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

Annual Project Report

March 2014 – February 2015

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

Terminology:
Citizen Charter: Information board that gives procedures and requirements for services provided by government agencies
Directives: Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069
HimRights: Himalayan Human Rights Monitors
Ilaka: Cluster/area of 4 to 10 VDCs
Janajati: Indigenous community
Namuna VDC: Mock VDC
Tole/Basti: Borough
Sida: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
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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 promoted effectively. Despite being significant segment of the population, they are mostly 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 Village Development Committee (VDC) District Development Committee (DDC) Working Procedures, 2067; Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069; Directives on Social Mobilization, 2071 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 the project ‘Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights’ in support from 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:**
- Marginalized Youths 18 – 24 years old (around 5% were above 24 years old)
- 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. This year, we have reached to 1531 marginalized youths as direct beneficiaries.

**Program Activities conducted this year:**

**Activities from Year I project cycle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Banke</th>
<th>Makwanpur</th>
<th>Bhojpur</th>
<th>KTM</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Public Hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Youth Legislative Parliament I</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Dialogue I</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activities from Year II project cycle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Banke</th>
<th>Makwanpur</th>
<th>Bhojpur</th>
<th>KTM</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training of Trainers on Human Rights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Village council (4 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Public Hearing (2 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Level Dialogue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock District Council (4 days)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Public Hearing (2 days)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Dialogue (2 days)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Youth Legislative Parliament II</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Dialogue II</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activities

Training of Trainers on Human Rights
Main objective of the five day Training of Trainers on Human Rights is to increase understanding among youths on human rights with focus on women and child rights, national and international human rights instruments, mechanisms, and impart them with skills of facilitation, communication and right based development approaches to establish them as human rights trainer in their community.

Process Summary:
Active participants were selected from the pool of 60 youths from each district who participated in 3-day human rights training of the previous year. They were selected based on their performance during the program and activeness in their community after the program.

The first three days were focused equipping participants with knowledge on theoretical aspects of human rights and its current trends. The sessions on criminal activities and human rights violation, citizen's rights and responsibilities, development of human rights, national and international human rights mechanisms, women rights and child rights; mechanisms to monitor human rights, existing laws, rules and regulations on human rights, democracy, and good governance equipped participants with theoretical knowledge on different aspects of human rights. The sessions were followed by deliberative discussions so as to increase better clarity on the subject matters. During discussions, participants indicated that they were very interested to learn. Every possible step was taken to make these sessions more participatory and interactive.

Last two days were devoted to enhance their skills on facilitation, communication, presentation through group and individual micro-teaching practices. Each participant was given specific topic for 10 minute presentation.

By the end of the 5-day program, youths had knowledge on human rights and skills to become good community facilitator and to see the world through human rights lens.
Activity Summary:
Three ‘Training of Trainers on Human Rights’ were conducted this year, one in each district. Participants were selected from the pool of previous year’s program cycle and they were already playing active roles in their communities and annual planning process of their VDCs. They were selected based on their active performance and community engagement. Hence, they were very energized from the first day and their expectations were also realistic. They expected to learn skills necessary for effective training and facilitation, develop theoretical base on practical aspects of human rights, and understand theoretical and practical challenges of a trainer.

Each of the theoretical sessions was followed by group discussions that helped each of the participants to engage themselves in brainstorming and discussions, which increased their participation in all sessions. After the core theoretical contents on human rights, the participants were provided with skill based knowledge on facilitation skills, micro-teaching methods, communication and presentation skills and planning methods. These skills enhanced them with practical aspects of facilitation and training.

The last two days were totally dedicated to individual presentations. All participants chose their own topics to make 10 minute presentations. Each presentation was followed by feedback from the facilitator. Some of the common topics were: human rights, child rights, women rights, historical development of human rights, civil rights, political rights, social rights, economic rights, good governance and accountability, right to information.

Some participants had good presentation skills and they made very good presentations. They had clearly followed the lesson plan and had successfully met the objectives of the session. They also had sufficient knowledge about the subject matter and articulate too. Their timing, expression and gesture were excellent.

Some participants did not follow the lesson plan format and they did not have clear knowledge about the topic. They were nervous and lacked confidence during presentation. Their eye contact and body language indicted their nervousness. They were unable to complete the presentation within a given time period. These areas of improvements were discussed by the facilitator and the participants were asked to improve in their presentations in days to come.

Participants found this program very fruitful as it enhanced their theoretical and practical knowledge on human rights and effective presentation skills. Kaushila BK of Bhojpur said that ToT has developed her personality and passion. She said, "This program has excited me to work in the field of Human Rights, given me courage to work and confidence to solve many social
problems in the society.” Ramesh Arpan Thami said that he will stay in contact with all other participants and give classes on human rights in local schools.

Tulsi Ranapaheli of Bhojpur, the youngest participant, had never participated in such training before. She said, "This training has broadened my vision to move forward in my life."

Laxmi Tamang of Bhojpur revealed, "I have been teaching in a school for more than two years but was never confident to speak in the public. But after participating in ToT and getting positive feedbacks in my facilitation, I am now confident."

Dilmaya Budhathoki of Banke said, “The individual presentation helped in boosting our confidence and developing our capabilities. I liked this session the most.”

Mahadev Pandey of Banke said, “Yes, this program has helped even the most introvert participants to speak up, once one gets a platform to show their presentation skills. But, we should be clear about the session plan and the presentation. These types of mistakes should be corrected as soon as we know.”

At the end of the program, participants made commitments to utilize the skills and knowledge acquired in training to become a better person and better facilitator. Representing the group, Sunakeshari Thing of Makwanpur said, “As result of this training, I have learned the concepts on human rights and how to convey the information. I have learned much through the facilitation methods and skill.” Similarly, Anil Ghalan from Makwanpur highlighted effectiveness of the program and said, “I have learned all the training activities practically and with full and equal participation. The TOT was very effective and will be useful in future.”

After ToT on Human Rights, participants’ self confidence increased significantly along with skills on facilitation, communication, and other practical aspects of training. They also assured organizers to share their knowledge at local level; they also asked organizers to help in the future with any possible means. Some of the positive trends found during the training are given below:

- Though most of the participants were facilitating the training session for the first time, they tried as much as they could to engage other participants during their training sessions. Participants were using "Participatory Approach" during their session which is a very positive output.
- New and innovative methods of the program inspired participants in many ways. They can facilitate trainings in their own areas in appropriate way.
- Most of the participants were very confident and commanding in their presentation. Each of them had worked hard to prepare the whole training materials. Some of the participants even prepared power point presentation for their facilitation while others used meta-cards, news print paper and other materials.

The participants of ToT program will co-facilitate on Human Rights Training in the third year.
Mock Village Council (MVC)
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 Village Development Committee Secretary, social mobilizer, heads of Government Offices, and coordinators of different committees were selected from the participants.

Process Summary
The first one and half day was spent on theoretical process of 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 (detailed table in the next page), 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 MVC 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), and 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 allocated budget 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 was one of the most important sessions with long term practical significance and impact for the participants.

Two MVCs in each district
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
  - Closed session of MVC (VDC board meeting)
  - Formal Closing session
and their communities. All the participants were asked to write a proposal on any of the categories 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 budget allocation.

The formal closing session was organized with representatives from District Development Committee, political parties, NGOs and journalists. The closing session was chaired by the Secretary of Mock VDC.
Sessions on Mock Village Council and Mock District Council are primarily based on 14 steps of Participatory Planning Process. The outcome of the process is sent to National Planning Commission (NPC) as well into its annual planning process. We conducted mock sessions from Step 5 to 12.

### 14-steps of Participatory Planning Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Time Schedules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First:</td>
<td>Directives and information, budget ceiling for next year from sectoral ministries and NPC</td>
<td>District level sectoral agencies</td>
<td>By the 2nd week of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second:</td>
<td>Review of Directives</td>
<td>Analysis and review of directives, policies, and guidelines estimated budget provided by sectoral Ministries/NPC.</td>
<td>Sectoral Agencies, Chief, DDC Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third:</td>
<td>Planning Workshop</td>
<td>Dissemination of information on policies, objectives, program resources, activities, available budget of sectoral ministries and allocation of estimated budget per VDC. Distribution of project request forms and orientation to fill the form to DC Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary and others.</td>
<td>DDC Officials, Sectoral Agencies, Chief representative of Financial institutions, District Chambers of Commerce and Industries, NGOs, VDCs Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth:</td>
<td>VDC Meeting</td>
<td>Analysis of programs/projects to be carried out in ward/ Borough/ Ilaka level by VDC</td>
<td>VDC, DDC and Sectoral Agencies’ representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth:</td>
<td>Borough level plan selection workshop</td>
<td>Assessment and analysis of the projects and programs in a participatory way, which benefits the maximum no. of households (local resident/Core-User Groups). Fill forms at borough level by communities with signature of the participants</td>
<td>Local residence, I/NGOs, Community Organizations, Users Groups, Civil Society Organizations, and Ward Chairperson and Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth:</td>
<td>Ward committee Meeting</td>
<td>Prioritization of programs/projects received from the borough community level.</td>
<td>Ward Chairperson, Members, Community Organizations, Users Groups, Civil Society Organizations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh:</td>
<td>VDC meeting</td>
<td>Prepare list of program/projects received from the borough level Identify and finalize programs/project. Prioritize programs/projects, with estimated budget which VDC can implement on its own and which needs external support.</td>
<td>VDC officials and Sectoral Agencies representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth:</td>
<td>Village council Meeting</td>
<td>Approve those program/projects to be conducted through VDC resources. Identify those which require external support, prioritize them and forward to DDC for assistance.</td>
<td>VDC council members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth: Ilaka (4-10 VDCs) level planning workshop</td>
<td>Prioritize sectoral program identified by VDC and Municipalities and forward them to DDC's sectoral committee. Ilaka member conduct Ilaka level planning workshop.</td>
<td>Ilaka member, VDC Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Ward Chairperson, Mayors and Deputy Mayors, Chief of Sectoral Agency, Chief of Financial Institutions and I/NGOs representatives</td>
<td>By the 1st week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth: Sectoral planning committee meeting</td>
<td>Prioritize sectoral programs identified by VDC and Municipalities and forward them to DDC’s sectoral committees. Ilaka member conduct Ilaka level planning workshop.</td>
<td>DDCs members, I/NGOs representative, sectoral committees' members as per the nature of their work</td>
<td>By the 2nd week February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh: Integrated plan formulation committee meeting</td>
<td>Access and analyze the prioritized programs/projects of different sectors. Incorporate prioritized project into different sectoral committees’ development plans and submit the draft to Integrated Plan Formulation Committee.</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, MPs of the district, sectoral committees’ chief and representative of I/NGOs</td>
<td>By the 3rd week of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth: District Development Committee</td>
<td>Assess the District Development Plan in relation to government/NPC instruction, district periodic plan, resource map, environmental impact etc. Classify program/projects separately between those to be done from the district and from the center. Prioritize programs and projects on sectoral or geographic basis and submit the draft plan for the approval of the District Council.</td>
<td>DDC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and members</td>
<td>By the 1st week of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth: District Council</td>
<td>Discuss the draft District Development Plan &amp; approval of the District Development of Plan.</td>
<td>Members of District Council</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteenth: Implementation on of District Development Plan</td>
<td>Forward the District Development Plan to MoFALD and NPC. Forward the sectoral program and project to sectoral Ministries.</td>
<td>NPC, MoFALD and Sectoral Ministries</td>
<td>By the end of March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Step 5 – 8 are practiced in Mock Village Council and steps 9 – 13 are practiced in Mock District Council. (Source: Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD), Government of Nepal)
Activity Summary:
Six Mock Village Councils were conducted this year, two in each district. These programs included participants from 30 VDCs (10 from each district). During MVC, theoretical sessions on participatory planning process at local level and practical mock sessions on those processes were conducted. The sessions on democracy and democratic behaviour, good governance and accountability of local government agencies, right to information and activities of local level institutions has really increased youths’ passion to involve and engage in community activities and local development process.

The methodology was designed to encourage participants to be active and contribute towards local development using their experiences and creativity. The activities and discussions were structured in a way which allowed even the less experienced, quiet participants to actively participate with their questions and comments which were crucial for discussions. The activities were based on methods such as learning by doing, direct participation, experimental learning in an interactive way. Facilitators encouraged youth to be more active and to have effective participation in the planning process of local development.

Here are some of the expectations of the participants they expressed on the first day of MVC:

- To understand functions of VDC, Village Council, WCF and ideas to make it more effective.
- To understand sources of VDC budget and its distribution.
- To understand role of central government and youth in village development.
- To know about the planning and prioritization process of development projects
- To learn duties and responsibility of VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizer
- To understand necessity of youth participation in VDC development activities
- To understand allocation and transparency of the VDC budget process

These expectations were met at the end of four day program. The intensive theoretical sessions and mock sessions on formation of toles (boroughs), Ward Citizen Forums and respective meetings, formation of Integrated Planning Committee and its meetings, proposal writing exercises and finally Mock Village Council sessions were effective examples of learning by doing process. Every participant had their own role during mock sessions which ensured everyone's active participation in all sessions. The sessions by VDC Secretaries and Social Mobilizers gave detailed insight on practical aspects of VDCs, their activities and participatory planning process.
Similarly, there was practical session on proposal writing. The participants were oriented on proposal form, a standard format provided by Directives on Local Resource Management and Mobilization, 2069. The participants came up with several proposals that also reflected actual needs of their communities. The most important part was they had to provide estimated budget too. During the proposal writing session, they brainstormed on the problems or issues which needed to be addressed, write few paragraphs on rationale, implementation plan, duration, use of local resources, and participation of local people. With these exercises, participants were able to identify the problem/issue and write proposals after going back to their VDCs. Many of them have successfully submitted proposals and few of them have facilitated proposal writing process to other people in ward level meetings. The participants found the program helpful in many ways.

Sareeta Gurung from Banke said, "Before this training, we always look for our rights only but now we have understood that rights and responsibilities are two sides of same coin and need to follow the system. To be active citizen, we all have to realize our rights and duties."

Bhim Bahadur Kathyat, Banke said, “This program helped in developing public speaking skills in me. I knew about the elements of good governance and democratic behavior and I promise to share this learning in my community.”

The final closing session was organized with presence of district level government stakeholders, representatives of political parties and NGOs, and journalists. In Bhojpur, Constituent Assembly member Hon. Jayanti Rai, chief guest, in her speech motivated youths to engage in local development process in the closing session. She focused on the positive mobilization of youth for the benefit of the communities. She said, "I believe you will take lead of development activities in your VDCs and take active participation in this year's planning process."

On the last day of the program, participants were asked to prepare action plans of the activities they could do when they return to their VDCs. Many of them had prepared realistic plans. They came up with conducting training and/or sharing sessions on participatory planning process in youth clubs, schools/colleges, community, and WCFs. Youths from Tungechha, Bhojpur planned to reform WCFs of their VDC and they reformed four of the WCFs after going back to their VDC. Chattra Bahadur Tamang from Tungechha, was one of the most inspired and promising participants said, "This program is very effective and has developed confidence in me for my representation in planning process. Earlier I had no experience and I didn't find any participatory approach in the planning of development..."
in the VDC and also found influential local leaders in decision making role and process.” He was able to play lead role in reformation of WCFs of his VDC. Session on Right to Information was very useful as the session was able to stimulate participants to take action for promoting good governance and accountability of local government agencies. Youths from Banke initiated RTI campaigns in different VDCs.

News on MVC was well covered by local newspaper in Makwanpur and Banke. Few of them made feature stories on their cover page. A feature story from Banke stated how the program was successful in incorporating both theoretical and practical knowledge learned in MVC. It also highlighted how the program helped to bring right and duties together and contributed in increasing participation in democratic structure of VDC. It quoted sayings of Manisha Sunar, “I will become a real VDC secretary after passing the Public Service Commission exam.”

This program brought together a highly motivated and very diverse group of marginalized and inclusive participants, inspired and motivated, who successfully lobbied for their inclusion in the local development process. This training gave the participants time to share their values and experiences related to personal, political, economic, and social issues.
Village Public Hearing

Village Public Hearing is a major link between the participants from MVC and local stakeholders to raise their issues with knowledge of local government process and address of their burning priority issues. The main objective of Village Public Hearing is to create a common platform to hold meaningful dialogue with dignity between youths from marginalized groups and the local stakeholders on various issues of public significance. The dialogue especially focused on transparency, accountability and good governance of government duty holders and increasing youth’s participation in participatory development process at VDC levels. The program created 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 be heard and identify them as future potential leaders.

Process Summary

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

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 which was later submitted to the government stakeholders for implementation. A ‘Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee’ was formed with
participants from 9 wards of a VDC. The Committee regularly followed-up with the relevant government stakeholders and lobby for the implementation of commitments.

Activity Summary:
Six Village Public Hearings were conducted in Bageshwari and Radhapur of Banke, Bhiphedi and Chhatiwan of Makwanpur and Annapurna and Mulpani of Bhojpur. Youths have raised their several priority issues to local government stakeholders including VDC Secretary, Heads of Health Post, Agriculture/Livestock Services Center and political parties. Some of the major issues raised by the youths were:

- Planning, selection, prioritization, budget allocation implementation and monitoring of annual development projects
- Functions and inclusion in VDC committees like Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Planning Committee, Consumers' Committees and monitoring committees
- Increasing youth participation and involvement in local development activities
- Proper utilization of annual budget especially targeted group budget for benefit of targeted groups (women, children, marginalized/minority/Dalit/elderly/disabled)
- Service delivery of local government agencies including health posts, Agriculture/Livestock Services Centers

With one day orientation and practice, participants were ready to raise their priority issues to the stakeholders. The orientation was very helpful to build their self confidence and to systematically raise the issues.

On the Public Hearing day, youths raised their priority issues to the stakeholders. Most of the issues were related to service delivery, good governance, accountability and transparency of local government agencies and youths' participation and inclusion in different VDC committees. The stakeholders effectively responded the issues raised and they made commitment to address them. Many of the commitments were implemented in many VDCs as promised.

Some of the results of VPH are:
- VDCs established Citizen Charters and installed complaint boxes
- VDC secretaries are regular in their offices
- Youths are in different decision making positions in the VDCs like WCFs, IPCs, CACs and consumers' groups
- Youth participation in annual planning process has significantly increased
• Free medicines are distributed effectively from health posts
• Smooth medical services
• Distribution of seeds and fertilizers on time
• improved service delivery from all local government agencies
• recognition of youths in VDC
• Cooperation from political parties in local development processes especially budget allocation
• Increased annual proposals in VDCs, especially on women, children and targeted groups

These results showed significant increase in good governance, accountability and transparency of local government agencies. Some of the VDCs have committed to conduct annual public hearings on their own from next year as they are mandated to conduct annual hearings. For most of the VDCs, the public hearing we organized was the first of its kind. Hence, the stakeholders were very positive about the hearing and issues raised by youths. Similarly, Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee was formed in every VDC and the committee is in regular contact of VDC office and other government offices to follow up whether the commitments are implemented or not.

The program is directed not only towards raising awareness and providing opportunities to the marginalized youths, but, it is also directed towards providing relevant stakeholders a better understanding of the challenges faced along with better ideas from the suppressed groups. Moreover, the working relationship between youths and local stakeholders is significantly strengthened through this forum.
Village Level Dialogue

Village Level Dialogues were conducted with an objective to enable further dialogue, lobby, advocacy, accountability, transparency and effective service delivery of government agencies and implementation of commitments made in previous programs. Further to strengthen coordinating relationship between participants and local government stakeholders to promote youth’s participation in local level planning process and raise various issues to local government stakeholders and seek solutions through dialogues. These were organized by the participants from these VDCs with some support from HimRights.

Process Summary:

The participants (9 participants of MVC) were mobilized to select 27 youths (3 from each ward) from all nine wards. The meeting of 36 youths was held to identify the issues and problems of their wards and VDC. Based on the meeting conclusions, they listed burning local issues and agendas for Village Level Dialogue. Based on these issues, the participants identified the stakeholders and the date for Dialogue was fixed. The stakeholders: VDC Secretary, heads of Health Post, Agriculture/Livestock Services Center and WCFs, Social Mobilizers and political parties. The Dialogue was conducted on these issues, these stakeholders committed to address and find solutions. For the Dialogue, most of the coordination was done by the participants with some guidance from HimRights. Facilitation of the Dialogue was conducted by HimRights district staffs.

In year two, Village Level Dialogues were conducted in following VDCs:
- Banke: Sonpur, Raniyapur, Udhrapur, Indrapur, and Paraspur
- Makwanpur: Bhaise, Nibuwatar, Phaparbari
- Bhojpur: Chhinamakhu
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 conceptualized 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, Ilaka level meetings, different Committees of District Development Committee (DDC) and the District Council.

Process Summary

The first one and half day, orientation was conducted 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 which we will be working in next year (so they could play active role from participant selection to MVC). 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. After the theoretical orientation, the participants were ready for the mock processes, learning by being in the role. The program also aimed to provide participants with clear picture of District Council procedures and increase active 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 Ilaka Level Meetings.
An Ilaka comprised of 4 to 10 VDCs. After receiving proposal from VDCs, the Ilaka Level Meeting is conducted where the members; VDC Secretaries, representatives of political parties and heads of government offices, discuss on the proposals. The Ilaka Level Planning Meeting was 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 Ilaka Level Meetings. These meetings help to avoid duplication of development activities and budget allocation. All the proposals received from Ilaka Level meetings, DDC committees were discussed in District level IPC meeting for final prioritization and approval for the budget allocation. The Mock District Council was organized with mock Local Development Officer, heads of government offices, representatives of political parties, NGOs, and general public. The Mock District Council was concluded by Mock LDO.

**Activity Summary:**
Five Mock District Councils were conducted this year, two each in Banke and Makwanpur and one in Bhojpur. First MDC conducted in Banke and Makwanpur was part of first year’s project cycle. The 4 day training showed the participants the importance of youth participation for their own local development. The program helped participants to understand the gaps in the current practices and made them feel their necessity to fill those gaps.

The first day, every participant was given a meta-card and asked to write what they expect from the training. They read their expectations aloud. Some of their expectations from the program are:

- To understand DDC planning processes
- Planning and selection of district level projects,
- Prioritization of projects from VDCs and budget allocation
- Importance of prioritizing effective programs to be selected in the district
- Role of youths in community after participating in district council

The election process of Local Development Officer and District Development Committee Planning Officers attracted everyone’s interest as these were the key posts throughout the DDC processes. Many of them nominated themselves as prospective LDO and Officers. This process was helpful for them to understand democratic exercise of election and participation in the process.
Sessions on district level planning process, democracy and democratic behaviour, good governance and accountability of district level government agencies and right to information provided youth with theoretical base, whereas mock sessions on Village Council, Ilaka level meetings, Meetings of thematic committees and intensive discussion in these meetings helped them to understand the process more clearly being in the roles. In these meetings, they identified problem/issue, wrote proposals, submitted in VDC and Ilaka level meetings, and lobbied for selection/prioritization. These exercises really improved their skill of public speaking and presentation.

The Social Mobilizers had different experience to be part of this program; they were invited as volunteers in the program. One of them, Punya Prasad Sapkota of Makwanpur said, “This program is very helpful to understand participatory planning process. It gave very clear picture of different steps. But, in reality, scenario is different. DDCs hardly follow these steps.” Another active participant and local journalist Subha Laxmi BK of Makwanpur pointed out the necessity of network between participants from different VDC to enable them to share the activities about their VDC and replicate in others. She said, “Usually local elites have control on local planning process which de-motivate youths, but this training has specially focused on necessity of youth participation in local planning process.”

Few statements that participants shared on the last day of the program:
Chandra Nepali of Banke said, “I did not know about the difficulties that we had to face in real District council. I take this program as an opportunity to experience the whole process of District Council and take part as a responsible person.”

Bishnu Neupane of Banke said, “If we are capable of raising our voices in the real District Council, I am sure that our voices will be heard and we will receive the opportunities and services that we are deprived of.”

Sabitra Pariyar of Banke, “This program has been very useful for me. After attending Mock Village Council, I got the opportunity to work for an organization, ‘Saathi’. The lessons I had learned from HimRights training has been very useful for me. This has strengthened my confidence to work forward in the field of development.”
The training program was very helpful in sensitizing the youth from marginalized communities about the processes of District Council. It helped them to practically understand how proposals are processed and prioritized in their Districts through mock sessions. The participants have shown active participation and enthusiasm throughout the program. According to participants, use of multimedia and different materials was very useful.

**District Public Hearing**

The main objective of District Public Hearing is enable participants to raise burning and priority issues which were raised but not addressed during the Village Public Hearing and other issues to district level stakeholders including Local Development Officer, heads of different government offices and district level political parties to make them accountable to address those 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 significant public issues included good governance, accountability and transparency of local government bodies; role/rights of youths in participatory development, VDC committees; and precise articulation of their priority issues in the public hearing. On the same day, participatory discussions were held on possible issues to be raised in the Public Hearing.

On the Public Hearing day, the participants effectively raised several significant public issues with the local stakeholders. Local Development Officer, district representatives of political parties, heads of different government offices, planning officer of DDC were the panel stakeholder 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.
Activity Summary
Five District Public Hearings were conducted this year, two each in Banke and Makwanpur and one in Bhojpur. First DPH conducted in Banke and Makwanpur were part of first year’s project cycle. The issues which were raised in Village Public Hearings which needs to be fully or partially addressed or from higher level authority were again raised in District Public Hearings. The stakeholders were Local Development Officer, Head of District Public Health Office, District Agriculture Development Office, high level officials from District Development Committee, and representatives of political parties. In Bhojpur District Public Hearing, CA Member Hon. Jayanti Rai was the chief guest present.
Some of the major issues raised in District Public Hearings were:
- Absenteeism of VDC Secretaries
- Insufficiency of VDC Secretaries
- Effective utilization of Constituency Development Fund
- Ensure transparency in budget allocation, implementation and monitoring of annual projects
- Improvement in service delivery of health posts, Agriculture/Livestock Services Centers
- Increase accountability and transparency in local government agencies
- Youth Self-employment Fund
- Political interference in local level planning process

District Public Hearing provided platform for both youths and district level stakeholders to understand youths’ issues and concerns in broader perspectives presented from 20 VDCs. They made several commitments to address youths’ issues and concerns. Bhojraj Khatiwada, Local Development Office of Makwanpur committed to send VDC Secretaries to their VDCs and provide necessary orientation to newly appointed Secretaries. Within a month, he issued directives to all Secretaries to go back to their VDCs and provide services efficiently. He also sent written instructions to all health posts in Makwanpur to provide effective health services.
**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. Similarly, this year Banke and Makwanpur District Dialogues were organized with the theme of National Youth Policy 2010. Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) has formed Task Force for revision of the Policy. We took advantage of this revision to highlight the issues and lobby for its integration in the Policy. The Coordinator and the Member of the Task Force participated in those Dialogues. However, Bhojpur District Dialogue was conducted in previous year's format. The program enhanced leadership qualities and self-confidence of marginalized youths and 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 on National Youth Policy, its implementation gaps and issues to be revised. The intensive discussions were held on National Youth Policy, its implementation gaps and issues to be revised (Banke and Makwanpur) and the issues raised during Village Public Hearings and District Public Hearings and the commitments made by the respective stakeholders (Bhojpur). The participants were also oriented on Dialogue process and its technical aspects.

On the District Dialogue day, Local Development Office, district representatives of political parties and heads of different government offices were present as panelist to discuss the issues raised in Bhojpur. Whereas, representatives of Task Force and Youth Vision 2025 of Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), youth wings of major political parties and government officials from DDC and District Sports Development were the main stakeholders in Banke and Makwanpur. Participants raised different priority issues discussed on the previous day and possible solutions. The dialogue concluded with some concrete results and conclusions which were summarized in the form of dialogue minutes. The Task Force members also committed to integrate issues raised
in the Dialogue in revised Policy. All the stakeholders and the youths signed on the minutes to increase ownership on the results and conclusions.

Activity Summary:
Five District Dialogues were conducted which included two each in Banke and Makwanpur and one in Bhojpur. First DD conducted in Banke and Makwanpur were part of first year’s project cycle. Stakeholders of the Dialogues were Local Development Officer, Heads of District Public Health Office, District Agriculture Development Office, high level officials from District Development Committee, and representatives of political parties. Participants raised several issues on following themes and held meaningful dialogue with the district stakeholders:

- Role of political parties in local planning process
- Participation of targeted groups in project planning and implementation
- Problems with frequent transfer of VDC officials
- Insufficient VDC Secretaries
- Services provided by office of Cottage and Small Industries
- Youth participation in local level planning process: Opportunities and challenges

In the program activities of second year, district dialogues were held on National Youth Policy, 2010. Ministry of Youth and Sports is revising the Policy, the Coordinator and Member of the Task Force was panelists stakeholder in the Dialogues conducted in Banke and Makwanpur. Youths raised following issues those need to be revised or clearly defined in the Policy;

- Budget for Youth as Target Group
- Limit age of Youth (existing 16-40)
- Lack of Implementation of Youth Policy
- Substance abuse and addiction of Youth
- Education and Unemployment

However, they focused more on effective implementation of the Policy. The representatives of the Task Force committed to integrate youths’ voice in the revised Policy.

The stakeholders made some commitments:
- Youth who are trained on the participatory planning process will be mobilized in the newly declared municipalities. They will assist in the infrastructural and human resource management.
- Social Mobilizers will be instructed for effective implementation of the budget.
- Youths will be mobilized to encourage the transparency, accountability and good governance of the local government.
- Political parties committed to assist the youth to promote their participation in local level planning process

District dialogue brought together a diverse youths with different view and values and district stakeholders and political parties to discuss on several issues and conclusions.
National Youth Legislative Parliament
National Youth Legislative Parliament seeks to engineer long-lasting, positive transformations in the capabilities and self-image of the youth from marginalized groups by enabling them to learn the finer details of parliamentary processes at the national level and the relevant decision-making procedures at the local tiers, articulate their issues confidently, gain relevant hands-on practical experience and internalize a democratic value system. The program is successful in fostering leadership, dynamism, positive motivation, penchant for good governance and civic duties among the youth participants.

Process Summary:
The six day program consisted of two day orientation and 4 day parliamentary mock sessions. On the orientation day, expert facilitators, Joint Secretary of Legislative Parliament, and co-facilitators conducted introduction to parliamentary system, legislative parliament, Constituent Assembly, democracy and development, parliamentary proceedings, formulation of laws and policies and parliamentary terminologies. The orientation team helped them to learn the methods and processes (modus operandi) of conducting parliamentary sessions professionally, discussed codes of conduct, the actual Parliamentary agenda and ways to polish the participants’ oratorical skills.

The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Prime Minister, Ministers, Leaders of the Opposition, Chief Whips, and Whips are the posts for parliamentary sessions. They were selected through election process which gave participants opportunity to be part of one of the most important democratic practices. The protocols for the parliamentary proceedings were also shared during these processes. Oath Taking Ceremony was conducted with the Speaker, Prime Minister and the Ministers and all the members of the Mock Legislative Parliament. The Members of Legislative Parliament were divided into ruling party and opposition party and were seated accordingly that is ruling party in the right and opposition in the left.

The first formal parliamentary session was chaired by the eldest member and later by the Speaker. The exercises on zero hour, issue based discussions, discussion on Bills, resolution of commitments, question and answer were conducted. The Prime Minister and Ministers answered
the issues raised by the members of the Parliament. The Finance Minister presented annual planning and annual budget and a full session is dedicated to discussion on annual planning and the budget. 'Bill on formation Youth Council' was tabled by Youth and Sports Minister. It was followed by discussion in the parliament and Legislative Parliament Committee on Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare. After discussion on each and every point, the Bill was passed with more than two-third of the votes.

The parliamentary session formally ended with the official letter from the Office of the President. The youth Declaration was prepared in the first NYLP.

**Activity Summary**

Participants were enthusiastic from the very first day. The introductory sessions and following sessions on democracy and development and good governance and youth participation were helpful for participants. Moreover, the major sessions on Legislative Parliament, Constituent Assembly, parliamentary procedures, and parliament terminologies provided them with theoretical backup for mock sessions.

The **First National Youth Legislative Parliament** held on May 26-31, 2014 at Dhulikhel Lodge Resort, Kavre was a program for direct participation of the Youths where they exercised all of the activities of a Legislative Parliament. In the given adverse scenario, it is absolutely desirable to create a national platform whereby the youths from across the country could assemble and ventilate their grievances and speak out for their safe future and for a better nation. 79 marginalized youths from 25 district participated in the program.

The formal inauguration of Mock Legislative Parliament program was conducted by CA member of Kavre, Chief District Officer, Local Development Officer, and Joint Secretary of Parliament Secretariat.

- Ram Hari Subedi, CA Member, Kavre Constituency no. 2
- Kedar Neupane, Chief District Officer, Kavre
- Arun BC, Local Development Officer, Kavre
- Rajendra Sigdel, Central Bureau of Investigation, Kavre
- Birendra Bahadur Karki, Joint Secretary, Parliament Secretariat

CDO Neupane pointed out that youth have always ignored politics which hasn't been a help for the country in anyway. He added, "All the participants must learn about the parliamentary process and share the learning." He added, "Youth have been leaving the country to earn a very small amount of money in other countries but they can earn it in own country." He even asked
HimRights to make the youth clear about the necessity to follow the responsibilities to achieve the rights.
CA Member Ram Hari Subedi denied introducing Nepal as a poor country and clarified that our land is full of potentialities. Asking the youth about development he said, "The whole nation is in the process of development which should be acknowledged and supported by the youth with their active and meaningful participation."

The first session was chaired by elderly member of the parliament, Asha Chaudhary and later by the elected Speaker. The sessions were conducted exactly the same way as the real Parliament. Sessions on Zero Hour, question and answer session, discussion on bills and ordinances, annual planning and budget had very lively discussions. Many realistic issues were raised and they were well tackled by relevant Ministers. Issues relating to education, health, corruption, youth empowerment, women, children and senior citizens were intensively discussed. The bill on Human Trafficking and Violence against Women and Girl Child was presented and discussed in the parliament and Legislative Parliament Committee on Women, Child, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare. The bill was passed by the youth parliament. Presentation of annual planning budget and following discussions were very interesting as the session gave real picture of budget session of the parliament.

The parliamentary ended with formal letter from the Office of the Youth President. The program has successfully rendered participants with both theoretical and practical knowledge on parliamentary proceedings, how members of parliament raise the issues in the House, how bills are presented, discussed and laws are formulated. These programs successfully increased youths’ understanding of national politics, formulation of national laws and policies and parliamentary procedures. Moreover, youths are more positive about national politics. Kanchan Ghimire from Makwanpur (participant of First NYLP) said; “I have always understood Politics as a dirty game but after participating in this process, but now I have changed my view.” He optimized that youth participation can bring change and clean “dirty” politics.

Similarly, Keshav Dhakal of Bhojpur (participant of First NYLP) said; “In the developed countries youth are welcomed in politics and are given opportunity to lead the country.” He said that youth though hate politics are still interested in developing the country. Ram Kumar Sonkar from Banke (participant of First NYLP) said that he was glad to criticize the Government Annual Programs. He added, “Healthy criticism is one of the characteristics of democratic process and we are able to practice it.”
A formal program was organized for the successful closure of the National Youth Parliament on 31st May, 2014. The program was chaired by Anjana Shakya, Chairperson, HimRights and renowned Human Activist Gauri Pradhan, Former Member; National Human Rights Commission accepted our request to be the chief guest.

Gauri Pradhan, the Chief Guest congratulated HimRights for the success of Youth National Parliament and all the participants for their achievement. He revealed that Nepalese society is full of discrimination and it is a challenge for the youth to ensure dignified and equal development for all people. He pointed out that the failure to include the youth in the development process or ignoring their issues creates new problems in the country. He revealed that new generation youth have been neglecting politics and branding it as dirty game. He added, "Politics doesn't need to be solely initiated by the political parties but individuals can also raise their voice for the common benefit of the society."

Anjana Shakya, Chairperson of HimRights expressed her happiness upon the change on the perspective about politics among the youth. She said, "After understanding both Rights and Responsibilities; the youth should understand how they can fulfil the responsibilities on individual level."

The **Second National Youth Legislative Parliament** was conducted on February 4-6, 2015 at Dhulikhel Lodge Resort, Kavre. 80 energetic youths participated in National Youth Legislative Parliament and National Dialogue. They were selected from diverse communities of all five development regions representing different indigenous groups, Dalits, Madheshi, Muslim, disabled and sexual minority. The diversity was more beautifully visible on the third day of the program. They attended the first session of the Parliament on their own cultural dresses - Tharu, Newar, Tamang, Rai, Magar, Madheshi, Muslim and other cultural dresses. In the second year, participants from non working districts were selected from same locality and fewer districts.

The election process was very interesting; more than half of the participants submitted their candidacy for the posts of Prime Minister, Speaker, and Ministers. Interestingly, more than two third of participants were candidates for those posts: 14 for Prime Minister, 20 for Speaker and 28 for Ministers.
All of the parliamentary sessions were very lively and systematically conducted; Speaker, Prime Minister, Ministers, opposition leaders and all members of youth Legislative Parliament excellently played their roles. The issues raised in Zero Hour and other discussion sessions were very realistic and relevant Ministers answered in the same way. Joint Secretaries from Legislative Parliament briefed every detail of each and every process.

The concluding ceremony was conducted in different way. Members of Legislative Parliament Committee on Women, Children, Senior Citizens and Social Welfare Hon. Jayanti Rai, Hon. Babina Moktan Lawoti and Hon. Ratna Devi Gurung held direct intensive discussion with participants in three groups. Participants raised several issues relating to women, children, education, health and local level planning and youths’ participation in these processes. The MPs surprised by the dynamic, enthusiastic, confident and meaningful queries of the participants. These discussions were followed by concluding remarks from Hon. Members of Legislative Parliament. They were so impressed by the participants; they informally said this type of program should be implemented in other parts of the country and their districts.

Babina Moktan found the discussion very energetic and important and assured to raise the issues discussed with the participants to the Parliamentary Committee. She asked the participants to share the knowledge for the training in the local level.

Ratna Devi Gurung also found the sharing of suggestions and discussions very important. She pointed out that most of the issues raised during the discussion are of national priority. Regarding the discussion on education she said, "Technical and scientific education as per the necessity of the youth should be prioritized which could guarantee job opportunities and fulfil the present necessities." She also pointed out that the education system and quality of community schools should be changed and increased and suggested that guardians need to form groups and go to the community schools to find out the quality of their children.
Jayanti Rai (from Bhojpur) also found the discussion very effective as it was an opportunity to understand the real issues of the youth. She accepted that the state has failed to address and manage the youth and also shared how youth can also bring change. She said, "Youth aged 16-24 are also equally mature and have advanced views and ideas. Some of the issues raised by the youth, I have personally raised in the House too." She revealed that due to lack of proper mechanism thousands of youth are compelled to go to foreign employment. Talking on education quality of the nation she said, "National education policy and facilities for the teachers are good enough but education quality is poor and no monitoring and evaluation is done." She also revealed that the youth self employment program has plenty of budget has failed in the implementation. At the end she asked the youth to actively participate in development activities in the local level and said "If only the youth participate actively in the budget planning process; the development activities would run smoothly."

Anjana Shakya, Chairperson of HimRights hoped that the participants could learn different democratic skill and said, "Democratic leadership could be practiced in local level through utilization of local resources which can bring the real changes." The program was successful in providing participants with theoretical and practical knowledge and helping them realize the importance of their participation in local development process.
National Dialogue:
National Dialogue is conducted to create platform for youths from different districts to hold dialogue with national stakeholders for policy implications. The issues raised during Village Public Hearings, District Public Hearings and District Dialogues were raised to the national stakeholders to address them from policy level mechanisms. The participants were provided with one day orientation on National Dialogue and the priority issues to be discussed in the Dialogue.

The issues discussed in National Dialogue were:
- Youth participation in Local level project planning, prioritization, budget allocation and implementation: issues, opportunities and challenges
- Services provided by government agencies at village and district level, availability of VDC Secretaries
- Planning process in newly formed municipalities
- Annual budget and implementation of targeted projects on women, children and other targeted groups which are often diverted
- Issues relating to health, women, children, and targeted groups
- Youth self employment and safe foreign employment

The stakeholders included members of Legislative Parliament, Joint Secretaries from National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, and Ministry of Health and Population. The Dialogue was expected to bring about long term impact on increasing youth participation in annual planning process and services provided by government agencies at local level. The stakeholders appreciated the program as they could share same platform with youths from different districts and listen to their voices from different perspectives.

Duration: 2 days
Participants: 80
Contents of the National Dialogue:
- Orientation day: Technical aspects of the Dialogue process
- Group wise discussion on different issues
  - Youth participation in local level planning, project selection, prioritization and implementation process
  - Targeted budget
  - Youth as targeted group
  - Services provided by VDCs
  - Issues relating to women, children, senior citizen and social welfare
  - Issues relating to health services at VDC and district
- The Dialogue Day
  - Participants raised several issues with national stakeholders
  - Stakeholders committed to integrate youths’ voices into policies
Activity Summary:
National Dialogues provided youths an opportunity to hold dialogue with national level stakeholders. Stakeholders of First National Dialogue held on June 2-3, 2014 were:

- Rabindra Adhikari, CA Member, CPN (UML)
- Rekha Sharma CA Member, UCPN (Maoist)
- Pushpa Lal Shakya, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission
- Tekraj Niraula Under Secretary, Local Bodies Support Section, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
- Rajendra Mishra, Director, Department of Cottage and Small Industries

The Dialogue was divided into three broad sections for interaction of the participants with the stakeholders. The sections to be discussed in the dialogue were:

- Development programs for the Elected areas
- Performance of the VDC Secretary in their respective VDCs
- Participatory planning process

Ram Kumar Sonkar from Banke raised an issue on absenteeism of VDC Secretaries in the office. He asked, “The VDC Secretaries are not found to be regularly attending the VDC offices. They have also been found to be influenced by different political parties. The budget allocation is also done under pressure of the political parties. Could these problems be addressed if monitoring teams are formed?” This is the main issue for most of the VDCs especially in mountain districts.

Responding to above question, Tek Raj Niraula, Joint Secretary of MoFALD said, “There is no local election for more than a decade. VDC Secretaries are working as VDC Chairperson and VDC Secretary in dual roles. Moreover there are insufficient Secretaries and they have responsibility of two or more VDCs. Hence they are not able to attend their offices on regular basis. However, we are trying to recruit more Secretaries for effective service delivery of VDCs.”

National dialogue brought together diverse group of participants with different view and values. They received an opportunity to present their issues among the stakeholders with possible solutions to it. The program was also useful in sensitizing the stakeholders about different challenges faced by the Marginalized Youths in the village level, district level and national level.
Different types of issues related to the VDC secretary, Local level elections, Planning of the programs, youth participation in the planning process and solution for effective and sustainable development were talked about in the program. Due to the lack of opportunity to express their opinions and due to suppression, there has been elation in the lack of answerability and accountability by responsible persons towards them and towards the community.

Stakeholders of the Second National Dialogue were:

- Ranju Kumari Jha CA Member and Chairperson of Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee of CA
- Pushpa Lal Shakya, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission
- Jagannath Adhikari, Program Director, National Planning Commission
- Ramesh Kumar Adhikari, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
- Dr. G.D. Thakur, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population

The Dialogue was divided into following sections for interaction with the stakeholders:
- National level planning (National Planning Commission)
- Good governance, accountability, transparency and project monitoring mechanisms in local government agencies
- Health Issues
- Women, Children, Senior Citizens and Social Welfare

Chhatra Bahadur Tamang, Bhojpur asked, “The projects are supposed to come from the local level through Ward Citizen Forum. But there are many wards where such forums aren't formed. How could the projects from those wards be passed in VDC? When would the WCFs be formed in those wards?”

Pushpa Lal Shakya, Joint Secretary of NPC answered, “When the Village Council passes any project in the local level; we should accept that the projects belong to the local people and they have passed it. But the projects in the local level get passed without clear budget design which affects throughout the process till its completion. We have designed a form which should be filled with the project details and should include the whole design.” He added, “We can't control the projects which come from the local level as the rights and responsibilities of the local people
should be limited to themselves. We can create process which could control other activities and can hope that the elite groups won't be affecting the local development activities. For effective implementation of development activities, youth participation and formation of WCF is very important.”

Ganesh BK, Palpa asked, “Budget of target groups are used in infrastructural development activities in VDC level. If targeted budgets are transferred to other activities, there is no point of allocating specific budget for these groups. I would also like to know what the MoFALD would address the rural development program.”

Ramesh Kumar Adhikari, Joint Secretary of MoFALD replied, “The 35% budget for the targeted group is unconditional aid from the Government of Nepal which can't be used in other activities. The 35% budget targets participation of local people as demanded by members of respective groups. Projects demanded in those groups reveal the actual necessities, problems and demand of the community. In some cases, there are no proposals submitted for targeted groups, hence the budget is spent on other activities.”

National dialogue gave a platform for marginalized youths to express their necessities and problems in local level while the stakeholders were able to hear the realities/issues of the youth. The healthy conversation even brought many youth to present new ideas which could easily solve problems in the local level. The stakeholders also used the platform to clear out many misconceptions among the youth and created positive environment. Good governance, transparency and accountability in local development activities and employment opportunities among youth came forward as the major issues in which the discussion was focused. The participants presented their core local problems to which the stakeholders were sensitized and also assured the youth to bring changes in the policies and programs which would benefit the youth in local level. The stakeholders found the youth eager to participate in local development activities, very positive and asked them to be more aware and active in their own locality. The program presented new hopes for the coordination between the state and the youth in the future.
Timeline of the activities conducted in the Year Two:

Village Level Dialogues were conducted in 5 VDCs in Banke, 3 VDCs in Makwanpur and 1 VDC in Bhojpur in different time period.
Participants Information

Selection of participation plays very crucial role in achievement of targeted outcomes. Hence, participants were selected in extensive consultation with VDC Secretaries, Social mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forums, local youth groups, participants of MDC and political leaders to select marginalized youths. Moreover, the prospective participants were individually met and/or telephoned and explained about objectives of the program and their roles in their community after the program.

During periodic review meeting organized in Hetauda (July 2014), it was concluded that older participants are more active in their community than the younger – they are more focused in studies rather than community activities. Hence more preference was given to the older participants, 20 years and above and the result was outstanding; they are more active than those from previous year. This year, we have reached to total of 90 VDCs, 30 VDCs in each district.

We have reached to total of 1531 participants this year with 851 female, 678 male and 2 LGBTI constituting 56% female participants. Last year, female participants constituted of 61%. The district wise participants are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>LGBTI</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYLP</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>678</strong></td>
<td><strong>851</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>1531</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart above shows there were 55.58% female participants, 44.28% male participants and 0.13% from LGBTI community.
The chart above shows the caste wise distribution of the participants. 14% of the participants were from Dalit community, one of the most marginalized groups who do not have access to decision making level in political and social spheres. 44% of them were from indigenous groups whereas 4% were from advantaged indigenous groups. 6% were from Madhesi and 5% from Muslim communities; most of them were from Banke district. 27% of them belong to Brahmin and Chhetri caste groups; they relatively have more access to decision making spheres. The efforts were made that all of the participants are marginalized no matter which caste groups they belong to. Some of the participants belonged to most disadvantaged groups like Chepang (Makwanpur), Jogi and Thami (Bhojpur), Harijan and Das (Banke); the Government has made specific reservations for these groups. Similarly, 2 of the participants were from LGBTI group and 6 were disabled.

**Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries:**

The participants has been sharing the knowledge with other youths from their communities and implementing projects. We interviewed 176 youths from 3 districts and to how many they shared their knowledge and learning and motivated them to be part of local development process to youth groups and communities. The findings are the total number they reached were 11,655 with an average of 66 persons per participant. Thus, the total reached by 1,531 participants were 101,046 secondary beneficiaries in three districts. This number is far more than we mentioned in the proposal or envisioned. The number of secondary beneficiaries are still growing and yet to document. This project is not only exciting to us but to participants too. They are finding it very meaningful, internalizing it and disseminating far and wide.
Achievements/Impacts

Impact Study:
An impact study was conducted in three districts to understand impact of this project; learn what participants have been doing in their communities; and what local government stakeholders and political parties think of their activities.

Methodology:
1. **Focus Group Discussions (FGD):** FGDs were conducted with 6-8 participants in each of the study VDCs. The objective of FGD was to figure out what youths have been doing in group and individually and identify other possibilities to engage in local development processes.

2. **In-depth Interviews:** In-depth interviews were conducted with participants who were already in local level decision making bodies and/or playing leadership roles in VDCs or annual planning process or increasing accountability, transparency and good governance of local government agencies. These interviews were documented as success stories.

3. **Key Informant Interviews (KII):** Key informant interviews were conducted with VDC secretaries, Social Mobilizers, Coordinators of WCFs and representatives of local political parties. KIIs were conducted to understand impact of participant’s activities, triangulation of information and their leadership roles in the community. We asked stakeholders how the youths who participated in the program are making difference in their community and how their actions facilitate different activities in participatory planning process. Some of the participants are implementing projects from VDC budget. The stakeholders were also asked about implementation status of those projects.

4. **Telephone interviews:** Interviews were conducted with the participants from remote areas.

Study VDCs:
- Banke: 20 VDCs
- Makwanpur: 20 VDCs
- Bhojpur: 16 VDCs

Sample size
370 youths from three districts were involved in focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and telephone interviews. It included some of the first year participants too. It makes 24% of total of 1531 participants of year II. Following is the district wise sample:
- Banke: 152 youths
- Makwanpur: 127 youths
- Bhojpur: 91 Youths
Findings
The following chart gives youths in leadership roles from three districts in different decision making levels like Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Citizen Awareness Center, Community Based Organizations, and youth groups. The data shows 20% of the participants (N=370) are already in local level decision making levels of Ward Citizen Forum and Integrated Planning Committees. These committees have direct influence on project planning, prioritization, budgeting and implementation of development activities. They have become integral part of participatory planning process in respective VDCs and they are taking leadership roles in planning, decision making and implementation of development projects. Similarly, 24% of them are connected with CBOs, NGOs, Women’s groups, cooperatives, agriculture and forest user groups. Most of them are working as community mobilizers while some others are in leading posts as well. Almost one third (30%) of them are involved in different youth clubs; these are either formed by the youths themselves or the existing ones. Hence it gives outstanding number of youths are in different decision making levels in their community and some at district level. While others are continuing their higher studies and some are working as teacher in local schools. They are also disseminating their knowledge to other youths and adults in schools, colleges, and also with VDCs and above mentioned groups.

![Participant's involvement after the program (n=370)]

Here CBOs include: Women’s groups and networks, Cooperatives, Agriculture/ community forestry user groups, and different community based organizations and NGOs.
District wise Achievements: Banke

Year I VDCs
Year II (Cluster 3)
Year II (Cluster 4)
Year III VDCs

* District Headquarters

LEGEND:
- International Boundary
- District Boundary
- VDC Boundary

Annual Report 2014/15: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)
Third Cluster VDCs: Bageshwari, Sitapur, Udhrapur, Sonpur, Raniyapur

Fourth Cluster VDCs: Radhapur, Paraspur, Indrapur, Belbhar, Saigaon

Though program VDCs are closer distance from Nepalgunj, the district headquarters; these are some of the least developed VDCs. Most of the people are not only from Madheshi and Muslim communities but are most marginalized groups. Saigaon, which borders with India, was the most difficult VDC to conduct programs.

Participants in local level decision making bodies: In-depth interviews and telephone interviews were carried out with 152 of the youth participants to understand their involvement after the program. They have been playing very active leadership roles after participating in different programs. They are more familiar in their VDCs; they are visible and their voices are heard. VDC offices, local political parties and community elders started to recognize youth. The following chart shows youths’ involvement in different sectors especially after the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants engagement after the program (n=152)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WCF 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAC 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBOs 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Club 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found that 18% of them are now members of Ward Citizen Forum, 5% and 1% of them are members of Integrated Planning Committee and Citizen Awareness Center respectively. These three bodies have direct influence on VDC’s annual planning and participatory planning process. Outstandingly, 36% of them are members of youth networks in their VDC. Some of them are members of district level youth network. Similarly, 24% of them are active of them are working with local CBOs, NGOs, women’s groups and local cooperatives. Majority (21 out of 37) of them are working as social mobilizers. 16% (Others) included those who are continuing their higher studies, involved in household activities and family businesses.
**Formation of Youth Clubs:** Youths from Radhapur, Udhrapur, Indrapur, Raniyapur, Sonpur, Paraspur, and Bageshwari has formed Youth Clubs in their VDCs. The club members have actively participated in this year’s Annual Planning Process from ward level meetings to Village Councils of their respective VDCs. These clubs are working in close coordination with VDC office and other organizations; the best part is that they are recognized by VDC and political parties as they consult with these Youth Clubs and invite them to formal meetings for their inputs.

**Participation in Participatory Planning Process:**
As a part of recognition in VDC, the VDC offices formally invited youth participants to participate in VDC planning process (Ward level planning meeting, IPC meetings, and Village Councils). 30 youths from all 10 VDCs participated in Village Council meetings. Few of them were formally invited in the Council meeting and provided them space to speak in the meeting. This is very important encouragement for youths as they are usually excluded from these processes in the past.

Usha Chaudhary, Mina Thapa and Til Kumari Basnet from Raniyapur VDC successfully facilitated the Village Council meeting which was almost postponed due to serious disputes among political parties. They talked with everyone and convinced them to resume the meeting peacefully. VDC acknowledged their effort to conduct the Council successfully. They also successfully lobbied at VDC to allocate Rs. 500 monthly stipend to Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV), earlier, they were provided Rs. 400 per month.

**Youth in project implementation:** Youths from Radhapur VDC received Rs. 75,000 from VDC for children and youth programs; the project proposal was submitted by Bimal Thapa, Radha Thapa, Anu Thapa and Bishnu Sunar. With this fund, they formed child club network in the VDC. Similarly, the Committee formed under chairpersonship of Anu Thapa received Rs. 1,500,000 from DDC for construction of Community Hall in the VDC. Bageshwari VDC allocated Rs. 80,000 for youth development activities. Puspa Sunar is leading this initiative. They all have gone through all steps of participatory planning process to get these funding.
Engagement in different NGOs: With increased working experience and theoretical base, self-confidence and increased articulation and analytical skill, many of the participants were able to get jobs in NGOs and CBOs. Some NGOs came to recruit them from while we were conducting our programs (Mock District Council). Seven of them are working with DEPROSC Nepal as Social Mobilizers. Gagan BK (Udhrapur), Radha Thapa, Bimal Thapa (Radhapur), Arif Salmani (Indrapur), Suraj Singh Thakur (Paraspur), Manisha Sunar (SItapur), Puspa Sunar (Bageshwari), Kabita Gautam (Raniyapur) are facilitating Business Literacy Program and Shovaram Kurmi (Indrapur) is working as Master Trainer in the same organization. They were recruited during Mock District Council.

Village Public Hearings: Village Public Hearings were conducted in Bageshwari and Radhapur VDC. These hearing proved to be perfect platform for youths and stakeholders to hold questions and answers on several issues. Stakeholders also appreciated the program for providing shared forum for all to hold healthy dialogue. During Public Hearing in Radhapur VDC, Chiranjibi Pandey, Secretary committed to increase youths’ participation in local level decision making process. He said, “I commit to ensure meaningful youth participation in Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Planning Committee, Consumer Groups and Citizen Awareness Center. VDC office will work in close coordination with youth groups as they are the most important partner of local development.” He also committed to fully activate VDC level Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. Similarly, Amar Raj Aacharya, Head of Agriculture Services Sub-center said, “Government has introduced youth self-employment program mainly to attract youths in agriculture. Sub-center in association with District Agriculture Development Office provides trainings to develop agricultural entrepreneurship in the field of Mushroom farming, Goat and pig farming. I would like to share the agricultural entrepreneurship development is one of the major priority areas of Government of Nepal.”

Increasing activities of Gagan BK, Udhrapur VDC
Gagan was working as an advisor in a child club; a chairperson in Youth Awareness Centre and a member in local Sukh Shanti Child Club. Unlike other dalit youth; he used to attend VDC level meetings on issues regarding to youth and children but due to lack of knowledge he could not present his ideas and issues in such meetings.

Now Gagan actively participates in such meetings and he finds himself empowered after participating in various levels of training. He says, “Now I can present myself clearly in any meetings and can confidently speak before the mass. I represent youth and the IPC and clearly present the problems, necessities and solutions for the youth.”

After participating in national level program; he is sharing knowledge to youth about National Youth Policy; their rights and responsibilities. He is also running campaigns and street dramas regarding human trafficking, child rights, domestic violence, and people with disabilities and so on. He shared his learning on participatory planning process in the local level and actively participated in ward level meetings and facilitated community people to identify their issues/problems; write proposal on identified issues; and submit at Ward Citizen Forum. Hence, there is significant increase in proposals on women, children and other targeted groups (Dalit, disabled, minority groups, elders). He recently filed an RTI to learn about the programs regarding youth in the VDC. He is currently working as a community facilitator for Business Literacy Program, run by DEPROSC Nepal, a local NGO.
**HimRights support in conducting public hearing:** It is mandatory to organize Public Hearings by all the VDCs (Local Self Governance Act, 2055) every year and social audits for development projects. But VDCs hardly organize Public Hearings rather they present VDC review meetings as Public Hearings. Very interestingly, Village Public Hearings organized by HimRights were the first public hearing of the VDC. The VDC Secretary realized the importance of organizing hearings for accountability and transparency on VDC activities. They committed to organize hearings from next year. Sitapur VDC of Banke has formally invited HimRights to facilitate their public hearing in the VDC. HimRights Banke and the participants supported VDC to conduct the Hearing. Hence there is increasing ownership and institutionalization of Public Hearing by VDCs contributing to increase accountability and transparency at local level.

**Village level dialogues** were conducted in Sonpur, Raniyapur, Udhrapur, Indrapur, and Paraspur VDCs. Dialogues were the follow up activities where youths from all wards of the VDC come together to hold discussion on their priority issues with local government stakeholders. The stakeholders were VDC Secretary, Heads of Health Posts, Principals and teachers of government schools, political party leaders, social mobilizers, and coordinators of WCFs. The dialogue between youths and stakeholders were very meaningful. Especially, they discussed on several issues of increasing youth participation in participatory planning processes; political interference in annual planning process; inclusive and active ward citizen forums; rightful allocation of budgets to women, children and other targeted groups; and the services being provided by government agencies at VDC level. During Dialogues, government stakeholders made some commitments to address the issues raised by the youths. Madhab Singh, Secretary of Sonpur VDC said, “We will definitely involve youths, women, Dalits, and indigenous people in this years’ annual planning process. We will make WCFs and CACs more active in this process.” He also committed to strengthen youth network in the VDC. 12 of the
youths from these five VDCs are members of WCF and IPC. They played very active role in this year’s planning process.

**Impact of Village Dialogues and Right to Information (RTI) campaigns**

During Village Dialogue organized on December 3, 2014 in Indrapur VDC, youths had raised issue of irregularity on scholarship distribution in Nepal Rastriya Lower Secondary School. The school has not provided scholarships to its students. After the dialogue, Shovaram Kurmi, Arif Salmani, Ramanand Tamauli and Mira Das have filed an RTI application to the school. The school management admitted that they have not distributed scholarships for more than four years and they committed to distribute in two months. Recently, the students have received scholarships.

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

45 youths from 7 VDCs filed RTI application in respective Health Posts for justifiable reasons on closure of their services at 2 pm on the same day and same time. They forwarded copy of the applications to District Public Health Office too. This campaign was widely covered in local newspapers. All of the Health Posts had replied instantly stating that they work on administration part after 2 pm rather than medical.

**Youths as campaigner:** Youth groups from Sonpur and Udhrapur are working on Campaign on Open Defecation Free Zone in coordination with VDC. They have started RTI campaigns in their VDCs as well. 45 youths from 7 VDCs filed RTI application in respective Health Posts for justifiable reasons on closure of their services at 2 pm on the same time and the day. They forwarded a copy of the applications to District Public Health Office too. This campaign was widely covered in local newspapers. All of the Health Posts had replied instantly stating that they work on administration part after 2 pm rather than medical.
Some of the success stories of youths who are working as youth leaders in their community:

The Youth Campaigner, Bimal Thapa, Radhapur VDC, Banke

"I always had urge and feeling deep inside my heart to work for the positive change in the community. Participation in different trainings organized HimRights empowered and guided me with the knowledge and skills to work for the community."

After participating in MVC, Bimal shared on the VDC process and roles of WCF in WCF and CAC. He played an active role during the ward level meeting for development programs in Radhapur on December 29, 2014. He led the community during the discussions on planning of construction of local road, information centre establishment, tree plantation and many more. He has started a Youth Information Centre in Radhapur VDC and due to his active participation and dedication towards local development; the VDC has selected him as the IPC member to represent youth.

Currently he is working as a Joint Secretary in building construction project of Shiva Shakti Savings and Cooperative with operating budget of NRs. 3.5 millions. He chairs a VDC level youth network which he started. Through his initiation the VDC has allocated NRs. 11,000/- for youth skills development project for youth network.

He recently formed a RTI group and is working on RTI awareness campaign. He has filed the RTI to find about scholarship and school construction budget of local Shree Maitahawa Higher Secondary School. He also played an important role in RTI orientation in Radhapur VDC organized by Information and Human Rights Research Centre.

Bimal has a new identity, he is proud to be working as a Youth Campaigner for the positive changes and development at the local level. He has good relations with local political parties and is maximizing it for the benefit of the community.

Changes in Behavior, Then and Now – Arif Salmani, Indrapur VDC, Banke

Arif was a dormant child club member from Muslim Community in village and district level and had no clear knowledge on planning processes and development activities. He learnt a lot about 14 step participatory planning process in the training which he shared with his WCF and CAC. Finding such growth in him; his community selected him as a WCF member.

After the training and village level dialogue he filed an RTI along with his friends in DEO for information on scholarship distribution in local school. He filed another RTI to the Sub-health post in Indrapur VDC to find out its opening time and demanded reasons for failing to running the health post according to the rules.

He is working as a Community Facilitator in Business Literacy Program run by DEPROSC Nepal and supported by USAID. He recently worked as a facilitator in 5 day training on Child Rights organized by CWIN Nepal. He is also working as Youth club secretary formed by Muslim community development centre. He is also a member of VCPC reformed by SAATHI, a national NGO.

Trainings of HimRights have helped Arif Salmani have good public relation with youth from other VDCs and have helped him coordinate in different local issues. His feels empowered and says, "I now realize that youth are the agent of development in local level and can contribute for the benefit of the community."
**District Dialogue:** National Youth Policy, 2066 was the main theme of District Dialogue in Banke. Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) has formed Task Force Vision 2025 for intensive study of National Youth Policy and its implementation gaps. Yogendra Shahi, Coordinator of the Task Force was invited as main stakeholder. There was intensive discussion on the Policy, its gaps and youth’s suggestion for more youth friendly policy. The youths put their views on several issues of the Policy that has not been implemented. The age group of youth was major issue, most of the participants said that age range of 16-40 is very impractical and upper limit should be minimized to 30 years. Similarly, lack of specific youth body in the district, youth council, and specific provision of youth as targeted budget in VDC’s annual planning were some of the issues discussed during the Dialogue. Coordinator of the Task Force committed to incorporate youths voices into Policy reformation. As per the commitment he made during the Dialogue, 2 of the participants participated in regional level workshop on Youth Vision 2025 organized by MOYS.

**Transformative Experience – Asha Gurung, Chisapani VDC, Banke**

Asha Gurung, an indigenous woman, has now turned into a local social activist. After participating in different trainings organized by HimRights; she is not restricted by household chores. Now she leads an organization called Mahila Adhikar Pairabi Sanjal (Women Rights Advocacy Network) with 100 members. She adds, “Each day I deal with minimum of 3 incidents on violence against women along with different local NGOs and take them to police station to ensure justice to victims.”

She is also working as Village Child Protection Committee Secretary and representing local women in Village Council and Area Council. She regularly coordinates with Women and Children Office, VDC and different NGOs/INGOs. She says, “I was limited within the family but now I am an activist which is my identity.” She had no prior knowledge on national politics and like other people she found it as a dirty game but her perspective certainly changed after participating in National Youth Legislative Parliament. She adds, “I should come forward to work on development problems and any other social problems in the local level and I believe that youth should actively participate in local or national politics. I sincerely thank HimRights for this empowerment.”

**Follow up of previous year’s participants:** HimRights District Office is in regular contact with participants of previous years’ program. Asha Gurung of Chisapani, Ganga Sunar of Bankatawa, and Fatte Kumari Jaise of Radhapur became active member of District Women Rights Forum, a district level women’s network. Makbul Mukeri (Matehiya) and Dal Bahadur Sunar (Bankatawa) were selected as Master Trainer in DEPROSC Nepal, an NGO. Dhan Kumari Tharu (Binauna) is currently working as Community Facilitator for Fatima Foundation, an NGO.

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**Dhankumari Tharu facilitating a meeting in community**

[Image of Dhankumari Tharu facilitating a meeting in community]
Annual Report 2014/15: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)
Cluster Three: Bhaise, Nibuwatar, Bhimphedi, Aambhanjyang, Basamadi
Cluster Four: Chatiwan, Dhiyal, Phaparbari, Betini, Raigaon
The third cluster comparatively is closer from Hetauda, the district headquarters, but due to difficult mountainous terrain and lack of reliable means of transportation, they were not easily accessible. Fourth cluster VDCs are some of the remotest mountainous VDCs in terms of road accessibility and people have less access to district level services. It takes more than 8 hours bus ride to Raigaon from Hetauda.

Participants in local level decision making bodies: In-depth interviews and telephone interviews were carried out with 126 of the youth participants to understand their involvement after the program. They have been playing very active leadership roles after participating in different programs. They are more familiar in their VDCs; they are more visible and their voices are heard. VDC offices, local political parties and community elders started to recognize youth’s potential. The following chart shows youths’ engagement in different sectors especially after the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Participants (n=126)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward Citizen Forum (WCF)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Planning Committee (IPC)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Awareness Center (CAC)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Clubs</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abroad</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found that 16% of them are now members of Ward Citizen Forum, 2% and 1% of them are members of Integrated Planning Committee and Citizen Awareness Center respectively. These three bodies have direct influence on VDC’s annual planning and participatory planning process. 22% of them are involved with CBOs, it includes different CBOs, local NGOs, women’s networks, cooperatives and Community Forest User Groups. 12% of them have joined youth clubs and 45% of them are continuing their higher studies or involved in previous occupations. Hence, it makes more than half of the participants are already in different decision making bodies of their communities.
Participation in Participatory Planning Process: Participants have been sharing their knowledge with other youths and Community members of their VDCs in the meeting of youth clubs, child clubs, and women’s groups. They conducted sharing meetings, facilitated WCF meetings, and participated in Ward Level Planning meetings. 24 of the youths are WCF Coordinators and Members and IPC members and they have been playing active roles in regulating the participatory planning process in systematic way. Many of them participated meaningfully in Village Councils and Ilaka level meetings as well.

Coordination with Government agencies: Hatiya VDC (currently Hetauda Municipality) office nominated two of its WCF members as participants for Mock District Council. The VDC Secretary, who also facilitated during Mock Village Council, found the program very useful for the members of WCF and overall annual planning process. This was mentioned in DDC’s Annual Planning Book.

Training sessions by ToT participants: Three participants of ToT on Human Rights organized training sessions on Human Rights, Leadership and Stress Management with 30 students of Janapriya Secondary School on August 2, 2014. The training was facilitated by Kanchan Ghimire, Ganesh Darpan Adhikari, and Roshan Aryal. It was an opportunity for them to practice and enhance their skills and at the same time it benefitted the students. Principal of the school also appreciated the youth's initiative and hoped for similar sessions in future. The event was also covered in local newspapers.

Village Public Hearings were conducted in Bhimphedi and Chhatiwan VDC. VDC Secretary, Heads of Health Post, Agriculture Services Center, Livestock Services Center, local political leaders, Social Mobilizers, Coordinators and members of Ward Citizen Forums were present during the Public Hearings. The Hearing was first of its kind.

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Pabina Lama Selected as WCF Coordinator, Bhaise VDC, Makwanpur

Pabina, an indigenous woman is the role-model to the youth with knowledge; capability building and empowerment can become a leader in local community development. Prior to participating in MVC & MDC she was a bachelor’s level student and house bound. After learning about the participatory planning and development processes; she participated in different local activities and due to her leadership the VDC Ward chose her as their WCF Coordinator. As a WCF Coordinator; she leads all of the 14 steps of participatory planning process in her ward.

The VDC is going to reform different committees regarding Women, Children and Disabled after Pabina raised the issue. "When I found that that those committees weren't organizing programs according to the rules and were misusing the budget, we raised our voice and now the VDC has agreed to reform the committees." Pabina is leading youth in reforming those committees which would develop proposals according to the actual needs of the target groups. As the WCF Coordinator she recently assisted the VDC by helping local people register their names in the voting list. The WCF has also helped the local people in distribution of social security allowance. Pabina says, "Role of WCF Coordinator has made me socially responsible. I'll try to solve local development problems and also motivate youth to participate in local development activities." She is also a member of Integrated Planning Committee and actively participating in different meetings.
in both of the VDCs, however, every VDC has to conduct public hearings. The Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee has been formed in both of these VDCs, they have been monitoring implementation of the commitments made during the Hearings and continuously lobbying for the VDCs to conduct public hearings in coming years. Chhatiwan Agriculture Services Center has been supporting agriculture groups in Horticulture, mushroom farming and vegetable farming in coordination with District Agriculture Development Office (DADO). VDC has allocated some fund to complete construction of women’s network building and school buildings; VDC Secretary committed to complete those projects during Village Public Hearing. The Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee formed during public hearing regularly monitored and followed up with the stakeholders for effective implementation of the commitments.

**Village level dialogues:** Village level dialogues were organized in Nibuwatar, Bhaise and Phaparbari VDC. The participants of Mock Village Council from those VDCs coordinated with local level stakeholders and other youth participants. There were more than 30 youths in each Dialogue representing all wards (at least 3 from each ward). VDC Secretary, Heads of Health Post, Agriculture Services Center, Livestock Services Center, political parties, schools, Ward Citizen Forums, consumer groups and schools.

Nibuwatar VDC Secretary committed to facilitate allocation of budget from Village Council if youths come up with concrete planning. He urged to form youth network in the VDC and work accordingly. With this commitment, youths from Nibuwatar formed youth club called Simaantkrit Namuna Yuwa Samuha Nibuwatar with participants from Mock Village Council and others. Likewise, Principal of Barahi Secondary School of Nibuwatar publically announced to declare school premises and surroundings as smoking free zone in the dialogue.

**DPH impact:** ‘Absenteeism of VDC Secretaries’ was the major issue raised in District Public Hearing. Youths from Aambhanjyang, Betini, Phaparbari, Raigaon (Phaparbari and Raigaon are some of the remotest VDCs of the district) asked Local Development Officer to take action on this issue. They raised issues like Secretaries are not regular in VDC Office rather they stay in the district headquarters; newly appointed Secretaries are inefficient; and there are insufficient number of Secretaries as one has to work in two or more VDCs. Due to these problems, they
have to travel to Hetauda, the district headquarter to meet Secretary and get their work done. This has not only wasted their time but also increased their expenses and unnecessary hassle.

Addressing these issues, Bhojraj Khatiwada, Local Development Officer made several commitments to give instructions to all VDC secretaries mandatorily return to their VDC office and provide services smoothly. Similarly, he also committed to provide necessary orientations on participatory planning process to newly appointed VDC Secretaries for effective and transparent service from the VDC. After the program, he gave strict instructions to go to their VDCs and provide effective services. Now, there are sufficient Secretaries in the district (one Secretary in each VDC). But the problem persists. There was good news coverage on every VDC with Secretaries but not all stay in their Offices.

**District Dialogue:** The participants had dialogue with Saroj Dilu Bishwakarma, member of Taskforce Vision 2025 of Ministry of Youth and Sports and youth leaders of different political parties on different youth issues. The focus was the National Youth Policy, 2010, its implementation gaps and recommendations for better youth friendly Policy. Youth raised issues on age of youths; youths to be identified as specific targeted group and allocate specific budget for youth development and empowerment; youth self employment; and youth participation in local development. Saroj Bishwakarma said, “This forum proved to be very effective as I hear voices of youths from different places and perspectives. I believe the issues raised here will be very productive in revising the National Youth Policy, 2010. I assure you that your voices will be incorporated in the Policy.”
Annual Report 2014/15: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)
Third Cluster VDCS: Khawa, Nagi, Annapurna, Chhinamakhu, Timma
Fourth Cluster: Mulpani, Tungechha, Nepaledada, Kimalung, Keurenipani

In Bhojpur, We have reached to eastern and northern parts of the district. Both the clusters are in remotest area, high altitude mountainous terrain and very far from the district headquarters. Moreover, lack of reliable motorable road connection made it very difficult to conduct programs. The program team walked whole day to Annapurna to conduct Village Public Hearing. There were no any means of transportation. The fourth cluster was also difficult in terms of accessibility. Hence, it is difficult to conduct regular follow up visits to the program VDCs.

Participants in local level decision making bodies: In-depth interviews and telephone interviews were carried out with 91 of the youth participants to understand their involvement after the program. They have been playing very active leadership roles after participating in different programs. They are more familiar and visible in their VDCs and their voices are heard. VDC offices, local political parties and community elders started to recognize youth’s potential. The following chart shows youths’ engagement in different sectors especially after the program:

![Chart showing participant's involvement after the program](image)

It was found that 20% of them are now members of Ward Citizen Forum, 5% and 3% of them are members of Integrated Planning Committee and Citizen Awareness Center respectively. These three bodies have direct influence on VDC’s annual planning and participatory planning process. 24% of them are involved with CBOs, it includes different CBOs, local NGOs, women’s networks, cooperatives and CFUGs. 45% of them have joined youth groups and 3% of them are continuing their higher studies or involved in previous occupations.

Formation of Youth Groups: Youths from Tungechha, Chhinamakhu, Annapurna, Nagi, Mulpani, and Nepaledada has formed Youth Groups. They have involved other youths from all wards of these VDCs and held introductory meeting where they discussed about youth’s role in development of VDC. Recently, youth group of Nepaledada met Chief District Officer (CDO)
and discussed on several issues. CDO committed to formally register the group if all required documents are provided. Similarly, Manita Khimdung of Chhinamakhu formed child club in her VDC and actively working for empowerment of children.

**Reformation of WCFs:** Youths from Tungechha VDC has reformed four of its inactive WCFs in Ward No. 1, 2, 3 and 9. Those WCFs were not functioning well and did not hold regular meetings in the communities. Hence, they reformed WCFs and included energetic youths in the committee.

**Participation in participatory planning process:**
Many participants have participated in VDCs’ Annual Planning Process. They involved in ward level meetings, WCF meetings and submitted proposals for the next year. Some of the proposals are: orientation on women rights and human rights: drinking water projects (Mane Bhanjyang), skill development projects for women, conservation of historical and religious places; child development; capacity building project for children and disabled (Annapurna), Training for youth on Human Rights, drinking water project; upgrade of roads; library, computers and sports goods for children (Bhojpur Municipality), Bridge construction in Kawa River (to be proposed in DDC); irrigation project; road construction (Ranibas VDC), Drinking water project in School; infrastructure for Early Childhood Development; Skill development training for women; felicitation for senior citizens (Chhinamakhu), Public toilets in Sombare Bazar; Human Rights Training for youths; public library (Nepaledada). Participants from Tungechha, on their own initiative, organized dialogue with local stakeholders in VDC hall where they discussed different aspects of participatory planning process, VDC’s annual budget ceiling, and political interference in development activities. The VDC assistant, Social Mobilizer, Coordinators and members of Ward Citizen Forums and youths were present in the Dialogue.

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**Child Club formed by Manita Khimdung, Chhinamakhu VDC, Bhojpur**

"During the MVC training, I learnt that child clubs could represent themselves in the IPFC but there was no such child club in my VDC to represent them. As children are the future to development activities, I found that their empowerment is very necessary. She returned Chhinamakhu, her VDC and formed a child club called, Pariwartan Child Club.

The club plans to organize a program each month for the children in the local. They organized a quiz contest on December 11, 2014 and National Song singing contest on December 27, 2015. She says, "It is very difficult to have child friendly environment in the community without bringing awareness among the children. We are trying to involve children and empower them to raise awareness on child rights."

They are also organizing child birth registration orientation program to local people and senior citizen felicitation program on April 3, 2015.

She currently lives in Bhojpur Bazaar; district headquarters, for her higher studies but also participates in local level activities. Due to her active participation and effort to empower the children, the VDC has selected her as the IPC member to represent children."
The following are the list of projects and estimated budget that youths have proposed in the Village Council and the Council approved for the next year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>VDC</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Drinking Water Storage Tank construction</td>
<td>Shree Naulo Gau Aadarsha Primary School</td>
<td>Rs. 20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Skill Development training for women</td>
<td>Chhinamakhu VDC</td>
<td>Rs 1,19700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Human Rights Training for youths</td>
<td>Nepaledada VDC</td>
<td>Rs. 30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Establish Public Library</td>
<td>Nepaledada VDC</td>
<td>Rs. 25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assistance for Disabled</td>
<td>Sadananda Municipality</td>
<td>Rs. 40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Human Rights training for women</td>
<td>Manebhanjyang VDC</td>
<td>Rs. 60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rural Electrification</td>
<td>Manebhanjyang VDC</td>
<td>Rs. 1,25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Women Entrepreneurship Development project</td>
<td>Annapurna VDC (submitted in DDC):</td>
<td>Rs. 5,00,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mana Bhujel’s effort on VDC budget for Women and Children, Chhinamakhu VDC, Bhojpur**

Mana was a housewife and a mother until a year back. Three years ago, she was nominated as WCF Assistant Secretary. She was not even asked if she was interested or not to work in that post and she had no idea of her roles or responsibilities.

She says, "I didn’t know the importance of WCF but after participating in the trainings provided by HimRights; I have understood the responsibilities of WCF, WCF coordinators and Secretaries. Now I regret for not actively participating in previous meetings."

Recent Ward Council on December 2, 2014 passed the projects like Tailoring training for women, Establishment of Child Development Centre and Senior Citizen Felicitation Program; which were led by her. Chhinamakhu VDC had decided to allocate the budget for women and children as instructed in the law after long effort by Mana.

She says, "I misjudged ward level meeting and village councils as the platform for the elite group and political representatives. But now I learnt that youth could play vital role in such programs."
Campaign for Open Defecation Free (ODF) zone: Youth participants from Nepaledada are actively working in coordination with VDC office for ODF campaign. The youth groups formed by MVC participants are also planning to start wall magazine and community library. They have also received fund from VDC to conduct youth empowerment training. They are planning to conduct training on Human Rights in coordination with HimRights Bhojpur. Similarly, Youths from Nepaledada are regularly monitoring the services provided by the Health Post for smooth and efficient healthcare service in the village.

Meeting in Sadananda Municipality: Joint meeting was held among the participants from different VDCs included in Sadananda Municipality. They had discussion on how they could participate in Municipal planning process and contribute in Municipal Council. The meeting was first of its kind where youths have shown their keen interest on participating in local development process.

Village Public Hearings: During Public Hearings in Annapurna and Mulpani VDC, stakeholders made concrete commitments to increase youth participation in participatory planning process; follow provisions mentioned on Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069; focus on concrete plans for women, children and targeted budget; and minimize transfer of budget for other purposes. Representative of Nepali Congress said in the Public Hearing, “I find this program very effective in filling the gaps between political parties and local youths.” These VDCs have committed to conduct Public Hearings in the

Human Rights Training and Youth Network – Pankaj Rai, Nepaledanda VDC, Bhojpur
After participating in the sequential trainings, Pankaj voluntarily participated in IPFC formation meeting. During the discussion the VDC Secretary revealed that the VDC had some unused target group budget from fiscal year 2013/14. Utilizing his knowledge, Pankaj successfully convinced VDC Secretary, political party representatives and local people to allocate budget for Human Rights training. The meeting allocated NRs. 30,000/- for the training which would be conducted on April 5-6, 2015. He says, ”Prior to training we were not aware about such budget for target groups and participatory planning process. But now we are able to allocate budget for youth empowerment”

Pankaj has also formed a youth network named Salpa Silichung in coordination with other participants and has found it more effective to work together in a group. He says, ”When I personally tried to share my learning only a few people were interested. But when I started working with Youth Network and social mobilize; local people pay attention when we share knowledge on planning process and even support us. VDC secretary also informs about the local activities and we actively participate in it.”
next year in their own. VDCs have mandate to conduct Public Hearings every year to pass in Minimum Conditions and Performance Monitoring (MCPM) assessment.

Chhinamakhu Youth Network, which was started by Manit Khimdung, our participant, has strongly raised voice against the irregularities that VDC Assistant has been making with VDC resources. He was found to be guilty of producing fake documents of senior citizens and getting their social security allowances. He has been doing this for many years. Similarly, he did not show actual income and expenditures of the Office. With youth’s strong confrontation, he is now dismissed from the office. It was found that he has illegally accumulated amount of Rs. 700,000. Currently, he paid back Rs. 100,000 to the VDC office. This campaign was raised by Mana Bhujel and Manita Khimdung.

**Village level Dialogue:** Village level dialogue was organized in Chhinamakhu VDC in August 2014. VDC Secretary, head of Health Post, representatives of political parties, school principal and coordinators of all Ward Citizen Forums were present in the Dialogue. They held dialogue on village level planning, youth participation in the local planning process, health services in the VDC and status of government school.

**Training sessions by ToT participants:** Youths from Takshar and Bhojpur have conducted different sessions in local schools. Dhankumari Darnal and Ranjana Kapali of Takshar (ToT participants) had conducted discussion session on ‘Human Rights and Child Rights’ with students from Takshar Higher Secondary School. There were 50 students from grade 8 in the session. Some of the teachers also attended the session. Omkardhoj Karki, a teacher said, “They seemed to be confused and scared in the beginning. Later they are back to the track and conducted the session very smoothly. I hope they will conduct more sessions on awareness raising issues. I think they are confident and motivated enough to conduct such sessions again and again.” Similarly, Kaushila Shankar and Kaushila Shiwa of Bhojpur (ToT participants) have conducted sharing sessions on Human Rights, Child Rights and Participatory Planning Process with the youth groups in Bhojpur.
National Programs
In this program year, two National Youth Legislative Parliaments and two National Dialogues were conducted in Kathmandu. First NYLP and National Dialogue was conducted in May 2014 and the Second in February 2015.

National Youth Legislative Parliament
First NYLP was organized in May 26-31 2014. There were 79 participants from 25 districts. It covered all development regions. 45 participants were selected from three program districts based on their performance and active leadership roles they played in their community and VDC. Whereas 35 participants were selected from non working districts, certain criteria were set up for their selection process: age group, inclusive participation, interested in community development and political spheres, involved in child clubs or youth groups and knowledge on participatory planning processes. Similarly, Second NYLP was organized in February 4–9, 2015. There were 80 youths from marginalized groups from 16 districts.

Participant selection criterion was revised in the second year. In the first year, 2 marginalized youths from remote areas were selected from different parts of the non working districts; resulting in difficulty in follow up with them. In the second year, 3 youths were selected from same locality of the non working district. This will help them to periodically meet/share to conduct programs or lobby/advocate for issues. Similarly, indigenous participants from the three districts of Kathmandu Valley were selected too. Local level institutions are not in place in municipalities, for example, there are no Ward Citizen Forums in municipalities, the annual planning, project selection, budget allocation and implementation process are not transparent. Participants from Bhaktapur and Lalitpur visited municipality office to know the status of WCFs, but there are no WCFs formed or newly established. They are regularly lobbying at municipality and political parties to form WCFs and seeking their active participation.

The program successfully created a space for youths to understand Legislative Parliament and parliamentary proceedings both theoretically and practically; they directly became part of those processes. Joint Secretaries from Parliament Secretariat were present throughout the process for guidance. Though the sessions were mock, youth parliamentarians raised and discussed on real issues they had been facing in their community and surroundings and mock stakeholders (Youth Prime Minister and Youth Ministers) addressed those issues same as the real ones do. The six days program concluded with very positive impact as youths who were negative about national politics have started to understand importance of it.

Inclusive participants: There was inclusive participation of youths from diverse background including Dalits, Indigenous groups, marginalized and disadvantaged groups, Madheshi, Muslim, disabled, and other communities. In the second NYLP, there was participation of youths from LGBTI community as well.
Participants very enthusiastic about the process: More than half of the participants were involved in different activities conducted at village and district level and they have been working in close coordination with VDC offices and other government offices in their community. Rest of the participants were selected from other districts, however they were active in their communities through child clubs, youth clubs, student unions, women’s networks and some of them were members of Ward Citizen Forums. Hence, there was no visible gap between new and old participants. They all performed equally well during the program.

Participants motivated to work at local level (especially new participants): For most of the new participants, the program, methods, and learning processes were very new and they became part of the each and every process very actively. The new participants were very interested in exploring what they could do in their communities. Visuals of inspiring success stories from program districts were shared which was very appreciated.

Visit to Constituent Assembly/Legislative Parliament: The participants were taken to observe Constituent Assembly meeting in June 2014 (first year) the day after the program. It was done in coordination with Parliamentary Secretariat. Participants observed the CA session and all the parliamentary proceedings they followed during the program. They observed how the session starts, the speech by the Speaker, and the CA members and how they participate in the discussion.

In the second year, participants observed Legislative Parliament hall as there was no meeting scheduled for that particular day. In both of the visits, Chief Whip and Joint Secretary of Parliamentary Secretariat briefed about the proceedings and the setting of the meeting hall. It was great opportunity for youths to visit the CA meeting and Legislative Parliament. These visits helped them to give meaning and face to the process they learnt.

Interactive session with Members of Legislative Parliament Committee: On the last day of NYLP, participants had interactive session with the Members of Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee of Legislative Parliament Hon. Jayanti Rai, Hon. Babina Moktan Lawoti and Hon. Ratna Devi Gurung. The participants were divided into three different groups and they held discussion with the Members on different issues relating to women, children, youths and senior citizens. It included right to citizenship through mother (was a major focus), gender discrimination and violence against women, government allowances to senior citizens, youths as a target group in annual planning, disability, school management committees, and youths in local level planning process, formation of youth information center and youth council, youth self-employment, substance abuses, and implementation of National Youth Policy. The youths got an
opportunity to sit with Members of Parliament (MPs) and had intensive discussion on different issues.

**Views of NYLP by MPs and Parliament Joint Secretary:** The MPs appreciated for providing this space to listen to youth voices from different districts and they committed to integrate youths’ voices into relevant policies. They were very impressed by the self-confidence and effective articulation of the burning and relevant issues by the marginalized youths. They said that these types of programs should be expanded to other districts of Nepal.

The Parliament Joint Secretary and ex-Joint Secretary were very impressed by the program and participant who could grasp the process effectively and express themselves and effectively play the roles of parliament process. They said, *"We should be the ones to conduct these types of programs. We really appreciate what HimRights is doing to promote parliamentary processes. We would like to see when these youths become real Parliamentarians. I 'm sure they are going to be very different."

**Information session on Right to Information with participants from Kathmandu:** An information session on Rights to Information was conducted on February 19, 2015 at HimRights Office. There were 9 participants from Kathmandu Valley. The meeting was conducted with an objective to make participants aware about the participatory planning process at VDCs and municipalities and to provide them information of Right to Information and its application in their communities. The participants from Bhaktapur and Lalitpur have further organized information sessions on RTI in their youth groups.
National Dialogues:
In the First National Dialogue (June 2014), the government stakeholders were leading youth CA members from major political parties, Joint Secretary from National Planning Commission, Under Secretary from Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development and Department of Cottage and Small Industries. The participants held intensive dialogue with the national stakeholders on youth’s participation in local development process, effective utilization of constituency development fund, services provided by government offices in village and districts, annual planning process in VDCs, municipalities and DDC.

Similarly, in the Second National Dialogue (February 2015) Chairperson of Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee of Legislative Parliament, Joint Secretaries from National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Health and Population were the major stakeholders. The dialogue was held on youth’s participation in local development process, youth unemployment, participatory planning process, good governance, accountability and transparency in government agencies at local level, annual planning process, effective and efficient use of annual budget to women, children and targeted groups followed by project implementation and monitoring. Other issues were services provided by health service institutions.

It gave youths a platform to express their needs, problems and issues at local level with national stakeholders for necessary policy implications. The stakeholders answered all the queries and issue raised by the youths. Stakeholders also appreciated for providing them with opportunity to interact with youths from diverse background and understand issues from different perspectives. They also committed to bring youth’s voices to relevant bodies for addressal. Both of the Dialogues were broadcasted on national television channels.

After both NYLP and Dialogues, the participants from three districts have completed whole project cycle and they are now aware of planning process from village level to national level. They are doing their best to participate in these processes. Participants from new districts were also very motivated to work in their communities.
**Systematic documentation:** The follow ups and monitoring visits were conducted frequently to learn what participants had been doing in their communities. The activities by the participants and their impacts were systematically documented. Focus Group Discussions were conducted with the participants and interviews were conducted with the stakeholders and local key persons for information triangulation. Few of the inspiring success stories were documented visually to produce short documentary which can be used as training tools.

**Video documentation of success stories:** Some of the participants are doing very inspiring works in their communities; playing leadership roles, motivating community people in development activities; organizing campaigns and conducting mass awareness activities. Those stories are visually documented this year and video documentaries are produced and showed during district and national programs. These documentaries will be widely used as training tool to motivate other youths this year. Following is the summary of Video Documentary of Dhan Kumari Tharu of Binauna, Banke and her active roles in her community:

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**Video Documentary of Dhan Kumari Tharu, Binauna VDC, Banke**

After participating in Mock Village Council and other programs, Dhan Kumari Tharu has been actively working in her community. Tharus are one of the most oppressed indigenous groups from western Terai and most of them were bonded labourers. The program has completely changed her perception of looking at local development process and annual planning process. She says, "In the past, I used to think that only political parties, VDC Secretary and the elites of the society are responsible for local development activities. After participating in MVC program, I realized that youth have very important role in local development. She further adds, “Before participation in MVC training, I did not have access to the VDC. I never went to the VDC. I limited myself within the home and wished someone would recommend me for job. After the training, I learnt about the VDC, process of project planning, budget allocation and implementation. Similarly, I found there were budget allocated for women and children, but not for youths. This year, we successfully lobbied VDC Office to allocate Rs. 25000 budget for the youth empowerment program. Now, I am connected with the VDC.”

She is currently working as Community Mobilizer for an NGO. She currently conducts awareness raising programs with local women’s groups of Binauna and Fattepur. Her activeness is well appreciated by local people.

Amrit Lal Pandey, local social worker, says, “She has formed women’s group and conducts literacy classes. She is conducting awareness raising programs. With her continuous encouragement and support, three of them are selected as member of WCF.”

Hema Rani, a member of women’s group, says, “Every week, she comes here and teaches us. Women from our community are very shy. She encouraged us to introduce ourselves in front of each other and tells us to presents our things without any hesitation and fear.”

Dhan Kumari says “I worked as Secretary of Drinking Water Project from RRN, an NGO, in my VDC. The program was to distribute 24 taps for the impoverished households. We distribute all the taps in coordination with WCF through which almost hundred households have benefitted from those taps.”

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Annual Report 2014/15: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)
The summary of Video Documentary of “Chetana Samuha” a youth group formed by participants from Pyauli, Bhojpur:

**Video Documentary on Chetana Samuha (Awareness Youth Group) Pyauli VDC, Bhojpur**

Sundar Magar, Prem Kumari Magar and Rita Karki from Pyauli VDC were very active participants of second Mock Village Council. During the program, they committed to actively engage in community activities after going back to their village. They have formed Chetana Samuha, a youth group in Pyauli VDC. Besides youth group, they are doing lot of activities.

Sundar Magar says, “After participating in trainings provided by HimRights, we realized that any targeted programs cannot be succeeded only through individual effort, but group effort is required. For that purpose, we formed "Chetana Samuha" (Awareness Group) and this youth group is involved in different development activities.”

Prem Kumari Magar says, “Some of the activities I have done after participating in the program was formation of youth group. I am actively working in that group. Similarly, I worked as a Coordinator of the Consumers Committee of a project for indigenous groups. Its total budget was Rs. 100,000/-. We successfully conducted different activities. I am also working as Coordinator in different Project Monitoring Committees and have been monitoring number of projects. We are actively participating in social and VDC activities.”

Bindeshor Chaudhary, Agriculture Technician has highly acknowledged their active roles in the VDC. He says, “They (Chetana group) have been providing us different suggestions. Their suggestions have made us easier for us to smoothly conduct Village Council. They suggested us to allocate budget in different sectors which was very appreciative.”

Bhupal Shrestha, Local Politician, Pyauli VDC finds they are doing excellent jobs. He says, “We heard that these 3 youths even participated in National programs (in Kathmandu) and they represented this district and their culture at national level.” He adds, “They are involved in different development activities. You have already noticed that they are very actively involved in local micro-finance activities as well. We find their active participation in any of the activities organized by the VDC and local NGOs.”

Their active roles have been supporting the Social Mobilizer in many ways. Mahendra Shrestha, Social Mobilizer, Pyauli VDC says, “I used to think that I was the only person to work with people from grass root level and provide them with different services of the VDC and linking them with VDC. There are 9-10 youths who attended training organized by HimRights where they learned about 14 steps of participatory planning process, VDC processes and rights of poor and marginalized people. Now, it is very easy to work. I used to be alone; but now, they are also supporting me a lot. Now, poor and marginalized people come to VDC. VDC has also realized that its programs should be focuses to marginalized and targeted groups.”

They have planned lots of development activities in the VDC. Rita Karki shares, “Today we made some decisions regarding our future activities. Our VDC has been declared as Open Defecation Free area. However, there are lot of garbage is produced. So, we are working on declaring garbage free VDC. For that reason, our Chetana Samuha is planning to buy 10-15 dustbins with VDC’s financial assistance. We submitted our proposal and that has been approved Rs. 10,000 for the Fiscal Year 2071/71. Along with the budget VDC and HimRights’ support, we will buy 10-15 containers and distribute in different places of the VDC. This will support our campaign for declaring Garbage Free VDC.”
Challenges

Geographical difficulty: Most of the VDCs in Bhojpur and Makwanpur are far from the district headquarters in remote and mountainous areas and are very difficult to reach especially during rainy season. There is lack of motorable roads and public transportation, no alternative than walking. Program team walked for 11 hours to reach Annapurna VDC with all the program materials to conduct Village Public Hearing. Similarly, some VDCs of Makwanpur are also very difficult to reach too. Hence, the district staffs had difficult time during monitoring and follow up visits to those VDCs. Taking these difficulties into account, there are no core activities planned in the months of June-August, the rainy season.

High mobility of youths: Youth groups have high mobility for higher education, employment, and personal development. They migrate nationally and internationally, hence, it is often difficult to find youths in some VDCs and engage them continuously in one year project cycle is a challenge too. In most cases 25% of participants are not found in VDCs for consecutive programs. In Bhojpur, it is difficult to find male participants and international migration is very high in Makwanpur.

The government stakeholders are transferred frequently which creates difficulty especially linking participants with the government agencies and institutionalizing commitments made during public hearings. Moreover, they need to be re-oriented about the program. It takes time and at the same time the new stakeholders do not own the spirit of the program and provide necessary support to the participants.

Engaging first year participants: Some of the first year participants are in regular contact with district staffs and have requested for connecting programs or refresher programs in their VDCs. But, there are no budgeted programs for past participants other than their participation as program volunteers/co facilitators. Due to lack of such mechanisms, it is difficult to keep them engaged in program cycle. However, district staffs are trying to create their linkages with government and non-government institutions to sustain their leadership roles.

Request for Village Public Hearings in All VDCs: Village Public Hearings are very effective platform for participants and local government stakeholders to dialogue on several issues relating to services being provided by government agencies. Moreover, the event promoted accountability, transparency and good governance of those bodies. We are conducting Village Public Hearings in one VDC of each cluster only, not in all the working VDCs. The participants and VDC Secretaries requested to conduct/facilitate public hearings in their VDCs as well.

Lack of space to participate in district level processes: Very few of the participants have access to district level planning process and municipal planning process. The key posts are occupied by political parties and or local elites. However, some of the participants attended District Councils and Municipal Councils.
Lessons Learned:

In the second year, we have changed some of the program implementation strategies based on the learning from previous year. Following are the lessons learned and changes made this year:

1. Participant selection: We found younger participants were less active in their communities and most of them are inactive upon return to their community. Furthermore, they migrate for higher education or labor migration. Moreover, older participants tend to stay back in their community, have more influence and are taking active leadership roles. Hence, decision was taken in the annual review meeting to give preference to older participants, above 20. We have found them far more active than previous year’s participants. Likewise, VDC Secretaries, WCF Coordinators and Members, Social Mobilizers and some political leaders were also consulted for participant selection and for better linkages between them and participants and joint activities in future for the sustainability of the program.

Similarly, in NYLP, we have selected participants from same locality and fewer districts. Last year, they were selected from different VDCs and districts across the country, which made it difficult for them to work or share amongst them. We found very difficult to follow up with them. Selecting participants from same locality is advantageous as they can meet regularly, learn, share, conduct program, raise and effectively lobby and advocate their issues.

For the first time in HimRights's history this year we had 9 participants from Kathmandu Valley (Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, Lalitpur) too as part of our accountability measures to where we are located. Most civil societies do not focus in the valley as it is the center of the country. But it lags behind in many aspects. In recent Constituent Assembly election in November 2013 the highest disqualified votes were from this valley as just one indicator. Similarly, there is no Ward Citizen Forums formed in municipalities. Thus we felt we should include more participants from these three districts of the valley as part of our own accountability measures. We found the participatory planning processes in urban area/municipalities are not in place yet. There are no WCFs formed and annual planning processes do not follow the procedures given by the Directives. We recently organized additional training session on Right to Information in a public holiday in HimRights Office and we will be conducting 14 step participatory processes of VDC and DDC to enable them to take active roles in ward and VDCs. Soon after RTI training, the participants from Bhaktapur and Lalitpur have replicated the training sessions with other youths. They are further making inquiries on government services, projects and budgets, establishing youth groups.

2. Based on the learning from first NYLP, we realized due to present political context of the Parliament, there is no space for participants to get involved in Parliament or CA. Thus, in this year, we had additional sessions on 14 steps of participatory planning process of local
government. This would help the participants from non working districts to be involved in their own VDCs and districts.

3. In the first NYLP, the parliamentary session was formally inaugurated by the Kavre District CA Member, Chief District Officer, Local Development Officer and others, which was not very meaningful it was limited to speeches and formalities. Hence, this mock parliamentary session was not formally inaugurated but closing session was conducted with intensive interaction between CA members and participants. After interaction, the CA members committed to integrate their issues in relevant policies and law.

4. In first year's National Dialogue, leading youth CA Members along with the Joint Secretary of National Planning Commission were invited as main stakeholders and themes for the dialogue were very wide. The program ran for more than three hours and some of the themes were not discussed. It left some of the participants dissatisfied as they could not raise their issues with the stakeholders. Hence, themes were narrowed down into three this year and stakeholders were invited accordingly from relevant ministries, National Planning Commission and Chairperson of the Women Children, Elderly, Social Welfare Committee of CA, the interaction was more meaningful and follow ups will be conducted for impact.

5. In the Year Two, Village Level Dialogues were conducted as follow-up activities. 9 Dialogues were conducted in three districts. These Dialogues have brought about major positive changes in the VDCs where participants along with local youths held dialogues with local government stakeholders to seek addressal for their burning issues. Moreover, it created strong linkage between them and local government stakeholders. Thus, Village Level Dialogues are effective follow-up mechanism.

6. In the first year, Human Rights trainings were organized to increase youth understanding on human rights and right based development approaches and Human Rights training was followed by Mock Village Council. It made participants clear on human rights issues, right based development approaches and basics of Nepal’s legal system. But, in second year, HR trainings were not organized with participants of Mock Village Council and the participants found hard to catch up on human rights and rights based development approaches and the whole MVC process. Thus, Human Rights training is a pre-requisite for this program.

**Recommendations:**
**Requests from previous years’ participants:** The participants from the first year felt there is no continuity beyond the year cycle. They requested for some kind of follow up programs so they can learn more along with strengthening their empowerment and support their enthusiasm in local governance and other activities leading to sustainable trend.
There should be **budgeted programs/small scale activity for previous years’ participants** to get them engaged in local development processes at least for few years. Village level hearings/dialogues could be a connecting activity to keep them active and connected with local government stakeholders. Since many of the participants are actively working for accountability and transparency of local government agencies, these dialogues will be a right platform for them to explore opportunities and challenges of local development process.

Furthermore, **Village Level Dialogues should be conducted in all the VDCs.** It was part of follow-up activities developed during annual review meeting in March 2014. This year, we have conducted 9 Village level dialogues in 3 districts. We received very good response from VDCs and participants. This program will be continued next year too.

**Public Hearing should be conducted in all project VDCs.** Public Hearings have very good impact in VDCs for both government stakeholders, better service delivery from local government agencies and linkage and visibility of participants. Moreover, some of the VDC Secretaries have asked HimRights to facilitate Public Hearing in future which will have an institutionalized sustainability of this process.

**Continuation and expansion of the project:** This project overall has extremely positive impact at all levels. During closing sessions of Mock Village Councils and Mock District Councils, government stakeholders and political leaders recommended to expand this program to all VDCs of the district. Similarly, with growing municipalities, this program can play significant role in creating concrete mechanisms of participatory planning process. Some of the CA members, government stakeholders and participants have requested to expand this program in their districts and at national level as this is a very effective and empowering program.

**Conclusion**

We have successfully completed all the activities including additional ones. In Year Two, we have reached 1531 youths as direct beneficiaries and 101,046 secondary beneficiaries from three program districts and additional 13 other districts in NYLP. Through the systematic study conducted with 370 participants from three districts, we have found 76% of them are engaged in local level decision making bodies of Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Planning Committee, Citizen Awareness Centers, Community Based Organizations /Non-government Organizations and youth groups – where they have been taking active leadership roles. Ward Citizen Forums and Integrated Planning Committees are very important decision making bodies of local level participatory planning process. Without approval from these bodies, VDCs cannot approve or allocate budget to any of the development projects. 74 youths (20%) of the youths are already in Ward Citizen Forums and Integrated Planning Committees. Their roles in these bodies are well appreciated by local stakeholders.
Likewise, participants have evolved as young leaders and campaigners. They are part of different VDC and district level campaigns. Youths from Banke had conducted Right to Information Campaigns in several VDCs which really helped local government authorities to be accountable and transparent. As a result, service delivery from government agencies has improved. VDC Secretaries are more regular in the Office, Health Posts and Agriculture/Livestock Services Centers are smoothly providing their services.

Public Hearings and Village level dialogues successfully enabled youths to raise their priority issues and demand for accountability to local government stakeholders. At the same time, it increased responsiveness of government agencies and stakeholders. Two way interactions between youths and local government stakeholders has not only strengthened good governance and accountability at local level but also significantly increased people’s participation in development activities.

At national level, youths had opportunity to voice their issues with national government stakeholders including CA members, National Planning Commission, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, and Ministry of Health and Population. The national stakeholders responded very positively to the issues raised by youths and committed to integrate youths' voice in relevant programs and policies.
Annex:

Some Glimpses of the program and its impacts:

Citizen Charter boards in Aambhanjyang, Makwanpur, before and after participants raised the issue of social accountability in the VDC

School Administration of Gyansagar Higher Secondary School distributing scholarships to the students
Orientation for Village Level Dialogue, Udrapur, Banke

Panelist Stakeholders at Village Public Hearing, Radhapur, Banke
Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee members, Bhimphedi, Makwanpur

Community elders at participant selection meeting in Keurenipani, Bhojpur
Youths facilitating proposal writing process during ward level meeting

District Dialogue, Banke

Participants at rally on Violence against Women
Topographical maps of Program Districts:

Bhojpur District

Legend
- Foot Path
- Main Trail

Elevation
- Below 500 m.
- 500 - 1000 m.
- 1000 - 1500 m.
- 1500 - 2500 m.
- 2500 - 3500 m.
- 3500 - 4500 m.

* Village Development Committee (VDC)
Annual Report 2014/15: Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights (HimRights/Sida)

Topographical maps from http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/maps/nepalmaps/