 136 male) from 30 VDCs. Following chart shows distribution of participants.
**Mock District Council**

The main objective of the program is to increase understanding of planning, prioritization, budgeting and implementation process of development projects at district level. The program gives overview of the development projects inceptionized in Ward level meetings and how they are prioritized, lobbied at different levels such as village level Integrated Planning Committee, Cluster meetings, district level Integrated Planning Committee, Area level meetings, different Committees of DDC and the District Council.

**Process Summary**

The first one and half day, orientation was done on the processes of District Council. There were 45 youths in the program. Thirty of them were selected from the pool of Mock Village participants and 15 from new VDCs. Sessions were conducted on democracy and democratic behavior; good governance and accountability; right to information; 14 steps of participatory development; and different committees of district council. The introductory sessions were on different government offices of the district which provided them with completely new information on their functions and service delivery. Similarly, the sessions on proposal writing was conducted which equipped them and new participants with relevant proposal writing skills; development project planning at ward, VDC and district level. With theoretical orientation, the participants were ready for the mock processes. The program also aimed to provide participants with clear picture of District Council procedures and increased involvement and engagement in these processes.

The Mock process started with nomination/election of Local Development Officer and Planning Officers at DDC. It was followed by formation of six VDCs and VDC Board. Each VDC held respective Village Council meetings and referred prioritized development project to higher level after series of meetings and consultations. Usually the projects with high budget requirement are referred to the Area Level Meetings. An Area comprised of 4 to 10 VDCs. After receiving proposal from VDCs, the Area Level Meeting is conducted where the members; VDC Secretaries, representatives of political parties and heads of government offices, discuss on the proposals. The

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**Duration:** 4 days  
**Participants:** 45  
**Contents of the MVC:**  
- Democracy and democratic behavior  
- Good governance and accountability  
- Right to information  
- Village Development Committee and Budget allocation at VDC  
- 14 steps of participatory development  
- Introduction of VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizer and their roles and responsibilities  
- Different committees of VDCs: Citizen Awareness Center, Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and their roles and responsibilities  
- Mock Village Council sessions:
  - Formation of six VDC  
  - Selection of Local Development Officer and Planning Officers of DDC  
  - Proposal writing and prioritization of development proposals  
  - Discussion on development proposals  
  - Referral projects to Area Level Meeting  
  - Formation of Areas, Area Level Meetings and prioritization of proposals  
  - Formation of different thematic Committees of DDC  
  - Integrated Committee Meetings  
  - District level IPC meeting  
  - District Council  
  - Formal Closing session
Area Level Planning Meeting is facilitated by Planning Officer from DDC.

It was followed by formation of district level government offices and thematic DDC committees. The offices and committees held separate meetings and discuss on the proposals referred by DDC and Area Level Meetings. These meetings avoid duplication of development activities and budget allocation. All the proposals received from Area Level meetings, DDC committees were then discussed in District level IPC meeting for final prioritization and approval for the budget allocation. The Mock District Council was organized in presence of mock Local Development Officer, heads of government offices, representatives of political parties, NGOs, and general public. The Mock District Council was concluded by LDO with a concluding speech.

One Mock District Council was successfully completed in Bhojpur which included 46 youths from 25 VDCs. Following chart shows distribution of participants.
**District Public Hearing**

The main objective of District Public Hearing is to raise burning and relevant issues raised during the Village Public Hearing and other issues with district level stakeholders including Local Development Officer, heads of different government offices and district level political parties to make them accountable to address the issues. Another objective of this program was to create linkage between participants and the government and other district level stakeholders for recognition of youths as competent citizens and establish their visibility for potential leadership in various capacities.

**Process Summary**

An orientation was conducted in the first day of the program. The participants were provided with orientation on the issues of public significance that included good governance, accountability and transparency of local government bodies; role of youths in participatory development, VDC committees and the public hearing process. On the same day, participatory discussions were held on possible issues to be raised in the Public Hearing.

On the Public Hearing day, the youth eagerly raised several issues of public significance with the local stakeholders. Local Development Officer, district representatives of political parties, heads of different government offices, planning officer of DDC were the stakeholder panel of the Public Hearing and NGO representatives were invited as guests. The program started with presentation of ‘Working Paper’ on status of youths in the DDC, planning, budget allocation and implementation process of development projects in the DDC, youth’s participation in these processes.

One District Public Hearing was successfully completed in Bhojpur which included 50 youths from 25 VDCs. Following chart shows distribution of participants.

**Duration:** 2 days (Day one: Orientation and Day two: Public Hearing)
**Participants:** 50
**Contents of the DPH:**
- Good governance, accountability and transparency at local government bodies
- Right to information and youth’s role
- Role of youth participatory development
- Roles of different district level government offices, different DDC committees, Area level meetings
- Technical aspects of Public Hearing:
  - What is Public Hearing?
  - Roles and responsibilities of panelist guests (stakeholders)
  - Questioning skill
  - Rules and regulations of the program
  - Issues for discussion

![Participants of District Public Hearing: Bhojpur](chart.png)

- 32% Male
- 68% Female
District Dialogue

District Dialogue was conducted with specific objective to continue effective dialogue between the participants of District Public Hearing and the district level stakeholders on different issues raised, commitments made by the stakeholders during the public hearings as well as to follow-up with the status of commitment implementation and to seek best solutions for those not implemented. The program enhanced leadership qualities and self-confidence of marginalized youths. The program also supports to continue the relationship between the participants and the stakeholders for any kind of future collaboration. Furthermore, these continuous processes facilitate to make the marginalized youth participants visible for any kind of future nominations/selection/election of public posts.

Process Summary

An orientation was conducted on the first day of the program. The intense discussions were held on the issues raised during Village Public Hearings and District Public Hearings and the commitments made by the respective stakeholders. Major issues were categorized into certain headings and discussed accordingly. Since, Dialogue is different from the Public Hearings; the participants were also oriented on Dialogue process and its technical aspects.

On the District Dialogue day, the participants eagerly awaited for the dialogue. Local Development Office, district representatives of political parties and heads of different government offices were present as panelist to discuss the issues raised. They raised different issues discussed on the previous day and also possible solutions. The dialogue concluded with some concrete results and conclusions which were summarized in the form of dialogue minutes. All the stakeholders and the youths signed on the minutes to increase ownership on the results and conclusions.

One District Dialogue was successfully completed in Bhojpur which included 47 youths from 25 VDCs. Following chart shows distribution of participants.

**Duration:** 2 days (Day one: Orientation and Day two: District Dialogue)

**Participants:** 50

**Contents of the DPH:**
- Issues and commitments raised during Village Public Hearing and District Public Hearing
- Roles of different district level government offices, different DDC committees, Area level meetings
- Technical aspects of District Dialogue Process:
  - What is District Dialogue?
  - Roles and responsibilities of panelist guests (stakeholders)
  - Dialogue skill
  - Rules and regulations of the program
  - Issues for discussion
### Table showing activities completed in Program Year One:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Banke</th>
<th>Makwanpur</th>
<th>Bhojpur</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on international HR framework and mechanism and Nepal's legal system (3 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Village council (4 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: VDC Level (2 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council (4 days)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: District Level (2 days)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue (2 days)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Programs dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Banke</th>
<th>Makwanpur</th>
<th>Bhojpur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council (4 days)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan. 24-27, 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: District Level (2 days)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan. 28-29, 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue (2 days)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb. 24-25, 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants Information

Youths

During this project period, we have reached to 45 VDCs of three program districts. The participants were selected in consultation with VDC offices, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forums, Citizen Awareness Centers, and youth groups. We sought their support for identification of participants as we would like to build relationship between the stakeholders and youth for visibility and recognition of their capacity for any future public posts. Several meetings were organized with them. The participants were aged between 16 to 24 years old. Priorities were given to the participants who are from most marginalized groups, however, their level of education, activeness in their community were also considered during selection process. The following table shows distribution of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on international HR framework and mechanism and Nepal's legal system (3 days)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Village council (4 days)</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: VDC Level (2 days)</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council (4 days)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing: District Level (2 days)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue (2 days)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>349</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[The project has a series of activities throughout the year and selected participants are repeated in subsequent activities. Hence, the total of 915 consisted of repeated participants as well. For example, 30 participants of Human Rights Training are repeated in Mock Village Council. Likewise, 17 of the participants are repeated in Village Public Hearing, 30 in Mock District Council and 45 in District Public Hearing. We reached to 510 youths from 3 districts.]

Efforts were made to ensure significant female participation in the all activities. The table above shows that 61% of the participants were female. Some of the participants were disabled and some from most disadvantaged indigenous groups like Thami and Jogi from Bhojpur. The participation was very inclusive in terms of caste, ethnicity and gender distribution. Their level of participation was very vibrant, eager, and their learning curve shooting higher and higher.

Most of the participants were selected from marginalized indigenous communities, more than 40 per cent of the total participants. On the other hand, around 15% of the youths were from Dalit communities. Similarly, there was active participation of youths from Muslim and Madheshi communities in Banke district.
Stakeholders:
Besides the youth participants, there were other stakeholders who worked very closely with the youths throughout the program and beyond. The VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Consumers Groups, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, district and local level representatives of political parties, Heads of local government agencies, Citizen Awareness Center, and journalists are the direct stakeholders of this program. Similarly, Local Development Officer, district chiefs of major political parties, heads of different government offices, planning officers, NGOs and journalists are the district level stakeholders.

During this period, we reached more than 148 district stakeholders; they have been part of Mock Village Council, Village Public Hearing, Mock District Council, District Public Hearing and District Dialogue.

We are in regular contact with the stakeholders in order to facilitate participants to work in coordination with them for promoting democratic process, accountability, and good governance in development activities. This has promoted meaningful participation of youths in local development.

Beneficiaries in numbers:
The program has directly reached to 510 distinct youth participants from 45 VDCs of Banke, Makwanpur and Bhojpur and more than 148 district stakeholders including Local Development Officer, Social Development Officer, representatives of political parties and NGOs, VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers, Coordinators of Ward Citizen Forums and journalists. We have categorized them as primary beneficiary.
We have been in touch with participants regularly through follow-up visits and telephone contacts. An interesting fact is that they have been sharing their knowledge with other youths and community members of their VDCs and in the meeting of youth clubs, child clubs, and women’s groups. This has majorly contributed in multiplying effects on the village council process, specifically planning and budgeting. With follow-up activities, we reached to more than 581 youths (16 – 24 years old) and 650 adults aged above 24 years old as secondary beneficiaries from the three districts. The following table shows secondary beneficiaries of this program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>16-24 years old</th>
<th>24+ years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>581</strong></td>
<td><strong>650</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes/ impacts

After completion of project activities, the program teams in the district are in regular contact with the participants and monitoring them and their further outreach. They have been conducting monitoring visits, follow-ups meetings, interaction programs and other activities to link participants with VDC and its committees. Findings based on follow-up activities:

Banke:
The participants from both the clusters were very active and they found the program very informative and full of must-have knowledge, extremely useful for the development of the community. They felt empowered and inspired to share their knowledge with others or take leadership roles in facilitation in public issues, good governance and accountability. For most of the participants, the program was one of the most notable learning experiences in their lives.

Formation of youth groups: In most of the VDCs, they have formed youth groups and other social groups. For example, youths of Bankatawa formed ‘Yuwa Netritwo Bikas Pahal Samuha’ (Youth Leadership Development Initiation Group), they are meeting regularly and discuss on different social issues. Similarly, ‘Gaun Bikash Sarokar Manch’ (Village Development Forum) was formed in Rajhena, ‘Yuwa Jagaran Bikash Samuha’ (Youth Awareness and Development Group) in Naubasta and ‘Samajik Bikas Yuwa Sanjal’ (Youth Network for Social Development) in Chisapani. All youth groups have the similar objective: to mobilize youth potential in development of their community. They are also planning to expand their group and incorporate more youths from all the wards.

Recognition of participants in VDCs: The participants are well recognized in VDCs. Bankatawa VDC Secretary has publicly committed to include one of the participants in Integrated Planning Committee and he has selected one participant in the committee. Similarly, the youth groups in Bankatawa, Binauna and Chisapani successfully lobbied at VDC to allocate Rs. 100,000, 25,000 and 25,000 respectively from Village Council for youth related activities. It is great recognition by VDC; usually youth are invisible except when their muscle power and head counting has to be used for political demonstrations. Youth groups from Matehiya, Gangapur, Fattepur are also lobbying their VDC for allocation of budget to conduct activities for youth.

Youths as Campaigner: Youth participants have been part of public events and campaigns. The participants from Naubasta became integral part of declaration of Plastic Free VDC from the inception of the campaign.

Capacity Developments: Twelve participants from Banke are engaged with different organizations as Social Mobilizer and other posts with recommendation from HimRights and capacity enhancement from these activities. Meena Pun, Volunteer of Mock Village Council, has been working as Social Mobilizer in ‘Janajagaran Samaj’, an NGO in Banke; she was selected amongst 180 candidates. Similarly, Bamdev Pokharel of Rajhena, Sabitra Pariyar of Chisapani, Chet Kumari Jaisi of Binauna, Resham Chaudhary of Naubasta, Makbul Ahmad Mukeri of
Matehia, Bhim Bahadur Sarki of Kamdi and Mamata BK of Titihiriya are working in different organizations after they participated in the programs. Their self confidence, positive self image, analysis and clear articulation of their ideas were some of the reasons their got the jobs.

Similarly, Bhim Bahadur Sarki of Kamdi, one of the participants facilitated training sessions on participatory planning process in 6 VDCs. He is recognized as a skilled facilitator by a local NGO. He says, “After participating in this program, I have been conducting training sessions on participatory planning process in different places. I am recognized as a facilitator.” He published an article in local newspaper. *(Annex)*

**Participants’ inspiring works:** Some of the participants have done remarkable tasks in their community after participating in the Programs. Aslam Nau of Titihiriya played a key role in removing the corrupt Chairperson of Madrasa Management Committee (Local Muslim school). With his initiative, they formed new management committee; the school and students are effectively utilizing the government support. He says, “After participating in the program, I was inspired to work on reformation of Madrasa Management Committee. Some people were angry. I used to get threats from them.” *(Annex)*

**Engagement in VDC committees:** Dhana Kumari Tharu of Binauna became a member of Citizen Awareness Center where she shares the learning with her colleagues. Similarly, she became a Secretary of Village Drinking Water Consumer’s Group. She is actively participating in public events.

**Increased concern on social activities:** Some of the participants who were very quiet and non-articulate are found to have been doing great jobs in their community. One of them was Barkat Ali Gujar, of Rajhena. A Muslim youth successfully conveyed information about VDC’s contribution to the Madrasa and discussed in the Madrasa Management Committee and they approached VDC office and that provided financial support to install tin roof in Madrasa. He is planning to get into Madrasa Management Committee next year. He shares, “There is a Madrasa in our village. After participating in this program, I talked with the Chairperson of the Madrasa and advised him to approach VDC office for put tin roof in the Madrasa. The VDC approved the budget and the school has tin roof. There are around 100 children in the Madrasa. Recently, Urdu language classes were withdrawn because the Madrasa could not pay the Maulana (Urdu teacher). I will submit my candidacy in next election of Madrasa Management Committee and work for improvement and development. Similarly, I am taking initiatives to construct public toilets in my village. I think, this program has encouraged me to work for social causes.”

**Sustainability and engagement:** Regular meetings with VDC offices: The participants are in regular contact with VDC offices and Ward Citizen Forums. 35 of the participants have actively participated in ward level planning meetings, Ward Citizen Forum meetings and Village Councils. Participants from Binauna and Chisapani had discussed on physical infrastructure and
rural electrification in ward level meetings. Some of the participants are planning to submit project proposal at ward level meetings.
Makwanpur
One-day interaction programs on VDC processes: As per action plan made by the participants on final day of the Mock Village Council, they have organized one-day sharing meetings in all working VDCs in close coordination with VDC offices. The main objective of the meetings was to share their learning with other youths from the VDC and mobilize youths to contribute towards local development. These meetings were facilitated by the participants themselves. They conducted different sessions on VDC, proposal writing, Integrated Planning Committee, Ward Citizen Forum, Village Council, Consumer’s groups, roles and responsibilities of VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, and different committees. VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer, and Coordinators of WCF were also present in the meeting. Meetings were organized in Hatiya, Padampokhari, Daman, Palung, Bajrabarahi, Churiyamai, Kamane, Handikhola and Chitlang. The meetings reached to 440 persons which included 300 youths aged between 16 to 24 years old. The meetings proved to have very good impact on youth, others and stakeholders at the VDCs. VDC officials have very positive response towards the program and they committed to provide support to the youths. These programs were organized in close collaboration with VDC Offices. Hatiya VDC provided lunch to the participants as a part of the partnership with the youths. Likewise, other VDCs provided meeting hall and stationary to the participants.

Article publication: Newspapers proved to be one of the effective medium for the participants to share the experiences of being part of the program and for the recognition they received in their community. Bijaya BK of Hatiya, Roshan Aaryal of Handikhola, Ganesh Adhikari of Handikhola and Samjhana Balami of Chitlang published their experiences in local newspaper. The article played crucial role in multiplying the learning and sensitization on the planning, budgeting and project implementation process of VDCs.

Recognition in the VDC: Bijaya BK from Dalit community, who was the Secretary of Mock Village Council, is now well recognized in his VDC. He has been sharing his knowledge with friends and elders so effectively that even the VDC office calls him to brief about VDC process
in their regular meetings. Once there was dispute in during Ward Citizen Forum planning meeting in VDC Office, the Secretary called him to explain the actual process of VDC planning. He shared, “The members of Ward Citizen Forum were disputing with each other as their proposal was not selected by the VDC Secretary. The discussion turned into heated arguments when I reached there. Then, I gave them information about the village processes and the process of proposal prioritization. I also asked them not to put the blame on the Secretary and briefed the responsibilities of the secretary. I successfully calm them down and they realized their mistakes.” Badri Sapkota, Secretary of Hatiya VDC, appreciated the initiations of the youth and shared increased concern of the participants of Mock Village Council in VDC activities. He acknowledged the enthusiasm and the excitement of the youth. He promised to support in every possible way.

**Sharing of knowledge:** Participants have been sharing their knowledge of VDC process in different spheres both formally and informally. The participants of Daman organized sharing meeting in one of the colleges in their VDC. It reached to more than 52 youths from different VDCs.

**Active participation in Public Hearings**
Youth participants raised several issues of public significance during public hearings organized in Handikhola and Daman and stakeholders made commitments to address those issues. VDC Secretary of Handikhola made commitment to renovate ‘Citizen Charter’ board installed in VDC premises within one month. Surprisingly, the commitment was met on time. Below is the picture of ‘Citizen Charter’ before and after:
Suggestion Box in Daman VDC Premises which was in one of the inaccessible corners of the VDC but later it was placed in the exterior wall of the office. Now, VDC office regularly checks the suggestion box.

**Formation of Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee**

A 9 member monitoring committee was formed to effectively monitor the implementation of commitments made by the stakeholders in the Public Hearing. The committee members are in regular contact with the stakeholders and to remind them of the commitments. The committee members handed over the commitments printed on flex posters sby the participants of this program.

Handover of flex posters to VDC Secretary of Daman and VDC assistant of Handikhola.
Affiliation with different organizations
Four of the youths from Makwanpur are engaged with different organizations as Social Mobilizer with recommendation from HimRights.

Recognition in DDC
The DDC specifically mentioned effectiveness of this project in its Annual District Planning with recommendation to include coordinators and members of WCF of Hatiya VDC in our next program as participants or observers.
**Bhojpur**

**Formation of Youth groups:** HimRights Bhojpur has facilitated to form youth groups in all VDCs of the first cluster. They have formed ‘**Srijanshil Yuwa Samuha**’ (Creative Youth Group) in Bokhim, ‘Taksar Gramin Bikash Samuha’ (Taksar Rural Development Group) in Taksar, ‘Siddhakali Samuha’ (Siddhakali Group) in Bhojpur, ‘Himmat Samuha’ (Courageous group) in Amtek, and ‘Paribartanshil Yuwa Samuha’ (Youth Group for Change) in Bhaisipankha. They have also selected a Coordinator and Secretary of the groups and planned to meet once every month. HimRights Bhojpur has been in regular contact with the groups. Similarly, youth participants from Pyauli and Tiwaribhanjyang have also formed youth groups.

**Sharing meetings:** The participants of Amtek, Bhaisipankha and Bokhim have organized one-day sharing meeting in their VDCs. The participants were selected from all wards. Different sessions on VDC, proposal writing, prioritization, different committees, and village council were conducted by the participants. The meetings were organized in collaboration with respective VDCs. The VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizers were also present at the meeting and expressed their views.

**Community Campaigns:**

Srijanshil Yuwa Samuha celebrated Social Service Day on September 24, 2013 in coordination with local *Dhrubatara Sanskritik Samuha* in Bokhim VDC. They organized a dialogue program with youths. The program’s main objective was to inspire every youth to take initiatives of social development. It was a perfect example of partnership with locally existing youth clubs. The program was covered in local newspaper tool.
Participation in VDC processes: Recognition of youth participants as important community representatives

15 participants from different VDCs have actively participated in ward level meetings and Ward Citizen Forum Meetings. Youths from Pyauli and Tiwaribhanjyang successfully lobbied at the VDC and Rs. 10,000 budget is allocated to conduct youth related issues. Five of the participants attended the real District Council meeting with the invitation from the LDO during the Public Hearing. Similarly, four of the participants have attended District Council.

Active participation in Public Hearings

Youths raised several issues with the village and district stakeholders and the stakeholders made commitments to address the issues. They raised issues to set up Citizen Charter, misuse of child and women related budget allocations, irregularities of VDC secretary in the Office, irregularities and transparency of development activities, and lack of involvement of youths in VDC processes. Similarly, issues were raised on service delivery of Health Center, Agriculture Services Center and Livestock Services Center. The stakeholders made commitments to address the issues and some of the commitments have been implemented. VDC Secretary of Pyauli is now regularly in the office and he issues public notice if he has to leave office for long period. This has directly led to effective and systematic VDC services.

Increased VDC Secretaries and proposals on targeted population groups

In Public Hearings, youths have raised issues of irregularities of VDC Secretaries in their Offices. Similarly, there were only 36 Secretaries for 63 VDCs of the district. The issue was raised during District Public Hearing. Local Development Officer announced in District Dialogue that there will increase number of VDC Secretaries to 48. He also said that, “There is significant increase in number of proposals for target group from ward level. I think this program may be contributing factor for this increase.”
Stakeholders at Village and Districts level:
We have worked in close coordination with stakeholders from VDC and the District. Here are some of the achievements relating to stakeholders:

- District Stakeholders including political parties have appreciated the program and its impact on youths. They suggested to expand the program in all VDCs of the districts.
- Participant held interaction with district level political leaders and VDC Secretary on increasing youth participation on local development processes. It helped to increase their concern on accountability, good governance and transparency of VDC activities. VDC Secretaries are more concerned about effective youth participation in VDC processes.
- They are very positive about the issues raised by the youths during Public Hearings and made several commitments. In some of the VDCs, commitments have been successfully implemented. Youths raised irregularity of VDC Secretary of Pyauli in VDC Office in Public Hearing. The Secretary is now more regular in the Office and he shares public notice if he has to be away from his office.
- It is mandatory to conduct public hearing in each VDC every year. But it is not done in practice. VPH organized by HimRights was the first public hearing in most of the VDCs. The VDC Secretaries from Pyauli and Bokhim committed to conduct VDC public hearing in coming year. They acknowledged public hearings are effective programs to link local people with VDC activities and maintain good governance and transparency.
- The VDC secretaries admitted that the number of development projects for women, children, indigenous, Dalit, and other target groups have increased in ward level meetings. The Local Development Officer of Bhojpur also hinted that this program has significantly played motivating role behind the increased proposals.
- District level stakeholders in Bhojpur including government stakeholders and political parties have agreed to promote youth participation in participatory planning process. VDC Secretary has announced to include our participant into Integrated Planning Committee and included one in the Committee.
Overall Finding:

Participant information
More than half (61%) of the participants were female whereas 39% were male youths. Majority of the participants were from Dalit, indigenous and other marginalized groups. Likewise, there were youth participants from Muslim and Madheshi community too. Few of the participants are disabled; however, they performed very well throughout the program. For most of the participants, these were their first participation in any NGO/GO program which they found very practical, youth friendly, effective and meaningful program. Programs on Mock Village Council, District Council, Public Hearings and District Dialogue were new for all of them. Understanding level of participants from Banke and Makwanpur was higher than those from Bhojpur. Bhojpur, is a remote and mountain districts, participants do not have access to information. Furthermore, there are very few NGOs working in this district.

Youth Participation in Development Processes
The programs were focused on increasing understanding of participatory planning process at VDC and District level and youth’s participation and involvement in VDC planning, budgeting and project implementation processes.

At the end of the programs, most of the participants realized importance of youth participation in those processes. The program successfully increased interest and highlighted the role of young people in local development processes; importance to ensure their participation in local development processes. Those who were not keen on VDC activities or hardly participated in Village Councils have started to visit VDC offices, meet Secretaries and Social Mobilizers, attend Village Councils and discuss on various issues of community development and development projects.

The government stakeholders have also revealed the fact that youth participation, especially of 16-24 years age group, have been increasing especially after the programs. Prem Shakya, VDC Secretary of Bhojpur said, “Youth participation in VDC planning process is very low. Youths from this age group (16 to 24 years) is almost nil. I believe this program would sensitize youths about importance of youth participation in these processes. I found this program very new, meaningful and practical.” He further said, he will invite the participants in the real Council.

Perception of Government Stakeholders
The Mock Village Council aims to promote practical implementation of ‘Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069’; all the program activities are conducted as mentioned in the Directives. Some of the Secretaries of VDCs found the process very new and effective as they have not followed the procedures of the Directives. All the VDC Secretaries admitted that the real Village Councils do not follow all the procedures as provisioned in the Directives. Some of them were not aware of latest amendment in the Directives. After being part of the program they made positive remarks to follow the Directives in next year’s Village Council. These processes were very educative for them too as many do not have the
opportunities for any trainings in implementation or to read the Directives. Similarly, the social mobilizers and members of Ward Citizen Forum said that they do not get any training on the Directives thus, do have comprehensive knowledge on it. They said this program should be conducted for them too.

Mock Village Council ended with a formal session with presence of district government stakeholders. In Bhojpur, Local Development Officer was the Chief Guest whereas Social Development Officer represented DDC in Makwanpur. District Chiefs of various political parties were invited as guests. Rameshwor Rana, Representative from UML, Makwanpur said in the closing ceremony, “I hope each and every participant will be able to act as a leader and represent their ward in the future. There are no Elections since 2053 (1997) and I hope to see youth participation in the next election for the post of Mayor and Chairperson.” Prahlad Lamichhane, Former Constituent Assembly member from UCPN Maoist, added that there should be bottom-up planning when it comes to prioritizing the proposals and raising of issues. He also stressed on the importance of youth participation. He said, “Either these youth should teach us clearly about the processes or they should participate along with us.” This shows how these youths could be a significant part of democratic leadership development process.

**Multiplying the learning through Collective Action**
The participants have expressed their commitment to impart their learning in their communities with other youths and elders. They made VDC wise action plan on the final day of Mock Village Councils. In most of the VDCs, the participants have conducted several programs as per their commitments/action plan and multiplied the learning with other youths from the same VDC and neighborhoods.

After the program, the participants have formed youth group/club and or collaborated with existing ones. They are holding regular meetings where they share their own experiences of transformative leadership in various sectors. Most importantly, they are planning to expand their groups and reach to new youths from different wards and spread the word of mouth and transform learning into action. Participants from all districts have been organizing sharing meetings with other youths. The sharing meetings are conducted by the participants themselves. They have established good linkage with VDC offices as well.

**Coordination with Government Stakeholders**
The participants are working in close coordination with the VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forum, Citizen Awareness Center and different committees of VDCs. The Government stakeholders and representatives of political parties have acknowledged the significance of program and urged to expand the program in all VDCs of the district and possibly in other districts too. The program also supports strong implementation of Local Self Governance Act in every VDC. The program also goes hand in hand with the spirit of Local Governance and Community Development Project (LGCDP) implemented by Ministry of
Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD). Efforts are on the way to coordinate with MoFALD and LGCDP at central level.

**Public Hearings, Effective tool to promote accountability and good governance of the local government bodies**

Public Hearings conducted at village and district level has provided youths to directly raise their issues to government stakeholders and political parties. Most importantly, the stakeholders have owned the issues raised by the participants and made several commitments to address the issues. Majorly issues raised during the Hearings were: services provided by VDC, Health Post, Agriculture Services Center, and other government agencies; establishment of Citizen Charter and suggestion box in VDC premises, irregularity of VDC Secretary in the Office; incomplete development projects; and youth’s participation in VDC planning processes. With regular follow up of the implementation of commitments made by the stakeholders during the Hearings, it was found that most of the commitments have been implemented or are in process of implementation. It is mandatory for all VDCs to conduct at least one public hearing every year but not in practice. VDC Secretaries committed to conduct public hearings each year in their respective VDCs. Similarly, participants of Village Public Hearings have requested to conduct the Hearings in their VDCs as well. Only one Village Public Hearing was conducted in each cluster rest of the four VDCs participants do not get this opportunity to dialogue with their VDC stakeholders.

**District Dialogue, holistic approach development issues**

District Dialogue conducted in Bhojpur proved to be a platform to discuss broader and policy issues raised at village level and find their solutions. The issues raised were beyond 10 VDCs; it included issues and implementation of other parts of the district too. The discussions were held on following thematic areas:

- Attendance, regularity of VDC secretaries
- Access to information in VDC Office
- Budget for target groups, proposal and prioritization
- Good governance, transparency, and accountability of local government agencies; youth participation and mobilization
- Youth participation in Ward Citizen Forum and VDC activities
- Roles and Responsibilities of youths

District stakeholders came to collective consensus to address the issues raised by the youths. Local Development Officer committed to issue circular to all VDCs to establish Citizen Charter, notice board and suggestion box. Similarly, it was decided that the youth and political parties would pressurize for transparency, good governance and for the VDC offices.

**Capacity Building of youth participants**

In Banke and Makwanpur, some of the participants have started their professional career in local NGOs as Social Mobilizers and other posts. They were recommended by HimRights District Offices. One of the participants from Banke has facilitated 18 training sessions on VDC process and participatory planning process in association with the VDC Offices. Participants have been
actively working on formation of youth groups, community campaigns, writing proposals to VDC, demanding for accountability and good governance of government offices. Moreover, they internalized importance of youth participation in those processes.

**Visual documentation**

The whole programs of Mock Village Councils were visually documented. The visual documentation focused more on individual transformation of participants during and after the programs. The DVDs of the visual documentation was produced for every Mock Village Council and widely distributed to the participants, VDC offices, DDC offices, political parties and journalists. We received positive feedbacks from viewers of the video. One of the journalists from Bhojpur said, “This documentary should be telecasted on national television so that more people would be aware of the VDC processes and importance of youth participation in those processes.”

**Evaluation by Social Welfare Council**

Two members of Social Welfare Council have conducted evaluation of the project in March 2014. They visited three program districts and conducted evaluation meetings with participants, stakeholders and district staffs. During the field visits, they met with Local Development Officer of Bhojpur, Planning Officers of DDC, VDC Secretaries, and representatives of political parties. Based on their visit, they have submitted evaluation report to the Social Welfare Council and the organization. Ms Riikka Jalonen, Country Representative of DEMOFINLAND said that the external evaluators from Social Welfare Council said that this is an excellent program from which their partners could learn too.

**Sustainability of the project:**

We have been continuously working for sustainability of the project. After completing a year of activities, we have seen significant transformations in the participants. With continuous support, space for leadership growth and expand the impact to wider level they have grown exuberantly. Hence, we are working on creating sustainable mechanisms in local governance of village and district level as well as linking them with like-minded organizations.

VDC and DDC offices have formally invited our participants to different meetings and events for inputs and participation at local policy level. 35 participants of Banke were involved in ward level meetings and Village Councils. Participants have taken leadership roles in their community and gone through planning process, proposed youth project and lobbied at VDC office to allocate budget which is already committed and will be released in next fiscal year (starting from July 2014). They have established close link with VDC office and they will be working in close coordination with VDC committees, consumer groups and VDC level monitoring committee in the next fiscal year while implementing the proposed projects. Similarly 12 of the participants of Makwanpur have participated in Village Council, ward level meetings and some had facilitated ward level meetings. This has increased participants’ recognition and visibility in the VDC. Likewise, the participants have formed youth groups and they have included other youths of their
VDC. These groups have started collective action in coordination with VDC and existing youth groups. Training Facilitations, the participants have already been training other youth and community which is mentioned in Outcome/Impact section. Similarly, few participants have been able to destructure and restructure their organizational structures for transparency, accountability, right to information, and participatory democratic decision-making. Few participants we will hire them for year two as co-facilitators.

Furthermore, there is been tremendous effort to link with both government and international agencies to share the process and outcomes, achievements, and for support to continue this fantastically effective project, its expansion of the project/activities in the same (where we are not working in this project) and/or other districts. Ms. Anjana Shakya, Chairperson, had been meeting with National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Department for International Development (DFID), Danida/Human Rights and Good Governance, Finish International Development Agency (FINIDA), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), UNDP – Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal, Rockefeller Foundation (New York) and DemoFinland. All of them found this project very interesting but funding has to go through proposal call and set schedules.

**Lessons Learned/ Challenges**

- Youths are one of the most mobile populations. Their continuations in the consecutive programmes are difficult. Hence, some of the active participants, especially young men have migrated from their place for higher studies and or better livelihood options. 25% of the participants from Banke have migrated from their village; similarly in Bhojpur. Moreover, we found the participants under 18 are too young to work in this sector. Their priority does not match with our objectives in most cases. Hence, we are planning to work with older age within our age limit.

- Bhojpur is one of the remote mountain program districts. Road transportation was very difficult as roads are graveled and muddy. The first program was conducted in early June, but the monsoon started early. The program team had faced extreme difficulties to reach the district. The air travel is nonexistent during rain. Similarly, one of the programs in Bhojpur was postponed due to strike. (In year 2, there are no programs in Bhojpur during monsoon season.)

- Due to Constituent Assembly election, we were unable to conduct the village public hearings as scheduled. We could not conduct any programs in November due to the elections. Similarly, it was difficult to conduct follow ups and field visits. However, some of the participants have done ‘Election Observation’ in Makwanpur and Banke. Some others were active in political activities.
• VDC Secretaries are routinely transferred to other VDC which creates difficulty in establishing ownership of the commitments made by the former Secretaries. Moreover, extra time has to be spent to explain the spirit of the project.
• We have conducted Village Public Hearing in one VDCs of each cluster. The programs were very successful, raised several important issues and the stakeholders promptly committed to address them. We have seen many commitments are being implemented. The participants are recognized and involved in VDC processes. However, the stakeholders and participants from other VDCs of the cluster have requested to conduct public hearings in their VDCs as well. Moreover, the participants from these VDCs are not recognized as youth with knowledge and capacity both by VDC personnel and political parties. Thus, feel disempowered.
• We have conducted few Public Hearings in many VDCs in Banke district, thus, we hired two of the Public Hearing Moderators from the district. Moderators did very well and discussions were interactive and fruitful. However, there were no concrete commitments made by the stakeholders. Hence, we appointed professional moderator who has conducted over 100 public hearings. He has moderated more than 40 public hearings organized by HimRights. He will be moderating Village Public Hearings, District Public Hearings, and District Dialogues.
• We should ask the external evaluators from Social Welfare Council to write the report in Nepali and get it translated into English as their English is not very good. Thus, their articulation of the report gets hampered.

Recommendations:

• The Public Hearings were successfully conducted in 6 VDCs. We got overwhelming support from VDC stakeholders and the participants. Moreover, lot of issues were raised during the Hearing and stakeholders committed to address the issues. However, in the VDCs where the Hearings were not conducted the participants were not visible. Need to find resources to conduct public hearings in all the working VDCs to facilitate recognition of participants and their participation in VDC processes and institutionalize it in VDC’s annual program.
• The priority should be given to the youths who are 20 years and above to achieve effective result.
• Participant should be selected in consultation with VDC office, social mobilizers and coordinators/members of WCF. Broad discussion with them is must for selection of the participants.

Conclusion:
The Year One program was completed successfully in three districts. With series of activities and continuous engagement, we have noticed significant positive transformations among the
Mock sessions are very practical and user-friendly tools of learning participatory planning process and increasing meaningful participation in these processes. Participants proved themselves as youth leaders in their communities; moreover, they have become integral parts of local development processes. They are more visible in their community and recognized by VDCs as well as some of them have been nominated as members of VDC Integrated Planning Committee. After participating in these programs, some of the marginalized participants have transformed into community leaders and they are actively working for good governance, accountability and transparency of local government offices as well as within their own organizational structures. Public Hearings are very effective tools for raising local issues and directly dialogue with concerned stakeholders, seek most appropriate solutions for them. Many issues were raised during the public hearings mainly relating to good governance, accountability and transparency of government offices. The stakeholders were very positive about the issues and made several commitments to address them. We have seen many of the commitments are implemented. Similarly, District Dialogue was very effective to raise voice of the voiceless, create meaningful relationship between participants and the stakeholders, increasing visibility of youth potentials.
ANNEX: I Programs in brief:

Banke

Mid-Western Development Region

Number of VDCs: 46
Municipality: 1
Population: 491,313
Population (15-24 years): 103,214
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster I)

There were 29 participants selected from marginalized communities from Bankatawa, Titihiriya, Rajhena, Chisapani and Naubasta VDC in consultation with Secretaries of respective VDCs, Social Mobilizers, and Village Mediation Groups (formed by HimRights). Participants were selected from Dalit, Muslim, Indigenous groups, disabled, and other marginalized communities – they were energetic and enthusiastic to learn about human rights and VDC Council process from the very first day. More than half (17) of them were female i.e. 59%. This shows the significant participation of female in this program. For most of the participants, it was their first training experience and they found the whole process very effective and easy to understand. Sabitra BK of Chisapani said, “I would have missed one of the biggest opportunities of my life, if I was not here to participate in this program.” Many participants found this program to be very effective and practical compared to other trainings they had previously attended. The best part of the program was their enthusiasm and eagerness was high through the entire program.

The results of the pre and post-test also indicated the radical differences in level of understanding of the participants. The highest score resulted in the pre-test was 5 out of 25 whereas the highest score in the post-test was 23 out of 25. All of the participants were found to have markedly increased their score in the post-test, which was a great achievement of the program.

With three days of intensive program, the participants were able to understand basic human rights principles and Nepal’s legal system. One participant aspired to start a network in his VDC for advocacy of human rights violations. Participants acknowledged that the laws in Nepal are good but voice needs to be raised to implement these them. There were many participants who had participated for the first time in any kind of training. They felt the growth in their personal development; they were glad that they got the opportunity to speak in front of the group. Most of them shared that they were very shy and scared to speak up in the beginning but gradually they also gained the confidence to speak.
Mock Village Council (Cluster I)

Mock village council was held in Nepalgunj from May 9-12 of 2013. There were 45 youth participants from marginalized communities selected from 5 different VDCs of Banke district; they are Rajhena, Naubasta, Chisapani, Bankatawa and Titihiriya. There was significant number of female participation, which was more than 53% of the total. This is especially significant because participation of young women in Tarai is difficult. The adjacent figure shows distribution of participants based on caste. More than two third of the participants were from Dalit, Muslim and indigenous communities.

For most of the participants, they are attending this kind of program for the first time. Participants stressed that it was a very excellent program, which helped them build their leadership capacity, as well as informative and useful training session. They were from different background that added diversity in their learning experience.

On the first day, a pre-test questionnaire was distributed to comprehend their understanding on VDC processes. The same questionnaire (post-test) was distributed at the end of the program. The significant difference in the marks obtained by the participants in pre-test and post-test also demonstrated the level of growth in the participants. Only 1 participant scored above 40% in the pre-test and the rest scored below 40%, whereas 22 out of 45 participants scored above 40% in the post-test. The lesson learned from the evaluation of this program was the questions asked were of high level, which made it tough for the participants to answer with ease.

The sessions on democracy, good governance, accountability and right to information had energized participants to be part of local development process. Similarly, proper use of energizers in between made the program entertaining as well as it helped in maintaining the constant level of interest in the participants.
The participants were observed to be very enthusiastic through the end of the program. Introvert participants were also found to be expressing their views and actively involved in the sessions towards the end.

The session on proposal writing for the local government engaged all the participants to think of an issue/problem in their community and develop a project proposal. All the proposals were submitted to Ward Citizen Forum, where the proposals were prioritized in participatory method before submitting to Integrated Planning Committee. The meetings at Ward Citizen Forum and Integrated Planning Committee were very lively as if they were real members of these working groups. Some of the selected proposals were:

1. Awareness program against girl trafficking
2. Forestation program
3. Awareness raising for Open Defecation Free Zone
4. Skill development training
5. Bridge construction
6. Human Rights Training
7. Support program for disabled persons
8. Gender training for women and men
9. Road Construction
10. Child Development Center

These proposals were submitted to VDC office. With series of discussion, the Mock Village Council approved those proposals with allocation of budget. The program ended with formal session of Mock Village Council inaugurated by Mock Local Development Officer of Banke. Prem Baigar, Namuna VDC Secretary presented annual planning report. Representatives of Mock political parties expressed their views on the annual planning.

The program proved to be a real learning experience for the participants. Most of them were not aware of VDC processes. The practical tools and methods made it easier to internalize the whole process. One of the participants said, “I have never participated or been a member of any groups but after being a part of this training, I am sure I will participate in the coming days.”

The face-to-face training delivered consisted of lectures and practical exercises (in groups and individual tasks). These techniques work well in the context of general courses. Lectures were useful in delivering the key points to the overall group, whilst the exercises provided the true ‘hands-on’ element of the course. Practical exercises and practical tasks allowed the participants to think about the subjects for themselves and helped in internalizing the course content. The changing seat arrangement also helped the participants to get introduced to new seating environment with new friends. This also helped in maintaining constant level of interest among the participants. Training tools were primarily used to supplement and enhance the training methods and the participants seemed satisfied with the training tools developed for them. Those training tools in the form of handouts included the summary of the 4 day long training and about the village processes. Along with the handouts, a handbook of village council was also
distributed among the participants that would help them to stay familiar with the village processes in the future as well.

The program was covered by local newspapers and FM stations. *Dainik Nepalgunj (Newspaper)*, in its banner news emphasized the need of youth participation in the developmental activities. The news was titled “Youths exercising Village Council”. The newspaper also quoted few sayings from Prem Baigar, Secretary of Mock Village Council that clearly stated the growth and satisfaction among the participants. Manisha Chaudhary (Social Mobilizer of Mock Village Council) said, “The program is an eye opener for me. I learned about VDC working process. Now, I am confident to share my learning with others. The ninth grader added, “I can now participate in planning projects for youths and children.” The newspaper focused on the main processes of proposal prioritization and feedback given by the participants.

Ramesh Kumar Paudel, Expert Facilitator of Mock Village Council said, “The Local Self Governance Act, 2055 and Directives on VDC/DDC working procedures, 2067 and Directives on local resource mobilization and management, 2069 emphasize on participatory process of planning, prioritization, budget allocation and implementation of development projects at local level. But, VDC/DDCs hardly follow the exact process. I think this program has encouraged youth to participate in VDC processes.”

The program had good impact on participants and they had shown keen interest of working in coordination with HimRights and other community based organizations. This is where we need to focus on to see the real change and youth participation in local governance. Post Mock Village Council HimRights supported the participants in organizing a ‘meeting’ with VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers and youths (every participant accompanied by at least 2 new youths) in each VDC. It gave them exposure to communicate with the stakeholders. This also helped in documenting their outreach with the society and the real impact of the program.
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster II)

There were 30 youth participants selected from different communities of Matahiya, Phattepur, Gangapur, Kamdi and Binauna. Participants were selected from Dalit, Muslim, indigenous groups and other marginalized communities – they were energetic and enthusiastic to learn about human rights and Village Council process from the very first day. 19 out of 30 participants were female which shows the significant participation of females in this program. Most of the participants were exposed to training programs earlier but only few of them had attended human rights training. More than two third of the participants were previously affiliated with different social organizations like child clubs, youth clubs, cooperatives, women’s network and community organizations. Many of the participants found this program very effective and practical compared to other trainings they had previously attended. The participants did not let their enthusiasm and interest go down till the last day of the program which can be taken as a factor to measure the effectiveness of the program.

Ram Kumar Tharu, one of the enthusiasts from Fattepur VDC said, “Thank you organizing team for providing this training which I think will be very useful in our coming days. I request my fellow participants to return back and share the knowledge we have learned here rather than storing into our heads.”

Meena Pun Magar expressed her happiness by saying, “Thanks for giving us knowledge about human rights which is one of the most important parts of our lives. I found this training very entertaining and liked the tools and methods our facilitator used here. I want to thank the organizing team for being so humble and for giving me this opportunity to participate and broaden my knowledge.”

Kayum Mukeri said, “I feel like we are now responsible for bringing the change in our community. I am hopeful that trainings like this will be held in rural places like ours in future as well.”
Mock Village Council (Cluster II)

There were 44 indigenous youths from 5 different VDCs of Banke district; they are Matahiya, Phattepur, Gangapur, Kamdi and Binauna. The program was directly observed by the secretary of Phattepur VDC, Mr. Deepak Paudel, who contributed in the program as ‘Trainer from VDC’ by sharing his experiences and knowledge. Besides his help, the Social Mobilizer of Binauna VDC, Ganga Oli also supported the organizing team as volunteers. Meena Pun, a participant of Human Rights training also worked as a volunteer and helped in simplifying the tasks and facilitating the participants to speak up and express their views. Their involvement and participation enhanced the prestige as well as helped in internalizing the processes in detail.

Besides the good participant selection, proper use of energizers is also needed to maintain constant level of energy in the participants and to reduce tediousness. The participatory approach and group activities helped participants to open up among the mass and express their views. The exercises being carried out in the practical session were found to be more effective as the involvement of the participants increased to a new level. Not only this, proper arrangement of hall and the seats were found to be one of the major factors for energetic participation of the attendants.

The growth in the participants could also be observed through the pre and post-test results. It was found that 23 out of 42 participants i.e. 54% had scored below 40% in the pretest whereas only 6 out of 42 i.e. 14% scored below 40% in the post test. This data can be taken as the tool which measures the level of knowledge gain among the participants. Not only the comparison between the pre and post-test results, but the concrete action plans prepared by the participants for their own VDC showed the amount of dedication and interest they had on the subject matter. The handouts and a handbook of village council were also distributed among the participants that would help them to stay familiar with the village processes in the future as well.

The formal closing program with certificate distribution and the opportunity given to the participants to give feedback also helped them in getting familiar with the organizing team members. One of the participant exclaimed, “The training was carried out in a very simple way which helped the participants in internalizing them. I hope that we will be able to adopt them in
practice. I used to think that only the secretaries and the political parties had roles in the village council but now I know that we are the main person responsible for it. I feel honored to be taken as a participant of this program.”

At the end of the program, a formal closing session was conducted. The invited guests were Social Development Officer of Banke DDC, representatives of different political parties and VDC Secretaries. The program received appreciation from not only the participants but also the invited guests. The representatives of political parties and the Social Development Officer of District Development Committee delivered inspiring speeches which encouraged the participants in making a commitment for the betterment of their society. Participants stressed that it was a very good event which helped them in boosting their confidence, as well as being an informative and useful training session. The mixed nature of the participants can be taken as the key factor behind the success of the training.

Representative of UCPN (M) impressed all of the participants by talking about the importance of youth in development of the country. He said, “The three things important in the development of the nation are 1) Good health of the youth, 2) Participation of the youth and 3) Education of the youth. All of us have adopted the habit of criticizing others, I expect these participants to leave this habit behind and work for our own betterment. This will eventually lead to the country’s betterment. The hard work of these youth will show where our country will be in the coming 10 years.”

Representing the participants, Dhan Kumari Tharu exclaimed, “The training was carried out in a very simple way which helped the participants in internalizing them. I hope that we will be able to adopt them in practice. I used to think that only the secretaries and the political parties had roles in the village council but now I know that we are the main person responsible for it. I feel honored to be taken as a participant of this program.”

Makbul Mukeri, one of the participants, shared his experiences, “Youth have always been underestimated in our society but after taking this training I am sure that I will be able to make a few differences in my community. I had never heard about the VDC Board meeting but now I know a lot about the processes of village council.”

Social Development Officer of Banke DDC said in his concluding remarks, “I am very happy to see all of the participant’s enthusiasm and interest. I hope they will help in identifying relevant issues and bringing up the programs through proposals in near future.”

The formal closing session was chaired by Bhim Bahadur Sarki, Secretary of Mock Village Council. He was very excited to chair the program with district level officials and representatives of political parties and get the opportunity to sit beside the leaders of the nation. He said, “I had never thought that I would get this opportunity of sitting beside the leaders as the chairperson of a program. It is not the first time I attended program like this, but without any doubts I can confidently say that it has been the best so far. The organizing team has been very supportive
and has taught us lessons that will be useful for our life. Now, I believe it is our duty to multiply this knowledge.”

Village Public Hearings: Cluster I (Chisapani)

The Village Public Hearing was organized in community hall of Chisapani VDC. There were 62 youth participants from Chisapani, Bankatawa, Rajhena, Titihiriya, and Naubasta VDC. Since the program was organized in Chisapani VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.

The Public Hearing was organized on December 4, 2013. The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Chisapani VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Ms. Jyoti Khatri presented the paper. She focused her paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation.

The stakeholders present on the Public Hearing were:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Name of the Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dhan Bahadur Nepali</td>
<td>Former Secretary, Chisapani VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basanta Acharya</td>
<td>Secretary, Chisapani VDC (New appointed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prem Shah</td>
<td>Head of Sub-Health Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anga Raj Dangi</td>
<td>Secretary, Rajhena VDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laxman Buda</td>
<td>Secretary, Titihiriya VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nayan Bahadur Shahi</td>
<td>Representative, Nepali Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhan Bhakta Buda</td>
<td>Representative, CPN (UML)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krishna Bahadur Shahi</td>
<td>Representative, UCPN (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wokil Jung Shahi</td>
<td>Representative, Rastriya Prajatantra Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naresh Bham</td>
<td>Representative, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratna Bahadur Basnet</td>
<td>Representative, Majdur Kisaan Party</td>
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Major issues raised during the public hearing were:
1. Services relating to VDC
2. Open Defecation Free program in Chisapani VDC
3. Sewerage management programs
4. Electrification programs
5. Consumer groups and youth participation
6. Services of Nepalgunj Medical College
7. Services provided by Sub-Health Post, Chisapani including distribution of free medicines
8. Roles of political parties on increasing participation of marginalized youths
9. Mobilization of youths in recent Constituent Assembly election

Issues raised by the participants with the response from the respective stakeholders are highlighted below:
Janak B.K, Chisapani VDC: There was certain amount of budget separated for the Open Defecation Free program. Could you please clarify where the 50% of the budget was invested on and how much fund was collected?

Dhana Bahadur BK, Former VDC Secretary: 50% budget remaining from the ODF program was deposited in the Karnali Bikash Bank which is situated in Kohalpur. The account had been opened in the name of ‘Drinking water, Sanitation and Cleanliness Committee’ in which the coordinators of the committee as well as representative from the sub-health post are the executive members. Some amount was used for the survey which showed the data of the toilet usage. We have also used the survey to find out the numbers of families in need of financial support from us. We are planning to support them financially by providing matching fund.

Geeta K.C, Chisapani VDC: Last year, Rs. 2,75,000 had been allocated for the Sewerage Management Program which was only limited to 5 or 6 houses in the implementation phase. The program ended without completion and no one took interest in knowing about it. I want to know if the program could be restored in the coming days.

Dhana Bahadur BK, former VDC Secretary: The program had been paused due to budget constraints. The budget allocated for the program was not sufficient due to which the program could not be completed with the limited budget. I think the program will be restored in few years after proper management.

Bishnu Chaudhary, Chisapani VDC: Why hasn’t the VDC been provided with electricity in spite of various attempts of fixing of the electric poles?

Dhana Bahadur BK, former VDC Secretary: In this case, the DDC had financially supported us with Rs. 4,00,000 which was after the request sent by the VDC. With this support our VDC had fixed the electricity poles but due to the lack of transformer, there has not been the flow in the electricity. The fixing of transformer had been halted as the Nepal Electricity Authority, Banke, has been blacklisted by the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority. I think the process will continue after the completion of investigations.

Sabitra Pariyar, Chisapani VDC: We all know that Nepalgunj Medical College is situated in our VDC. What initiation has been taken by the Medical College for development of the VDC and youths of the VDC? And what benefits has it made to the local people?

Dhana Bahadur BK, former VDC Secretary: There hasn’t been any initiation made by the Nepal Medical College for the studies of the local people, and the VDC has not done any program in the college. Talking about the benefits to the local people, there hasn’t been any type of collaboration done by the VDC with the medical college till date. We have not been in a close contact with the members of the college and there hasn’t been any initiation made by the VDC for betterment of the local community people in collaboration with Nepalgunj Medical College.

Lek Bikram Shahi, Chisapani VDC: Why is it that the budget allocated for youth always used for the Football games and nothing else?

Dhana Bahadur BK, former VDC Secretary: The proposals brought from the youth have always been football centric. So, they have to bring new proposals. The budget allocated for the youth is only Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 45,000 and the youth clubs should consult with each other in order to bring effective programs. It is clear that the budget cannot be divided among different
clubs and it has to be focused towards the whole VDC. The proposals have not been timely brought about by the youth which is why the programs have not been effective.

**Janak B.K, Chisapani VDC:** *I wanted to know what kinds of people are selected in the Consumer Groups. Can youths be part of those groups?*

**Dhana Bahadur BK, former VDC Secretary:** There is a selection procedure for the consumer group which has been mentioned in the Local Resource Mobilization and Management Directives, 2069, on Page number 40. The procedure has recently been changed and it says that the consumer group should be of 7-11 members which should include representatives from all the targeted groups. The selection is not done by the secretary or any of the political parties but the local people who are the consumers of the community have to show their presence in the selection procedure. They are selected by the consumers themselves.

**Question relating to services provided by Sub-Health Post (SHP), Chisapani**

**Janak B.K, Chisapani VDC:** *How are staffs of sub-health post selected? Are they recruited directly from the Government of Nepal or locally? Is the new SHP building being built by the national budget or I/NGOs support?*

**Prem Shah, Head of Sub Health Post:** The management committee and the members of SHP are selected by the Government of Nepal and we cannot interfere in the selection procedures. This building has been constructed initially for the leprosy treatment and training. It has been supported by the District Development Committee. This is one of the first buildings for such purposes and I was awarded Dikshya Dakshya Award.

**Dal Bahadur Sunar, Bankatwa VDC:** *Are the local community people aware about 32 types of medicines which are distributed free of cost?*

**Prem Shah, Head of Sub Health Post:** Yes, the local people have been made aware about those medicines and the treatment. This method has been started from Magh 1, 2064 BS. I would also like to highlight that our SHP is one of the most appreciated SHPs in entire Nepal. The medicines have always been provided to the local people if they arrive on time. I accept that the local people have not been able to receive as much as they needed, but, that is entirely only because of the lack of enough medicines in our health post.

**Question to the representatives from different political parties**

**Sabitra Pariyar, Chisapani VDC:** *There are many Dalit communities in Ward no. 1. What are the initiations taken by the political parties for them and if not what are the things that will be done in future?*

**Representative, CPN (UML):** Kalu Baigar is the chief of Dalit Janamorcha who had attended the meeting of Integrated Planning Committee with us. He was present as a representative from the Dalit organization and on his recommendation a proposal was approved which was Drainage Management Program of total budget Rs. 2,75,000. Political parties have always and will always be supporting for the empowerment and development of Dalit community.

**Navraj Rawal, Chisapani VDC:** *Youths were fully mobilized by the political parties for the election campaigns. They had even promised to provide employment to these youths. What do you have to say about it after the election process?*
Representative, CPN (Maoist): Youths were mobilized in the election campaigns as they are one of the important parts of the nation. They were mobilized by their own will to bring about change and development in the nation without enticing them of any employment opportunities. But, if any of members of the political parties had promised about the employment opportunities then those members are not allowed to be called members of any political parties.

Questions relating to newly appointed VDC Secretary

Bamdev Pokhrel, Rajhena VDC: What new methods and things will be adopted by you when you will be working as a VDC Secretary to set example in whole Banke District?

Basanta Acharya, VDC Secretary: I am very happy to be appointed as a new Secretary. I will be completing all of the tasks on behalf of the elected chairperson of the VDC. Due to various interventions made by different NGOs, INGOs and political parties, the awareness level in the community people have high. I will be in close contact with these agencies for the improvement and development of the community.
Village Public Hearings: Cluster II (Kamdi)
The Village Public Hearing was organized in Kamdi VDC on January 20, 2014. There were 60 youth participants from Kamdi, Fattepur, Gangapur, Matehiya, and Binauna VDC. Since the program was organized in Kamdi VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.

The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Kamdi VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Mr. Bhim Bahadur Sarki presented the paper. He focused the paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation.

The stakeholders present on the Public Hearing were:

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bal Krishna Chaudhary</td>
<td>Secretary, Kamdi VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tikaram Bohora</td>
<td>In-charge, Sub-Health Post, Kamdi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buddharam Yadav</td>
<td>Head, Livestock Services Sub-center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resham Neupane</td>
<td>Representative, CPN (UML)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ganeshman Khadka</td>
<td>In-charge, Area Police Office, Kamdi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jhuthuwa Tharu</td>
<td>Coordinator, Citizen Awareness Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Naresh Yadav</td>
<td>Social Mobilizer</td>
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Major Issues discussed during the Hearing:
- Irregularity of VDC staffs in the Office
- Services provided by Livestock Services Center
- Services provided by Agriculture Services Center
- Services provided by Sub-Health Post
- Annual budget allocation from VDC Office
- Budget allocation for promotion of youth participation in participatory planning process
- Political interference in Integrated Planning Committee
- Functions of VDC level Monitoring Committee

Question to the respective Stakeholders
A participant from Fattepur VDC 3: As a VDC Secretary, we can understand that you have lots of work to do and you are not able to come to the office regularly. I am concerned about why other VDC officers are not regularly present as they are meant to be in the office?

VDC Secretary: Firstly thank you for the question. We have to do many works inside and outside the office and also same thing goes to the other VDC staffs. We work under the DDC and there are many programs going on in different parts of the VDC. We need to go for field visits along with VDC staffs and Social Mobilizer and we could not attend the office. On the other hand, we might have to take leave under various circumstances. But, we try our best to take minimum leaves.
Muna Khatri, Gangapur VDC 7: Does Livestock Services Center provides free veterinary medicines to the farmers? If yes, then which types of medicine do they provide?

Livestock Services Center: Livestock Services Center provides its services in 4 VDCs, they are Fattepur, Bankatti, Kamdi and Pareni. We have medicine for small injuries and infections which we provide for free of cost and there are medicines which farmers have to buy as per prescriptions and only after that we conduct surgery to their animal. We don't provide other facilities except the PPR vaccination.

Ramkumar Sonkar, Kamdi VDC 4: In the agriculture service center office, they get many kinds of seeds. I have heard from others that they didn't provide those seeds to the farmers but to their relatives and friends. I want to ask why is there that kind of biasness?

VDC Secretary: Thank you for the question. The Agriculture Officer is not present here right now. Agriculture Service Center in Udrapur provides the necessary service in this VDC (Kamdi). I don’t think these kinds of activities are going on the Center.

Nirmala Sahi, Kamdi VDC 6: As per our government rules, usually health posts are opened from 10-4 pm but why our health post open from 10-2 pm only?

Head of Sub-Health Post: Yes, we provide services only from 10 to 2 pm because after 2 pm we have other official work and our work is not only to take care of patients. We have other official work too which we start after 2 pm. As per government rule, we provide maternity service for 24 hours a day.

Bishnu Maya Neupane, Kamdi VDC 8: As you said health post is providing services for 24 hours. If the service provider is not there how will we get services? When women get pregnant they go to the health service center for check up every 4 months. If they give birth at home, are they eligible to get the facilities and allowances as those who give birth in health post get?

Head of Sub-Health Post: We have two service provider or nurses, they are also human being, and they also get sick or have some personal work or problem. I agree, sometimes we can't provide 24 hour service but I have told them if one has to take a leave other has to stay at health post and we have tried our best to give as much time as we can.

If a woman gives birth in health service center, we provide Rs. 500/- as transportation fare and other perks. If she has been going on a regular check-up for four times in 4th, 6th, 7th, and 8th month and gives birth in health service center, they are provided with a card which they have to show while receiving the transportation allowance of Rs. 500 and service charge Rs. 400 in total Rs. 900. If one gives birth at home, we cannot provide them with such benefits.

Madhusudan Yadav, Kamdi-8: How much is our internal resources of VDC?

VDC Secretary: There are not much internal resources of VDC. We only take fees from registration and referrals. The royalty from sand and boulder stone directly goes to DDC,
therefore VDC does not get those any royalty. Last year, we have only Rs. 100,000 from fees collected as our internal source of VDC.

**Hariram Yadav, Matahiya- 8:** *What kind of process or planning is done with the amount allocated for youths in the VDC?*

*Therefore we can also plan and work in our VDC by taking example of your Kamdi VDC.*

**VDC Secretary:** The youth of our Kamdi VDC is very active, and I am very happy see the kind of programs done by our youth. If youth are willing to engage in development activity of community then we can do much better in future. I want to encourage every youth to engage in VDC policy making and planning processes. We commit to bring some more capacity building programs in future for the betterment of our VDC.

**Kalpana KC, Kamdi – 6:** *Why only political parties are invited in Integrated Planning Committee?*

**VDC Secretary:** We haven't invited only political parties, but we have included local youth clubs and women’s groups like Nawadurga Club and Paralegal Committees.

**Sangita Chalauni, Kamdi-7, Padampur:** *Is there a VDC level monitoring committee? If yes then how many members are there? Are there any female representative? How many female representatives are there in IPC? Why is Citizen Awareness Center established only in Ward no. 9?*

**VDC Secretary:** Yes, we have VDC level monitoring committee. I agree there are not 13 women representative in IPC but we have included women from child club, VDC board, political party representatives, women representative of Ward Citizen Forum and Paralegal Committee. We haven't been biased but it is true as mentioned in baseline paper, monitoring committee has not been effective. But we can form a youth pressure group to raise awareness in the community about how VDC is working in the development and betterment of community.

**Social mobilizer:** We work by the directions of Local Development Ministry and District Development Committee. Therefore in each VDC or Municipality, there should be only one Citizen Awareness Center.

**A participant of Kamdi VDC:** *VDC receives social security allowance for elderly but not distributed on time why? 10% of budget is allocated for the development of children. Where is that budget spent?*

**VDC Secretary:** We have distributed social security allowance on time but there are some cases, the elders don’t come to receive the allowance. It is not possible to keep money in VDC. We have issued public notice to collect social service allowance on time. As far as children's budget is concerned, we have invested it in child development activities.
Makwanpur

Central Development Region

Number of VDCs: 43
Municipality: 1
Population: 420477
Population (15-24 years): 87,165
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster I)

There were 31 marginalized youth from Hatiya, Padampokhari, Churiyamai, Hadikhola and Kamane-8 (Hetauda Municipality) which comprised of diverse communities. They were selected in consultation with VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers and Surveillance groups (formed by HimRights). The participants were mostly from Dalit and Indigenous communities. The participants were very energetic from the beginning to the end and they were quite passionate to learn about human rights. Most of the participants were involved in child club, Junior Red Cross Circle, others Group, Forum and organization; they were active from the first day of the program.

Almost two third of the participants (19) had participated in a training for the first time and they said that they found the training very effective. They could actually incorporate what was being taught since the training tools and techniques were very user friendly and easy to understand. They felt the growth in their personal development and they were glad that they got the opportunity to speak in front of the participants of the training. Most of them shared that they were very shy and scared to speak up in the beginning but gradually they gained confidence to speak up.

The session on youth participation in development successfully identified some of the key issues of youths and prospective solutions. Through discussions identified creating employment opportunities, awareness campaigns, youth centered programs, vocational and skill development trainings, and promoting institutional development for youth as the solutions to increase participation in development process.

One of the participants said, "If I weren’t able to attend this training, I would’ve missed several things to learn about Human Rights." Another participant said, "What I learned here will definitely be implemented in my community."

With three days of intensive program, the participants were able to understand basic human rights principles and Nepal’s law and legal system. Participants acknowledged that the laws in Nepal were very precise but voice was raised for need to implement these laws. There were many participants who had participated for the first time in any kind of training.
Mock Village Council (Cluster I)

There were 45 participants selected from different VDCs of Makwanpur district (Haitya, Handikhola, Churiyamai and Padam Pokhari) and 1 ward of Hetauda Municipality (Kamane). More than 57% of the participants were female which encouraged women participation in Mock VDC and provided them opportunity to participate in the program. Tamang community is the largest indigenous groups in this district; hence, 20 of the participants were from this community. On the other hand, six youths were from Dalit community. Mr. Badri Sapkota, VDC Secretary of Haitya VDC attended the program and provided direct support and guidance for effective and efficient flow of the program. Besides his help, Ms. Apsara B.K, social mobilizers of Haitya VDC, Ms. Shanti Karki, of Hetauda Municipality – 8, volunteered during the program. Their involvement and participation enhanced the real experience, prestige and in internalizing the processes in detail. Their involvement also forged linkage between them and the participants.

The level of growth in knowledge was clearly revealed by the results of pre-test and post-test. It clearly indicated the increased interest and curiosity about the developmental activities being done in their own VDC. Almost half of the participant (23 out of 45 participants) scored 40% or below in the pre-test whereas only 4 out of 45 scored 40% and below in the post-test. The results clearly point to the effectiveness of the program.

Organizers observed most of the participants were enthusiastic throughout the program except for few participants. Few participants were quiet in the beginning of the program but the changed gradually. Group exercises were major factors, which helped them to get familiar with other participants and aided them in opening up soon. Participants actively involved in the group exercises.
The session with VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer and their roles was conducted in the form of public dialogue; they were the panelist. The participants raised their queries about VDC secretary and their roles and responsibilities. The panelist answered the issues raised by them. It provided participants with opportunity to directly discuss with VDC Secretary and raise their issues.

The selection of Mock VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizers were done through democratic election process. There were nine interested candidates for the post of VDC Secretary and 6 for Social Mobilizer. They could not come to a consensus to nominate the candidates for the posts. Election was held as a democratic process, the result was accepted by all the candidates. Bijaya BK and Srijana Bartaula were selected as Secretary and Social Mobilizer respectively. Bijay B.K, newly elected Secretary of Mock VDC expressed his happiness by saying, “I had really not thought that so many of my friends would believe in me and vote for me. I will perform all of my duties sincerely.”

The sessions on proposal writing, prioritization of development proposals and meetings of different committees had really engaged participants into the VDC process. The Mock Village Council approved following development projects with allocation of budgets:

- Health camp for women’s health
- Skill development training on bamboo craft
- Public Sanitation program and public wells
- Awareness program against child labor
- Construction of Child Shelter Home
- Program for Improved Cooking Stoves
- Forestation Program

At the end of the program, representatives of different political parties, journalists and VDC Secretaries of 3 VDCs and Secretary of Hetauda Municipality participated in the concluding ceremony in spite of their busy schedule. The Chief Guest was Social Development Officer of Makwanpur DDC. All of them stressed the importance of this excellent initiative which would directly help the participants in developing their skills and increasing their interest in developmental activities. They also added that this program would enhance youth participation in development activities.

Speaking at the program, Rameshwor Rana, Representative from CPN (UML), expressed, “I hope participants will be able to act as a leader and represent their wards in coming days. Local Election hasn’t taken place since 2054 and I hope to see youth participation in next election for the post of Mayor and Chairperson.”

The Chief Guest, Ramkrishna Thapa, Social Development Officer delivered his speech. He elaborated on the challenges while carrying out any activity in the VDC and current practices in the VDC. He said, “These types of trainings are most needed for the youth and I am hoping to see Makwanpur to be on the top and setting examples for other districts.”
There was news about the Mock Village Council in different regional newspapers. One published in ‘Samriddha Samaj’ emphasized on the need of youth participation in the developmental activities. The news titled “Involvement of youth in Village development”. The newspaper also quoted statements of the participants that clearly stated the growth and satisfaction among the participants.
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster II)

A total of 30 participants attended this training program that was from different marginalized communities of Makwanpur District. The communities were from Chitlang, Tistung, Daman, Palung and Bajrabarahi VDC. Participants were selected from Dalit, Indigenous groups and other marginalized communities – they were energetic and enthusiastic to learn about human rights and VDC Council process from the very first day. 24 out of 30 participants were female i.e. 80%, which shows the significant participation of females in this program. Some of the participants were members of student wings of political parties, members of Ward Citizen Forum, NGOs, cooperatives, mother group, and adolescent group and school teachers.

The difference in the marks obtained by the participants in the pre-test and post-test shows the growth in the level of knowledge. They were not able to answer the simple human rights questions in the beginning where as by the end of the program they were found to be confidently answering them. Another point to be noted, there was rapid growth in the level of curiosity in the participants.

Ritu Lama explained her experience of being part of this, “I would like to thank HimRights for coming up with this training. I hope that all of us will become someone who can develop their community. This has been the best training I have attended so far as these kinds of training are very fruitful in the places like ours.” She also added that at first it is very difficult to learn something but after you learn then it is very difficult to implement it in your behavior.

Similarly Milan Karki exclaimed, “The development of a community is in the hands of the youth, so these kinds of training are necessary in raising awareness among the youth, especially in the less developed places like ours.”

Rabi Kumar Lama, Chairperson of the day, said, “I am very happy to be a part of this program. I liked the teaching style of our facilitator and specially liked the topic about Human Right violation. These topics are very relevant for the youngsters.”
Mock Village Council (Cluster II)

The training was attended by 45 indigenous youths from 5 different VDCs of Makwanpur district (Tistung, Chitlang, Daman, Palung and Bajrabarahi) which were grouped as Cluster 2. There were 9 participants from each VDC. Female participation was appreciative, 73% of the participants were female. The VDC Secretary of Daman selected as ‘Trainer from VDC office’; he contributed by sharing his experiences and knowledge with the participants. Besides that, Ramsharan Gopali, Social Mobilizer of Bajrabarahi VDC and Prabha Syangtan of Daman worked as volunteers. They supported the organizing team and facilitated the participants in different group activities.

14 out of 45 participants scored below 40% in the pre test whereas only 4 participants scored below 40% in the post test. It was found that there were some improvements in each and every participant in the post test. The lowest score in the pre test was 4 out of 20 whereas the lowest score in the post test was 7 out of 20. This shows the difference in the marks obtained by the participants in the pre test and in the post test which also reflects the level of knowledge gain in the participants after attending the training.

Not only the comparison between the post and pre test results, but the concrete action plans prepared by the participants for their own VDC showed the amount of dedication and interest they had on the subject matter. Along with this, evaluation sheets were distributed among the participants to get their feedback which was a Likert scale evaluation. This showed that most of the participants found this program to be very relevant, having suitable time period, well managed, having very good facilitation skills, and using relevant tools. Most of the participants were found to be satisfied with the training program. Some of the participants commented that they did not have enough of this program and requested the organization to come back with these programs in future as well.

This program received positive feedbacks from not only the participants but also the VDC Secretary, representatives of political parties, Social Development Officer and Social Mobilizers. Rabi Kumar Lama said, “The program has worked in opening our eyes and I hope we will be able to share the knowledge as much as possible. It is said that each drop has to join with other to form a river, so, we should share our experience starting with one person and then multiply
the knowledge. This will help in spreading the knowledge and information to all the people of our community.”

Similarly, Mrigawati Lo expressed how happy she was to be a part of this program. She emphasized, “The investment had been done in the wrong sectors and now we should all stand up to correct it. It is not just our right but our duty to do this.”

One of the representatives of a political party said, “I have also participated in many programs like his. But, truly saying, I had never internalized the content being taught in the program. Now, I realize how important it is for us and our community. So, I request you all to share your experiences after returning home.” Not only did he say this, he also encouraged the participants to participate in the election or any other governmental processes in the near future.

Ram Krishna Thapa, Social Development Officer, stressed on the fact, these types of programs are very helpful in institutionalizing local development processes. He also encouraged the youth to not just be curious about the physical development but keep their interest on the promotional activities as well. According to him, the social issues prevalent in the society such as domestic violence, caste-wise discrimination, and health camps and women empowerment should be addressed and the programs should be brought into practice. He concluded his speech by saying, “I want to request the youth participants to improve your self. It will take a little more of hard work, research, studies and interest but change is not far.”
Village Public Hearing: Cluster I (Handikhola)

The Village Public Hearing was organized in VDC premises of Handikhola. There were 50 youth participants from Handikhola, Churiyamai, Hatiya, Padampokhari and Hetauda-8. Since the program was organized in Handikhola VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.

Public Hearing was organized on December 17, 2013. The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Handikhola VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Mr. Roshan Aaryal presented the paper. He focused the paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raju Acharya</td>
<td>Secretary, Handikhola VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basanta Kumar Sitaula</td>
<td>Former-Secretary, Handikhola VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shankar Neupane</td>
<td>Representative, Nepali Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhuwindra Aryal</td>
<td>Representative, CPN (UML)</td>
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<td>Gajadhar Subedi</td>
<td>Representative, UCPN (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bir Bahadur Theeng</td>
<td>Representative, Rastriya Prajatantra Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Prasad Kalakheti</td>
<td>Representative, Maoist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janak Dutta Ghimire</td>
<td>Representative, Agriculture Services Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Chandra Dahal</td>
<td>Head of Handikhola Health Post</td>
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Major issues raised in the Public Hearing:
1. Establishment of Citizen Charter
2. Political consensus on development activities
3. Formation and Activities of Citizen Awareness Center
4. Services of Health Post: mobile health camps
5. Budgets allocated for targeted groups and women, and their participation in development
6. ODF and transparency of Social Security fund
7. Transparency of VDCs, Health Post, Agriculture Services Center
8. Drinking water project

Issues raised by the participants with the response from the respective stakeholders:

Ram Prasad Murberi, Handikhola VDC: The Citizen Charter does not have the list of service charges. Can it be included now? If yes, when will the process be completed and if no, why?

Raju Aacharya, Secretary Handikhola VDC: Yes, it can obviously be changed and the services charges should be included. We have not been able to complete it due to various factors. But, if the respective departments support me in this process, it will be completed in a month. I can assure you that both the service charges and fees will be included in the Citizen Charter in one month along with the upgrading of the Citizen Charter.

Prakash Jamkattel, Handikhola VDC: Can all the political parties work hand in hand in the development activities? Why? (In both cases)
Bhuminandra Aryal, CPN (UML): I agree that if all the political parties work hand in hand then it will be easier to work for development. All the parties should be included in the Maintenance Committee which is formed for any type of program. It should be done by discussing with all of the stakeholders and also with the local people via ward gathering. Our party is ready to coordinate with other parties and work together as a group for any development activity.

Nirajan Dhakal: What percentage of the budget is cut off by the VDC in implementation of any developmental activities? Only 75% of the total budget was given to us in the program of well construction while the remaining was said to be cut off by the VDC itself. The program was of fiscal year 2067/2068.

Basant Kumar Sitaula, Former VDC Secretary: I have never cut off any percentage of the budget in my working period. If anyone wants to know about the process of budget dissemination then you are welcome in our office. But, I have never used the budget given to the consumer groups. I have not even cut off 3% of the total budget as contingency charge as in other VDCs. So, I think there has been some kind of leakage in the consumer group itself.

Devaki Dhungana: Why hasn’t there been significant participation of women in the programs related to agriculture?

Sarita Lamsal, Mobilizer: I think it is because of the lack of communication with the local people. I accept that it has been our weakness to be not able to disseminate information to the local people. I can assure you that the local people will be getting updated information if I am informed by different departments.

Sushila Adhikari, Handikhola-1: It is very difficult for ward number 1, 2 and 3 to reach the Health Post. Can a sub health post be established in ward number 2 so that it will be easier for us to get the services?

Ram Chandra Dahal, Head of Health Post: We have been conducting “gaau ghar clinic” in four different wards. The wards had been selected in such a way that even the people living far from the area of health post could get the services. We have been visiting the wards twice a month to provide services to the local people. These are the facilities that we are providing as the establishment of sub-health post is not possible by only the health post.

Pushkar Bista, Handikhola VDC: Why does the health post refer the delivery cases? Is it because of lack of equipments in our health post?

Ram Chandra Dahal, Head of Health Post: Birthing centers have been established to reduce the complications during pregnancy and to reduce the maternal death. There were many cases of Post Partum Hemorrhage which was one of the major reasons for maternal death. There is only one trained personnel in the health post and there is absence of high risk management team. All of the cases have not been referred but only those cases are given referral which needs risk management.

Pushkar Bista, Handikhola VDC: Why is Citizen Awareness Center formed only in ward number 9?

Sarita Lamsal, Social Mobilizer: Establishment of Citizen Awareness Center is done only in one ward due to which it has been established in ward number 9. This represents the Citizen
Awareness Center of the whole VDC. We are soon planning to transfer it to another ward as the same issue was raised in the Ward Citizen Forum meetings.

**Ganesh Darpan Adhikari, Handikhola VDC:** There are posters of different political parties stuck in the walls of VDC Office. Is it appropriate for the political parties to advertise about their party like this?

**Gajadhar Subedi, UCPN (M):** I agree that the posters should not be stuck on the walls of VDC office. It might have been done for the meeting but they should have known where the posters should be stuck on. Those posters will be removed as soon as possible by our party.

**Hari Sharan Paudel, Handikhola VDC:** Are the programs related to agriculture brought separately or just included within the budget of the VDC? We have seen a lot of people from different insecticide companies advertising about their products and selling in the name of Agriculture Services Center. Why is it happening?

**Janak Dutta Ghimire, Head of Agriculture Services Center:** We also receive budget from the District Agriculture Department. The programs are brought by the Agriculture Committee and are also regularly monitored. It might be due to lack of trained personnel in the Center and also due to less interest shown by the political parties. 11 staffs were appointed in the Agriculture Services Center but it is reduced to 2 staffs. This is the reason for various insecticide companies to advertise their product in the name of Agriculture Services Center.

**Hari Sharan Paudel, Handikhola VDC:** What percentage of budget has been spent or but not cleared in our VDC?

**Former Secretary, Basanta Kumar Sitaula:** There hasn’t been any uncleared budget in our VDC. Though there is a pending budget for the construction of a building.

**Shanti Maya Theeng, Handikhola VDC:** My sister has been taking care of my brothers and she is 45 years old. Is there any provision for her to get the social security allowance to single woman? I wanted to know if unmarried women fall into category of single women or not.

**Basanta Kumar Sitaula, Former Secretary:** Social Security Incentive Guideline has not included this provision for the unmarried women. VDC has been working in close coordination with the local committee formed in the VDC. So, I request her to raise her issue within the committee which is headed by Durga Karki.

**Sita Maya Theeng, Handikhola VDC:** I am from ward number 4 and most of the community people have not been introduced with the Female Community Health Volunteer. She has been staying in Hetauda and not involved in the community. If they do not even know who the FCHV is, how can they get involved in the mother’s group?

**Ram Chandra Dahal, Head of Health Post:** Sushila Rumba has been working as the FCHV for ward number 4. I am quite surprised by this remark and this issue has to be dealt seriously. I
have heard that she has been working on behalf of her mother-in-law who had also worked as a Female Community Health Volunteer. I will assure you that this issue will be investigated in detail and feedbacks will be taken from the local people for proper management.

Puja Puri, Handikhola VDC: It is important for every individual to know about the budget received by the VDC, number of programs being implemented and amount of budget used by different programs. But, this information has not been kept in the notice board of our VDC. Why?

Raju Acharya, VDC Secretary: I assure you that the information about the amount of budget received and utilized in different topics will be provided to the local people via notice board in the VDC Office.

Commitments made by stakeholders:
- To inform all of the community people about the regular meetings organized by the mothers group.
- Investigation of the issue of FCHV, ward number 4, in detail and proper management of the issue by taking feedbacks from the local people.
- To inform local people about the amount of budget received and utilized via notice board.
- To increase youth participation in the development activities.
- It has been found that only the older people are involved in the Agriculture Department whereas the younger ones are involved in other sectors. We are willing to support the youth anytime they ask if they form a group and request for support from the department.
- Management of removing the posters stuck on the walls of VDC office by certain political party.
- To update the Citizen Charter in the VDC office premises within one month.
- To arrange a meeting for the bridge construction committee.
Village Public Hearing, Cluster II (Daman)
The Village Public Hearing was organized in community hall of Daman VDC. There were 50 youth participants from Daman, Chitlang, Palung, Bajrabarahi and Tistung. Since the program was organized in Daman VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.

Public Hearing was organized on December 23, 2013. The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Daman VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Mr. Kumar Negi presented the working paper. He focused the paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation. The stakeholders present in the Hearing were:

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<tr>
<td>Dasharath Guragain</td>
<td>Secretary, Daman VDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raghabendra Mishra</td>
<td>Head of Livestock Services Sub-Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahesh Kumar Choudhary</td>
<td>Head of Agricultural Department</td>
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<td>Ganesh Bahadur Lama</td>
<td>Representative, Nepali Congress</td>
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<td>Shivaram Thapa</td>
<td>Representative, UML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binod K.C</td>
<td>Representative, A-Maoist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uttar Bahadur Gopali</td>
<td>Representative, Rastriya Janamorcha Party</td>
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The whole process was aired on Palung FM 107.2 Mhz which is a local radio station in Daman. The public hearing ended with some concrete commitments by the stakeholders to address the issues raised during the program.

Major issues raised in the Public Hearing:
1. Budget for slate construction (DDC project)
2. Budget allocated for culture preservation
3. Public notice board and Citizen Charter in VDC premises and promotion of tourism places in Daman
4. Transparency in distribution of social security allowances

Issues raised by the participants with the response from the respective stakeholders:
Sugat Gopali: *We heard that for the Slate Construction budget had been passed from DDC but the work had not been done yet, is this true or not and if it is true then how this did happen?*

VDC Secretary: I have no any idea about this project as it happened before I was appointed here. We haven’t received any letter or related information for this project. If all the concerned stakeholders ask us about this project, we are willing to search all the related fact about the project in the DDC.

The land of our Guthi (Trust) which have been personally registered that makes us hard to conduct Guthi and Jatra (festival), and we didn't get any budget for the Guthi from anywhere.

Our culture is already in the line of extinction, can you manage permanent fund for this?

VDC Secretary: Firstly, yes, we have to protect our culture and tradition. If related stakeholder in VDC asked about the budget of Guthi, we have to provide that budget. But we have to propose the planning in Integrated Planning Committee and in other boards including political parties. As
the Guthi is our public property, we will commit to provide the budget for Guthi with high priority.

**Ritu Lama, Daman-7:** Has the information officer been appointed in the VDC along with their personal information? (name, email address and Phone number). What is your planning to put 7, 8 and 9 wards in the priority list so that it will also develop like other VDCs?
And, Daman is already established as a Tourist destination. Has the budget for tourism utilized for the development works? What is the progress of this program? Didn’t the VDC investigate about this? Please clarify.

**VDC Secretary:** Firstly, we haven't appointed any Information Officer yet. It is handled by VDC staffs. We assure you that the appointment will be done within the end of Magh (Jan/Feb).
The local people from ward no. 7, 8, and 9 have to show some interest regarding the development. This place is considered as an Open Defecation Free zone and people have built toilets. But, in the same time, people have been suffering from water scarcity. I had talked to the Officer of Plan International about this. Later, with the technical support from Idea Nepal, we searched the main source of water. But, as the local people did not show any interest in this issue and were not involved in the Village Council, we could not succeed. We are now presenting this as the main priority. It has been taking quite a long time but we have been working on keeping these wards in the priority list.
Last year’s village council was held before I was appointed as a secretary. We had presented the issue of Tourism development in Daman, Palung with the help of Integrated Planning Committee and received the total budget of Rs. 100,000 after recommendation from the Tourism Committee. The budget is not enough to include all of the aspects of tourism, so, coordination has been made with Idea Nepal to produce a documentary which comprises cultural, natural and geographical aspects of Daman VDC. The documentary will be completed within this year. We can get more budgets in the coming years for tourism if we bring up this issue via Integrated Planning Committee.

**Mrigawati Lama, Daman:** There was a high amount of corruption in the distribution of Social Security allowances. Distribution via banking system was introduced to avoid the misuse of the fund. But then I don’t think it has been implemented in our V.D.C. Has it started now? If yes then can we get information of the people who have received their incentive?

**VDC Secretary:** In the context of Makawanpur District's VDC, government planned to distribute Social Security allowances from DDC through the bank but this couldn’t be practiced due to various problems. All of the allowances sent to VDC are distributed to the respective people in every four months. This fiscal year and we are near to closing. So, it will be distributed soon. And after that we will publish all the information regarding this issue in Poush (December).

**Kitani Shanti Shyangtang** and **Chinimaya Shyangtang of Daman VDC ward no.6** were supposed to get Social Security allowance of Rs. 2000 of 4 months. But they received only Rs. 1500. They were made to sign the document which showed that they had received Rs. 2000.
VDC Secretary: We commit to find out the truth in one week and find out the responsible person and take strict action against them.

The purpose of Citizen Charter is to provide information to the local people. But, the Citizen charter in our VDC is very small in size with information printed in the back of the charter. The letters are not clear and it is difficult for us to understand the information. Do the VDCs get budget for the preparation of Citizen Charter? Can the charter be made larger and more visible?

The citizen charter was placed before I was appointed. Yes, it is small in size and not clear. I assure you that a large Citizen charter will be placed with clear letters in the coming fiscal year. And, we do not get any budget for the preparation of the Citizen Charter. Is has to be made by consulting with Integrated Planning Committee and other stakeholders.

Commitment
We will find the guilty person regarding to the canal construction and publish his name as soon as possible.
1. We commit to publish the name of the person, who is responsible for the re-construction of Canal of Shikharkot. (Secretary and Representative of Political Parties)
2. We will publish the name of VDC information officer's Name, Phone Number and Email Address, till this month ofz. (Secretary)
3. For the betterment and development of Tourism Planning of Daman Palung, we will be allocating money from VDC. (Secretary and all Political Parties)
4. We will conduct a training to lead Ward Citizen Forum actively and affectively. The time period of Ward Citizen Forum is 2 year and is going to end in this coming month of magh, therefore we will form a new Ward Citizen Forum and we will include as many as female and youth. (Social Mobilizer and Secretary)
5. The Citizen Charter in VDC is small in size, that's why we will make it big for the convenience of citizen to know the information of VDC. (Secretary)
6. For the information to the entire citizen, in next month of the Poush VDC will publish the name of every person who has received the Social Protection Incentive. (Secretary)
7. Daman VDC ward no.6 Kitani Shanti Shyangtang and Chinimaya Shyangtang both supposed to get Rs. 2000 of their Protection Incentive of 4 months but have only got Rs.1500 but made them sign where it has mentioned as they had got Rs.2000. In regards participants have raised question about this issue that’s why in 1 week we commit to find out the truth as soon as possible. (Secretary)
8. In coming days, we will provide detail information for the citizen about all those planning above Rs. 200,000. (Secretary)
9. To provide more efficient services to all the citizen of VDC, I commit to be present everyday at VDC. (Secretary)
10. Ward citizen forum will participate in next formation of Monitoring Committee as Citizen Local body resource mobilization and management procedure, 2069 has mentioned. (Secretary)
11. To know the complaints of the citizens, we will put the complaint box as soon as possible and after that we will see if there is any complaint and issue, we will investigate and try to find the possible result of it. (Secretary)
Bhojpur

Eastern Development Region

Number of VDCs: 63
Population: 182,459
Population (15-24 years): 36600
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster I)

Thirty youth participants were selected from five VDCs namely, Bhojpur, Taksar, Bokhim, Amtek, and Bhaisipankha and 62% of them were female. Most of them were from Dalit and Janajati communities. Three fourth of the participants were 20 or below 20 years old. Almost all of them were new to human rights training. Few of them were working as journalists in local newspaper and FM radios. It was bit challenging in the beginning due to congested venue; it was difficult to conduct group discussions and other group activities. Bhojpur is a mountain district with limited flat space. It was observed that the level of participation increased day by day.

Most of them were eager to learn about basic principle of human rights, human rights situation, and different legal provisions in Nepal. The understanding on basic concepts of human rights was minimal among the participants. By the end of the program, there were notable changes among them. The female participants were more inquisitive to learn new issues. The session on women rights made them very interested on the issue. One of the female participants said, “The training gave me chance to learn about different aspects of Human Rights. We all should implement these things in our society.”

The three-day training concluded with realization of basic concepts of human rights. They made positive commitments to implement their learning in their communities.
Mock Village Council (Cluster I)

A four day program on the "Mock Village Council" was held in Bhojpur on 25-28 June, 2013. There were 45 participants from five VDCs of the district: Bhojpur, Taskar, Bokhim, Amtek and Bhisipanka. The participants were mostly from Dalit, indigenous and other marginalized communities. In total 34 i.e. 78% was from Indigenous Nationality groups, and 7 i.e. (16 %) was from Dalit community.

The women participants comprised of 64%. Most of the men of this age has migrated. All the female participants were active, encouraging and energetic in this program. Majority of the participants were 20 years old or below.

The participants’ engagement increased day by day. The active participation in every subsequent session made livelier. Kaushila Shankar from Bokhim VDC, one of the vibrant participant said, “The training gave us live experience of every activities of VDC planning process; indeed, it was more participatory.” Another participant Deepak Shakya from Taksar VDC said, “We were waiting for such a program that provides all the youths with details of VDC processes. I think this program successfully provided in-depth knowledge about Village Council.” In the meeting with VDC Secretaries of Taksar, Bhojpur, Bokhim, Tiwari Bhanjyang, and Bhasipanka and the volunteers, they expressed, this is an effective innovative program. VDC secretary of Bokhim said, “This program will give us a learning opportunity.” Prem Shakya, Secretary of Taskar and Bhojpur VDC said, “The issue you are trying to deliver is very important for youths. This should be integrated into school curriculum so that youths know about those processes and realize the importance their participation in these processes. In fact, we do not follow the steps provisioned in the Directives. It is very time consuming.” He added, “But, participation of youths of this age group is almost none, at the same time, their participation is very crucial for development process.”
The closing session of Mock Village Council went very well. Prem Prasad Ghimire, Local Development Officer was the chief guest. Representatives of various political parties and local NGOs were present. Addressing the closing ceremony, Local Development Officer said, “The local governance should proceed in democratic way. The Local Governance Community Development Program aims to improve the living standards of the people through community led development program, proficient service delivery, good governance, based on a democratic value system and rights-based approach. I believe this program will contribute to LGCDP as well. The planning proposal should come out from community level. This type of program can help in implementation of program and committed youth in local development.” The representatives of political parties also appreciated the efforts of HimRights and committed to work in cooperation, hand in hand with youths. The program was aired by a local FM radio.
Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System (Cluster II)

A total of 30 participants attended the program, they were from different marginalized communities of Bhojpur District. They were selected from Dalit, indigenous groups and other marginalized communities of Pyauli, Tiwari Bhanjyang, Champe, Yangpang and Shyamshilla VDC. Almost two third (19 out of 30 participants) were female participants. For most of the participants, this was their first human rights training. Six of the participants had completed higher secondary level education. Some of the participants were from Thami and Jogi community, one of the most indigenous communities of the region. Second cluster is far from the district headquarters and it was expected that the participants would be less active and vocal. But, they were more active and vocal in comparison to that of the previous cluster. The first cluster was selected from Bhojpur, the district headquarter and the surrounding VDCs. Many of the participants found this program very effective and practical compared to other trainings they had previously attended.

Shyam Bishwokarma said, “This training was very fruitful. We know about our rights and we shouldn’t forget about our responsibilities.” He thanked the organizers and added, “There should be more programs in future. I think, the idea of bringing youth participant from five VDCs is great because we can share our experience to youth from other VDCs.”

The program successfully imparted insight on human rights and human rights violation. Similarly, Prem Kumari Magar exclaimed, “If we see any human rights violation in our communities we will act as a human rights defender. I hope all of the participants will share their knowledge and experience and further implement what they learned in this training.”

Bimala Bishwokarma, Chairperson of the day, said, “I feel very lucky to be able to participate in this program. This training has definitely made me more confident. I also learned about human rights and our responsibilities as a citizen. I am very happy to be a part of this program. I hope everyone will do well in their communities after returning from here.”

During the training, some of the participants of previous cluster (Cluster I) were invited to share their experience of being part of Human Rights Training and the activities they have been doing in their communities after the program. Dipak Shakya, one of the participants selected as the Secretary of Mock VDC, shared his experience, ”I want to thank our facilitators for boosting our confidence and making us able to speak in front of the mass. I have learned a lot of things about
human rights, VDC processes, Budget distribution and estimation, Role of a secretary in a VDC. I have come to know that these VDC processes are very important for the youth as well.”

Similarly, another Ex-participant, Kaushila Bishwokarma, also shared her experience. She shared, "I am very glad to see these many youths participating in this program. We learned about our rights and the responsibilities that come hand in hand with the rights. Proposal prioritization was another topic we learned about which taught us the step wise prioritization of the programs of the VDCs.”
Mock Village Council (Cluster II)

There were 44 marginalized youths from Pyauli, Shyamshila, Yangpang, Champe and Tiwari Bhanjyang which were grouped as Cluster 2. Some of the new participants were active members of student wings of political parties. This added diversity within the participants. There were more than 61% female participants i.e. 27 female participants out of 44 participants, which show the significant participation of female participants.

The VDC Secretary of Champe and Pyauli, Tarani Guragain, was the ‘Trainer from VDC’ of the whole process. Not only observation but he also contributed by sharing his experiences and knowledge with the participants. Besides that Social Mobilizers Tiladevi Ale Magar of Champe and Sarada Tiwari of Tiwari Bhanjyang assisted the program as volunteers.

17 out of 44 participants i.e. 39% of the total participants scored below 40% in the pre test whereas only 3 participants scored below 40% in the post test. It was found that there were some improvements in each and every participant in the post test. The lowest score in the pre test was 5 out of 20 whereas the lowest score in the post test was 7 out of 20. This difference in the marks obtained by the participants in the pre and post test shows the improvement in each participant. It also reflects the level of knowledge gained by the participants after attending the training.

This evaluation showed that most of the participants found this program to be relevant, effective, having suitable time period, well managed, having very good facilitation skills, and using relevant tools. Most of the participants were found to be satisfied with the training program. Some of the participants lamented on the program on being short and requested the organizing team to come back with these programs in future as well. Whereas some of the participants requested the organizing team to manage more energizers in between the program so that they would not get bored. The participants also appreciated the fact that the introvert participants were given more priority in the program which helped them in boosting their confidence.

The formal closing program was organized without representatives of political parties as the ‘Code of Conduct of CA Election’ had come into action. Hence, representative of NGOs, media persons were invited as guests. One of the invited guests was Jamuna Rai, a participant of the Cluster I. She not only highlighted the effectiveness of the program, but, she also briefed about the differences she found in her interests after the program.
Dhruba Subedi, representative from Avenues Television and Nepal Republic Media, encouraged all of the youth by saying, “All of the youth should work hand in hand with each other in helping the Secretary and turning your village into a Namuna Village. It is now your responsibility to awaken the respective personnel who have been sleeping and forgetting their responsibilities.”

One of the participants, also a representative from the Nepali Party C in the MVC, expressed her happiness for being able to participate in this program in the end of the formal session. She exclaimed, “I feel very lucky to be able to participate in this program. We have learned a lot about the VDC processes and village council.”

In a similar way, the representative of Chomelongma F.M. also delivered a short motivating speech to the participants. He stressed on the importance of female participation in development activities. He said, “Female participation has not been up to the mark because of the lack of awareness in the female population.” He added, “There are very less evidences of proper utilization of budget separated for women. So, I request the participants present here to take a solid step in increasing female participation in any program.”

The program successfully imparted the Village Council process theoretically and practically. The Namuna VDC Secretary, Keshab Dhakal, was most fascinated about the 4 day learning process and he formally announced the end of the program.
Village Public Hearing: Bokhim

The Village Public Hearing was organized in the community hall of Bokhim. There were 48 youth participants from Bokhim, Bhojpur, Taksar, Bhaisipankha and Aamtek. Since the program was organized in Bokhim VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.

Public Hearing was organized on January 23, 2014. The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Bokhim VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Ms. Kaushila Shankar presented the working paper. She focused the paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation.

The stakeholders included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tara Bhattarai</td>
<td>Bokhim VDC Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Bahadur Tamang</td>
<td>Head of Sub-Health Post Bokhim VDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dambar Kumar Neupane</td>
<td>Chairman of Village Committee, Nepali Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeevan Shankar</td>
<td>Chairman of Village Committee, UCPN (Maoist)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratna Kumar Rai</td>
<td>Representative, Aadiwasi Janajati Mahasangh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhana Bahadur Tamang</td>
<td>Ward Citizen Forum, ward-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ganesh Pradhan</td>
<td>Former Chairperson - Schools Management Committee</td>
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Major issues discussed in the Public Hearing:

1. Absence of VDC Secretary in the Office, insufficient VDC secretaries in the district
2. Rural electrification
3. Services of sub-health post
4. Open Defection Free Campaign
5. Citizen Charter and suggestion box in VDC premises
6. Misuse of VDC budget allocated for children
7. Local resource management and transparency in resource uses
8. Good governance and accountability of VDC

Issues raised by the participants with the response from the respective stakeholders:

Pratap Tamang, Bokhim VDC: You have been appointed as the secretary of Bokhim VDC, but when we come to the VDC office for official signature and recommendation you are never in the office. We have to go to Bhojpur, why is it so?

Why are there only 36 secretaries for 63 VDCs? Is it because the secretary wants to earn more money or is it due to lack of capable people?

VDC Secretary: Yes, I was appointed as the secretary of Bokhim VDC by the DDC. But after few months I was assigned to work for two other VDCs as there are only 36 secretaries in 63 VDCs of Bhojpur. If I stay only in Bokhim it can cause problems for other VDCs. In order to complete some official work and submit reports, the VDC secretary has to be present at the district headquarter; that's why I have to go to Bhojpur at times. I know your important work is
delayed due to this, but I assure you that I will be present in Bokhim VDC office regularly until and unless I have other additional responsibilities of other VDCs.

You have to understand that VDC secretaries are selected from the Public Services Commission. The selected candidates are sent to the DDC for further posting. If the DDC asks for 18 secretaries only 9 are sent. Hence they have to work in two or more than two VDCs at a time.

_Sujana Rai, Bokhim VDC:_ Even after 3 years of electricity transmission, ward no. 1, 2, 3 have electricity but the rest doesn't. Why is it so?

_Representative of UCPN (Maoist)_: There is electricity in ward no. 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the VDC. We just had a meeting with the electricity committee on this issue and it has been decided that initiatives will be taken to bring electricity in all 9 wards of Bokhim. Electricity transmission expansion in Bokhim VDC is on going. The Nepal Electricity Authority has provided 40 electric poles, the work is going on.

_VDC Secretary:_ Since Bokhim is a developing VDC, all nine wards need electricity. We have proposed District Council to allocate the budget for electricity expansion. I hope it will be approved.

_Sharmila Tamang, Bokhim VDC:_ Why is the sub-health post closed during the door-to-door campaigns and clinics in the health post?

_Head of Sub-Health Post Bokhim VDC:_ Now, the sub-health post has recruited another staff and we work together to deliver services of the health post. I assure you that I will put up notice about the programs of the sub-health post and other programs so that everyone will know when the sub-health post will be closed.

_Chin Kaji Shankar, Bokhim VDC:_ It was said that Bokhim would be declared an Open Defecation Free Zone by June and Rs.25000 has also been spent. Why hasn't it still been done?

_Representative of Nepali Congress:_ Declaring Open Defecation Free Zone is not a big deal but building toilets and using it is more important. The coordinator of the Ward Citizen Forum, representatives of political parties and others have gone to households and requested them to use toilets for their own health benefits. I have also requested the VDC secretary to organize a meeting so that we can choose a date for the declaration.

_VDC Secretary:_ As soon as toilets are built in every household, Bokhim VDC will be declared an Open Defecation Free Zone.

_Shakti Tamang, Bokhim VDC:_ Where is the VDC Citizen Charter and suggestion box in our VDC? Will youths have their say only in this type of public hearings?

_VDC Secretary:_ The Citizen Charter is inside, you are right it should be kept outside so that everybody can see. The suggestion box has also not been placed, I have seen it in other offices but it hasn't been placed here. As soon as the VDC office shifts, it will be placed outside. Some people collect stones and leave them littered around the VDC office and sub-health post. I fear if we put the Citizen Charter and suggestion box the people will mess around with it.
Representative of Nepali Congress: There is no fencing around the office. We will be able to place the Citizen Charter and suggestion box as soon as we shift in the new office. But every one of us should be responsible; we should feel accountable for the security and protection of office materials. Otherwise, no matter how much we try or request it will be of no use.

Bhesh Raj Dahal, Bokhim VDC: I am the chairman of the child club. Why was the budget allocated for the child club spent on school renovation last year?
VDC Secretary: Budget allocated for children is for their services, education and for their development. So, renovation of school also falls under that category. Just giving training on child rights is not enough. So, the direct beneficiaries are the children who study in that school.
Bhesh Raj Dahal, Bokhim VDC: But the allocated budget should be spent accordingly. There are other budgets for renovation; the education department should do it.
VDC Secretary: Since renovation of school directly benefits the school going children, the council decided that it would be appropriate. I assure you that the budget allocated for children will be spent on development activities for children.

Shamden Tamang, Bokhim VDC: Have you thought about increasing the internal resources of the VDC as well as management and transparency of those resources?
VDC Secretary: We are preparing the Five Years Periodic Plan and we will include various ways to increase internal resources of the VDC, identify new ones and management of the resources.

Sujana Rai, Bokhim VDC: The VDC has to conduct public hearing once in every four months. Has the VDC conducted public hearing in Bokhim VDC before?
Representative of UCPN (M): Yes, “Nyayashi Asal Sasan Club” conducted a public hearing 2 years ago. Public hearings are also conducted after the end of projects in Bokhim VDC.
VDC Secretary: The VDC has given budget to various clubs to conduct public hearing but the VDC itself hasn’t conducted it. I don’t have long experience as a secretary. Other relevant programs are organized, like public audit before and after any projects, meetings with consumer groups. We conduct review meetings and discuss the gaps and weaknesses. I can’t commit to conduct public hearings in every four months but I promise that I will try to conduct it at least once a year.

Commitments:
1. To be regularly present in the office until and unless there is added responsibility and work of other VDC. – VDC secretary
2. Since Bokhim VDC has the capacity to become a municipality, all the wards must have electricity. Therefore, necessary steps will be taken. – VDC secretary
3. The schedule of village health programs and other programs will be publicized. – Head of Sub-Health Post
4. To complete all the activities required for declaring Bokhim VDC as an Open Defecation Free Zone. To go forward with all the required process for declaring Bokhim VDC as an Open Defecation Free Zone. –Youth participants, VDC secretary.

5. To place the VDC Citizen Charter and suggestion box after the VDC office is shifted to the new place.- VDC secretary

6. Committed for the protection and safety of public property of the VDC and various other organizations.-Youth participants and political parties

7. The budget allocated for the children will only be spent for the benefit and development activities for children.-VDC secretary

8. The sub-health post will open regularly from 10 am to 2 pm. – Head of Sub-Health Post

9. The VDC office will open regularly from 10 am to 5pm and provide all the services. –VDC secretary

10. The number of students in Yuwa Barsha Primary School has decreased due to various reasons and it is in verge of closing down. Therefore, investigation will be done as to why it happened and the school will run smoothly again. –Political Party

11. Since information on the services provided by the sub-health post cannot be publicly displayed due to safety reasons, anyone can individually come to the sub-health post for queries. – Head of Sub-Health Post

12. If there are youth oriented proposals, they will be kept under priority on the basis of necessity, importance and beneficiary population. –VDC Secretary

13. Increasing internal resources of the VDC, identifying new ones and management of the same will be included in the Five Years Periodic Plan. –VDC Secretary

14. Public information will be circulated for participation in the formation process of various committees and other processes in the upcoming Five Periodic Plan. There will be massive participation. –VDC Secretary

15. Public hearing program which has to be conducted regularly by every VDC will be conducted at least once a year. VDC Secretary

16. To encourage the proposals that increase participation in various VDC processes, youth mobilization, youth capacity development and empowerment. –Political Party
Village Public Hearing: Pyauli
The Village Public Hearing was organized in community hall of Pyauli. There were 54 youth participants from Pyauli, Tiwaribhanjang, Shyamshila, Yangpang and Champe. Since the program was organized in Pyauli VDC, majority of the participants were from the same VDC.
Public Hearing was organized on January 20, 2014. The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper on status of marginalized youths in Pyauli VDC and their participation in VDC processes. Mr. Gokul Bhujel presented the working paper. He focused the paper on different development projects started by VDC and their status of implementation.
The stakeholders included:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tarani Guragain</td>
<td>VDC Secretary, Pyauli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raj Kumar Karki</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhupal Shrestha</td>
<td>CPN (UML)</td>
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<td>Ganesh Bahadur Pulami</td>
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<td>Ram Yadav</td>
<td>Head of Health Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janakeshari Rai</td>
<td>Head of Agriculture Services Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahendra Shrestha</td>
<td>Social Mobilizer</td>
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Issues discussed during the Public Hearing:
- Notice board at VDC office
- Electrification project in Pyauli
- Services of Health Post
- VDC budget allocated for target groups
- Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forum and youths participation
- Services of Agriculture Services Center

Issues raised by the participants with the response from the respective stakeholders are highlighted below:

Gokul Bhujel, Pyauli VDC: There is no notice board in the VDC office. We are unaware about the programs being implemented in the VDC. When will the notice board be placed in the VDC?

VDC Secretary: There is a notice board but it has been placed inside the office. I assure you that it will be stuck in a visible place within a month. Along with that Citizen Charter will also be placed.

Gokul Bhujel, Pyauli VDC: There was a program being implemented in the wards 7, 8 and 9 for the electricity transmission. Wires have been placed in its place but nothing has been done beyond that. When will the program be completed?

Representative of Nepali Congress: The program has not been completed because of technical reasons. It will be completed and continued as soon as the technical person from Nepal Electricity Authority district office arrives here.
Rita Karki, Pyauli: *How many types of medicines are distributed for free from the health post? I have heard that 35 types of medicines are distributed free from the health post. Has it been done?*

**Head of Health Post:** There is a notice board where the names of all types of essential drugs are listed down. You can come and see if you want to know the names of all 35 types of drugs. It has been said that only Paracetamol is given free of cost but we have been providing all the 35 types of drugs for free.

Sanjeev B.K, Pyauli: *There is a practice of taking the patients to the witch doctors and avoiding the medical treatments. There should be some awareness program in the community to inform them about the importance of allopathic treatment. What has been done for the awareness?*

**Head of Health Post:** Door to door clinic is practiced three times a month and vaccination programs are also being carried out. Besides this, information is also sent via radio and TV programs and advertisements. New programs are also in the phase of preparation so there might be some programs in the coming days.

Ramesh Arpan Thami, Yangpang: *Why are the programs for the target group population being utilized in other programs? How are the programs for targeted population brought from the community?*

**VDC Secretary:** We usually discuss with the representatives of the target group population and the programs that are selected by them are brought.

Sundar Magar, Pyauli: *Social Mobilizers are needed for the formation of Ward Citizen Forum but they are not present in the meetings of Ward Citizen Forum. Why is it so?*

**Social Mobilizer:** There is lots of work for the social mobilizers. Due to this, we are unable to manage time for every meeting. Besides this, there are no incentives for the Ward Citizen Forum meetings. So, the frequency of participation is a little low.

Nisha Rai, Pyauli: *We have been sending applications requesting the chemical fertilizers but they are never delivered in time. What is the reason behind this?*

**Head of Agriculture Services Center:** This issue is prevalent because of the transportation problem. If there is any query about the chemical fertilizers and anything related to the department of Agriculture then you can come to our office with your issues.

Prem Kumari Magar, Pyauli: *Few chemical fertilizers are sold from the Agriculture Services Center at high price than other shops. There is a fertilizer which we can get in Rs. 70 from other shops whereas it costs Rs. 100 in the Agriculture Services Center. Why does this difference exist?*

**Head of Agriculture Services Center:** The chemical fertilizers are distributed free of cost from the Department of Agriculture and never sold from there. If anyone is found to be selling the goods from Department of Agriculture then contact us. Immediate action will be taken.

Keshav Dhakal, Tiwari Bhanjyang: *The Secretary should be found in the VDC but the secretary of Pyauli/Champe is usually stays in Bhojpur. Have you shifted the office to Bhojpur?*

**VDC Secretary:** I have been visiting the VDCs 5-6 times in a month. I agree that I have not been visiting the VDCs very often. I will try to improve it as soon as possible.
Commitments:

- The services related to birthing center as well as emergency services will be made more effective. It has been operating for 24 hours in Pyauli VDC and it will be made more effective. – Head of health post
- We commit that we will help the Pyauli VDC to be a place with political equality and similar thinking by including unity. – Political parties
- We commit that public hearing will be held soon in the coming days. – Secretary
- We will recommend the youth who have knowledge about the VDC planning process and had participated in the Mock Village Council for the VDC activities. – Secretary
- We commit that suggestion box and Citizen Charter will be placed within a month. – Secretary
- All the 35 essential drugs will be distributed free of cost from the primary health care center. – Head, Primary health care center.
- Youth volunteers will be mobilized for the information dissemination which can increase the participation of the local people in the free door to door health camp. – Head, Primary Health Care Center
- The programs related to the targeted population will be implemented according to the guidelines. – Secretary
- The participation and presence of youth will be increased in the Ward Citizen Forum. – Social Mobilizer
- The notice about the ward gathering, ward citizen forum meeting and village council will be sent publicly so that the number of participants increases. – Secretary
- Initiation will be taken to increase the number of youth participants in the ward citizen forum. – Coordinator, Ward citizen forum, Ward number 6
- The provision from the government will be provided to the lactating mother after the process has been completed. – Head, Health Post
- Dissemination of the information about the fertilizers and other agricultural materials from the Agricultural Department. – Head, Agriculture Services Center
- The name list of the people receiving social security incentive will be publicized in the coming trimester. – Secretary
- Detailed investigation will be done if the application regarding drinking water is received in only in some household. Process will be initiated as per requirement. – Secretary
District Public Hearing: Bhojpur

HimRights organized the District Public Hearing event for the youths on January 28th, 2014. There were 50 youth participants selected from 25 VDCs of the district.

The Public Hearing started with presentation of working paper by Bibash Rai. The Working Paper was focused on the status of youths in the district and planning and implementation of local development activities. The whole process was aired live on Radio Chomolungma. The stakeholders present in the Hearing are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prem Prasad Ghimire</td>
<td>L.D.O, District Development Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajesh Khatiwada</td>
<td>UCPN (Maoist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Budathoki</td>
<td>CPN-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prana Raj Neupane</td>
<td>District Education Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishnu Kumari Rai</td>
<td>Representative, R.P.P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binod Mil</td>
<td>District Public Health Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancha Lal Shah</td>
<td>District Forest Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijay Kumar Thau</td>
<td>Drinking water and sanitation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sushila Acharya</td>
<td>Women and Children Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hari Prasad Khatiwada</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviram Chaulagain</td>
<td>CPN (UML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saroj Kanta Adhikari</td>
<td>District Agriculture Development Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajan Rai</td>
<td>Nepal Electricity Authority</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Major issues discussed in the Hearing
- Involvement of teachers in political activities
- Rural electrification in Bokhim
- Irregularities of VDC secretaries
- Literacy classes
- Services of health posts
- Misuse of budgets allocated for target groups
- Citizen Charters in VDC offices
- Open Defecation Free campaigns

Samjhana Jogi: It is said that teachers are not allowed to be involved in the political parties. But, they have been involved. Are we supposed to call them party representative or teachers?

CPN (UML): They might have been influenced by our policies and strategies. If they have been hampering their duties then action will be taken but we will not have anything to say if they follow us as they are influenced by our thoughts/ideas.

Pratap Tamang, Bokhim: One year project was initiated for the electricity in Bokhim, ward number 8. The community people were requested to help them in placing the electricity poles for which they were promised to be given Rs. 500 each. But even after 3-4 years, there is no...
electricity in the VDC and the community people have not been given their incentives. Why is it so?

**Nepali Congress:** Different political parties had taken the responsibility of providing electricity to the VDC and also for the incentives. The community people might have been tricked but I assure you that we will try our best to provide electricity in that area.

**NEA:** The programs are initiated in different areas in terms of the budget allocation. Due to the limitation of budget, the contractor of the program in ward number 4 had initiated the program himself for which no labor charge was given to the community people. Talking about ward number 8 and Pyauli VDC, there might have been some problems because of the distance as well as budget.

**Rita Karki, Pyauli VDC:** *Why are the VDC secretaries being placed in the district and not in the VDCs? Why are the secretaries been handling more than one VDCs? Can this issue be solved by discussing in the central level?*

Prem Prasad Ghimire: There are 63 VDCs in our district and total of 42 secretaries have only been assigned for the post of VDC secretary. As 4 of them have been transferred into different district, only 38 VDC Secretaries are in their working period. So, to manage their duties they have been assigned two VDCs and the secretaries are asked to be in the middle point of the two districts. The middle point is fixed by the standard criteria itself. They have already been given order to be present in the VDC office and re-order will be sent to them for the same.

**Pabitra Tiwari, Tiwaribhanjyang VDC:** *Stationery distribution had been done for the literacy classes which included copy and pen. But, there is no board for the classes. What is the reason behind this?*

**District Education Office:** Rs.90 has been allocated for each person for the literacy classes. The VDC has been ordered to provide the board, evaluation list and the forms required. If the board has been made available in the first level then same board will be used for another level as well.

**Mohan Pradhan, Gupteshwor VDC:** *How much budget is allocated for the literacy classes?*

**District Education Office:** Rs. 300 has been allocated for the purpose of teaching the illiterates. Among this, 70% is covered by the Department of Education and the rest is managed by the Education center itself.

**Jamuna Rai, Bhaisipankha VDC:** *The programs brought in the VDCs are only half completed and left incomplete. Shouldn’t that be monitored by the DDC?*

**LDO:** I request you to send a written application indicating the name of the program and the area covered. I want to tell you all that there will not be any compromise in the cost, quality and quantity of any of the development programs. We will monitor and re-check the program again and will take actions for it.

**Nanimaya Katwal, Sanodhunga VDC:** *What is the reason behind the absence of the head of SHP in our VDC? We are forced to take the patients of our VDC to another VDC for a simple treatment.*

**District Public Health Office:** It is the responsibility of the District Public Health Office to manage the human resources and the medicines and there is a management committee in each of the VDCs. There might have been problem in the placement of the head of the SHP which
should also be monitored by the VDC itself. The SHP has never been shut down during our period of monitoring and evaluation. If there is any problem then you can call in the number 420189 and report your case to Mr. Raju Shrestha.

**Nanita Tolange, Annapurna VDC:** Electricity poles had been placed in our VDC in 2064 B.S while the head of the department was Gyanendra Karki. The program has not been implemented since then and has been left incomplete. Was it done only for the election promotion?

**NEA:** I want to clarify that the Department has recently been established and the program was implemented by another project. The project had been phased out so the remaining work could not be completed as far as I know.

**Mohan Kumar B.K, Chyangre:** Why is the budget allocated for the targeted groups utilized in the development activities which include physical amenities?

**LDO:** The programs should be divided into 4 parts and they are Physical, Economical, Capacity building and Organizational capacity building. The programs of building construction can be under the title of any of the targeted groups. The programs should be divided into various sectors touching all of the targeted groups. The VDC Secretaries are directed not to divert any program.

**Kaushila Shankar, Bokhim:** It is known to all that the Citizen Charter should be placed in such a way that it is visible to all. But, it has not been done. Why isn’t there system of monitoring?

**LDO:** It is a rule to place suggestion box and Citizen Charter in every VDC office. I don’t think that Bokhim VDC office doesn't have Citizen Charter. It might have been placed inside a room and not publicly displayed. I will send orders to all of the VDC Secretaries to publicly display the Citizen Charter.

**Ramesh Thami, Yangpang:** Everyone is engaged in declaring their VDC as Open Defecation Free Zone but when are they initiating in declaring their VDC as Untouchability Free VDC?

**LDO:** I agree that we have been backwards in this process. We had participated in a program for the elimination of untouchability. It was a joint feast in which people of all caste, ethnicity and religion participated. I believe that it is a matter to be dealt socially which needs change in perception of local people. It will take some time but the change has already begun. We have not been in programs which have been started from the district level but we will discuss about this in near future.

**Commitments:**

- Three to four years back, an agreement was made with the local community people of Ward number 8, Bokhim. They were asked to place the electricity poles and they were promised to be provided with incentives for the work. But, even after a long time of placing the electricity poles, they were neither given incentives nor did they get electricity. Nepali congress will raise voice in the District and take action to those who did not provide incentives to the community people.

- In regard to the issue of Ward number 8, Bokhim, discussion will be made by the Local Development Officer with the different Thematic Committees of the District Development Committees.
Orders have already been given to the VDC Secretaries to be present in the VDC Office. Re-order will be given by the Local Development Officer to solve the absence of the VDC Secretaries.

As the number of secretaries is comparatively less than the number of VDCs, the workload is immense for the VDC Secretaries. Nepali Congress will discuss about appointing secretaries in the 63 VDCs with the newly formed members of parliament, Bhojpur.

Some of the developmental programs implemented by the District are left incomplete. Identification will be done about the programs and respective VDCs. Necessary steps will be taken for the incomplete programs after strictly monitoring and collecting data about the program by the Local Development Officer.

Most of the VDCs of Bhojpur was found to be utilizing the budget allocated for the target group in a way different than the policy. To address this issue, Local Development Officer will send information to the VDC Secretaries and they will be asked to spend the budget as per the law.

Citizen Charter and notice board of Bokhim and Pyauli VDC were placed inside the office where it was not visible. VDC Secretaries of all of the VDCs will be directed to set the Citizen Charter in accessible and visible place.

If the “Campaign against untouchability” is brought into action by the VDCs then the program will be supported by the District Development Committee. District Development Committee, Bhojpur will take the matter of elimination of untouchability in a serious way.

Communist Party of Nepal, UML, will continue to try in managing the utilization of budget which has been allocated for the targeted groups.

The Department of Agriculture is committed to provide information via telephone inquiries to solve the issues/problems of farmers of the district.

All of the political parties committed that they would help in sending the developmental programs along with issues of different sectors to units of VDC level.

All of the political parties committed that they would support in the selection of the proposals from the beginning of the process and include the marginalized population by cooperation with related stakeholders.

All of the stakeholders committed to bring the raised issues into practice.

Local Development Officer committed on behalf of the District Development Committee to properly implement the programs following the rules and policies directed by the nation.

The unaudited budget will be settled and will be included in the website to inform all of the local people.
**District Dialogue: Bhojpur**

The District Dialogue was organized in Bhojpur on February 24 – 25, 2014. There were 50 participants from 24 VDCs of the district. The program was a follow-up of the commitments made by the stakeholders during district public hearing. The stakeholders who were present during the District Public Hearing were present at the dialogue. The stakeholders present on the program were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Giri Jung Rai</td>
<td>CPN-UML</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Budhathoki</td>
<td>Nepali Communist Party Maoist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manju Rai</td>
<td>Sanghiya Samajwadi Party Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bishnu Kumari Rai</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatantra Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Prakash Shah</td>
<td>District Health Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khagendra Shrestha</td>
<td>District Education Office</td>
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<td>Prabhat Shrestha</td>
<td>District Drinking Water Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bal Ram Rai</td>
<td>NGO Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sapta Raj Rai</td>
<td>Seto Gurans Child and Community Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surendra Rai</td>
<td>Planning Officer (LGCDP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ful Maya Tamang</td>
<td>Women Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kumar Ghimire</td>
<td>Nepal Electricity Authority</td>
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The moderator then recited the commitments made by the stakeholders in the District Public Hearing program. The commitments were categorized into following five categories:

- Attendance, regularity and access to information
- Budget for target groups, proposal and prioritization
- Good governance, transparency, youth participation and mobilization
- Youth participation in Ward Citizen Forum and VDC activities
- Responsibilities

The participants were asked to briefly share their experiences of participating in public hearings at village and district level, the changes in them and their village after participating in the programs.

Rita Karki, Pyauli VDC shared that the commitments made by the stakeholders have been implemented to certain extent. She said, “Before, the VDC secretary was not punctual and the work was not done on time, but such problems didn't exist anymore. The VDC secretary even informed if he had to go somewhere.”

Similarly, Jamuna Rai from Bhaisipankha shared that such Public Hearing events should be organized regularly since she didn't know anything about the activities in her VDC and that lot of changes has come. She also hoped that all the VDCs' would witness such positive changes.
After the experience sharing, the stakeholders updated on the implementation on the commitments they made during the District Public Hearing. Prem Prasad Ghimire, Local Development Officer said, “I had committed that I would discuss with the DDO regarding the electricity problems in Bokhim VDC. I have already discussed it on the 22nd Village Council. The Village Council has recommended the district level proposals on electricity and sent it to the relevant offices. This has already been discussed in the Integrated Planning Committee and the Thematic Committee meetings. Regarding the VDC secretary, as mentioned earlier we have 48 VDC secretaries.” He added, “Talking about incomplete development programs of the district; after the public hearing no one came and told me which programs were left incomplete. So, I couldn't follow up on it. This time the village council has made its' planning according to the four priority areas i.e. infrastructure, economic and social development, skill building, empowerment and organizational development. It has come from the ward level; some of the projects of the school have been kept in the targeted group whereas school renovation budget has also been used for the target groups. This has been approved by the Village Council as well as the Area Council. Similarly, about the VDC Citizen Charter; I have talked to the VDC secretary of Bokhim and Pyauli and I will follow up on that.”

These are some of the updates from stakeholders about implementation of commitments made during the public hearings. It was followed by theme-wise discussion on above mentioned five categories.

1. Attendance, regularity and access to information

A Participant: The VDC secretary, government employee or any accountable person should be available as per required by people, so that they can get services and their important work is not clogged. Their services should not be biased. They should be able to execute the responsibilities given to them by the state. They need to take suggestions from the local consumers and involve youth participants. They should provide information about their work, plans and activities, so that everyone has equal opportunity to participate.

Local Development Officer: For the past 14 years the VDC secretary is operating the local agencies and the LDO is operating the District agencies. No matter what problem people have (citizenship, marriage/birth/death registration/, property work etc) they go to the VDC office. The VDC secretary is burdened with lots of work. Therefore, if the political parties provide support responsibly, it will be much easier. The government employees try their best to go to easier places because no matter which place they go either as a VDC secretary or at post office, their salary is the same. But, being a VDC secretary means lots of work and tension.

2. Budget for target groups, proposal and prioritization

Kaushila Shankar, Bokhim: I think the budget allocated for targeted groups should be spent for their social and capacity building. I really hope the budget won't be spent on doors and windows. If the budget is effectively implemented, there won't be any target groups.

Planning Officer, LGCDP: This is a very important issue. I want to ask if the budget hasn't been allocated at all or is it insufficient. Budget definitely has been allocated. Actually, the VDC wants to give sufficient money but they don't have sufficient budget. I also want to say
something about the 14 steps of proposal prioritization. It is mainly based on need and importance. Prioritization is based on what is more important. Even in the case of targeted groups, the most important issues are kept under high priority.

A Participant: But the targeted groups don’t know how much percentage is allocated for them. We have also discussed this in the public hearing. Why hasn't the work been done? Why can't the targeted groups write proposals for themselves? How can this problem be solved?

Planning Officer, LGCDP: I think they know about it. The problem is in identifying effective programs. There should be awareness and empowerment programs for the targeted groups. I think the whole structure has to be changed.

3. Good governance, transparency, youth participation and mobilization

A Participant: We are not clearly informed about the projects of the VDC, which projects have been successfully completed, and how much budget was spent on which areas. In most of the VDC's, there are review meetings, but public hearings have to be held compulsorily because the community people don't know anything about the VDC process and they don’t participate. There are no notice boards or suggestion boxes in many VDCs so even if the information is placed, the next day it is torn and no one knows about it.

Mohan Pradhan, Gupteshwor VDC: The dates and activities of the VDC must be publicly announced or informed. Only the VDC secretary, political parties and stakeholders are informed, so no one can participate. The youths should also be informed so that they can also be involved in the process; this will make it easier for the VDC secretary.

Local Development Officer: Every VDC should at least have three public hearings in a year. You can question your VDC about this. The unaudited amount should be discussed in the council. We cannot plan for another year until it is reviewed in the Council.

Time for writing proposals, village council, ward council and implementation of programs are done through the consumer group. Similarly, about the hoarding boards for projects, the DDC has to place the details of the project if the budget is above 5 lakhs and the VDC has to do the same if the project budget is over 3 lakhs. Otherwise, boards are not required for projects with small amounts. Another important part is that each project has to go through public audit; the final payment is not done until the audit is complete. You can question the stakeholders if it is not done. Good governance will be ensured only if you ask more questions to the stakeholders.

4. Youth participation in Ward Citizen Forum and VDC activities

A Participant: While selecting youth participants during the formation of the Ward Citizen Forum, the coordinator and the members of the committee only give priority to the active youth, the marginalized youth who don't speak too much should also be involved. The selection should not be biased.

Planning Officer, LGCDP: We have to follow various guidelines of the process. Youth participation in the Ward Citizen Forum is based on action towards reaction. Since you are students, you are busy with your studies and you can't attend the meetings. Power analysis is done before the formation of the Ward Citizen Forum Committee. Various active organizations and groups are identified and their representation is ensured. Youths of this district don't have such organizations. But, the guideline will change soon and I am sure it will bring changes. One
of the participant also said that the social mobilizer and the chairperson make all the decisions, but the process has lots of steps.

At the end of the Dialogue, participants have also committed to work together with respective VDC offices and go back to their village; actively take these issues forward and try their best to turn negative aspects into positive. The collectively voiced to actively participate in the VDC processes and raise the voice where necessary.

Conclusions:
1. While discussing on proposal no.1, the stakeholders agreed on the issues raised by the youth which were; punctuality and regularity of the VDC secretary, the service bearers shouldn’t be discriminated on the basis of gender, caste or class, transparency in VDC activities and involvement of youth in development process. In order to find solutions, it was decided that the youth should also be aware and curious as to why the VDC secretary isn't regular and they should complain to the relevant stakeholders. The VDC should address those complains and conduct local elections for sustainable solutions.

2. While discussing on proposal no.2, it was agreed that due to lack of access to required information, the targeted groups could not participate in the proposal making and prioritization. It was also agreed that due to lack of budget, required budget could not be allocated for the target groups and the percentage of budget allocated was not utilized directly for the targeted groups. Therefore, it was decided that instead of trainings and seminars, skill development programs should be implemented for their empowerment.

3. While discussing on proposal no.3, the youths opined that in most of the VDCs public hearing was not conducted regularly and the VDC office didn’t have Citizen Charter, notice board or suggestion box due to which the people were uninformed about the VDC activities. Therefore, it was decided that the youth and political parties would give pressure for transparency, good governance and for the VDC secretary to be present in the office. If this didn't bring any change, a written complaint would be given and the DDC would address the complaint.

4. While discussing on proposal no.4, since youth participation is very low in the Ward Citizen Forum, it was decided that all the political parties, LGCDP and other relevant stakeholders would work towards increasing youth participation.

5. While discussing on proposal no. 5, it was decided that all the youths would actively participate from their regions to bring positive changes in the local agencies to ensure good governance, transparency and accountability. For this, the youth agreed to come together and share their knowledge and experience in their communities.
Success stories

Change SMC in Madersa
Aslam Nau, a Muslim youth from Titihiriya VDC, Banke, has been teaching in Madersa (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/Sida 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 assistance available to Madersa for 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 are not being paid a salary and the building has not been constructed.

He organized a meeting with local stakeholders to discuss several issues regarding Madersa. With their collected effort, the SMC was restructured, and there is now a new Chairperson. There is hope that government assistance will be used for good purposes. Aslam says, “I was inspired to work on reformation of Madarsa. Some people were angry. I used to get threats from them.”

This Madarsa is one of the best in Banke. Currently, 140 children are studying in English medium.

Bishnumaya Gurung’s letter to HimRights
Training Gave Me a New Perspective
First of all, I want to express my hearty thanks to organizer committee HimRights and then to helping organization Sida.

I am Bishnumaya Gurung. I live in Bajrabarahi VDC-9, Furke. I am twenty years' old. I am waiting my result of +2. I am the youngest daughter of my parents Kaanchha Gurung and Thulimaya Gurung. I have 3 sisters, 2 brothers and a sister-in-law. My 2 sisters got married and recently we are 7 members in our family. Because of their support and kind cooperation, I got an opportunity to participate in 'Training on International Human Rights Framework and Mechanism and Nepal's Legal System' and 'Mock Village Council'. I am very much happy that I got a golden opportunity to participate in the training and broaden my knowledge.

Before participating in this training, I was completely unknown about Human Rights and Village Council. I had absolutely no idea at all. I had just a few ideas about VDC but now I have learned a lot. Mock Village Council has been succeeded to erase my false thought. Before the training, I used to think that there is not any work of VDC Secretary. They receive salary doing nothing. But now, after knowing their roles and responsibilities, I realized I was wrong. I shared it to my family, friends and peer groups which helped washing false thoughts from everyone's mind.

I had a curiosity to know how proposals are sanctioned in the village council. I, now, know everything regarding Village Council and the process through which the proposals sanctioned. I
also realized that we should remember our roles and responsibilities to our community before questioning and talk about our rights. Youth are actually the backbone of the nation. They can change the future of the society with their well being and courageous and creative behaviour. I got to know about the Ward Citizen Forum, Citizen Awareness Centre, Integrated Planning Committee, VDC Board and many more in the training and most importantly, I realized the importance of youth in the community development process. Again, I would like to thank HimRights without which I would not have been able to empower myself.

**Sabitra Pariyar, an anti-human trafficking campaigner**

Sabitra Pariyar lives in Chisapani VDC. She has been working for the rights of marginalized women as a community mediator. She is the Secretary of VDC level women’s group. She shared, “After participating in Mock Village Council, I have learned a lot on VDC level planning process and roles of youths in those processes. I have never thought that way of participator development process.’

After the participation in the program, she along with other youth participants, they have formed a youth group called ‘Samajik Bikas Yuwa Sanjaal’ that literally means ‘Youth Network for Social Development’. They have given space to other youths from the VDC sharing their learning and knowledge of VDC process and encouraging other youths to participate in development processes. She has started to attend Ward level meetings, Ward Citizen Forum meetings and even Village Council that she never had attended. She is now more cautious about VDC activities, activities of Social Mobilizers. She said, “The program has motivated me to work for social cause. Our VDC is prone to human trafficking. We are planning to initiate campaign against human trafficking in our VDC and surrounding VDCs.”

She discloses the Mock Village Council programs and continuous support has motivated her to move ahead. She plans to explore opportunities beyond her VDC to reach other parts of the district.
When I was a mock VDC secretary…….

Various countries in the world are rapidly developing. Science has made new inventions and changed the world. Countries like America, Japan and China have developed a lot but our country has not been able to develop. The politicians who promised to change this country are merely fighting amongst each other for power. Instead of focusing on development, they have raised prices of goods and are filling their pockets. Such activities are creating lots of problems for the citizens. Due to raised prices, the citizens are not able to fulfill their needs. They are trapped in poverty. Due to unemployment thousands of youth are compelled to opt for foreign employment. Since capable population of the country is going abroad, the labor and resource of the country is being wasted. It’s difficult to find youths in the villages even when someone is sick or to carry the body during the funeral.

In such times, HimRights conducted a 7 day program for youths of marginalized communities of various VDCs. In which we were youth participants from four VDC; Hatiya, Padampokhari, Handikhola and Hetauda municipality number 8. In the first three days we learnt about what are human rights? What are the rights of human beings? What work do human rights do? How was United Nations established? When? What kinds of roles do youth have on various departments of the state or in the activities of the state? HimRights further conducted 4 day program on "Mock Village Council" with youths of marginalized communities. The participants were youth from the same 4 VDC and 1 municipality. There were 9 participants from each VDC. During these four days program, HimRights informed us about what is VDC? What work it does? What is proposal? What is planning commission? What is ward citizen forum? What work it does? What is budget? How much percentage budget is allocated for which topic? What is the role of the secretary in budget distribution? What is a secretary? Roles and responsibilities of the secretary.

Currently I am 3rd year BA student. 15 years of my education couldn't teach me what I have learned here in 7 days time. This training was conducted by dividing various roles to the participants. I played the role of the VDC secretary. It was then I realized that the work of a secretary is very difficult. Before participating in this training I didn’t know anything about the VDC budget. After participating in this training I learned how much budget is allocated for which area and I also got information about the role of the secretary in every activity of the VDC. We thought learning amongst each other was not enough. Therefore, 9 of us from Hatiya VDC invited total 45 participants (three from each ward) from 9 wards of the VDC. We summarized the 7 days program into one day and informed the participants about how much budget is spent on which area and how the proposals are prioritized? We also informed them about formation of the Integrated Planning Commission. We also provided information to the organizations of each ward about the VDC budget.

One day the Ward Citizen Forum meeting was being conducted. Two proposals presented by my ward were not selected. Therefore, there was a heated discussion between the Social Mobilizer and the members of my ward. The Social Mobilizer called me. I went there and told them about the budget allocation and prioritization. I was able to solve this conflict. Today, people's attitude towards me has changed. Many people call me a mock village secretary and my friends call me a
secretary. I have been sharing my experiences in the ward citizen forum meeting in every ward. Everyone respects me. People who didn’t talk to me before have become friendly. All these changes came because of HimRights. I am very thankful to HimRights. I will share my experiences about the village council in every ward of my village as far as possible.

(This article published in ‘Samriddha Samaj’ National Daily newspaper in Makwanpur.)
### 14-steps of Participatory Planning Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Receive budget ceiling and directives</td>
<td>District line agencies</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review of guidelines</td>
<td>Heads of line agencies, DDC Officials</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-planning preparation workshop</td>
<td>DDC officials, heads of line agencies, banks, FNCCI, NGOs, VDCs</td>
<td>DDC and heads of line agencies</td>
<td>Last week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>VDC/Municipality meeting</td>
<td>VDC, DDC, representatives of line agencies</td>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community-level project planning</td>
<td>Community, NGOs, CBOs, consumer groups, ward chiefs</td>
<td>Ward chiefs and ward members</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ward Committee meeting</td>
<td>Ward members, chiefs, CBOs, consumer groups</td>
<td>Ward committees</td>
<td>Last week of December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>VDC/Municipality meeting</td>
<td>VDC officials, representatives of line agencies</td>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; week of January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Village/Municipal Council meeting</td>
<td>Members of Village Council</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; week of January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Area (Ilaka)-level planning workshop</td>
<td>Area members, VDC chairperson, vice chairperson, ward chief, Mayer, Vice-Mayer, heads of line agencies, banks, NGOs</td>
<td>DDC, Area members, VDC, Line agencies</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sectoral planning meeting</td>
<td>Coordinators of thematic committees, NGOs, Line agencies</td>
<td>DDC and line agencies</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Integrated plan formulation meeting</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, DDC thematic committee coordinators, line agencies, NGOs</td>
<td>DDC, line agencies, NGOs, Private sector</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>DDC meeting</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, members</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; week of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>District Council approval</td>
<td>District Council members</td>
<td>DDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Implementation of DDC plan</td>
<td>National Planning Commission, MoFALD, Sectoral Ministries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Categories of Caste/Ethnicity in Health Management and Information System (HMIS) of Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal

1. Dalit
   Hill: Kami, Damai, Sarki, Gaine, Badi, Terai: Chamar, Mushar, Dhusah/Paswan, Tamta, Khatway, Bantar,
   Terai: Dom, Chidimar, Dhobi, Halkhor
2. Disadvantaged Janajatis
   Hill: Magar, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Bhote, Walung, Byansi, Hyolomo, Garti/Bhujel, Kumal, Sunsar, Baramu, Pahari, Yakkah, Chhantal, Jirel, Darai, Dura, Majhi, Danuwar, Thami, Lepcha, Chepang, Bote, Raji, Hayu, Raute, Kusunda,
   Terai: Tharu, Dhanuk, Rajbansi, Tajpuriya, Gangai, Dhimal, Meche, Kisan, Munda, Santhal/Satar, Dhangad/Jhangad, Koche, Pattarkatta/Kusbadiay
3. Disadvantaged non-Dalit Terai caste groups:
   Yadav, Teli, Kalwar, Sudhi, Sonar, Lohar, Koiri, Kurmi, Kanu, Haluwai, Hajam/Thakur, Badhe, Bahae, Rajba, Kewat, Mallah, Nuniya, Kumhar, Kahar, Lodhar, Bing/Banda, Bhediyar, Mali, Kumar, Dhunia
4. Religious Minorities: Muslims, Churoute
5. Relatively advantaged Janajatis: Newar, Thakali, Gurung
6. Upper caste groups: Brahman (hill), Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi, Brahman (Terai), Rajput, Kayastha, Baniya, Marwadi, Jaine, Nuraang, Bengali
News Coverage:

Bhim Bahadur Sarki’s article published on local newspaper “Experience of being mock VDC Secretary’ (Banke). He writes his experiences of being Mock VDC Secretary and further initiatives he had taken especially after the program. He mentions, he conducted orientation on participatory planning process in 6 VDCs. The contents were based on that of Mock Village Council.
Samjhana Gopali writes ‘Multiplying the learning’ (Makwanpur). She writes she has been sharing her learning with others and implementing in the community.
Bijaya BK writes ‘When I was VDC Secretary’ (Makwanpur) Published in Samriddha Samaj National Daily on September 24, 2013

He mentions, he is now recognized in his VDC and VDC office also invites him to the meetings. He was once invited to conduct sessions on participatory planning process in VDC office.
Newspaper article: ‘Mock Village Council made us accountable’ (Makwanpur)

News published on ‘Samriddha Samaj Daily’ quotes Ritu Lama, Mock VDC Secretary’s statement.
Newspaper article: ‘Mock Village Council to increase participation’ (Makwanpur)
Newspaper article: ‘HimRights organizes District Dialogue’ (Bhojpur)

News published after District Dialogue in Bhojpur. It writes, youths, government stakeholders and political parties made 5 point agreement on regularity of VDC secretaries, use of budget allocated for targetted groups, youth’s participation in ward citizen forum and planning processes, enhancing good governance, accountability and transparency of government agencies.
Newspaper article: ‘Crucial need of youth participation in development activities’ (Bhojpur) It writes there is crucial need to increase youth participation in development activities.