ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020

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Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) Nepal

ceci
CHANGES LIVES

VISION

Through sharing and respect, CECI works for equality between men and women, both within its own organization and in society at large. It helps to combat poverty and exclusion by building bridges within its international network of partners through intercultural interaction and international cooperation.

STRATEGY

CECI focuses on building the development capacity of local and disadvantaged communities. Its programs and projects support communities in becoming their own drivers for change by focusing on local ownership, empowerment and partnership with local non-government organizations and community-based organizations. Gender transparency and good governance are at the core of our capacity building activities.

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FOCUS AREAS

To enhance the quality of lives, CECI Nepal concentrates its actions in five areas of expertise:

- Economic development & livelihoods

- Agriculture and food security

- Local governance and accountability

- Human safety and emergency response

- Gender equality and social inclusion

- Disaster Risk Reduction

MISSION

CECI's mission is to combat poverty and exclusion

ACRONYMS

AVP	Australian Volunteers Program
CCUL	Coffee Cooperative Union Lalitpur
CDCAN	Central Dairy Cooperative Association Limited Nepal
CECI	Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
FWEAN	Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' Association Nepal
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
JAMC	Judicial Affairs Management Committees
LDMPCU	Lalitpur District Milk Producers Cooperative Union
LGs	Local Governments
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NACCFL	Nepal Agriculture, Cooperative Central Federation Limited
NYFN	National Youth Federation Nepal
NEHHPA	Nepal Herbs and Herbal Product Associations
NGO	Non Government Organization
TUTH	Tribhuwan University Teaching Hospital
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMGs	Women and Marginalized Groups

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT

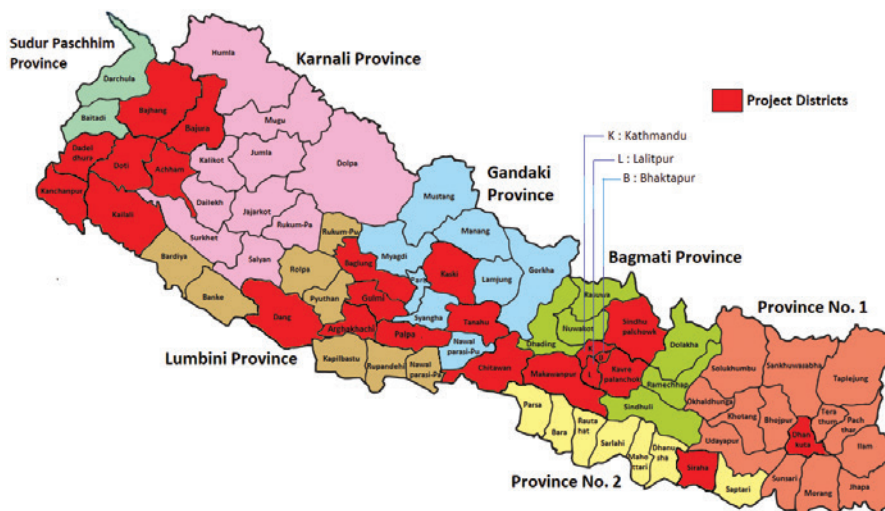## Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI)

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The Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) is a Canadian non-profit organization founded in 1958 and registered in 1968. CECI works to combat poverty and exclusion by strengthening the development capacity of disadvantaged communities, supporting initiatives for peace, human rights, and equity, mobilizing resources, and promoting the exchange of know-how. CECI's core competencies include providing diverse consulting and project management services to address the multiple facets of poverty reduction.

CECI established its office in Nepal in 1987, and since then it has been supporting and implementing development projects to achieve development goals of the country with a focus on improving the quality of life of people.

CECI Nepal's programs focus on agriculture, livelihood, micro, small and medium enterprise development, good governance, and disaster risk reduction (DRR). CECI Nepal works in partnership with local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations

Project Districts in 2019-2020

(CBOs) and has implemented various development projects and supported thousands of NGOs and CBOs in undertaking programs. CECI Nepal also mobilizes international and national volunteers with financial contributions from the Government of Canada, provided through the Global Affairs Canada, and the Australian Government provided through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and development. The majority of volunteers are placed in governmental and non-governmental organizations to enhance their institutional, planning and programming capacity and to recognize their significant contribution to the socio-economic development of Nepal.

CECI works in Nepal under the General Agreement initially signed with the Social Welfare Council in 1989 and renewed subsequently.

Message
from the Country Director

I am very much delighted to present this report to you all. As you go through this report, I hope you will gain insights about our project activities in Nepal. I do hope, as in the past years, this report will give you a brief tour of our activities.

This year we have completed Uniterra program, a Canadian Volunteer Cooperation program, which was funded by the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada and was jointly managed by CECI and World University Services of Canada (WUSC). Uniterra program mobilized 188 volunteers with 20 partners, including government institutions, non-government organizations, associations and cooperatives that are working to enhance economic empowerment in agro-enterprise, non-timber forest products, and handicraft sectors.

In this report, we have presented a brief of our activities before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. We were able to achieve our targets despite the adversaries created by the pandemic and subsequent nationwide and partial lockdown, and this was entirely possible due to continuous support, collaboration, and encouragement rendered from all the sectors.

Thank you for making our work possible and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all our donors and implementing partners, the Government of Nepal, Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Abt Associates, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Government of Australia, and civil society organizations and partners for their continued cooperation, collaboration, and invaluable work with us.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented us all with new challenges. However, it is at times like these we realize how much we depend on each other. Thank you again for your collaboration, support, and looking forward to a better and safe situation ahead as there is much more to do.

Last but not the least, I would also like to thank the CECI Nepal team for their efforts in preparing this annual report. Enjoy reading!

Sita Ram Bhatta
Country Director,
CECI Nepal

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ONGOING
PROJECTS

Sustainable Use of Technology for Public Sector Accountability in Nepal - Susasan

The Sustainable Use of Technology for Public Sector Accountability in Nepal - Susasan is a four year project being implemented by CECI Nepal with financial support from the Government of Canada provided through the Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The project is aimed at leveraging and mainstreaming integrated technologies for public sector accountability in Nepal. The project is working with 12 local governments (Municipality and Rural Municipality) of six districts: Sindhupalchok and Lalitpur of Bagmati Province and Kailali, Dadeldhura, Achham, and Bajhang of Sudur Pashchim Province and coordinating with federal and provincial governments. For effective and smooth implementation of the project, it is partnering with two national organizations- Freedom Forum (thematic partner) and Young Innovations (technology partner), and six district-level NGOs one in each project district. The project has been
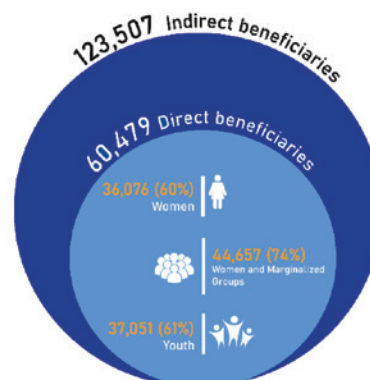
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complementing the Nepal Government's ongoing initiatives and programs related to the promotion of transparency, public sector accountability, and citizen-state engagement through introducing innovative integrated technological solutions (online and offline).

Susasan has been working mainly in four themes: (1) Open Data; (2) Budget Transparency; (3) Citizen Reporting and (4) Grievance Reporting to particularly reach marginalized groups, defined through gender (i.e. Women), youth, so-called lower caste (i.e. Dalit), vulnerability (i.e. Persons with disabilities), indigenous and ethnic minorities and geographically excluded and extremely poor communities.
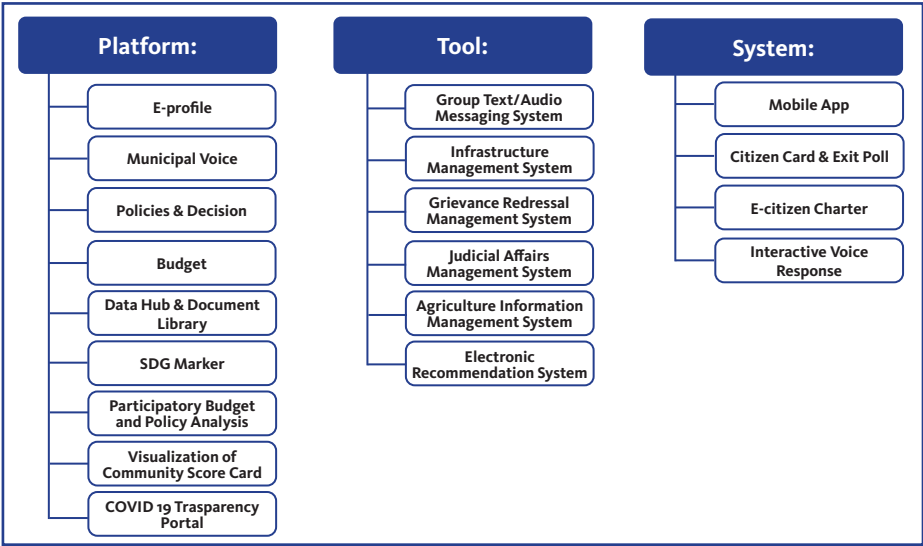
The project has directly reached 60,479 beneficiaries through various activities including a unique number of accessing technological tools, platforms, and mechanisms developed by the project. Among these total reached beneficiaries, 36,076 (60%) are women, 44,657 (74%) are WMGs and 37,051 (61%) are youth.

123,507 Indirect beneficiaries

60,479 Direct beneficiaries

36,076 (60%) Women

44,657 (74%) Women and Marginalized Groups

37,051 (61%) Youth

Highlights of outcome level progress in 2019-2020:

– The Project has been supporting and facilitating the local governments on the use of integrated technologies for the promotion of accountability, transparency, and citizen-state engagement. Two physical techno-hubs (municipal and community) in each targeted local governments are established and operational to improve or facilitate the delivery and access to public information. On the one hand, the developed technological tools, platforms, and mechanisms have improved public service delivery efficiency of local governments and on the other hand, citizens have been accessing required information and data to fulfil their needs by visiting techno-hubs and virtual platforms.

– The project developed 20 technological tools, platforms, and mechanisms, including the COVID-19 transparency portal for the use of local governments and citizens to relay and access public data and information.

– The project provided facilitation support to local governments for the development and implementation of local-level policies, guidelines, and plans to ensure and address the participation and need or demand of citizens especially Women and marginalized groups (WMGs). For instance, the project has provided

facilitation support to develop Public Hearing Guideline, Non-government Organization (NGO) Coordination Procedure Guideline, Infrastructure Management System (IMS) Operational Guideline, Good governance action plan, User Committee Formation and Mobilization Guideline, Agriculture and Livestock Extenstion Strategic Plan etc.

– The level of capacity of the CSOs and WMGs has been enhanced and the participation of WMGs in decision-making processes is increasing at the local level due to access to public information and data through integrated technological tools, platforms and mechanisms.

– The local governments have started to disclose their data and information proactively using integrated technologies intending to fulfil citizens' needs and demands. The technological tools have significantly supported to improve the efficiency of LGs for

Platform:	Tool:	System:
E-profile	Group Text/Audio Messaging System	Mobile App
Municipal Voice	Infrastructure Management System	Citizen Card & Exit Poll
Policies & Decision	Grievance Redressal Management System	E-citizen Charter
Budget	Judicial Affairs Management System	Interactive Voice Response
Data Hub & Document Library	Agriculture Information Management System	
SDG Marker	Electronic Recommendation System	
Participatory Budget and Policy Analysis		
Visualization of Community Score Card		
COVID 19 Trasparency Portal		

the delivery of public services. The LGs have claimed that government activities including planning, budget, and decisions are now available in the hands of citizens. They are getting responses from the citizen both in the form of appreciation and grievances as well.

– The integrated technologies are developed through the co-creation process based on the demand and the need of the local governments and are rolled out for regular use or operation. Infrastructure Management System, Judicial Management System, Agriculture Management System, Grievance Redressal Management System, Text and Audio Messaging System, Municipal Data Portal, Municipal Mobile App, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Marker, E-recommendation System, etc. have been accessed and used by local governments and have notably contributed to the establishment of digital governance system at the local level.

– Citizen-State dialogue has started to improve, particularly regarding the quality of education and budget expenditure through the use of social accountability tools, i.e. Community Score Card (CSC) and Public Expenditure
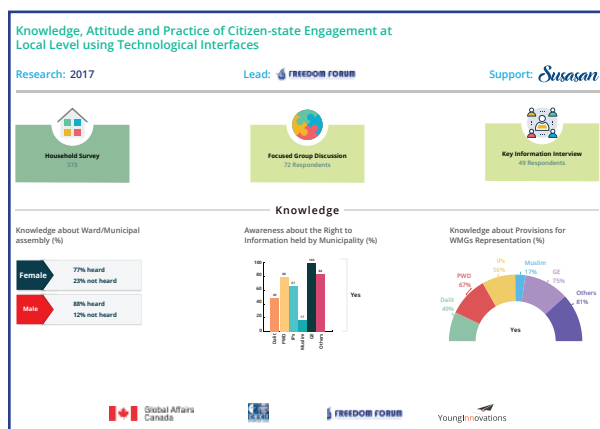

Tracking Survey (PETS) at the local level.

– Development of the COVID-19 transparency portal (https://www.susasan.org/covid19) for local governments to provide information to citizens has been the project's contribution to support

constructive citizen-state engagement. The portal has helped the local government to gather, visualize, and communicate the action taken against the pandemic by promoting transparency, and accountability. This portal is rolled out in 12 local governments of the project area. Whereas other local governments beyond the project areas have also adopted this portal through CECI's technical support.

– Five podcasts (https://susasan.org/covid19) and two different e-posters have been produced as awareness material related to COVID-19. The podcasts are related to psychosocial counselling targeting to housewives, returnee migrants, children and parents, youth, and elected representatives while the posters are aimed at creating awareness. Both podcasts and e-posters are widely published through social media and project portal.

Techno-Hub:
the Source of Information

Getting information has been a challenge for the people of Navadurga Rural Municipality and Amargadhi Municipality of Dadeldhura District. To get information, sometimes one needs to submit a written application. It was difficult to find the right person to get information as well. Now, because of Susasan Project's support, well equipped community techno-hubs have been established in both Municipalities making it easier to access information. The project oriented the local people on the importance and use of the techno-hub and getting information using integrated technology, including websites and mobile applications. Eventually, people are being aware of the technology and getting access to the Municipalities' information smoothly. The community techno-hubs are serving as a reliable source to get information and has become an effective channel for the Municipalities to disseminate information. Nowadays people are not only using it to get municipal information (budget decisions, expenditures, policies, activities, etc.).

Kavita Awasthi, Information Technology Officer of Navadurga Rural Municipality, says, "Establishment of community techno-hubs and the group messaging system apps have made it easier to inform the citizens and concerned authorities about every plan and programs including the meeting decisions of the Municipality".

Ms. Dambari Oli
Deputy Chair Navadurga
RM, Dadeldhura

Ms. Dambari Oli, Deputy Chair of Navadurga Rural Municipality said "Citizens especially women and marginalized people are being able to raise their voice to claim the public budget and other social entitlements. We are also making the annual budgets and plans of local government transparent by using technology and demonstrating our responsiveness. Before the technological intervention of the project, there was a monopoly and lack of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness".

Thokarpa:
the Digital Village in Sunkoshi Rural Municipality

Thokarpa, ward no. 1 of the Sunkoshi Rural Municipality of Sindhupalchok district became the first ward to set up Community Techno-hub with a digital board with support from Susasan project, is now known as "Digital village" among other wards in Sunkoshi. Upon the request from Ward Chairperson Netra Bahadur Karki, the project supported the Ward Office to set up a Community Technology Information Center (techno-hub) and a digital board (e-citizen charter). The Ward Office, then arranged for a regular IT staff to operate the information centre. Besides, the ward office oriented and encouraged citizens to use the information centre and digital board. Citizens are now getting familiar with accessing the information from the techno hub. They can even get the information on their mobile phones using Municipal Mobile Apps. With this setup, Thokarpa Ward could set an example of transparency of their work and be accountable to their citizens. All other Ward Offices in the Sunkoshi Rural Municipality are now showing interest on the e-citizen charter and some of them have started replicating the system and displaying information through digital display boards.

Ward Chairperson, Netra Bahadur Karki says, "we are committed to the maximum utilization of technological platform.' After the recent restructuring of the government, the technology has helped to organize our work and manage information. We regularly display all the necessary information issued by the ward on the digital board. Local people have become accustomed to viewing the board and ask for the required information at the community techno hub. This has also contributed in saving the environment by reducing the consumption of paper".

Ward Chair Mr. Netra Bahadur

Active Judicial Affairs Management System

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The Constitution of Nepal, 2015 has vested the power to resolve prescribed category of disputes at the local level for making justice accessible to the community through recourse to both mediation and arbitration under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Mayor/ vice-chair of the municipality. Hence, Judicial Affairs Management Committees (JAMC) are formed in all Municipalities of Nepal. Barhabise Municipality of Sindhupalchowk has also formed JAMC under the coordination of Deputy Mayor Sushila Pakhrin.

In the past, the complaints used to be registered manually, which were then brought into mediation with both the parties for mediation proves. The agreement reached from the process were again recorded in the register. It was a lengthy and complicated process to record each case and trace how many cases were resolved and how justice was administered in a month or a year. It was even more difficult to maintain the files as there used to be hundreds of complaints in a month.

In an endeavour to support in maintaining judicial complaints systematically, Susasan Project developed Judicial Affairs Management System (JAMS) for Barabise Municipality. The system registers the complaints from people, updates, progress, and streamlines record management. It has made the management and operational aspects of judicial work tidier and easier. All the records such as the number of registered complaints, their nature, dispute settlement process, and the final status can be easily viewed by the system. Similarly, periodic reports can be produced easily.

Deputy Chief Ms. Pakhrin expressed her gratitude to the project for all the support. She further said, " The system has made judicial work more efficient by systematically organizing the complaints and has saved time and resources". Now members of the JAMC have access to the system and can trace the complaints right away from any place even when they are not present in the municipal office.

NEW
PROJECT

USAID supported Sajhedari-Support to Federalism

Sajhedari-Support to Federalism (or Sajhedari) is a USAID Nepal funded six year project supporting Nepal in its post-conflict constitutional transition from a unitary to a federalist state. The project began in June 2019 and is expected to end on June 2025. The Sajhedari Project plays a critical role in supporting implementation of the new federal system. The Project is focussed on supporting 10 municipalities in five districts: Bajhang, Doti, Kailali, and Kanchanpur in Sudurpaschim Province (Province 7) and Dang in Karnali Province (Province No. 5) .

The major objective of the Sajhedari project is to "provide technical assistance to the GoN during transition from a unitary state to a federation of provinces with more effective, accountable, responsive and inclusive local
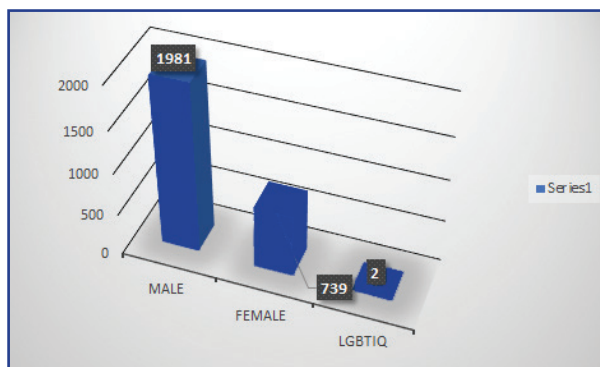
Thematic area:
- Sound Policies and Legislation
- Government and System Strengthening;
- Citizen's Engagement and Social Accountability

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governance." Whereas the three specific objectives of the project area as follows:

1. The GoN creates and implements sound policies and legislation that are informed by evidence, and empower, finance, and regulate provincial and municipal governments;

2. The targeted province and select municipal governments therein are more responsive, inclusive, accountable and transparent, in decision making and, service delivery;

3. Citizens and civil society organizations in targeted municipal areas, including the marginalized ones, actively participate in local decision-making and oversight.

The project is being implemented by Abt Associates Inc. in partnership with Urban Institute, Team Consult Pvt. Ltd., and CECI Nepal. CECI Nepal's role in the project is to contribute to the achievement of the objective number 3. During this period Sajhedari Project directly reached 2724 people (1981 male, 739 female and 2 from LGBTIQ+ community) through different activities.

Expected key results

The project seeks to achieve the following results:
- Policy and legislation are informed by evidence through policy research and dialogue involving a cross-section of stakeholders.
- Policy processes are more transparent, participatory, and inclusive at the federal, provincial, and local levels.
- Local governments are more effective and inclusive in delivering priority services to fulfill core legal responsibilities.
- Municipal and provincial governments are more responsive, inclusive, accountable, transparent, and effective in decision-making.
- Learning institutions to support improved local governance are enhanced and sustainable.
- Citizens and civil society are more effective at engaging in decision-making at the local level.
- Civil society has a greater capacity for monitoring and oversight of public service delivery and other public functions.

Highlights of the activities completed during 2019-2020:

under CECI Lead Thematic Interventions (Objective 3):

— Finalized CSO Mapping and Needs assessment
— Increased Citizen Participation in Pre-budget at Local Levels
— Developed the e-learning Platform for a series of virtual capacity building events
— Convened Governance Labs on Citizen School on Civic Engagement and Social Accountability using an e-platform
— Developed Inclusive Leadership Training Package targeting toward and municipality level elected or nominated representatives and CSO leaders
— Designed a COVID-19 Citizen-Municipality Interface for Sajhedari working municipalities
— Rapid Assessment of Gender Based Violence during lockdown
— Designed a Challenge Fund Targeting Local CBOs/CSOs and providing mentoring services
— Formation of Good Citizen Initiative led by 10 diversified nature's of CBOs.

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Peer Support: First Governance Lab

'I realized that we have to participate in the local policies and programs'

Prabha Devi Dhanuk, is a Chairperson of Pragati Community Organization that works for the HIV infected people and encourages saving habits. The organization also helps needy people to make monthly savings by mobilizing group fund. Ms. Prabha has a key responsibility to visit the homes of HIV-infected and affected people, to ensure that they have good health and are taking medicine regularly. She participated in the Focus Group Discussion in the initial stage of USAID's Sajhedari project where she demonstrated excellent performance. She was then invited to participate in the Governance Lab online training, but she was not computer literate and was hesitant to participate. However, the project personnel encouraged her by teaching to operate the computer first. Eventually, for the first time in her life, she participated in the online training where she learned about Nepal's constitution, federalism and local government, civic engagement and social accountability, participatory planning and budgeting, policy and budget analysis, civic budgeting, and fact-based advocacy. After completing the training she developed the confidence to lobby with the local government to help her organization.

She said "at first, I lost my confidence because I was computer illiterate and never had I participated in such types of online training courses. Gradually I became familiar with the computer and started understanding the contents given in the training. The training changed my way of thinking. I realized why we have to know and participate in the policies and programs implemented by the local government. I will share this learning with all the members of my organization to increase their level of awareness. In the days to come, we will keep eyes on local government policies and programs and lobby for the supports of our organization. Now, I am excited that some of our problems can be solved."

Australian Volunteers Program **(AVP)**

© Australian Volunteers Program

The Australian Volunteers Program, an Australian Government Initiative is funded by the Australian Government and managed by Australian Volunteer International (AVI) in a consortium with Cardno and the Whitelum Group. AVP is active in 26 countries across the Indo-Pacific, East Asia, South Asia and Africa region. In Nepal, CECI is subcontracted to provide logistical support for the program. The AVP matches skilled Australians with Nepali Partner Organizations to help them achieve their development objectives. The program's special focus is capacity building by sharing and exchange of knowledge.

Between July 2019 and June 2020, a total of 17 new volunteers were mobilized in Nepal. The volunteers worked in Province no. 1, Bagmati Province, Gandaki Province, and Lumbini Province to support the municipal governments, University faculties, a community

technical school, at the Tribhuvan University Teaching hospital and at the Nepal Agriculture Research Centre. The support provided by Australian volunteers were in the sectors such as urban planning, nursing coordination, tourism development, environment and sanitation, geometric and structural engineering, e-governance, speech therapy, and disability research – sectors in which Nepal lacks adequate human resource.

During the year, volunteers established strong relationships with their host organizations, which further contributed to building expertise and resources in Nepal. One such assignment was with Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) to support speech therapy. The other novel assignment was a Tissue Culture Scientist Ms. Anna Balzer whom the partner organization, Nepal Agricultural Research Council had considered to be very disciplined and dedicated.

Volunteering Experience
As a Speech Pathologist in Nepal

© Australian Volunteers Program

Australian volunteer Athena Chan worked as a speech pathologist at the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) in Kathmandu, Nepal. She helped to establish a swallowing disorder clinic, to build the capacity of the local speech pathologists, raise awareness of speech pathology in the healthcare community, and contribute to enhancing service delivery and improving patient outcomes at TUTH.

Athena says: 'Volunteering my professional skills in Nepal for 12 months was one of the most challenging yet awe-inspiring things I have done. I can see the fruits of my labour continue to sprout even after my return to Australia.'

Some members of the ASLP Team at TUTH with Anil, Athena, Susmita, Kabi Raj, Prabha and Bebek

Support to strengthen
Disability Research Centre, Kathmandu University

© Australian Volunteers Program

Vicki Hannam, a social worker, and lecturer from Sydney had been supporting the Disability Research Centre, School of Arts, Kathmandu University (KU), since April 2019 until March 2020 as part of the Australian Government's Australian Volunteers Program. She was repatriated early to Australia because of COVID-19.

The Disability Research Centre was established in 2015 in the School of Arts to seek and promote new knowledge about disability in children and adults, including the impact of disabilities on children, individuals, and families. It also examines the efficacy of different policies, interventions, and support methods. Vicki, as a Program Development Worker supported the Centre in many components, including liaising and building collaborative networks with organizations working with people with disabilities in Kathmandu. She actively participated in developing, expanding, and collaborating with teachers to include disability issues in their curriculums at a university level. She was also involved in collaborative training and teaching within the Community Development field in KU; Disability Studies, an undergraduate course and Disability Studies (which was currently piloted) which specifically examine theoretical, cultural, social frameworks of disability in Nepal. She also supported in arranging practical excursions to Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) working in the disability sector, as well as lessons in Nepali sign language, to enrich the students learning experience.

Vicki said, "I am lucky to work with very creative colleagues, who have a vast array of knowledge and experience in the disability sector. The assignments allowed liaising with many different fields of study. I am honoured to have the experience of working toward a more expansive and positive outcome for those living with and working in Disability in Nepal.

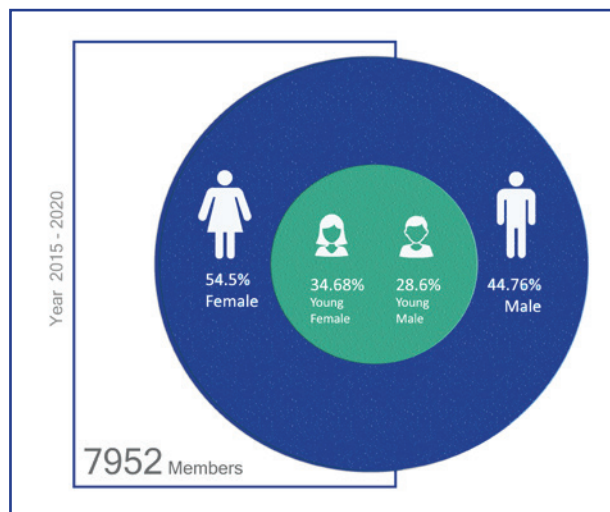Source: https://bit.ly/2Ywqs8x

COMPLETED
Project

Uniterra

Uniterra, a Canadian Volunteer Cooperation program, funded by the Government of Canada provided through the Global Affairs Canada, had been jointly managed by CECI and World University Services of Canada (WUSC) since 2004 ended in March 2020. The program was implemented in three different phases to include women and youth in the market system. The third phase of the Uniterra programme (2015 to 2020) aimed to reach 400,000 people (Direct and Indirect) out of which 60% of women and 50% of youth were focussed. Uniterra programme (U3) mobilized 188 volunteers with 20 partners, including government institutions, associations (non-profit and private/ business), umbrella organisations (private/ business), cooperatives and NGOs in Nepal, working in agro-enterprise, non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and handicraft sectors.

In 2019-2020, an end-line survey was conducted to gauge the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of U3 in the partner's capacity development. Similarly a study on the impact of the international volunteer on women's economic empowerment and gender equality was also conducted. Documentation in the form of photo and video of the Uniterra program and its partner organization has also been prepared.

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Highlights of the Achievements:

Partner's Capacity Development

Since 2015-2020, Uniterra directly trained 7,952 people (54.5% female and 44.76% male); of which, 34.68% of the total were young women and 28.6% of the total were young men. In 2019-2020, Uniterra's contribution to partner's capacity building was significant with 2,271 people (67.4% female and 32.6% male directly trained, which included 34.68% young women and 28.6% young men.

A total of 769 tools developed or updated for the partners in the project period, including, 253 tools created in 2019-2020. The tools included Strategies (GESI, marketing), Guidelines/manuals on Good Laboratory Management Practice, career counseling Health and Safety, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), Good Manufacturig Practice, GAP, ISPm, press releases writing, graphics, banners, flyers, pamphlet, sticker, logo, label, interview, photobook, case study template, videos, databases, websites, brochures, survey results, donor tracking templates, social media, review reports, a protocol for clinical trials, digital service standard, etc.

Volunteers supported partners to generate resources through proposal development, network and linkage building, and fundraising. More than 32 concept notes/proposals were developed, out of which 3 received funding support.

Innovation

In 2019-2020, several programmatic innovations and pilot interventions were introduced. A short-term group corporate volunteering initiative brought six volunteers from Coast Capital Savings who played a catalytic role in strengthening and reviving Women Entrepreneurs and Consumers Cooperative Society Ltd. (WECCSL) and supporting its transformation. The near-closure organization is now active and providing lots of support to its member organizations.

The 1st pilot project supported by Uniterra to Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association (NEHHPA) introduced key technology, hybrid solar dryers, that would allow producers to increase the production quality of cardamom and other herbal products. The technology is proving to be successful, and additional pieces of training are planned to further optimize the production cycle and product quality using this technology.

The 2nd pilot project was to establish a heating and cooling system in the yogurt room, in Lalitpur District Milk Producers Cooperative Union (LDMPCU) /Central Dairy Cooperation Association Ltd. Nepal (CDCAN) in 2020,

© Mallika

providing service to 5,150 dairy farmers. This was a part of the bigger processing plant, LDMPCU installed in Chapagaon. Uniterra supported organizing an exposure visit of 15 members to Gujrat, India to learn methods to improve the operation of their milk processing centre, developed training guidelines, and trained its staff to run the processing centre.

The 3rd pilot project was with partner organization Prerana. Prerana was able to support 110 Dalit women in Sarlahi District, who are excluded from land ownership and access, secure innovative entrepreneurial endeavours that would see beneficial financial and environmental outcomes. This project mobilized to support and resources from multiple INGO partners to strengthen and secure unique entrepreneurship opportunities for these women, who are excluded from land ownership and access to build effective agro producer and agro-service provider businesses using the river bank. The local governments have provided access to land alongside the riverbanks for the women to grow, and sell, Moringa and watermelon.

A Uniterra volunteer mentored 13 youths on communications/IT skills through the National Youth Federation Nepal (NYFN)'s Youth Collective Coding (YCC) mini-project. The youths further trained other youths associated with YCC. YCC was also able to secure 7 paying clients, from the not-for-profit and business sector, in a short time and was able to support NYFN to have greater visibility in general and strengthen its relationship with its members and district chapters.

Environment

Environmental considerations were given high priority in U3. Several environmentally focused initiatives on small scale irrigation development pilot projects were supported by Uniterra volunteers. These included (1) a Fog Water Collection Pilot Study, (2) a Plastic Pond Rainwater Harvesting Systems, (3) a Water Management and Irrigation Efficiency Study in Bajrabarahi, which was published by the Society of Public Health Engineers Nepal, and (4) the Global Water Partnership that was presented at the International Conference. In addition to the studies, a training guide and a handbook on good water management practices for small farmers were developed for future use.

Uniterra promoted organic agriculture and environment-friendly agricultural practices. With our volunteer support, one of our umbrella partners, NACCFL now holds 'Respect for the Environment" as one of their guiding principles. Volunteers also supported the creation of potential business opportunities in the production and distribution of climate, environment, and health-friendly bio-pesticides with a focus on youth employment.

Plastic pond in Dhading

Governance

Uniterra partners are demonstrating improved governance and more inclusion of women and marginalized groups in the management and advisory roles. , Some partners, such as NYFN developed a five-year strategic plans.

At the beginning of Uniterra 3, most of the partners had no women and marginalized groups representation in their board. Now some like Fair Trade Group (FTG), Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Associaton (HIMAWANTI), CDCAN, Coffee Cooperative Union Ltd. Lalitpur (CCUL) have now their governance structures more inclusive.

Milk pipeline in Shankhu, Lalitpur

U3 and the Trade and Export Promotion Center (TEPC) facilitated NEHHPA to organize a workshop to draw the attention of Nepal government's policymakers and to address the export barriers, quarantine issues for Nepalese Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) to China and India who currently do not accept the Quarantine certificate issued by Nepal Government in terms of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The issue raised in the quarantine workshop has been highly prioritized by both the Department of Plant Resource and the National Plant Quarantine Program. 105 products in the quarantine list of India were proposed, which was 17 in the past. The continuous effort of the partner led to the quarantine offices being established on both sides of the Nepal and China border.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Uniterra has also supported organizations to mainstream gender in their policies and systems. Our volunteers and partner organization Prerana helped other partners in mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). Six events of GESI workshops/ training are organized for NYFN, NACCFL, Lalitpur Dairy Milk Producers Cooperative Union (LDMPCU), and CCUL. Balaju School of Engineering and Technology (BSET) / CTEVT CTEVT schools have introduced the GESI curriculum in short-term training and long term courses. CTEVT Schools have allocated GESI responsive budget. An anti-harassment policy is introduced in the CTEVT schools.

Women's economic empowerment, support has helped partners grow and sustain. Since the start of U3, the number of women entrepreneur

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members of the Federation of Women Entrepreneur's Association Nepal (FWEAN) has increased from 103 to 122. FWEAN is better able to facilitate market access to its members and is now able to organize four events annually at the International Women's Trade Expo with an average of 150 women entrepreneurs exhibiting in each expo. With Uniterra support, in 2019-2020 Women Entrepreneurs Consumer Cooperatives Society Ltd. (WECCSL), which was on the verge of collapse, has emerged as a vibrant organization strengthening its network in the district and province level and heading towards financial sustainability benefitting 61,708 women members.

Uniterra partners were provided with an orientation on "Gender Trouble: Beyond Gender as Binary and Understanding Gender Issues of Our Time From an LGBTIQ+ Perspective." at a sensitization workshop hosted by Blue Diamond Society. As a result of the workshop, Uniterra partners are more aware of the challenges faced by Nepal's LGBTIQ+ community and they became an ally of the Nepalese LGBTIQ+ community.

Enhanced performance of partners

Uniterra partners now have increased knowledge, skills, and capacity to undertake several initiatives. Partners can organize trade fairs, an effective marketing tool. Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Associations (NEHHPA) is now organizing the annual Herbs and Herbal Expo. Uniterra along with other organization contributed technically and financially to organize big national and international events of Fair Trade Group Nepal such as the World Fair Trade Day in which there were1,300 participants (85% women) in 2019, National Symposium on "Fair Trade: A Sustainable Development Model", " Asia Fair Trade Summit" and "Fair Trade Christmas Bazar" etc.

Federation of Women Enterprise Association Nepal (FWEAN) organized various types of fundraising events such as charity movie event, charity dinner, and were able to spread awareness about FWEAN among donors and government. Centre for Microfinance (CMF), was able to organize 4 events of Micro-Finance summits with over 1,000 participants in every two years. Uniterra along with other organization contributed technically and financially to organize such events.

Following the launch of the Kisan Ko Poko (KKP) in 2016 with our volunteers' support, Nepal Agriculture, Cooperative Central Federation Limited (NACCFL) was able to open a third outlet in Kathmandu. KKP is providing direct access to the Kathmandu market to 3,000 farmers (80% women) from 150 cooperatives.

With Uniterra facilitation, CDCAN and Premier Insurance Company signed an MOU. According to the MOU, CDCAN will be responsible for field management, implementation of livestock insurance through its member cooperatives, issuing a policy, collecting and depositing premiums, and claim assessment-related activities and in return, Premier Insurance Company will pay 15% commission on full premium and tag and stationery required for insuring livestock.

To support the Israel returnees in becoming entrepreneurs, Sana Kisan Bikas Bank Limited (SKBBL), Industrial Enterprise Development Institute (IEDI), and Uniterra supported three trainings in 2019-2020 tor 65 participants on entrepreneurship development and Business Plan Preparation. As a result, all the youth has started the agricultural enterprise and are utilizing the knowledge gained in the trainings.

BSET/CTEVT with Uniterra support organized 2 events of the job fair. In the first event, 22 employers and 1,200 youth participated and 30 employers and 1,500 students participated in the second event. Total 200 employment offers were made at the job fair.

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