

**MINISTRY OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
LOCAL GOVERNANCE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(LGCDP)**

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Position:	Local Environment Specialist
Accompanies:	AjitK Jha, District Energy Officer; and Monitoring & Evaluation Officers including Kalpana Bisht, Reshu Bashyal, Kamala Shrestha & Radium Adhikari
Duty Station:	PCU – Kathmandu
Office/Place Visited:	Dhanusa DDC; Janakpur Sub Metropolitan City, Dhanusadham and Kshireswor Municipality; and Baniniya, TheraKachuri and Singhimadan VDCs of Dhanusa DDC
Visit Date:	From 10 to 14 June, 2015

Activities

- 1) Briefed objectives of the visit to Dhanusa District Development Committee (DDC) Officials including Local Development Officer (LDO), Social Development Officer, Account Officers and other staff members on 10th June 2015.
- 2) Took stock on activities performed by Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (Environment Volunteer) and ICT Volunteers in DDC Dhanusa on 10th June
- 3) Observed ongoing pond management activity in the premises of Dhanusa DDC Office and also inspected proposed sites for solar panel installation.
- 4) Carried out field visit to Baniniya, TheraKachuri and Singhimadan VDCs. Observed pond management activities such as cleaning, excavation and plantation in Baniniya. In addition, site for public toilet with biogas construction was observed. Moreover, carried out interaction with VDC Secretary, local political leaders and local community representatives in Baniniya VDC Office premises.
- 5) Attended in ongoing Social Mobilisers Training on Transformation Social Mobilization and Livelihood Improvement in Thera that was organized by DDC Dhanusa.



1. Dhanusa DDC premises, 2. Ongoing pond management in Baniniya VDC and 3. On site inspection of Pond conservation work in Baniniya

- 6) Observed ongoing pond management in TheraKachuri and inspected proposed site for solar panel installation.
- 7) Visited Singhimadan VDC and observed ongoing Sub Health Post compound construction. In addition, observed toilet at the premises of the Sub Health Post. The site for proposed plantation also observed.

8) Interacted with Citizen Awareness Center (CAC) members in Ekarhariya, Khairawa 6, and Mathihani VDC of Mahottarion 12th June 2015

Observations

- As per the approved Project Funding Matrix (PFM), DDC Dhanusa has already issued EFLG Program activities implementation authorities as well as 50% approved budget in advance to five EFLG Implementation Village Development Committees.

- Dhanusa Local Development Officer expressed satisfaction over support of LGCDP mainly work performance of DGE and ICT Volunteers.

- ICT Volunteer has supported Dhanusa DDC with Web based SMS, audio notice board (1618041520142), functionalized letter registration and issuance software, conducted accounting software training in 15 VDCs, managed free Wifi, designed DDC Web Sites, developed Facebook page, maintained social mobilizers' database and established web based reporting system. They were planning to develop digital notice board and communication network very soon. According to LDO, all these activities are supporting DDC to be it more accountable and transparent.

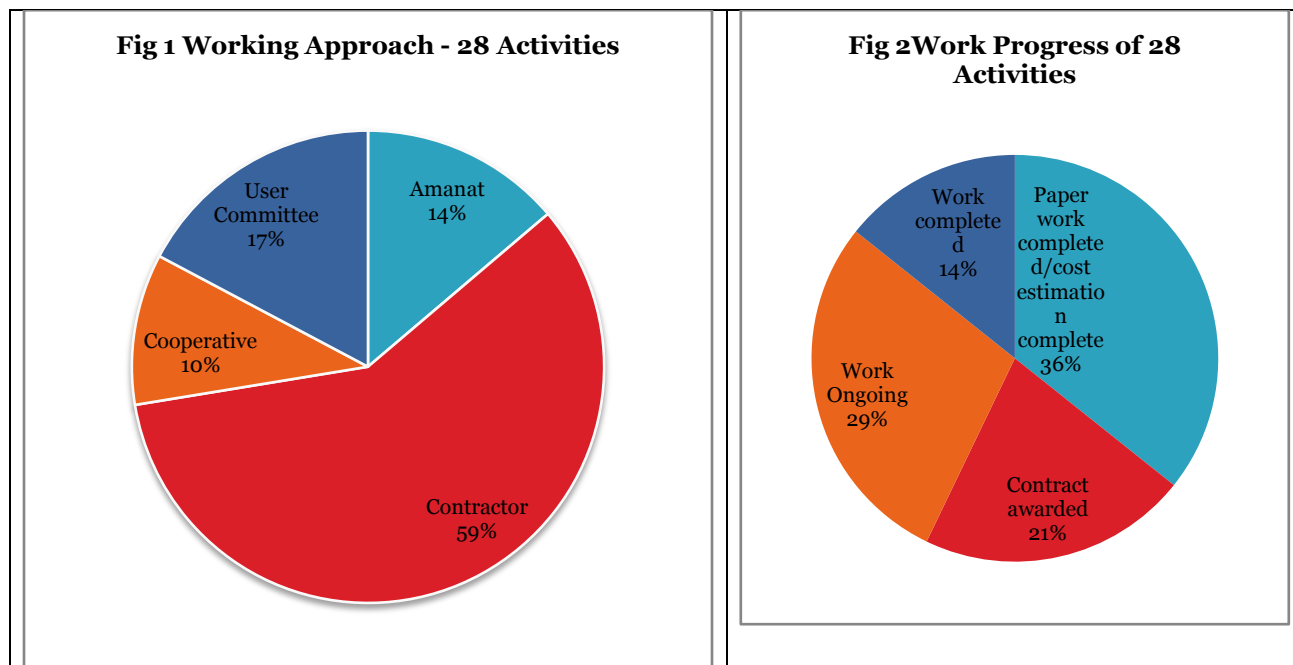
- It was reported that Social Mobiliser in Baniniya VDC was not active. The ongoing pond construction work in Baniniya was found very important for reclaiming its area from encroachment, maintaining water reservoir and enhancing landscape beautification etc. All the participants during on-site interaction meeting in Baniniya expressed commitment for extending their support to make the program a model in Dhanusa District. The VDC was preparing to be declared as ODF by 15th July 2015.

- Dhanusadham Municipality was undertaking pond management, public toilet construction, park management and bathing steps maintenance from EFLG support.

- On the whole, I managed to take stock in implementation status of a total of 28 activities during the four days visit. Of the total, about 60% and 17% activities were already contracted out to individual contractor and user committees respectively (Fig 1). Similarly, 64% of the total activities were already contracted out while others were under agreement signing process. It implies that in the ensuing year, the program should give priority on user committee to individual contractor while implementing field activities to ensure sustainability of the programs. Likewise, local



1. Interaction with CAC members, 2. On site observation of pond conservation in Dhanusa Dham Municipality, 3. Construction of bathing steps in God Dhui pond in Janakpur Municipality, 4. Retention wall in a pond of Dhanusadham Municipality



bodies should put extra efforts to accomplish the entire activities within the fiscal year 2071/72.

- I interacted with Ekarhariya CAC members in Khairawa 6, and Mathihani VDC ward no 1 of Mahottari to understand their level of empowerment and interest on participation in possible exchange visit in Mid Hills of Nepal, they put forth various ideas that are presented in Box 1.

Box 1 Interact with CAC Members

While asking opinion, regarding their interest to participate in possible exchange visit to Mid Hill of Nepal, Citizen Awareness Center members in Ekarhariya, Khairawa 6, Mahottari had shown strong desire to learn mountain culture and languages. They were expecting that the visit would help uncovering sari from their face, the age old culture. Similar, views were expressed by CAC members of Mathihani VDC ward no 1 of Mahottari.

There are 28 women member in Ekarhariya, Khairawa CAC of which 57% are from Mahara Family and the rest of them are from Paswan family. The CAC was established three years back and are struggling for easy accessing of drinking water and space for no-open-defecation. They undertake regular meeting at 11 AM of every week in the community building that was constructed by Livelihood Improvement Program of UNDP. They have already received 30,000 and 100,000 from Mahottari District Development Committee and being invested in loan and purchasing buffalos, goats, and cows.

After becoming CAC members they have started children birth registration at VDC Office, received citizenship certificate, abled to read and write, analyzed income and expenditure, put voice in VDC Council to access women focused budget and abled to give their introduction in front of other people.

They had heard that they would be receiving Rs. 3,15,000 for small infrastructure project from DDC under LGCDP Programme soon. As per the policies, they have to undertake a collective income generation activities from the budget. "We have interest to construct toilets but we are devoid of adequate water pump" said Satiya Devi Mahara, Coordinator of the CAC. "How to construct toilets by poor people, like us" said Kumari Devi Paswan, a member of the CAC. There are only four water pump for the entire 30 household. Support for constructing water pump would be a great help to them instead of supporting them with vegetable farming in private leased land.

Instead of extending support of small infrastructure project following blanket approach, it could be better to support CAC with their immediate need. For instance, supporting CAC members with constructing water pump could help a lot in early adopting open defecation practices as well as undertaking other diverse activities like vegetable farming and improving sanitation.

- While interacting with few Social Mobilisers of Dhanusain Thera, I asked individual Social Mobiliser to write a single most important achievement that make them proud of being Social Mobilisers in their respective site. In this regard, a total of 37 responses were collected (Table 1). As shown in the table 1, 35% of the total activities that had made them proud were related to infrastructure development such as road maintenance, construction of community buildings and management of school compound, among others. Another 30% activities were women and children empowerment. The other 35% activities include help communities practicing good governance and easy accessing goods and services from local bodies.

Table 1 Success cases as perceived by Social Mobilisers

Activity	Frequency of Response	Proportion of Frequency
<i>Infrastructure: 1) CAC members got access of small infrastructure projects, 2) Reclaimed land for road expansion, 3) Constructed compound wall of VDC office premises, 4) Constructed separate home for running REFLECT Classes, 5) Constructed 1800 meter Irrigation canal, 6) Constructed 2 km road, 7) Constructed community building for CAC members, 8) Electrification in various wards, 9) Maintained 40 feet right of way of a road and prepared the land suitable for plantation, 10) Managed bench and desk in Madarsha, 11) Renovated a well in Dalit Settlement, 12) Road graveled and 13) Convinced to construct toilet in coordinator of a CAC</i>	13	35
<i>Children: 1) Child budget for child group, 2) Children participation in planning process, 3) Schooling of children, 4) effective balbhela and 5) timely vaccination to children</i>	5	14
<i>Participation: 1) Inclusive user committee, 2) Increasing attendance of UG in UC, 3) Women from Dom family are now discussed by staying with other members of CAC, 4) Women group accessing development projects from VDC & 5) Women participation in VDC Council</i>	5	14
<i>ODF: 1) Declared ODF, and 2) effective ODF campaign</i>	4	11
<i>Birth Registration: Effective birth registration campaigns</i>	2	5
<i>Program access: Sewing and Knitting training program demanded through WCF got approval from VDC Council and got implemented & Ward level plan selected and implemented</i>	2	5
<i>Disabled focused program: Provided ID cards to disabled people after collecting their names</i>	1	3
<i>Income: Increased fund of CAC from 100000 to 110000 and continued investment</i>	1	3
<i>Livelihood: Livelihood improvement due to goat farming</i>	1	3
<i>Grants: Received additional grants due to VDC Council in VDC Office, inclusive and participatory</i>	1	3
<i>Social Security: Distribution of social security allowance</i>	1	3
<i>Transparency: Formed UC transparently</i>	1	3
Total	37	100

Issues

- There is a room for further strengthening of coordination among DDC/Municipality, LGCDP and EFLGP staff members. EFLG Monitoring and Evaluation Officers are yet to practice providing a copy of progress report to their respective D/UGEs. Local bodies are yet to own M&E Officers.
- Project design and cost estimation has been done without considering environment and found more technical. In addition, as cost estimation is written in English, it is quite difficult to understand by ordinary people. Most of the activities in the field are yet to make public. Meaningful participation of CAC and WCF members in EFLG program designing and implementation were yet to be witnessed. Community were found reluctant to contribute whole heartedly to EFLG activities. Very minimal coordination and partnership was noticed between

line agencies and local bodies while implementing programs specially plantation and pond conservation.

- About 36% works were yet to be contracted and there is a fear that all the planned activities would be completed in time. As most of the activities were being implemented through private contractors, it could be a hindrance for forging ownership of local communities.
- Most of the accomplished activities were infrastructure projects with minimum consideration of environment such as toilet construction, retention wall maintenance etc.
- While asking Social Mobilisers at Thera on most pertinent issues that were facing, the overwhelming responses (76%) were on lack of cooperation from political parties in social mobilization and community development. Another 18% issues were related to inclusion of voice of disabled and women group in decision making process (Table 2). The other six percent response was demand of dalit communities for constructing their toilets.

Table 2: Perception of Social Mobilisers on various development issues at their working areas

<i>Perceived Issues</i>	Frequency of Response	Proportion of Response
<i>Lack of support from political party</i>	13	76
<i>Toilet construction in Dalit settlement</i>	1	6
<i>Transportation management to disabled people while collecting ID cards</i>	1	6
<i>Voice of backward women not heard</i>	1	6
<i>Demand grant for constructing toilets</i>	1	6
<i>Total</i>	17	100

Recommendations

- Organize regular interaction programs among DDC/Municipality, LGCDP and EFLGP staff members to strengthen coordination among them. DDC and Municipalities in Dhanusa should mobilize M&E Officers together with concern DDC and Municipality staff into monitoring, follow up and reporting of EFLG implemented activities. M&E Officers are required to make available a copy of every progress report to their respective D/UGEs
- A mandatory provision should be made local bodies to prepare cost estimation in Nepali and including environment and climate change adaptation criteria in infrastructure design. To make the program more transparent and accountable, it is necessary to erect onsite project board, engage CAC, WCF and Social Mobilisers in the entire project management cycle, carry out public audit of each and every activities, and make effective Environment Friendly Local Governance Coordination Committees EFLGCC. Also, engage EFLGCC in monitoring, reviewing and planning of the EFLGP activities.
- Local bodies are required to put extra efforts to ensure timely completion of planned activities. Contract priority should be given to user committees instead of private companies. M&E Officers as well as Engineers should include environmental and climate change adaptation criteria into infrastructure development projects.
- Political party should be made more accountable to beneficiary communities by organizing orientation programs to them. Also, it is equally important to further empower local communities especially poor, women and disabled for accessing environment friendly local development activities from concern authorities.
- Citizen Awareness Center members in Terai are to be encouraged to participate in exchange visit in Midhill communities of Nepal. Moreover, while selecting CAC focused small infrastructure development projects it is wise to collect possible priority activities from them instead of prescribing list of activities from center.
- Social mobiliser in Baniniya VDC should be made more active and accountable to user committees.

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Reported by: Ek Raj Sigdel

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Date: