Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights
(March 2015 – February 2016)

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

Terminology:
Citizen Charter: Information board that gives procedures and requirements for services provided by government agencies
Directives: Directives on Local Resource Mobilization and Management, 2069
HimRights: Himalayan Human Rights Monitors
Ilaka: Cluster/area of 4 to 10 VDCs
Janajati: Indigenous community
Namuna VDC: Mock VDC
Tole/Basti: Borough
Sida: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
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INTRODUCTION
Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights

HimRights has successfully conducted ‘Enhancing Empowerment of the Youth from Marginalized Groups in Nepal for Inclusive Democracy and Greater Realization of Human Rights’ (March 2013 to February 2016) intensively in 3 districts (Banke, Makwanpur, and Bhojpur) and at national level (work with 18-30 districts) with the overall objectives of the fortification of democracy, accountability, and transparency; enhancement of the right, access to information and freedoms of opinion, expression and communication; reduction of various forms of discrimination and oppression and respect women as leaders from early age; and the creation of an overall socio-political environment conducive to equal access to justice in Nepal. The primary target group of the project was youths from marginalized groups from Banke, Makwanpur and Bhojpur districts of Nepal. The project also aims to increase in the awareness of legislative and other decision-making processes at the local and national levels among young people from the marginalized and increase their meaningful participation in those processes ensuring participation of 60% or more of women from vulnerable and oppressed groups.

Human Rights Trainings, Mock Village Council, Village Public Hearings, Village Dialogues, Mock District Councils, District Public Hearings, District Dialogues, National Youth Legislative Parliaments and National Dialogues are organized in three districts intensively and at National to increase in the realization of the importance of 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 and increase their participation in those processes and other relevant decision-making processes at the local and national levels.

Basically the participants understand their human rights, build their positive self image and confidence, and understand the participatory planning process at VDC and district so they are able to demand their rights/issues during the public hearings/dialogues, get commitments from the duty bearers and follow up to see what has been implemented. They also have the confidence to demand for accountability and transparency on how the regular and other activities are planned and how budgets are being used. The most effective and visible change is happening at Village Development Committee (VDC) level especially where public hearings were conducted. At District level things are changing but slowly. In the Year III, we have directly worked with 1049 marginalized youths from 3 project districts and 15 other districts – they are taking leadership roles in local government institutions, communities and CBOs/NGOs

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-western Region</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National program:**
Kailali, Bardiya, Bara, Sindhupalchowk, Kavre, Rasuwa, Kaski, Nuwakot, Gorkha, Sindhuli, Dolakha, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Dhankuta

**Target Groups:**
Marginalized Youths 18 – 24 years old (around 5% were above 24 years old)

**Stakeholders at:**
**VDC**
VDC Secretary,
Social Mobilizers,
Ward Citizen Forums,
Consumers groups,
Heads of Agriculture Services Center, Livestock Services Center, Health Posts and Political parties

**District**
Local Development Officer,
Officers from District Development Committee,
Local Governance and Community Development Project Officers, District Government Offices,
NGOs

National
Legislative Parliament Secretariat
Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee
Members of Parliament

Project Cycle: Year III
Activities:

TRAINING ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK AND MECHANISMS AND NEPAL'S LEGAL SYSTEM

The main objective of the 3 day Training on international Human Rights framework and mechanisms and Nepal's Legal System is to increase understanding of youths on human rights with focus on women and child rights, national and international human rights instruments, mechanisms, communication and right based development approaches.

Activity Summary:

Duration: 3 days
Participants: 30
Contents:
• Concept of Human Rights and its features
• Historical development of Human Rights
• Universal Declaration of Human Rights
• Citizen and political rights
• Economic, social and cultural rights
• Nine big treaties
• Women’s rights and CEDAW and child rights and CRC
• The United Nations and Human Rights

• Domestic implementation of International laws
• Human Rights and Interim Constitution, 2007
• National Human Rights Commission
• Rights based development
• Human rights defenders, roles and responsibilities
• Qualities of Human rights Defenders and their code of conduct
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 participation, involvement and engagement in these processes. The Village Development Committee Secretary, social mobilizer, heads of Government Offices, and coordinators of different committees were elected/nominated from the participants.

Activity Summary:
Two MVCs in each district; Duration: 4 days
Participants: 45
Contents:
- Orientation
  - Democracy and democratic behavior; Good governance and accountability; Right to information
  - Village Development Committee and Budget allocation at VDC
  - 14 steps of participatory Planning Process (circular process from local to national level and back to district and village)
  - Introduction of VDC Secretary and Social Mobilizer and their roles and responsibilities
  - Different committees of VDCs: Citizen Awareness Center, Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee (IPFC), Project Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and their roles and responsibilities
  - Proposal writing and prioritization of development proposals
- 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 (WCF) and Integrated Plan Formulation Committee
  - Ward/role, WCF and IPFC meetings; Mock Village Council;
  - Closed session of MVC (VDC board meeting)
  - Formal Closing session
14 steps of Participatory Planning Process:

1. NPC Directives on budget ceiling and guidelines
2. Review of Directives at DDC
3. Planning Workshop to disseminate budget ceiling and guidelines
4. VDC Meeting
5. Settlement level plan selection workshop
6. Ward level assembly
7. VDC / Integrated Plan Formulation Committee meeting
8. Village Council approves projects endorsed by IPFC
9. Ilaka (4-10 VDCs) level planning workshop
10. Thematic planning committee meeting
11. Integrated plan formulation committee meeting
12. Preparations for the DDC Council, Review the projects endorsed by IPFC
13. District Council approves projects endorsed by IPFC
14. Implementation and forward the District Development Plan to MoFALD and NPC

This is the participatory process in which development projects are formulated at ward level, prioritized and endorsed by IPFC and approved by Village Council for implementation. The projects which need partial or total support from DDC are forwarded District Development Committee through Ilaka and the projects which cannot be financed by the DDC are endorsed to the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development and other relevant Ministries which are then discussed in the National Planning Commission. The NPC sends directives on budget ceiling and guidelines to the DDCs and VDCs in the following year. The process aims to increase significant citizen’s participation. Our participants have been playing key roles in different steps of the process – especially in steps 5-8 (Village Development Plan). Some of them have considerable participation in steps 9-13 (District Development Plan).
VILLAGE PUBLIC HEARING (VPH)

Village Public Hearing is a major link between the participants from MVC and local stakeholders to raise their issues with knowledge on local government processes 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 hearings especially focused on transparency and accountability of government duty bearers 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 active citizens whose voices need to be heard and make them visible as future potential leaders with knowledge and capacity.

Activity Summary: Two VPHs in each district

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

Participants: 50

Contents of the VPH:

- Good governance, accountability and transparency at local government bodies
- Right to information and youth’s role
- Role of youth participatory development
- VDC, VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizer and their roles
- Different committees of VDC: Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee, Citizen Awareness Center, Village Council and their functions and importance of youths’ role in these committees
- Technical aspects of Public Hearing:
  - What is Public Hearing?; Roles and responsibilities of panelist guests (stakeholders); Questioning skill; Rules and regulations of the program; Issues for discussion
- Public Hearing Day
  - Youth raise their issues to the panelist stakeholders
  - Stakeholders address the issues raised
  - Commitments made by the stakeholders
  - Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee is formed including youths from all wards to monitor effective implementation of the commitments
DISTRICT PUBLIC HEARING (DPH)
The main objective of District Public Hearing is enable participants to raise burning and priority issues which were raised but can not be 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. The program created a 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 and demand for transparency.

Activity Summary:
One DPH in each district
Duration: 2 days (Day one: Orientation and Day two: Public Hearing)
Participants: 50
Contents of the DPH:
• Good governance, accountability and transparency at local government bodies
• Right to information and youth’s role
• Role of youth participatory development
• Roles of different district level government offices, different DDC committees, Area level meetings
• Technical aspects of Public Hearing:
  o What is Public Hearing?; Roles and responsibilities of panelist guests (stakeholders); Questioning skill; Rules and regulations of the program; Issues for discussion; succinct speaking
• Public Hearing Day
  o Youth raise their issues to the panelist stakeholders
  o Stakeholders address the issues raised
  o Commitments made by the stakeholders
  o Commitment Implementation Monitoring Committee is formed including youths from all wards to monitor real implementation of the commitments
NATIONAL YOUTH LEGISLATIVE PARLIAMENT (NYLP)

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, law formulation at the national level and 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.

Activity Summary:
Duration: 6 days; Participants: 80

Contents of the NYLP:
- Orientation
  - Democracy and human rights
  - Identification of youth issues and discussion
  - Parliamentary terms
    - Legislative Parliament; Constituent Assembly; Bills; Zero Hour; Calling Attention Motion; Question Hour
    - Formulation of Laws
    - Committees of Legislative Parliament
  - Briefing on parliamentary proceedings
    - Roles and responsibilities of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Ministers, General Secretary, Chief Whips and Whips
- Mock Sessions
  - Oath taking ceremony
  - Formal parliamentary session
  - Zero Hour, Special Hour, Question Hour
  - Government’s annual policies and programs followed by discussion
  - Presentation of Annual planning and budget followed by discussion
  - Presentation of Bill and intensive discussion in the parliament and parliamentary committee
  - Approval of the Bill from the Parliament and the President
  - Preparation of Youth Declaration
Following activities were conducted in the Year III:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities conducted in Year III</th>
<th>Banke</th>
<th>Makwanpur</th>
<th>Bhojpur</th>
<th>KTM</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Village council (4 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Public Hearing (2 days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Level Dialogue</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Public Hearing (2 days)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Year III, Mock District Councils and District Dialogues were not conducted in any of the project districts due to budget constraints. HimRights received less amount in its final installment due to fluctuations in exchange rates.

**PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION**

Participants were selected in extensive consultation with VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forums, local youth groups, participants of previous programs and local political leaders. Moreover, the prospective participants were personally met and/or telephoned and explained about objectives of the program and their roles in their community after the program.

We have directly worked with total of 1049 participants this year with 563 female, 486 male constituting 53.7% female participants. Last year, female participants constituted of 56%. The district wise participants are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male %</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banke</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makwanpur</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpur</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYLP</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>486</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>1049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart below shows the caste/ethnicity distribution of the participants. 52% of the participants were from marginalized indigenous groups which also included youths from disadvantaged group like Chepang (Makwanpur) and Jogi and Thami (Bhojpur), these are listed as one of the almost extinct indigenous groups in Nepal. Rai and Tamang are the local indigenous groups in Bhojpur and Makwanpur respectively. 11% of the participants were from Dalit community “untouchable” from both Hills and Terai; they are one of the most marginalized groups who do not have access to decision-making processes in political and social spheres. 15% were from Madheshi and 2% from Muslim communities; most of them were from Banke district. 20% of them belong to Brahmin and Chhetri caste groups categorized as ‘Others’; they relatively have
more access to decision-making spheres than other groups. However, the efforts were made that all of the participants are marginalized no matter which caste groups they belong to. Similarly, there was participation from disabled as well.

**Caste distribution of participants (N-1049)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Groups</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madheshi</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalit</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIRECT AND INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES:**

The participants have been sharing their knowledge with other youths from their communities and implemented their own projects, many of them supported by local government. We interviewed 223 youths from 3 districts as a follow-up to find out how many of them have directly shared their knowledge and learning; as well as motivated others to be part of local development process. We found they have conducted sharing meetings in Ward Citizen Forums, Youth Groups, VCPC, Surveillance Groups, Women’s Groups, Cooperatives, Child Clubs, Citizen Awareness Centers, and Village Mediation Groups. We gave each participant a copy of training manual and DVDs of Mock Village Council to facilitate their sharing. They conducted sessions on:

1. Ward Citizen Forums,
2. Integrated Plan Formulation Committee,
3. Human Rights,
4. Democracy
5. Public Hearing
6. Participatory Planning Process
7. Right to Information
8. Good Governance, Accountability, and Transparency

We found all 223 youths, interviewed have directly shared their knowledge to 38,822 youths and adults; this is a super great multiplier effect than we originally environed about one participant sharing with five others. It showed each participant had shared to average 174 persons. Thus, the total number of indirect beneficiaries of the project in the third year is 182,526.
ACHIEVEMENTS/IMPACTS
The following chart gives participation of youths in leadership and decision-making roles at VDC and district level like Ward Citizen Forum, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee, Citizen Awareness Center, Community Based Organizations, and youth groups.

The data shows 36% of the participants (N=223) are already in local level decision-making levels of Ward Citizen Forum and Integrated Plan Formulation Committees. These are the core institutions which have direct influence on project planning, prioritization, budgeting and implementation of development activities at the local level.

They have become integral part of participatory planning process in their respective VDCs; they are taking leadership roles in planning, decision-making and implementation of development projects.

Similarly, 31% of them are involved in different Youth Groups, many of them formed new Groups and others joined existing youth groups. Hence, it gives excellent number of youths in different decision-making levels in their communities and some at district level. Most of the female participants are engaged with Cooperatives and Women’s Groups, it constituted 9% and 5% respectively. 3% of the participants were engaged with Consumer Groups. Some of the participants are involved in active politics; one of the participants was elected as Ward Secretary of Nepali Congress and other is active member of Rastriya Prajatantra Party (Nepal). Many of
the participants are playing multiple roles as Member/Coordinator of WCFs, youth groups, women’s groups or consumers groups. This has made them very visible in the community and their active roles are well recognized by the community, local government stakeholders, and political parties.

Very interestingly, 54.9% of the youths in leading roles are women. This indicates women are more actively working in Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee, youth groups, consumer committees and others especially after the program. The disaggregated data of the youths who were in Ward Citizen Forums and Integrated Plan Formulation Committees shows that it consisted of 48% of youths from Indigenous Groups, 21% from Madheshi, 25% from Others and 6% from Dalit community. This shows that youths from marginalized communities are taking the lead roles and they are in the frontline of local development process. They are gradually increasing their meaningful participation in annual planning process and other development activities. Most importantly, their voices and issues are being heard at VDC level.

**ANALYSIS AND OBSERVATION**

Local Self Governance Act (LSGA) was promulgated in 1999 with the main objective to i) “make provisions conducive to the enjoyment of the fruits of democracy through the utmost participation of the sovereign people in the process of governance by way of decentralization, ii) institutionalize the process of development by enhancing the participation of all the people including the ethnic communities, indigenous people and down-trodden as well as socially and economically backward groups in bringing out social equality in mobilizing and allocating means for the development of their own region and in the balanced and equal distribution of the fruits of development”.¹ The enactment of the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA) in 1999 expanded the mandates of local bodies, devolving the power, responsibilities and resources required to allow local governments to meet the basic infrastructure needs of the locality. It also called for a greater role for civil society in the everyday functions of local bodies, emphasizing transparency, public accountability and popular participation (TAF, 2012).

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¹ Local Self Governance Act, 1999
The Act has very practical provisions of increasing participation in mainstreaming development from the diverse population: ethnic communities, indigenous and disadvantaged groups. The structural mechanisms envisioned by the act are extraordinarily amazing inclusion of diversity. Several Directives are formulated in different periods to support implementation of the Act. But implementation has been poor, although the Act has been promulgated for 16 years. The decade long internal armed conflict (1996-2006) and dissolution of locally elected bodies in 2004 had weakened the implementation strategies of the Act. The situation exacerbated negatively to strengthening control of the local elites and political leaders in continued stronghold in annual budgets and planning process at local and district level excluding the marginalized and disadvantaged groups from access to resources and decision-making processes. The marginalized, disadvantaged and youth groups were excluded from decision-making processes. This is the result of prevalent patriarchy, caste system, and religious beliefs and historical subordination of higher caste elites over lower caste marginalized people – men vs. women and elderly vs. youth.

People from Dalits, Janajatis, Muslims, Madheshis and other disadvantaged groups have always been excluded from decision-making processes at all levels of government bodies and similarly, the youths and women too. Most of the decision-making posts are seized by local elites and political leaders. There is very minimum representation of youths and women in local level government committees like Ward Citizen Forums and Integrated Plan Formulation Committees – these committees are supposed to be very inclusive and participatory if provisions of the Directives are strictly followed. Moreover, local elites and political leaders do not trust in the capability of youths and women and they are discouraged to take leadership roles in local development process – this perception is traditionally engrained in their mindset. Hence there is no voice of youths and women in annual planning process and local development processes, moreover, the annual budgets were spent with the consensus of few elites behind the scene. Annual budgets allocated for women, children and other targeted groups were spent for other purposes, i.e. road construction. However, this reality has changed radically after the marginalized youths participated in our programs. We found, there is significant increase in level of interest and participation of youths, especially women, 128 out of 593 youths who were systematically interviewed during follow-up were found to be members or coordinators of WCFs or IPFCs. This is a considerable achievement of the project as these youths are playing very active crucial roles in their committees. The committees are now participatory, inclusive and democratic. The annual budgets are spent 100% on projects based on the target budget percentage allocated to women, children and other targeted groups along with infrastructure development projects. Local bodies, DDC and VDCs are expected to allocate budgets for children (10-15%), women (10%) and disadvantaged or marginalized groups (15%) from their annual budgets. In the Year III, 35 youths have successfully submitted proposals in their VDCs and the Village Councils allocated budgets for various development projects. The total amount they were able to allocate from the local governments was NRs. 5,687,400 (USD 56,874) in three districts. Youths are now recognized in their communities, their effective linkage and coordination with local government officials and political parties have been significantly
increased. This program has empowered marginalized youths to voice their issues, take leadership roles and participate in decision-making especially roles at local, and also at district and national levels.

Youths are working in coordination with local government agencies – they are working closely in Participatory Planning Process including project formulation, prioritization, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of development activities. They are holding dialogues with local stakeholders on various local issues.

Accountability and transparency in local government agencies was one of the major concerns of the youths. In many VDCs, youths are conducting regular visits to the local government agencies to see if their service delivery is in right track. Local government agencies like VDC, Agriculture Services Centre, Livestock Services Centre, Health Posts, and schools are now more accountable and transparent. The service delivery from these agencies has significantly improved. Many of the VDCs have installed Citizen Charters and complaint boxes in their office premises and they promote participation of marginalized youths, especially women in the annual planning processes. They started to distribute Social Security Allowances more systematically and transparently. Similarly, Agriculture/Livestock Services Centres are providing better services to effectively to enhance livelihoods of local people. Health Posts have started to provide better healthcare services; they operate for longer hours, and distribute free medicines more systematically. Likewise, local schools started to distribute scholarships to poor and children from marginalized groups. Hence, the government agencies are now more accountable and transparent. The local stakeholders – VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers, Heads of local government agencies, political parties and district level stakeholders are very impressed with the marginalized youths for their active roles in their communities. They suggested us to expand the program to other VDCs and districts.

The program has successfully facilitated marginalized youths to increase their understanding on human rights, civic roles and responsibilities, democracy and democratic behavior, accountability and transparency and practically implement their learning in their communities through creation of networks among themselves and linkages with government stakeholders and political parties. Youths who once were completely unaware and indifferent to local development activities have started to show their strong presence in these processes. They are in Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Plan Formulation Committees, Citizen Awareness Centres, Youth Clubs, Cooperatives, Agriculture Groups and many more. Local stakeholders have recognized them as partners of local development. Most importantly, VDC’s annual budgets are now properly utilized – annual budgets allocated for women, children and other targeted groups are spent under same headings in all project VDCs and not in road construction (the idea is everyone uses road regardless of any target groups).

Likewise, they are working with different district level government agencies including District Development Committee, District Public Health Office, District Agriculture Development
Office, and Women and Children Office especially for effective services at local level. Similarly, some of the participants have become founder members of National Youth Council Banke District Chapter which has amplified their visibility in district spheres. Furthermore, the national programs provided youths with understanding on parliamentary proceedings theoretically and practically and provided opportunity to share their issues and dialogue with members of the Parliament to address their issues from policy level. They raised several burning youth issues with Members of the Parliament. The MPs appreciated participants for their articulation skill, their understanding on various issues, the positive transformation and disciplines. The Declaration Document prepared by the participants was submitted to Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee of the Legislative Parliament. The Chairperson of the Committee said the Declaration has been owned by the Committee and will address the issues raised in the Declaration. Very recently, the Government of Nepal addressed some points of the Paper in its annual policies and programs. The whole process has made youths more articulate and analytical which helped them in major way to engage in various jobs especially in development sector.

Following Chapters give detailed district-wise achievements of the project.
Year III VDCs:
Cluster Five: Bankatti, Puraini, Udayapur, Betahani and Basudevpur
Cluster Six: Belahari, Samshergunj, Khajurakhurd, Manikapur and Ganapur

Achievements: Banke
Youth participation after the program:
We found youths from Banke were actively involved in different spheres of the community. 22% of them are in Ward Citizen Forums and 2% in Integrated Plan Formulation Committee. 40% of the participants are in newly formed or existing Youth Groups and 14% are working as school teachers, community instructors/mobilizers in different VDCs associated with different NGOs.

Participant in Leadership roles (N=50)

Formation of Youth Group: Participants from Shamshergunj, Puraini, Ganapur, Bankatti and Belhari VDC have formed Youth Groups in their respective VDCs. These youth groups are working on increasing youth’s participation in annual planning process. They are coordinating with VDC office and other organizations to financially sustain the Group. Youths from Belhari and Shamshergunj have approached VDC for allocation of budget to conduct youth related activities. Many of the youths are also involved in existing youth clubs, women’s groups, and District Youth Club Network. They are playing critical roles to bring genuine changes in their communities. Youth Group from Shamshergunj submitted proposal in due process in their VDC, who allocated NRs. 25,000 (USD 250) and they successfully conducted Human Rights Training for youths. Similarly, many of the youths are involved in National Youth Council, Banke District Chapter. Rukmani Chauhan of Udayapur is currently working as Vice-Chairperson of the Chapter and Bamdev Gautam and Dal Bahadur Sunar from first year as General Secretary and Secretary.
respectively. Likewise, Mohammad Arif Salmani, Shyam Chaudhary, Om Prakash Chauhan, Dipa Chand, Arjun BK, Harima Gharti Magar and Manisha Sunar are the members of the Chapter. The Chapter is working on raising awareness on youth issues; recently they conducted road safety sessions for school students.

**Leadership Roles in Ward Citizen Forums and Citizen Awareness Centers:** 22% of the participants are taking lead roles in Ward Citizen Forums and they are playing active roles in the Forums. Om Prakash Chauhan, from Udaypur, with other participants and local people are also able to keep their WCF from the clutches of political party interference. Furthermore, they selected female Coordinator for gender equality.

Participants from Shamshergunj approached VDC Office immediately after the program and discussed with the Secretary regarding budget for youth empowerment. The VDC Secretary asked to submit a proposal and they submitted on Public Speaking Training for youths. They received the fund and successfully conducted 3 day Public Speaking Training with participants from all nine wards in July 2015. Similarly, Roshani Mahatara of Shamshergunj VDC was selected as the Coordinator of Citizen Awareness Center. She has been conducting different sessions with disadvantaged groups of the community.

**Youths active in social campaigns:** Youths from Betahani are actively working in cooperation with VDC and other youths on Open Defecation Free VDC Campaign. Kishanlal Mourya, Dinesh Yadav and Kopila Gupta are leading VDC cleanliness campaign. They are also working with community about raising awareness on Annual Planning Process and VDC budgets. Currently, they are working on proposal for gravelling the village road.

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

Similarly, youth group of Shamshergunj are working in coordination with VDC, local Police and political parties to declare VDC as Open Defecation Free zone, Fully Literate and Drug Free. Likewise, Manmohan Barma, Dharmendra Barma and Ratan Kumar Barma are organizing rallies for Open Defecation Free VDC campaign in Ward no. 1- 5. The youth group formed by them is very involved in social activities. Ratan Kumar Barma is working as Community Mediator and successfully mediated two cases of community disputes.

Rukmini Chauhan, 19 year old Madhesi girl, has been campaigning against child marriage in her community. She was a member of local child club since 2012; recently she is selected as the Vice-Chairperson of National Youth Council, Banke District Chapter. She wanted to fight against child marriage and training from HimRights provided her the tools for her mission. She was able to stop four child marriages in her VDC. She does not want to stop her mission despite many obstacles and threats. She was recently nominated as Chairperson of Consumer Committee and was allocated NRs. 450,000 (USD 4500) for rural road gravelling project from her Municipality.

After participating in different programs, Om Prakash Chauhan, from Udaypur, filed RTI application to know the facilities and duty hour of health post located in his VDC. The health post formally replied to his application and public notice on duty hours of the health post. He shared how he transformed to a responsible citizen from a normal youth, “Earlier, I did not care much about development activities of the community and the VDC. I used to think that development activities are sole responsibilities of community elders and the political parties. I now realize youths can play very important role in community development.”

Kopila Gupta, Betahani
During the armed conflict, Kopila Gupta was sold for marriage at the age of 12. She was limited to household activities for many years. With support from her husband and the trainings organized by HimRights, she is able to meaningfully participate in local development activities. She now facilitates other local women to get facilities from VDC, local government agencies and NGOs.

After participating in Mock Village Council, she was first able to utilize the budget allocated for drainage construction in her VDC. She said, "Constituency Development Fund has allocated NRs. 700,000 (USD 7,000) for local school but the school, local people and political parties could not come into consensus. I talked with the VDC Secretary to re-allocate the fund to drainage construction and he did. We got drainage construction project of NRs. 400,000 (USD 4,000). I worked as Advisor in the Consumer Committee.”

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She is also Chairperson of local Consumer Committee, thus, she is leading local gravel road construction projects worth NRs. 100,000 (USD 1,000) in Ward no. 5. She was also member in other two road construction projects worth NRs. 140,000 (USD 1,400).

She adds, "I formed Women’s Group consisting of 25 members and conducted training sessions on proper utilization of budget for women, children and other targeted groups from VDC. I have linked women with different NGOs for income generation and skill development trainings like tailoring and animal husbandry training especially targeted for marginalized Madheshi women. The group has monthly saving as well."

Kopila, once a victim of child marriage is now able to empower local Madheshi women and strengthen their socio-economic conditions. Now she is a very popular in her VDC.

**Youths in active politics:** Mock Village Council, Village Public Hearings and National Youth Legislative Parliament have truly inspired Om Prakash Chauhan of Udaypur to actively participate in politics. He was recently elected as Ward Secretary of Nepali Congress. He shared, “I think, politics is one of the means of social service. I am ready to exercise leadership and democratic practice and I will try to bring some change in existing democratic practices.” Similarly, Sharmila Thapa Magar of Manikapur is active district member of Rastriya Prajatantra Party Nepal. She shared, “I am able to contribute to the party in better way now. I got to know more about importance of democracy, local development process, good governance and accountability at local level.” This will promote young leaders with knowledge and good understanding to get into active party politics.

**Multiplier Effect in Knowledge Sharing:**
The participants have been sharing their learning with other youths and elders in the community in different forums. They have been sharing in Ward Citizen Forums, youth clubs, VCPC, surveillance groups, District Youth Club Network, Women’s group, cooperatives, child club, Citizen Awareness Centers, Village Mediation Groups. We have provided with training manuals and DVDs of each program for further sharing and training. They strongly felt what they learnt is crucial; thus, need to share with others too. They have conducted sessions on:

1. Ward Citizen Forums,
2. Integrated Plan Formulation Committee,
3. Human Rights,
4. Democracy
5. Public Hearing
6. Participatory Planning Process
7. Right to Information
8. Good Governance, Accountability, and Transparency

Many of the participants are working for the rights of marginalized communities and increase their meaningful participation in local development process. In fact they are motivating marginalized population to raise their voice and issues with relevant stakeholders.

**Samikshya, bridging the social gaps**

Samikshya Gurung started discussion classes for illiterate marginalized women: Muslim, Pasi and Teli communities of Puraini VDC after her participation in the programs organized by HimRights. She discussed about human rights, human rights violation, facilities and services provided by the local government agencies, annual planning process at local level and even been running adult learning classes too.

She said, "Teli and Pasi women from Hindu Dalit and those from Muslim Communities didn't get along in the beginning but both are marginalized due to lack of education than political flaws. During the classes, I was able to form unity amongst them."

Now, women from Dalit and Muslim communities have come out of their veils and burkhas. Both parents and children are gradually becoming aware about the importance of education. There are still many Dalit children who do not go to school which bothers her and encourages her to do more work and dedication in the community. Due to her effort, some children from the Dalit communities are able to attend the schools without any discrimination.

She added, "Untouchability still remains deep-rooted among Dalit communities, they feel inferior to other communities which hinder their social development. Similarly, girls get married at early age, child mortality rate is high and there is huge problem of citizenship. Now women are becoming more aware and are capable to raise their voice."
BHOJPUR

BHOJPUR DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARY

Legend:
- District Boundary
- VDC Boundary

Year I
Year II
Year II
Year III

UDAYAPUR

CIS UNIS, LCCC/MLD, 2011
Year III VDCs
Cluster Five: Ranibas, Sindrang, Homtang, Khairang, and Devantar
Cluster Six: Manebhanjyang, Baikunthe, Basikhora, Dhodlekhani and Bhulke

Achievements: Bhojpur
Youth participation after the program:
The interview with 89 participants from third year found that 23% of them are engaged in Ward Citizen Forums and 22% in Integrated Plan Formulation Committee. This outstanding number shows that youths are capable to work in community development if they are provided with knowledge and experience. Most of them shared that they are able to perform well after participation in the programs. Some of them are already members of WCF, but they were not aware of their roles and responsibilities as a member and what they were supposed to do in WCF.

Almost half of the participants (47%) are taking leadership roles in Youth Groups, some of them are newly formed by the participants and others became part of existing Groups. 4 % of the participants started their career as Social Mobilizers in local NGOs. They shared that after the trainings it was much easier to work in the community. 2% of the participants are in Child Clubs and 2% in Women’s Groups.

![Chart showing youth participation in various roles](image)

Participants in leadership roles (N=89)

Capacity building of youths
There has been significant increase in youths’ understanding and knowledge on human rights, their roles and responsibilities, participatory planning process, and youth participation in development. They have been sharing their knowledge with other youths and adults in different
forums like Ward Citizen Forums, Citizen Awareness Centres, Youth Groups, Child Clubs, Women’s Groups and cooperatives. We found 89 of the youths, who were interviewed during the follow-up, shared their knowledge to 9375 youths and adults. It not only increased their interest in local development activities, but also increased their meaningful participation in annual planning process. Many Ward Citizen Forum members who did not know about their functions and their roles have turned to the active members after sharing sessions by our participants. They know about the process and their roles which made annual planning process more systematic and transparent. Karina Magar, participant from Bhulke, Bhojpur said, "I was not aware about any of the VDC activities and annual budgets available in the VDC. After participating in trainings, I participated in the annual planning process and the Village Council decided to allocate NRs. 20,000 (USD 200) for youth network."

Some of the participants have been transformed from political “muscle power” to social activists. Sudhir Rai from Dhodlekhani, Bhojpur shared his experience as, “I used to think muscle power and strength can solve all the problems. I faced different police cases and even spent some time in police custody. But after participating in different trainings on human rights, VDC process and leadership organized by HimRights, my perception has changed. Now, I feel we can develop our society through dialogue and sharing our views than with excessive power and strength.” He is also influencing his political “muscle power” contemporaries not to use physical power to make others do what they want; they could dialogue to convince their belief. He was recently selected as Coordinator of Ward Citizen Forum and he formed youth network and child network in all nine wards of his VDC. He was successful in allocating NRs. 60,000 (USD 600) for child empowerment programs from children’s budget to child network. Earlier the target budget for children used to be diverted to some other development headings. He was elected with maximum votes as the Prime Minister in the Mock Youth National Legislative Parliament and executed his role superbly.

**Close connection between youths and local government agencies**
The coordination between youths and local government agencies especially in VDC has significantly increased, similarly with the political parties too. Youths have become members or coordinators of Ward Citizen Forums and Integrated Plan Formulation Committees; these are the most important bodies of annual planning process. Hence, youths are consulted with and their voices are heard in the VDCs. It has increased recognition of youths by VDC Secretary, Social Mobilizers, Ward Citizen Forums and political parties. Youths from Ranibas, Dhodhlekhani, and Baikunthe have been organizing different programs in coordination with VDC office.

Youth Network and Child Networks formed in Ranibas VDC, led by Rabin Thapa, are working in close coordination with VDC, political parties, Social Mobilizer, and Ward Citizen Forums. They are working on holding dialogues with VDC and political parties on different issues and campaigns.
The most active Youth Network
Rabin Thapa and other participants have formed youth and children network in Ranibas VDC which has been working closely with VDC Secretary, political parties, Social Mobilizer and WCF coordinators. After participating in MVC; Rabin and other participants participated in Integrated Plan Formulation Committee meeting and were able to allocate budget focusing on youth and children. He says, "Budget for target groups and youth used to be allocated haphazardly. This year, we shared our learning in Integrated Plan Formulation Committee and NRs. 120,000 (USD 1,200) was allocated for projects related to youth and children empowerment."

The youth network organized quiz and debate contest focusing children in the VDC on March 4, 2016. 35 students from 7 schools participated in the program. Rabin adds, "The VDC was supposed to organize those programs but as they were unable to do so; the VDC asked us to organize the program." They will organize different programs with NRs. 90,000 (USD 900) focusing children and other programs with NRs. 30,000 (USD 300) very soon.

Along with that Rabin is also actively involved in awareness programs for women. He adds, "Married women were not allowed to participate in different meetings in my village. I shared my learning on Human Rights and Women Rights to women members of CAC in ward 5. They were interested to learn more and invited me to share again on human rights. Now women are running 5 different networks in our VDC."

Rabin is pursuing his bachelor's degree in Biratnagar but travels frequently to Ranibas to organize and participate in different programs in local level. He has kept close connection with local officials and political representatives. After long effort of the youth network, the VDC office, political parties and local people have decided to ban sale and distribution of liquor during office hours.

Improved service delivery of local government agencies
With increased understanding on good governance, accountability and transparency, local youths have started to raise their voice against poor service delivery and corruption in government agencies. The Public Hearings proved to be the perfect platform for it. Two Public Hearings in Ranibas and Baikunthe VDC have made the stakeholders from VDC, Primary Health Post, Agriculture and Livestock Services Centre and political parties more accountable to the citizens. They made several commitments to improve their service delivery mechanisms. After the hearings, VDCs established Citizen Charter in their premises and started monitoring and evaluation of development activities, utilized targeted group budgets in respective fields (VDC annual budget is allocated for women 10%, children 10% and other targeted groups including Dalits, marginalized groups, disabled, elderly etc. 15%); Health Posts started free distribution of medicines and effective Out Patient Department service and Agriculture Services Centre made commitments to timely distribute seeds and fertilizers.
**Youths in participatory planning process**

There is significant increase in youth participation in annual planning process in all program VDCs. Youths from Ranibas VDC are engaged in raising youth awareness on increasing youth participation in annual planning process. They conducted sharing meetings with local youth groups, Ward Citizen Forums, women’s groups, and child clubs. They participated in formulating development proposals from settlements and wards, submitting in Ward Citizen Forums and prioritization and implementation. The youths are more inquisitive about VDC activities and VDC annual budget – some of the participants even shared it on social media about VDC activities and annual budgets. Participants from Dhodlekhani have lobbied to allocate budget for children and activities relating to them. The VDC approved NRs. 255,400 (USD 2,554) for child related activities. Following is the list of projects and respective budget approved by different Village Councils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Name of the participants</th>
<th>VDC</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Amount (NRs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Sudhir Rai               | Dhodlekhani | • Child friendly furniture  
• Sound system for children  
• Orientation on child nutrition  
• Capacity building training for children  
• Orientation for guardians on creating child friendly environment | 90,000  
35,000  
45,000  
45,000  
40,400 |
| 2  | Rabin Thapa Ranibas      | • Child Friendly VDC Campaign  
• Youth Empowerment activities | 70,000  
30,000 |
| 3  | Pankaj Rai Nepaledada    | • Proposal writing training for youths | 40,000 |
| 4  | Mana Bhujel Chhinamakhu  | Chhinamakhu | • Sewerage construction and Bridge construction  
• Ward level awareness raising program on child rights | 55,000  
20,000 |
| 5  | Manita Khimdung Chhinamakhu | • Solar-light set purchase for child club | 10,000 |
| 6  | Karina Magar, Sanjaya Rai Bhulke | • Youth empowerment project | 20,000 |
| 7  | Dhyan Bahadur Rai Basikhora | • Sports competition | 60,000 |
| 8  | Baburam Tamang Manebahanjyang | • Quiz Contest with Child Clubs  
• Orientation on Child Nutrition | 35,000  
50,000 |
Youths in social campaigns

The participants are conducting different social campaigns in VDCs. Participants from Basikhora VDC have started a campaign to ban alcohol during office hours with exception to cultural activities. They are planning to ban gambling activities in the VDC as well. Similarly, youths from Ranibas have conducted meeting with VDC Secretary, social mobilizer, teachers and guardians to ban alcohol consumption and gambling during day time (10.00-16.00 hours). They also decided to ban selling alcohol and cigarettes in school area. They also conducted mass campaigns and distributed pamphlets to control such activities.

Commitments in Public Hearings:

Village Public Hearings were organized in Ranibas and Baikunthe VDC of the district. The hearings went very well and the panellist stakeholders made several commitments on the issues raised by the participants. Most of the issues raised were related to service delivery of VDC and other government agencies and annual planning process (budget allocation and project implementation). Commitments Implemented:

- The Agriculture Services Centre provides better services to farmers regardless of limited human resource. (Ranibas)
- The Primary Health Post stopped selling free medicines and the free medicines are systematically distributed for free. (Ranibas)
- The VDC gave more priority to the projects targeted to women, children and other target groups in this year’s annual planning process. The Citizen Charter has been established in VDC premises which can be seen by everyone. (Ranibas)
- Some of the existing WCFs were reformed to make them inclusive. Women and youths were added in the WCFs. (Ranibas)
- Sagarmatha Higher Secondary School distributed scholarships to students from Dalit community which could not happen in the past years and fees for extra-curricular activities and library facility have been reduced. (Ranibas)
- The VDC has set up Complaint Box and Citizen Charter in the Office premises as committed by the Secretary. (Baikunthe)
- The Area Level Primary Health Post In-charge committed to open the health posts till 5 pm and informed that a Health Assistant will soon be posted in Basikhora Health sub-post. (Baikunthe)
- The VDC Secretary and Political parties committed not to reallocate the target group budgets to other groups/development headings (Baikunthe)
- Local youth committed to actively participate in ward level and VDC level participatory planning process. (Baikunthe)
• The VDC Secretary informed that the VDC office, monitoring committees, DDC representatives and political parties jointly monitor the development activities and committed to conduct effective monitoring and improve the weakness in the coming days. (Baikunthe)

• All political representatives committed to give more priority to ward no. 3 of the VDC as it is lagged behind from development activities. (Baikunthe)
Year III VDCS
Cluster Five: Gadhi, Budhichaur, Manahari, Sukaura and Sarikhet
Cluster Six: Manthali, Markhu, Kulekhan, Fakhel and Sisneri

Achievements: Makwanpur
Youth participation after the program:
The follow-up interview with 84 youths from third year, found 42% of them were engaged in Ward Citizen Forums as members or Coordinators and 25% were involved in local cooperatives. The cooperatives are working on economic empowerment through micro-credit management. Similarly, 5% of the participants were in Child Clubs and 2% in Youth Groups. 7% of the youths were involved in Consumer Groups – they are implementing different projects in VDCs.

Increased participation of youths in participatory planning process:
The participation of youths in participatory planning process in Makwanpur is significantly higher than other two districts. Almost half of the participants (44%) interviewed participated in this year’s annual planning process and successfully lobbied at Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Plan Formulation Committee and Village Council to allocate annual budgets for various projects. There are project on child development, drinking water, irrigation, income generation, bridge and road construction, women skill development and health camps. Youths have submitted a proposal on small hydropower project as well. The following is the list of projects and respective budget allocated by Village Council – these participants have led and/or participated in development and prioritization of the projects and they will be integral part of implementation process as well.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Name of the participants</th>
<th>VDC</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Sanu Bd. Titung          | Gadhi-9 | - Building construction of Bihani Bal Bikash Kendra (child development centre)  
- Citizen Awareness Centre building  
- New Khohoriya drinking water planning- lift system  
- Water Tank construction | Rs. 40,000  
Rs. 50,000  
Rs. 200,000  
Rs. 30,000 |
| 2  | Bina Yonjan              | Gadhi-7 | - Samari Khola Briabhumi Churi Danda large Irrigation Project | Rs. 1,000,000 |
| 3  | Sabitri BK               | Gadhi-3 | - Goat rearing | Rs. 7000 |
| 4  | L.R Syangtan             | Gadhi-3 | - Goat rearing  
- Irrigation Project | Rs. 6,000  
Rs. 25,000 |
| 5  | Arjun Sapkota            | Gadhi-6 | - Water Tank Construction | Rs. 200,000 |
| 6  | Gauri Subedi             | Gadhi-8 | - Football ground for children  
- Health Camp | Rs. 30,000  
Rs. 30,000 |
| 7  | Shyam Bd. Moktan         | Budhichaur-4 | - Road Construction | Rs. 25,000 |
| 8  | Manju Karki              | Manahari-1 | - Bridge, Path road Construction:  
- Distribution of Drinking Water | Rs. 150,000  
Rs. 50,000 |
| 9  | Umesh Puri               | Manahari-7 | - Construction of branch road/Kriya Bhawan/Drinking Water | Rs. 50,000 |
| 10 | Subarna Neupane          | Sukaura-2 | - Bridge Construction | Rs. 100,000 |
| 11 | Mina Thakuri             | Sarikhet-3 | - Road Construction (Simpani-Deukot)  
- Distribution of Drinking Water | Rs. 450,000  
Rs. 100,000 |
<p>| 12 | Januka Timalsina         | Manthali-2 | - Small Hydropower | Rs. 100,000 |
| 13 | Sarina Lopchan           | Manthali-3 | - School benches | Rs. 5,000 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>VDC</th>
<th>Project Details</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ranjana Moktan</td>
<td>Manthali5</td>
<td>Co-operative building construction</td>
<td>Rs. 250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Laxmi Thing</td>
<td>Sisneri-1</td>
<td>Shortcut road construction (Thingan-Manthali)</td>
<td>Rs. 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Channu Maya Bhlon</td>
<td>Sisneri-8</td>
<td>Road Construction (Sisneri to Kulekhani)</td>
<td>Rs. 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Shova Singh Thakuri</td>
<td>Markhu-5</td>
<td>Soap making training/ Temple Construction</td>
<td>Rs. 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Nisha Lama</td>
<td>Markhu-8</td>
<td>Road construction</td>
<td>Rs. 125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mithhu balami</td>
<td>Markhu-6</td>
<td>Sports material for children</td>
<td>Rs. 260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Shanti Syangtan</td>
<td>Markhu-7</td>
<td>Drinking water Project</td>
<td>Rs. 50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Riya Syangtan</td>
<td>Phakhel-5</td>
<td>Path road construction, Training of Soap &amp; Cushion production</td>
<td>Rs. 12,000 Rs. 192,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Sunil Lama</td>
<td>Phakhel 6</td>
<td>Road construction</td>
<td>Rs. 125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Nani Maya Syangtan</td>
<td>Kulekhani-6</td>
<td>Road repair</td>
<td>Rs. 70,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This year, the participants will be involved in project implementation of above mentioned projects. HimRights district staff will be in regular contact to see the implementation status.

**Coordination with government stakeholders**

Youths have developed good connection with local stakeholders including VDC Secretary, heads of Agriculture/Livestock Services Centre and political parties. Village Public Hearings were the platforms where they really had dialogue with the stakeholders on different issues and made them accountable.
Bina, a Young Leader from Makwanpur Gadhi

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

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

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

Bina is currently working as WCF Secretary and she is very active in social activities. Her dream is an effectively functioning Agriculture Group and bring irrigation project in her ward so they can start commercial vegetable farming in her village which would improve their financial and living status. Recently Village Council has allocated NRs. 1,000,000 (USD 10,000) for the irrigation project.
Youths in social campaigns: Youths have been enthusiastically involved in different social campaigns. Sarina Tamang, Secretary of Kriyashil Women’s Group of Sarikhet VDC has been working on women’s empowerment. She is actively working against harmful social practices. One of the women in her VDC was accused of being ‘witch’. She was discriminated and excluded from her society. Sarina, as a woman leader, had a meeting with the accusers and tried to resolve the case. Being supporter of the woman did not make the accusers happy. Instead they accused her as a witch. She was very angry and asked them to produce evidence if she and the woman are witches. Later, the accusers dropped their accusations and apologized with both of them. Presently, the woman is living happily without any discrimination.

Youth-in-action through Street Drama and interaction with stakeholders
Youths from Budhichaur performed Street Drama and interaction with local government stakeholders. Madhab Timilsina, Shrijana Bhandari, Menuka Pudasaini, Dilkumari Pudasaini found the Drama the best tool to raise social awareness on increasing local participation in annual planning process. It was named ‘Mock Village Council’. They presented various issues on political interference in planning process, corruption and irregularities in VDC and other government agencies in the first part. The second part was more focused on different steps of participatory planning process, functions of Ward Citizen Forums, formulation, prioritization, budget allocation and implementation of development projects. The drama was super effective and reached to more than 300 people.
The Drama was followed by interaction session with local government stakeholders, political parties, Social Mobilizers, and Coordinators of WCFs. All the stakeholders appreciated the Drama as it presented all steps of annual planning process in detail. During the interaction, youths strongly urged to conduct Public Hearing every year so that all citizens know what exactly is going on in VDC.

Sanu Bahadur Titung of Makwanpur Gadhi has been sharing his knowledge in Ward Citizen Forums, Citizen Awareness Center at different times. After participating in Village Public Hearing, he approached VDC Secretary to conduct Public Hearing in his ward. With necessary coordination from HimRights, he was able to conduct Public Hearing at his ward – many people put forth different issues to the VDC Secretary mostly relating to annual VDC budget and development activities implemented by VDC and different consumer committees. Sanu Bahadur said, “The elite groups were very dominant at local level and never allowed the poor and weak
people to present their issues and problems. But the Ward Public Hearing really changed the situation. Local people got opportunity to discuss on several issues directly linked with VDC and they got authentic information than rely on middleperson or second hand information.”

Commitments in Public Hearings:
Stakeholders made several commitments during Village Public Hearings and District Public Hearings. The following are some of the concrete commitments to address the issues raised by the youths. Many of the commitments have been found to be implemented.

- VDC Secretary committed to establish Citizen Charter Board within a month from program date and he did it. There is a new Citizen Charter Board in front of VDC office. (Phakhel)
- The new Village Agriculture Committee was reformed as per the commitment made by Ex-Chairperson of the Committee and representative of CPN UML. (Phakhel)
- The VDC office did not entertain smaller proposals less than NRs. 5,000 (USD 50) in the annual planning process. The Secretary made commitment not to give priority to smaller projects as there are no significant results seen from such projects.
- The number of proposals for women, children and other targeted groups has significantly increased. The VDC followed the exact process as mentioned in the Directives. (Phakhel and Gadhi)
- The Health Post is now open from 10 am to 3 pm. Previously, it used to close at 2 pm.
- The information on distribution of Social Security Allowance is posted in VDC’s website as per commitment made by the Secretary. (Gadhi)
- Enhanced services from Livestock Services Centre and increased number of mobile camps on livestock healthcare. (Gadhi)
The National Youth Legislative Parliament held on January 14-19, 2016 in Dhulikhel, Kavre was a program for direct participation of the Youth where they exercised different parliamentary procedures of Legislative Parliament. In the given adverse scenario, it is absolutely desirable to create a national platform whereby the youth from across the country could assemble and raise their issues and speak out for their safe future and for a better nation. 81 marginalized youths from 18 districts participated in the program representing diverse caste and ethnic groups. Due to major Nepal Earthquakes, April 25 and May 12 and continuous aftershocks, hill districts of Central region have faced catastrophic loss of lives and physical properties. The Government is focussing on reconstruction and resettlement of earthquake affected areas. Hence, participants from earthquake affected districts were selected to provide them platform to raise their voice and issues at national level.

**Inclusive participants:** 50 of the participants were selected from three project districts that had gone through series of programs conducted in VDC and district level. They have good understanding on participatory planning process and issues relating to good governance and accountability. Other participants were selected from 15 other districts representing all development regions and specifically earthquake affected. The participants were selected based on their active roles in the community and direct victims of earthquake were selected from earthquake affected districts. There was inclusion of participants from indigenous groups, Dalits (both Hill and Terai), Muslim, disabled and other disadvantaged/marginalized groups.

**Intensive discussions:** Youths raised several issues during mock sessions and other discussion sessions. Youth unemployment, safe foreign employment, participation of youths in decision-making levels from local to national level, Agricultural entrepreneurship development, youth mobilization natural disasters and calamities, violence against women, caste discrimination and human trafficking were the main issues raised during ‘Zero Hour’ and ‘Question Hour’. Calling Attention Motion was presented on ‘violence against women’. Youth MPs drew attention of
relevant Ministers to reduce different forms of domestic violence, sexual assault and rape, acid attacks and trafficking of earthquake survivors and take strong action against the perpetrators. They pointed out the government should implement of existing laws to ensure justice to survivors of violence against women.

There was intensive discussion on the Bill on formation of National Youth Council which was presented by Minister of Youth and Sports. The Bill highlighted formation of Youth Councils in every district for holistic youth development, promote their meaningful participation from local to national level and transform them as active citizens. The Discussions on Annual Policies and Programs, Budget session, Bills, Calling Attention Motion were interactive, realistic, and very lively as if they were real members of the Parliament and Ministers.

**Earthquake as major focus:** The major focus of the Third NYLP was Nepal Earthquake, its impact and reconstruction process. Participants from earthquake affected district shared about impact of the earthquake and status of government and non-government support and reconstruction process. There was continuous discussion on how people were affected after the earthquake, distribution of relief packages by government and non-government organizations, reconstruction of personal houses, public properties and cultural heritage sites.

**Interaction with MPs:** On last day of the program, participants had interaction with Chairperson and Members of Parliament from Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee of the Legislative Parliament. Hon. Ranju Kumari Jha, Chairperson, Hon. Jayanti Rai, Hon. Minakshi Jha, Hon. Ram Hari Subedi and Hon. Kalpana Chapagain addressed the various issues raised by the participants. Hon. Ranju Jha said that this program should be implemented in the 8 problematic districts in Madhesh/Terai to positively transform the radicalized youth. Similarly, Hon. Minakshi Jha said that the program was very effective in transforming youths to leaders. She added youths should equally focus on politics and local development; this program should be organized in all the districts of the country. Adding to this Hon. Kalpana Chapagain said asked that if this program could be extended to her district. This process created linkage between youths with national stakeholders to highlight their issues policy or broader level and to address the issues raised by youths. The MPs were very impressed by the participants’ respectful, well versed, disciplined, and confidence. They accepted and owned the Youth Declaration as their own and committed to raise the issues where ever possible in the Parliament.
Youth Declaration: ‘National Youth Legislative Parliament Declaration, 2072’ was released which stated issues and demands of marginalized youths to be addressed at national level. Some of the issues covered by the Declaration were: youth self-employment and entrepreneurial development, engaging youths in sports, inclusion of youths in all state mechanisms, mobilization of youths in earthquake reconstruction process, ensure youth participation in local elections, formation and activation of National Youth Council, foreign employment, skill development trainings to youths and disabled and establishment of rehabilitation centre for drug abusers. The Declaration was submitted to ‘Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee’ to be addressed and implemented. Very recently, Government of Nepal announced through its Annual Policies and Programs to provide entrepreneurial loans to youths based on their educational certificate which was mentioned in the Declaration.

CONCLUDING SHARING MEETINGS:
Sharing meetings were conducted in all three program districts to inform about impacts and achievements and closure of the project with district stakeholders. The stakeholders included representatives from District Administration Office, District Development Committee, Assistant Local Development Officer, Women and Children Office, District Public Health Office, District Education Office, political parties, VDC Secretaries, Social Mobilizers and selected participants of three years project activities. During the Meeting, participants shared their experiences of participating in different programs and how the program helped them to grow in their community engagement and their learning about local development. They also shared how they are working in collaboration with other youths and local government stakeholders for community development through establishment of accountable and transparent governance mechanisms.
Megh Raj Khatri, Manikapur, Banke said, “I have participated in different programs organized by HimRights from village to national level. It was difficult to work in my community prior to the trainings. Now, I have good understanding of Human Rights, participatory planning process and local development process. I want to continue my community activities in future too.”

Sharad Paudel, Senior Program Officer of DDC Banke said, “The three year program has brought about many positive impacts in the communities. I have participated in many of the HimRights programs. I find this program very innovative as it successfully increased youth’s interest in VDC activities and local development process. I think youths can play very important role in the community. At the same time, local institutions should ensure the systematic planning, prioritization and implementation. If there are many youths with good understanding on the system, local government agencies automatically maintain system and with increased accountability.”

Rita Karki, Aamtek VDC, Bhojpur said, “I participated in HimRights Program 3 years ago. It was the first time I participated in such programs. I got to know clearly about VDC processes after participating in the programs. I started to participate in annual project planning and prioritization process. I was selected as Ward Citizen Forum Coordinator and member of Integrated Plan Formulation Committee. Last year we successfully implemented a women empowerment project. I am currently working as Social Mobilizer for a project. This program helped me a lot for my current job.”

Hon. Jayanti Rai, Member of Parliament, from Bhojpur said, “There are few organizations that are working with marginalized youths. This program has brought many changes in all program VDCs. Youths have worked on increasing transparency in local government organizations. There are no elected bodies in VDCs and these youths are working very closely with VDC Secretary, VDC and political parties. Youths who participated in different activities have been individually and socially transformed. They have participated from local to national programs. I find this program very effective, hence this program should be continued in years to come. If this organization cannot continue this program, DDC, VDC can
take lead to involve and engage youths in local development process. Youths have been monitoring local development activities. I believe this will bring real change in this district. Some of the participants are working in DDC project and the line managers also appreciate them as they have good understanding of local development process and they are quick learners.”

Roshan Aryal, Handikhola VDC, Makwanpur said, “We had no idea about the VDC budget or development activities in local level before participating in the training. Now our participation in the local level has increased and our concept in development activities and local budgets are also clear.”

Chandra Bahadur Karki, Assistant Chief District Officer of Makwanpur said, “We appreciate the effort and trainings organized by HimRights which has trained the youth about the planning process from the local level and empowered them with leadership and different skills. Youth participants need to come forward with issues on social necessities, gender violence, youth issues, raise awareness, participation and lead the community in these issues. More youth participation from marginalized communities is necessary. Youth assistance is necessary in VDC and DDC for development of good governance in the VDC. We hope that the youth participants would help the VDC Secretaries. When the youth are asking for the rights; they should be aware about their own responsibilities. We hope that this program will continue. I would commit to help anyhow necessary for the continuation of the program.”

PROGRAM CONSTRAINTS, ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES:

GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTRAINTS: Most of the VDCs in Bhojpur and Makwanpur are far from the district headquarters and located in remote and mountainous areas that are very difficult to access, especially during rainy season. There is lack of drivable roads, public transportation, and no other alternative than to hike. The Program team hiked for 11 hours to reach VDCs of the fifth cluster carrying all the program materials to conduct a Village Public Hearing. Similarly, some VDCs in Makwanpur were also difficult to access. The program staff had difficulties completing monitoring and follow up activities in these VDCs. On the other hand, due to geographical constraints, there are very few NGOs working in Bhojpur, thus, we were warmly welcomed in the remote VDCs. We got very enthusiastic responses from the stakeholders and youths too.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE TRANSFERRED FREQUENTLY: This phenomenon makes it difficult to link participants with government agencies and follow up on commitments made by officials during public hearings. Moreover, new officials need to be oriented about the program. It takes time and new stakeholders do not own the spirit of the program and provide the necessary support to participants.
KEEPING PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED: Some of the participants from previous years are in regular contact and have requested follow-up programs or refresher programs in their VDCs. Due to lack of additional budgeted activities, it is difficult to keep them engaged in their communities. However, district staffs have created linkages with government and non-government institutions to continue their involvement. RECOMMENDATION: There should be budgeted follow-up/refresher programs for previous year participants to keep them engaged in the local development processes for at least for few years. The most amazing part, the local government was so impressed with HimRights program and participants they played crucial role in engaging youths in local development processes. HimRights local team played very important role to link participants with local government agencies and others. Participants organized different activities and dialogues with cash or in kind support from VDCs and other organizations. We did not include in kind support from VDCs in this report.

REQUEST FOR VILLAGE PUBLIC HEARINGS IN ALL VDCs: Village Public Hearings are a very effective platform for participants and local government stakeholders to raise issues relating to services being provided by government agencies. Moreover, such events promote accountability and transparency in government authorities. Unfortunately we were only able to conduct Village Public Hearings in one VDC per cluster. The Hearings were very successful and participants from other VDCs requested to conduct or facilitate Public Hearings in their VDCs. RECOMMENDATION: Public Hearings should be conducted in all the VDCs. In some VDCs, participants conducted Ward Public Hearing with support from HimRights and VDC.

ACCESS TO DISTRICT LEVEL PLANNING PROCESS: Few participants were able to gain access to district level planning processes or municipal planning processes. The key posts are occupied by the political parties and/or local elites and few of participants attended District or Municipal Council meetings.

VILLAGE LEVEL DIALOGUES: In the second year, Village Level Dialogues were conducted as follow-up activities. 9 Dialogues were conducted in three districts. These Dialogues have brought major positive changes in the VDCs where the participants along with local youth raised their burning issues with local government officials. Moreover, it created strong linkages between them and local government stakeholders. Village level dialogues could be an activity to keep them active and connected with local government stakeholders and explore issues and opportunities in the local development process. RECOMMENDATION: Village Level Dialogues should be conducted in all the VDCs seeking funding from local government agencies. Several issues raised during the dialogues have been addressed. It is the best tool to keep youths engaged in VDC activities and processes.
CONTINUATION & EXPANSION OF PROGRAM: The overall positive impact of the program justifies its continuation and expansion. During the closing sessions of the Mock Village Councils and Mock District Councils, National Youth Legislative Parliaments government officials and political leaders recommended the program need to be expanded to all the VDCs and districts of Nepal. There is also a potential to expand the program into municipalities and prospective Federal States towards further institutionalizing inclusion of diversity and marginalized in the Participatory Planning Process, democratic practices, accountability, transparency, decision-making and other leadership roles. Local government agencies in recognition of the capacity of the participants continue to mobilize and engage our participants in different committees and local development process and with financial support.

CONCLUSION:
We successfully conducted 24 activities in three project districts and annual national level activity. In the Year III, we directly worked with total of 1049 youths with 563 female (53.7%) and 486 male (46.3%). It included youths from diverse communities especially from marginalized and disadvantaged indigenous groups and Dalits, Madheshi and Muslim communities. 52% of the participants were from indigenous groups, 15% from Madheshi, 11% from Dalit, 2% from Muslim and 20% from others.

VDC level programs had significantly brought about transformation amongst the participants in terms increasing their understanding on local development process and meaningful participation in Ward Citizen Forums, Integrated Plan Formulation Committees, Citizen Awareness Forums, youth groups, women groups, agriculture groups and cooperatives. They are playing very active roles in these positions. We conducted only one district level activity in each district. District Public Hearings had linked youths with district level government service providers and increased visibility of marginalized youths at district level. National Youth Legislative Parliament provided marginalized youths an opportunity to raise various issues with Parliamentarians from Women, Children, Senior Citizen and Social Welfare Committee and submit youths’ Declaration to the Committee. The Committee owned the Declaration as their own and committed to raise the relevant issues in the Parliament. Some of the issues are already been incorporated in Annual Policies and Programs and revised National Youth Policy.

We conducted Project Completion Sharing Meeting in all districts to share about project impact with major government stakeholders from village to district level and our youth participants. The program was like a social audit. Both participants and government stakeholders were very impressed by the project. Government stakeholders said that they will support us (not financially) in any way they could if we bring back the project. This is the biggest complement any NGO can have from the government agencies.
In the Year III, we have directly worked with 1049 marginalized youths and facilitated them to create linkages with government stakeholders and political parties. It helped them to increase their participation in critical decision-making roles, to local resources and visibility in their community. They are able to conduct several activities including Village Dialogues, several campaigns and activities for youths and children with cash and in-kind support from the government agencies. Similarly, they are proactively taking leadership roles in youth groups and networks which will keep them actively engaged in community development in coordination local government and non-government stakeholders. Their collaboration and activities will live beyond the life for this project. Furthermore, we assume many of the participants will be candidates in the local elections – if they win the elections, they will be able to systematically implement the directives of Local Self Governance Act and local development process as active citizens and leaders. We hope to see them as visionary and effective national leaders in years to come.