

**Emergency Architecture
& Human Rights**

Master Class on Climate Change and Poverty Study Case

Organization name: DIB

Project title: Enhancing rural livelihoods in Nepal

Implementation period: 1/2 2018 - 31/1 2021

Country: Nepal

Project Description

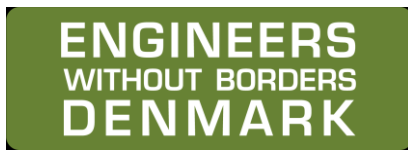
The overall goal of the project is to reduce poverty among poor and marginalised families in rural areas in Nepal by enhancing their capacity and capability to create a more sustainable livelihood and local sustainable development. The intervention is targeting three communities in Nepal, and the primary target group includes 135 households (756 people) consisting of poor and extremely poor people.

The project is inspired by the Eco-Village Development (EVD) concept, which DIB has been implementing with other partners in South Asia. The EVD concept combines several solutions for poverty reduction within sustainable energy, water management, agriculture and housing. The EVD solutions are generally simple, easy to implement, low cost and with low carbon emissions and proven to improve the livelihood of the beneficiaries. Examples of the solutions are biogas for clean cooking, light and organic slurry, rainwater harvesting, solar home systems, solar dryers, improved cook stoves, organic farming and seasonal vegetable gardening.

The target group has been involved in the project from the beginning, and they have reflected on and identified the specific problems in their communities. High priority issues in all communities are access to water and food security. The project will address these issues with simple solutions such as organic farming techniques including use of organic fertilizer and compost, climate-adapted crops and rainwater harvesting methods. Furthermore, it will address environmental issues in the project area such as landslides and deforestation, and in that way make the communities more environmentally friendly and resilient.

Through capacity building activities, trainings, exchange visits and support for implementing different technologies, it will be possible for people to increase food self-sufficiency and their income level. Agriculture steering groups will be established in each community to promote collaboration and create an agricultural forum with democratic decision-making power during the project. Furthermore, the established groups and forums will give the community people a place where they can discuss agricultural-related topics and issues, and work together for improving their livelihood. The project has a strong focus on ownership. By letting the target group invest a small amount of money in the needed solution(s), they will feel a higher sense of ownership and motivation that will contribute to the sustainability of the project and bring lasting improvements for the target group.

Furthermore, the advocacy plan of this project will focus on influencing local, district and national authorities and decision makers, other organisations and networks. The aim is to have greater focus on issues in local communities in Nepal and increase funds for local sustainable development, which will create more possibilities and lasting improvements for the target group. Moreover, the advocacy



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efforts will seek to raise awareness on the EFLG framework in order to support and secure its practical implementation.

Initial problems and background (connection with climate change)

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking as number 144 out of 188 countries on the latest Human Development Index. 15% of the population is living below the income poverty line of 1.90 USD a day (ADB 2016) and 25.2% below the national poverty line (UNDP 2016). The high poverty level in Nepal makes it difficult for many people to meet their basic needs. This is the case in the three project communities of Lewade, Phallapani and Gunjara. Poverty affects people across different castes and gender. Being a high caste Brahmin does not ensure a life out of poverty. The poverty level and daily struggles in the communities overshadows everything and especially the families living in the rural areas are affected.

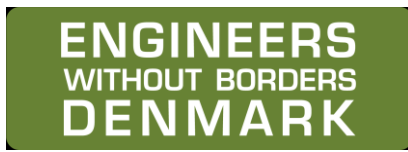
Nepal experiences periodically natural disasters such as snow avalanches, melting snow, heavy rain, hailstorms, thunderstorms, drought, and earthquakes. A returning problem is the high intensity rainfall events during the summer monsoon season causing floods and landslides. Every year human lives, houses, infrastructure and livestock are lost due to floods and landslides with great impact on the local communities and families. Most of the people that are affected by and endure severe hardships from climate change effects are the poorest groups living in rural areas. Furthermore, they have limited information, knowledge and resources to help reduce their level of risk.

The access to water, gas for cooking, electricity and proper waste management is a problem all over Nepal and especially in the rural areas. In the project communities of Lewade, Phallapani and Gunjara access to sufficient and clean water for consumption, for livestock and for agricultural purposes is a huge problem. In Nepal, 81% of the population lives in rural areas (World Bank 2016), where the majority is dependent on subsistence agriculture. The yield from the land is low and often barely enough to sustain the families. In the three communities food sufficiency is very low. 21% of all households produce food to feed themselves for less than 3 months and 57% household cannot cover for more than 6 months. The awareness on modern agricultural technologies and eco-friendly solutions is very low among people in the three communities. Agricultural practices such as crop rotation, soil management, composting and organic manure are not known or used by the local people. The baseline study showed that 60.5% of the households in the communities use chemical pesticides for their crops.

Furthermore all households in the three communities are very dependent on firewood as an energy resource, and 93% of the households are not aware of alternative energy resources e.g. biogas or solar energy. The firewood is mainly used in the kitchen for cooking food, boiling water for their livestock and getting heat as energy source. The baseline survey showed that on a yearly basis a household use about 8.000 - 10.000 kg wood. The usage of firewood for cooking creates lots of smoke in the kitchen, which affects the health of women and children. The people in the communities get firewood from the forests causing deforestation to the area. Furthermore, as a result of the deforestation, the area is affected by landslides and soil erosion.

Goal and objectives of the intervention

The overall and long-term objective of the partnership between DIB and CN is to *reduce poverty among poor and marginalized families in rural areas by enhancing their capacity and capability to create a more sustainable livelihood and local sustainable development.*



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The first objective of the intervention is:

1. By the end of 2020, sustainable organic agriculture has increased household income with at least 30% from sale of vegetables and increased self-sufficiency among the target group in the three local communities of Phallapani and Lewade in Kaski and Gunjara in Tanahun.

The second objective is:

2. By the end of 2020, the enhanced advocacy capacity of CN and the local agents of change have resulted in increasing influence on local, district and national level regarding implementation of the EFLG framework and release of funds for local sustainable development.

The third and last objective is:

3. By the end of 2020 the organizational capacity of CN in the sector of sustainable development has increased.

Potential risks and challenges

- **Political reconstruction:** Nepal is in a phase of political reconstruction, which can create political instability, strikes and conflicts at local and district level. The new government has created a new structural division of governmental responsibilities from central level to local level, which allocates more responsibility and decision power at local level. This can both be a risk and an advantage for the project. There will be new funds available but also a possibility for new priorities and uncertainty on how the reaction to these changes will be.
- **Many actors - many agendas:** Other NGOs might have different focus than this project applied which may create some confusion to the people in the communities. To minimise this, CN will plan frequently networking and sharing meetings with different NGOs and GOs at local and district level. This will also open up for the opportunity of co-funding activities or merging of initiatives with other projects in the project areas.
- **Lack of resources and time:** At local level, there is a risk of the target group not having extra resources, or they might hesitate to participate in the activities being carried out at local level. As described, the target group is representing the poorest people in the communities, thus they are struggling to cover their basic needs. In addition, they may not be used to thinking in possibilities to create a better life for themselves.
- **New collaboration:** The collaboration between CN and DIB is relatively new, and the focus on sustainable livelihood is also a new work area for CN. Thus the organisations are still in the process of getting to know each other, how to communicate and be familiar with their different work habits and expectations. Furthermore CN has to continue to build their capacity and network within the new focus area, while providing training and capacity building to the target group.

Target groups

The primary target group of the project consists of poor and extremely poor people in the communities. The primary target group include 135 households and 756 people in total. Out of the 135 households, there are 57 Dalit households and 27 households are from different ethnic groups. The primary target group include poor Brahmin/Chhetri households as well.

The secondary target group is the rest of the people in the communities i.e. 38 households and 221 people in total. This group of people has to some extent better living conditions than the primary target group.

Partnership

The Danish partner organisation is DIB, former Danish International Human Settlement Service. www.dib.dk

The national partner in Nepal is CHILDREN-Nepal (CN) which is based in Pokhara. <https://www.childrennepal.org.np/>

Strategy and expected results of the intervention

The expected results for objective 1 are:

- 1.1 By July 2018 one organic agriculture steering group is established in each of the three communities of Phallapani, Lewade and Kaski.
- 1.2 By 2020 the three communities of Phallapani, Lewade and Kaski have increased organic agricultural production.
- 1.3 By 2020 deforestation in the project area has been reduced and community people have increased efforts of planting fruit trees in the communities.

The indicators of success are:

- 1) 50% of households from the target group have increased their organic agricultural production by 30%.
- 2) 50% of the households from the target group have increased their income with 20%.
- 3) The amount of firewood consumption in 50% of the target groups' households is on average reduced by 30%.

The expected results for objective 2 are:

- 2.1 CN has increased its advocacy capacity for sustainable development focusing on sustainable agricultural practises in Nepal.
- 2.2 The advocacy capacity of the local agents of change has improved and they can arrange advocacy activities on their own behalf.
- 2.3 Rural Municipality and local government authorities have increased programmes and funds for local sustainable development and the practical implementation of the EFLG framework.

The indicators of success are:

- 1) By 2020 CN has established a network of likeminded NGOs and is actively lobbying in issues concerning access to water, food security and environmental-friendly communities.
- 2) By 2020 the three local communities have through advocacy achieved support from their local level government/ Rural Municipality to improve their access to water.
- 3) By 2020 Rural Municipality and local government authorities have initiated initiatives for local sustainable development and increased funds by 20%.

The expected results for objective 3 are:

- 3.1 CN has increased its knowledge in topics related to sustainable development focusing on organic farming, climate change adaption and environmental issues.

3.2 CN has developed a strategic plan including goals for its organisation to work in the sector of sustainable development.

The indicators of success are:

- 1) After participating in internal trainings CN project staff will conduct/facilitate trainings to the people of the local communities concerning organic farming and local sustainable development.
- 2) The strategic plan and policies are approved and implemented by the CN board. CN staff has implemented policies and is carrying out new strategies. The strategic plan and policies are printed and published on the CN website.

Strategy

The project will facilitate initiatives to improve the local livelihood in the three communities by combining training and local capacity building, funds for installing eco-friendly solutions and sustainable agriculture initiatives and advocacy efforts at local, district and national level. The strategic considerations and methodology applied in this project intervention are as follows:

- A collaborative approach

After consultations with the local CSOs it has been decided that the project will establish agriculture steering groups in the communities to ensure active participation of the target group. Collaboration will be promoted during project activities and the people of the local community will through meetings with the steering groups create a forum for sharing experiences and knowledge on their newly acquired farming techniques, to ensure that food self-sufficiency is given priority in the village, to create a resource pool, to pass on their knowledge to others, and to provide a group that can further explore the possibilities for selling any surplus products on markets in collaboration.

- Capacity building of local communities and CN

The project seeks to increase and enhance the knowledge, skills and capacity of the target group to ensure their ownership, participation and their ability to act upon fulfilling their basic needs and improving their livelihoods. This will be done through trainings, participatory workshops and dialogue meetings with the purpose of raising awareness and knowledge and improve their skill set about different local eco-friendly solutions like improved cook stoves, organic farming, garden practices, rainwater harvesting, solar dryer, etc. There will be provided funds for construction of eco-friendly local solutions to improve the lives of the target group. Furthermore, there will be provided technical support and regular supervision by the experienced field staff. The capacity building activities will be available for the whole community, and since the majority are farmers, the activities will be easy and relevant for them to relate to.

In order to reach the objectives the capacity building of CN will continue.

- Advocacy for local sustainable development and EFLG implementation

The advocacy strategy for the project is to work at three agendas:

- 1) To get the Rural Municipalities of our project areas and the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) to implement the EFLG Framework, and increase their focus on funds for local sustainable development.
- 2) To have the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) who are responsible for the EFLG framework, the Prime Minister Agriculture Modernization Project and the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) to recognize organic farming practises as a viable part of the agriculture sector in Nepal.

3) To equip local agents of change to advocate for local improvements on access to water and for improved rural livelihood opportunities.

Photos

