

Report

Workshop with Ward and Municipal Representatives on Making Local Government Level Development Plans and Budget Climate and Gender Smart



3 - 4 June 2019

Dhulikhel Mountain Resort

Dhulikhel, Kavre, Nepal



Objective:

The main objective of the workshop was to make the participants aware about the impacts of climate change in Nepal, Nepal's global commitments regarding climate change and gender, and remind them of environment related provisions in the constitution and the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA). This workshop was also an attempt to engage the participants in discussion on ideas to make municipal level plans and budget climate and gender friendly.

Participants:

A total of 18 representatives from five Municipalities in Province 3 participated in the workshop. They included Mayor from Nagarjun Municipality, Kathmandu, Deputy Mayors from Bhimeshwor Municipality, Dolakha, Manthali Municipality, Ramechhap and Kageshwari-Monahara Municipality, Kathmandu, and other elected members. Some of the participants also represented the Municipality Planning and Budgeting Committees. Name list of the participants is given in Annex I.

Day 1

Sessions:

Opening Session

Pradeep Bhattarai, Programme Officer, Prakriti Resources Centre (PRC), who led the opening session, reminded the participants that the Constitution of Nepal, 2072 has devolved crucial authorities related to environment conservation and climate change to Local Government (LG). Currently, LGs are in the process of preparing their annual plans and budget for fiscal year 2076/77. Underscoring the timing of the workshop, Pradeep pointed out that as consultations are under way at Ward level for collecting public input based on local needs and aspirations for inclusion in Municipality plans and budgets the workshop becomes all the more important to discuss how the LG plans and budget can be made climate and gender smart, and why it is crucial. He then shared the objectives of the workshop and also facilitated introduction of the participants.

Welcome Speech

In his welcome speech, PRC Chairperson Sri Krishna Basnet briefed the participants about PRC's objectives and its work in the area of environment conservation and climate change in Nepal. He requested the elected representatives' active participation in discussions and expressed the hope that the workshop would help them take informed decision on

inclusion of climate change and environment conservation, especially from gender perspective, in LG plan and budget.

A Quick Project Brief



Prabin Man Singh, Programme Director of PRC briefed the participants about the BothENDS- supported project "**Increasing Women's Influence in Local Governance for Gender and Climate Smart Plans and Programmes**", as the workshop was one of the activities under the project. He shared the objectives, activities, target groups and budget of the project. He also solicited the elected representatives' support and cooperation with the women's groups involved in the project to organize the project activities more effectively in coordination with their respective Municipalities.

During the question-answer session following Prabin's presentation, **Bhuvan Giri from Nagarjun Municipality** described the workshop as very timely as many of the Municipalities were in the process of formulating their plans and budget for next fiscal year and also appreciated PRC's effort to organize the workshop. **Kamala Basnet, Deputy Mayor of Bhimeshwor Municipality** asked for some details about the project area and target groups. In his response, Prabin said that the project will be implemented at Federal and Municipal levels directly engaging one women's group each in five Municipalities in Province 3. They include Nagarjun, Kageshwari Monahara, Manthlai and Bhimeshwor Municipalities, and Bhethanchok Rural Municipality. Similarly, he added, other CSOs working in environment and gender will also benefit from this project, which underlines effective coordination and collaboration with LGs in its Municipal level activities. The elected representatives pledged their support for PRC and the women's groups and expressed their willingness to get engaged in the project activities.

Prabin's presentation was followed by technical sessions. During informal chats, participants expressed their interest to discuss and learn about climate change, environment conservation and gender equality with reference to the country's commitment to Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs). They were also interested to know more about SDG. Therefore, the workshop was slightly modified accordingly.

Session 1: Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development Goals



Bed Prasad Sapkota, resource person for technical sessions, initiated the session by engaging the participants in discussion on the impact of climate change in their respective Municipalities. Most of the participants talked about water resources depletion, increasing water induced disasters, drought, increasing pests and diseases in agriculture. Some of them admitted that with their limited knowledge and little financial resources at their disposal, addressing climate change and its impacts is very challenging for them. Following the discussion, Bed familiarized the participants with the genesis of SDGs referring to the World Commission on Environment and Development- 1983, the report on Our Common Future- 1987 and Rio Summit 1992. In his presentation, he included UNFCCC, international negotiations on climate change and current trend of environmental conservation at International level. While defining sustainable development, he talked about the trend of development at Municipal level. He also stressed the importance of considering environment in local level plans and budget by elected representatives. Considering environment in development activities does not only ensure sustainability but also helps meet the needs of the present without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Bhuwan Giri from Nagarjun Municipality said, "There is no doubt about the importance of the principles of SDGs and sustainability but implementation is very difficult in practice. Sometimes we have to work based on the local problem and conditions, which makes us difficult to ensure sustainability."

Session 2: Environment and Gender in SDG and Characteristics of SDGs

The resource person explained to the participants the main characteristics of SDGs and especially, drew their attention to SDGs 5, 6, 7, 13 and 15, and their targets.

He also told the participants that in September 2015, governments agreed on the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", with a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators. The 2030 Agenda is based on the concept of global partnership, comprehensive approach to the mobilization of all means of implementation. In his presentation he covered:

Goal 5: Gender Equality

Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Goal 13: Climate Actions

Goal 15: Life on Land

He concluded the session by highlighting the importance and benefits of including these goals in the municipal level planning and budgeting. He also encouraged the elected representatives by stating that if these goals are reflected in the Municipal plans and budget, the municipalities would be widely recognized for their contribution to meeting the SDGs and thereby fulfilling the country's global commitment.

Session 3: Climate Change, its Impacts, and National and International Initiatives

Prabin Man Singh, Programme Director, from PRC familiarized the participants with basics of climate change, its impact in Nepal and national and international initiatives to address impacts of climate change. Using examples and illustrations, he highlighted some of the proven impacts in Nepal including glacial lake outburst flood, increase in climate induced disasters, lower crop yield, loss of diversity, possibility of energy crisis and effects on human health. He also talked about the adaptation and mitigation measures taken in Nepal and referred to such examples as lowering of water level by 3m of Imja glacial lake by the government as a part of adaptation. He also talked the participants through international initiatives on climate change referring to UNFCCC and its objectives, COP meetings and Paris Agreement.

Maya Kumari Karki, Deputy Mayor of Manthali Municipality shared her experience of living in fear because of flood during the monsoon season. Manthali Municipality also lies

on the lower part of the Tsho Rolpa glacial lake, which is one of the most vulnerable and dangerous glacial lakes of Nepal. Manthali Municipality is also experiencing severe drought because of which people are reeling under shortage of drinking water in the municipality.

Concluding the session, he asked all the participants to share some adaptation measures they are taking in their communities. Using meta cards, the participants came up with a list of adaptation measures they have been taking: drip irrigation, rain water harvesting, construction of embankment along the rivers, promoting organic farming and the like. The representatives of Kageshwori-Manohara Municipality shared that the Municipality is mainly implementing adaptation practices in relation to DRR and alternative occupation. Kiran Oli from Bhimeshwar Municipality informed the participants that her municipality is preparing to introduce seeds insurance policy in the municipality. At the end of the discussion, Bhuwan Giri, Nagarjun Municipality spoke of the need to interact with Provincial Government and widely replicate best practices existing in different Municipalities.

Session 4: Localizing Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Actions

This session highlighted the steps of localizing or contextualizing SDGs and climate change actions in Nepal with a focus on SDG 13. The steps include: awareness raising and development of common understanding, advocacy, policy formulation and establishment of mechanisms, integration of SDGs in local context and plan, development of planning and monitoring framework and review of learning and monitoring.

Day 2:

Day 2 started with a review of the previous day's sessions. Participants reflected on the learning and discussion of the first day.

Session 5: National Initiatives on Climate Change and SDGs in Nepal

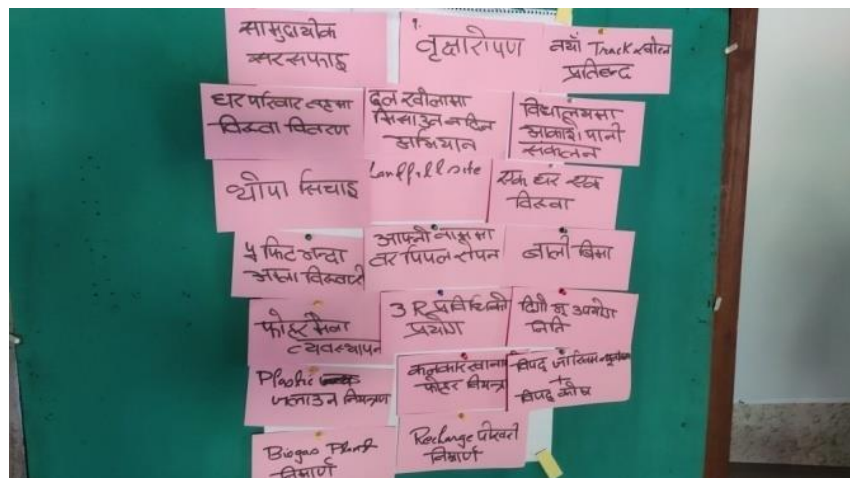
This session focused on the government initiatives to take climate change actions and achieve SDGs in Nepal. Various Municipal representatives spoke about the actions taken by LGs. At the Federal level, the government is in the process of revising the climate change policy and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to align them with the changed context (federal structure of government). With the aim of protecting the people from adverse effects of climate change and to mitigate the impacts, the government has implemented some plans and projects such as National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPA), Environment Friendly Local Governance (EFLG), Nepal Climate Change Support Programme (NCCSP) etc. The Federal Government has also developed '**Plans Formulation Guidelines**' for LGs to independently formulate

and implement development plans at Municipal level. The government has also formed different committees such as Climate Change Council, Multi-stakeholder Climate Change Initiatives Coordination Committee, SDGs Implementation and Coordination Committee and sector wise committees for effective implementation of the plans and programmes related to environment, climate change and SDGs. For effective dissemination of information related to SDGs, the National Planning Commission has developed an Online Portal.

Taking part in the discussion thereafter, **Bhuwan Giri, Nagarjun Municipality** said that as LGs are making their own laws, policies and programmes as mandated by the Federal constitution the way they are implementing plans and programmes vary from Municipality to Municipality. LGs have multiple plans and policies guided by multiple laws but they are yet to learn about what climate change actions are appropriate for them and how to complement the effort to meet SDGs. He also requested PRC to support the Municipalities to measure the outcomes of projects.

Ms Kamala Basnet, Deputy Mayor of Bhimeshwar Municipality said many of the programmes at community level are implemented through user groups, which usually lack in knowledge and information on SDGs and climate change; hence quality of work is always questionable. It is, therefore, very important to orient them to the importance of considering environment and climate change in the development work they carry out.

Bhimeshwar Municipality is trying to orient user groups to the Municipality rules and laws while implementing development work, she said, adding many of the constitutionally mandated authorities of LGs have not been exercised due to a lack of adequate experience, knowledge and resources.



Discussing programmes and activities related to environment conservation conducted at the Municipal level, each of the municipal representatives shared their activities. They included, among other things, tree plantation, sanitation programme, promoting solar energy in the Municipality, solid waste management, waste segregation, controlled use of single used plastic, supporting community for bio gas plant construction, construction of plastic ponds, crop insurance, sustainable land management, sewage management,

promotion of rain water harvesting, disaster management plans, disaster management fund, landfill sites etc.

Session 6: Panel Discussion by elected municipal authorities



At the end of the two-day workshop, a panel discussion was organized with the involvement of representatives from four municipalities. The panelists included: Kamala Basnet, Deputy Mayor, Bhimeshwor Municipality, Bindu Pudasaini, Deputy Mayor, Kageshwor-Monahara Municipality, Maya Kumari Karki, Deputy Mayor, Manthali Municipality and Bhuwan Giri, Head of Social Development Section, Nagarjun Municipality. Each of the panelists shared the current activities carried out by their respective Municipalities and their plan to integrate gender and environment in Municipal plans and budget.

Bhuwan Giri, Head of Social Development Section, Nagarjun Municipality said, the Municipality has set up a '**Disaster Relief Fund**' and a '**Women's Coordination Committee**' and at the same time, it is supporting community for drip irrigation, rain water harvesting, and construction of ponds for rain water collection. The Municipality is also promoting greenery and conducting awareness programme and plantation programme. He said he will try to include climate change and gender issues more strongly in the next annual plan and budget.

Ms. Kamala Basnet, Deputy Mayor of Bhimeshwor Municipality described the workshop as timely and very fruitful and informed the participants that Bhimeshwor Municipality is collecting input from all nine wards for plans and projects for next fiscal year, which will be followed by prioritization process in a few days. Last year, she said, the Municipality organized various awareness programmes for Municipal representatives and local people, and also organized different activities related to forest and environment conservation. Reflecting on the programmes organised last year, she said "the Municipality has realized that these programmes are not enough to address climate change and

environmental problems we are facing in the Municipality. So, this year we will allocate more budget under Environment and DRR head.” She also spoke about her plan to coordinate with different organizations that are working in environment and climate change in the Municipality for effective implementation and sustainability of the programmes to be launched together with them. “We will discuss plans to incorporate gender and climate change considerations in our plans and budget, she added. Describing solid waste management as one of the very serious issues in the Municipality, she said the Municipality is considering public-private partnership (PPP) model to address the problem, and while doing so the Municipality will prioritise women’s groups as important actors. She further said that the Municipality has already taken steps to ban plastic bags on the Municipality premises, promote organic vegetable production, conserve water sources, empower women and control soil erosion. As part of REDD piloting project, 59 community forest user groups in Dolakha district have started calculating carbon for carbon trade with the Municipality’s technical support. As the Municipality itself cannot run all the programmes related to environment and DRR, it is looking forward to collaborating with CSOs working in these sectors.

Ms. Maya Kumari Karki, Deputy Mayor of Manthlai Municipality spoke about a lot of environmental problems -- drought, landslide, flood etc that Manthali Municipality is facing. In order to address these problems the Municipality has initiated capacity building of women, formed a coordination committee on DRR, organized tree plantation and school awareness programmes, constructed dumping sites for solid waste management etc. Manthali Municipality is experiencing massive flooding during rainy session and drought in dry season, she said.

Ms. Bindu Pudasaini, Deputy Mayor of Kageshwori Monahara Municipality described solid waste management, degradation of natural resources because of land plotting, pollution, deforestation and depletion of water resources as major challenges in the Municipality. On the one hand the Municipality has the Bagmati River, which despite its role in the evolution of the Kathmandu valley civilization, has currently turned into an open sewer due to growing dense and unplanned urbanization, while on the other it also has the Shivapuri National Park, she stated. In such a situation, she added, despite the Municipality’s priority to environmental issues in its plan and budget it is faced with a huge challenge to maintain clean environment. Lack of awareness among local people is also adding to the challenge, she said and expressed her commitment to include environment, climate change, gender and DRR issues in the Municipality’s upcoming annual plan and budget.

Conclusion

The panel discussion was the last session of the two-day workshop. The workshop concluded with a highly positive note with the elected representatives describing the event as a useful platform for them to share their experience, learn what other Municipalities are doing and become familiar with climate change and gender issues including SDG and why their incorporation in Municipality plans and budget is crucial. They also pledged to incorporate climate and gender considerations in their upcoming annual plans and budgets.

Annex I: List of Participants

S.N	Name	Municipality	Designation
1	Bindu Pudasaini	Kageshwori Monahara	Deputy Mayor
2	Sabina Shrestha	Kageshwori Monahara	Head, Women Section
3	Laxmi Koirala	Kageshwori Monahara	Health Coordinator
4	Jamuna Shrestha	Bhimeshwor	Municipality Member
5	Kamala Basnet	Bhimeshwor	Deputy Mayor
6	Kiran Oli	Bhimeshwor	Ward Member,
7	Sushila Thapa	Bhimeshwor	Ward Member
8	Karna Tamang	Bhethanchowk	Ward member, 04
9	Janak Khatri	Manthali	Ward Chairperson, 02
10	Maya Kumari Karki	Manthali	Deputy Mayor
11	Mamita Shrestha	Manthali	Ward member, 04
12	Mohan Bd. Basnet	Nagarjun	Mayor
13	Krishna Pd. Sapkota	Nagarjun	Chief Administrative Officer
14	Kapil Prasad Paudyal	Nagarjun	Accountant Officer
15	Naryan Pd. Timelsina	Nagarjun	Head, Administrative and Planning Sub Committee
16	Mahesh Rimal	Nagarjun	Ward Chairperson, 05

17	Bhuwan Giri	Nagarjun	Social Development Section
Resource Persons and Organisers			
18	Srikrishna Basnet	PRC	Chairperson
19	Binay Dhital	PRC	Advisor
20	Pradeep Bhattarai	PRC	Programme Officer
21	Sunaina Shrestha	PRC	Treasure
22	Prabin man Singh	PRC	Programme Director
23	Bed Prasad Sapkota	Facilitator	