

Annex G: Case stories

Annex G.1 Abolishing bonded labour

Summary

In 1991, Danida started supporting the NGO 'BASE', which organised the indigenous Tharus people to resist a slavery-like system of bonded labour called *kamaiya*. Within ten years, BASE's effective campaign had caused the legal abolition of all bonded labour in Nepal, and it now has 300,000 members who continue to promote local enterprises, empowerment and access to government services.

Why it was needed

In the 1950s and 1960s the indigenous Tharus people of the Western Terai in Nepal slowly began to lose their land to settlers who became their landlords. Gradually, they had to sell their bonded labour to these new landlords. At the time, they were illiterate and living under difficult conditions. Those who were literate had power over them. In 1991, after democracy was introduced, BASE obtained its legal personality as a grassroots organisation. The founding president understood that in many parts of Nepal socio-economic conditions were unacceptable, that the suicide rate was very high and violence prevailed, in particular among young people. In his opinion, illiteracy was the main cause for this situation.

What was done

The original connection to the Danish Embassy was made by a Danish citizen living in Western Nepal, Inge Saghild. The Danish Embassy realised there was a real need to support literacy for marginalised groups and initiated support in 1991. Over the next decade, BASE was to receive support through the Embassy's Local Grant Authority, as well as directly from Copenhagen and the DanidaHUGOU programme. Later, the organisation was supported by several NGOs, including Danish MSActionAid.

During the 1990s, Danida supported a number of organisations working in the area of community development, among which the one with the largest membership in Nepal was BASE, which carried out a number of programmes intended to empower bonded labourers and villages in six districts in the south of Nepal. Some related to human rights issues, while others had to do more with general education, health and poverty alleviation. MSActionAid also partnered with Danida and supplemented its work.

In financial terms, Danida spent almost DKK 13 million over almost 11 years in support of BASE's work on formal and non-formal education, as well as in strengthening the organisation. This support ended in 2001. One of the first important actions was to conduct a survey of the number of persons involved in the *Kamaiya* system. A BASE survey had found some 37,000 families of bonded labourers, and was using this information in its first advocacy efforts, aimed at raising awareness of the scale of the problem. The figure was not accepted by government, which carried out its own survey to find 29,000 families with bonded persons, thus confirming the importance of the issue.

It was decided that support to non-formal education was key to empowering bonded labourers, a strategy to which the beneficiaries responded with enthusiasm. As Ove Fritz Larsen recalls, "after a hard day's work we could see the lights at night where the women would be receiving lessons, learning to read and write." The project also included a support programme to help the bonded labourers buy back their land, in which each participant was encouraged to save rice, with the amount saved being doubled by the Danida project.

What was achieved

Impact. The rice-saving and land buy-back scheme was a step in the right direction, but as the director of BASE, Churna Bahadur Chaudhari, explained: "The process was very slow. We realized it would take 25 years to be free if we only used this manner. By 1999, BASE considered it necessary to promote a peaceful movement. We formed a *Kamaiya* network. In 2000, 19 persons carried out a sit-down strike at the district office. Then others joined in, sympathising with them." It all ended in Kathmandu when more than 1,000

Tharus demonstrated before Parliament in favour of emancipation. A few days later, in July 2000, the Government of Nepal announced the banning of the Kamaiya system, the freeing of all Kamaiyas, and the cancellation of their debts. While the abolition of bonded labour may have been the most important result of the intervention, additional achievements which can be traced to collaboration with Danida include:

- 250 Kamaiya families received rehabilitation support;
- 135 received technical education courses, and all have been involved in government jobs;
- 220 received lead farmer agriculture training in the community, to extend their skills and knowledge;
- 66,000 adults learned how to read and write;
- 735 women's groups (with 27,600 members) were formed and mobilised in saving and credit practices;
- 1,200 women received informal education and enrolled in government schools after completion of Non Formal Education (NFE);
- 245 youths received scholarship support for higher education (intermediate and bachelor degrees);
- 51 cooperatives were registered, at which women groups raised funds with the support of the project;
- 4,800 girls received educational scholarships and passed School Learning Certificate; and
- 3,700 out-of-school children received nine-month courses and enrolled at government schools afterwards.

Lessons learned. Danida support enabled BASE to create an organisational structure which was then used to connect with other allies. Empowerment and adult literacy led to mobilisation and considerable impact and change. It was important to carry out a flexible, comprehensive project, which allowed the partner to test different methods by which to achieve change and empowerment. Long-term support allowed the partner the time needed to develop sustainability.

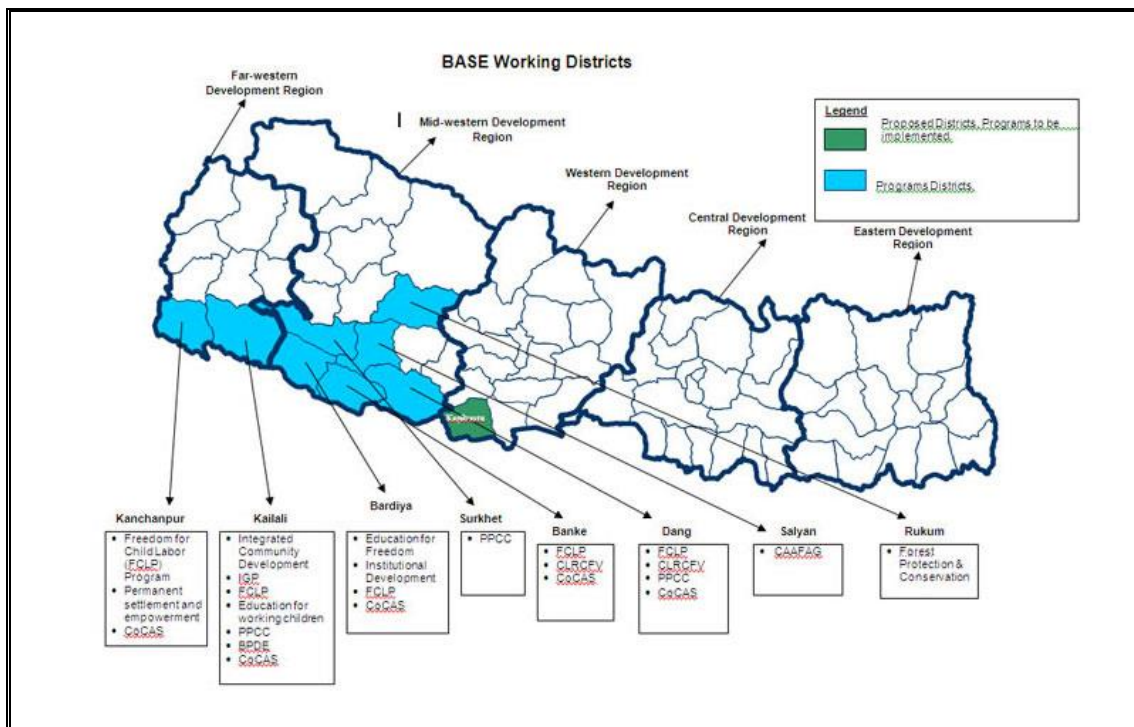
Sustainability. Strengthened by Danida, BASE diversified its sources of funding and has worked with twelve different donors and institutions, including USAID, the Asia Foundation, UNESCO and the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre. The historical Kamaiya movement initiated by BASE resulted in freedom for 32,509 bonded labourers, of whom 27,570 received land and other entitlements from the Nepal government (although another 1,480 remain in rehabilitation), as well as the other achievements listed above. Today, BASE has about 300,000 members and is engaged in rural community solar and drinking water projects, access to drinking water, and agricultural initiatives. Many BASE members are active in local governance, including Ward Citizen Forums and women's groups.

Notes and sources

- Danida Evaluation: Support to Human Rights and Democratisation in Nepal, 1999.
- Interview with Churna Chaudhary, Executive Director, BASE, May 19, 2017.
- Interview with Ove Fritz Larsen, ex-deputy at the Royal Danish Embassy March 27, 2017.
- Interview with Tim Whyte, ex-development worker for MSAActionAid in BASE April 3, 2017.
- Fact sheet BASE, May 2017 (provided by BASE).

Kamaiya: Slavery and Freedom in Nepal by Peter Lowe (2001, Mandala Book Point, Kathmandu).

Extract from the book *Kamaiya: Slavery and Freedom in Nepal* by Peter Lowe (2001): "Many of the bonded laborers have spent their entire lives in the fields and kitchens of large landlords. Now they have reached Kathmandu and see for the first time the capital of their country. Mothi Chaudhary, the wife of a bonded laborer, carries the banner Free Kamaiyas now at the head of the rally that winds its way through the city to the parliament's gates. The rally is the culmination of months of sit-ins and demonstration in the district capitals of the distant western plains. Eventually, after days of demonstrations, the government gives in. On July 17, 2000, the Nepali Government declares Mothi's husband along with all other bonded laborers in the Kingdom free from their debts. It is an historic achievement. Celebrating their freedom, Mothi and the other protesters dance and sing in Kathmandu. When she gets back to her family, however, she is confronted with the reality of her old life. The landlord swears at her and threatens to send her to jail, Mothi discovers that though she and her husband are free, they have no property and nowhere to go."



Annex G.2 Reducing caste discrimination and prejudice

Summary

In some areas, the so-called 'low-caste' people known as Dalits are at a serious disadvantage in life despite legal protection. To change this, Danida has long helped the Dalit NGO Federation to encourage Dalits to be more assertive in protecting their rights as full citizens. Success is shown in court cases, media coverage, and effective policy changes on affirmative action in education, a monitoring role for the National Dalit Commission, and targeted support through the National Planning Commission.

Why was it needed

Untouchability and other forms of caste discrimination were legally abolished in Nepal in 1963, but the caste system continues to be an important feature of identity and social relationships, and continues to influence life chances. Despite constitutional and legal efforts, there are still frequent cases of prejudice and discrimination against Dalits in all areas of Nepal, often taking the form of exclusion from temples, from public drinking water systems, and from employment and educational opportunities. Almost half of Nepal's Dalits live below the poverty line, and many are landless. Their life expectancy is lower than the national average, and so is their literacy rate. They also continue to be under-represented politically. The 2011 census found that Dalits numbered about 3.6 million (13% of the population), but some observers believe that the correct figure is close to five million. A lack of representation of the poor is a threat to democratic, peaceful and just development, and discrimination against Dalits violates their human rights.

What was done

Danida dedicated specific support to the Dalits from the first phase of its Human Rights and Good Governance (HRGG) Programme. The aims have varied slightly, but the second phase's formulation captures the essence of its purpose by stating it to be: "the human rights of Dalits in Nepal are respected and Dalits have equal opportunities to participate in the political, social and economic life". Since 1998, support from the HRGG Programme has included the following actions:

- strategic planning and strengthening management capacity for national Dalit organisations, including

fundraising activities;

- promotion of good governance and democratic principles within the national organisations;
- training, workshops, and exposure visits on gender, human and legal rights and how to carry out advocacy;
- strengthening of local member organisations/chapters of national/umbrella organisations to enable them to engage in empowerment and advocacy activities towards local authorities;
- policy advocacy and networking, where Danida has supported participation of Dalit organisations in different forums at district and national level;
- legal awareness raising and provision of legal aid; and
- assistance with claiming various livelihood resources and services at local level.

At the national level, actions focused on removing barriers to Dalit progress among Nepal's formal arrangements (e.g. the Constitution, laws, regulations, policies, and programmes) and informal ones (e.g. caste, gender, and traditional and local institutions). Danida developed long-term relationships with many Dalit organisations, and Dalit rights were also promoted in other Danida activities (e.g. on media, access to justice programmes, and support to local governance and community development). Outside Nepal, Danida supported the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), which is based in Copenhagen. All this made it possible to create synergy between national and international activities.

What was achieved

Impact. Dalit organisations proliferated during the intervention, with the membership of the Dalit NGO Federation increasing from around 24 organisations to over 100. Many of these work to build awareness on the legal rights and equality of opportunity for Dalit women and men. As a result, Dalits today are more aware of their rights, more assertive, and their issues are more likely to be covered by local and regional media. They also have better access to legal recourse, with cases of discrimination filed and some of them decided in favour of Dalits. Advocacy activities by Dalit organisations have contributed to changes in government policy. Dalit leaders have participated in international activities, where the UN has paid more attention to Dalit rights, and the EU has now assigned specific, global support to the Dalits. The following contributions can largely be traced to Danida support.

- In 2011, a special law made caste-based discrimination a criminal offence.
- In 2008, 35% of the grants to Village Development Committees were reserved by the Ministry of Local Development for Dalit and other marginalised groups, so infrastructure projects are now more likely to benefit the Dalit population at local level.
- Measures to increase Dalit political participation included reserved seats for Dalit women in local elections.
- Dalit organisations at local level now have improved access to credit and other benefits, and Dalit access to governmental and donor programmes has improved.
- There is now explicit reference to Dalit rights in policy discourse at national and international level, including through the UN and EU.

The LGCDP has streamlined support to the Dalits and involved them more than formerly. In the remote Karnali region, for example, more than 1,000 Dalits were able to reach decision-making positions in institutions such as school management committees. In Banke, a member of one of the organisations supported by Danida (Suryamukhi Women Farmers Group which is member of the Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organisation) observed in May 2017 that:

- “Before, as a Dalit, you could be asked to go and wash your own dishes if you ate at a restaurant; some people would not drink water served by a Dalit and we would be called by different derogatory names. This has decreased.”
- “Most Dalits now send all of their children to school, whereas before we would tend to prioritise the boys and let the girls work at home.”

Such reports confirm improvements in discrimination and gender equity, while increased political

participation is suggested by the fact that all the Dalits in the community interviewed in Banke had participated in the Ward Citizen Forums and had registered to vote in the June 2017 local elections. Two female Dalits were in fact standing as candidates for different political parties, but both claimed that “we are first and foremost Dalits”, revealing a solidity that transcended party politics.

The 2008 Constituent Assembly (CA) elections marked a significant step forward for political participation in Nepal. Historically excluded ethnic and caste groups, including Dalits, comprised a solid majority of CA members. Though the Dalit representation suffered in the second CA elections in November 2013, a good number of the excluded were sent to the constitution-making body. The political parties’ unwillingness to field more women and Dalit candidates for the first-past-the-post elections has affected the outcome.

Lessons learned. (a) Results can be obtained through an explicit focus on marginalised groups, with a specific component, resources and advisers assigned. (b) Long-term partnerships were an effective vehicle through which to strengthen Dalit organisations. (c) Principles of democratic good governance were introduced to Dalit organisations while they were being strengthened. (d) Coordinated work at global, national and local level is needed to make progress on an issue like that of the Dalits. (e) Stronger national organisations can participate more actively at the international level, while also pushing for change at the government and donor levels.

Sustainability. Because of the capacity development measures undertaken, formerly weak organisations have become better able to address their issues and concerns. Also, because of the advocacy activities of Dalit partner organisations at the central level, exclusion of Dalits is generally recognised today as an important element among the myriad of problems facing Nepal today. Denmark was a ‘first mover’ on support to the Dalit movement. In this sense, Denmark has been an inspiration to other donors who later paid more attention to this work, such as the EU. Likewise, since 2000 Denmark has decided to support Dalit issues at international, national and local levels. In Nepal, the Danish presence has made it easier for Dalit organisations to participate in policy dialogue. There are cases (e.g. in 2013-14) of Dalit organisations being invited to high-level meetings that included key line ministries, and the police and armed forces, to discuss how concrete discrimination and problems can be avoided. It was Danish support that facilitated this participation.

Notes and sources

- Danida Project Completion Report: Component on Social Inclusion, Human Rights and Good Governance, Phase II, 104.Nep.54-4, 2003.
- Danida Project Completion Report, Component on Dalit, Human Rights and Good Governance Advisory Unit (HUGOU)/DANIDA, File No.: 104.Nep.52, 2003.
- Danida Programme Completion Report: Human Rights and Good Governance, 2014.
- Interview with NNDSWO: May 17, 2017: Trilok Chand Vishwas (National President, Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organisation), Mohan Singh Sunar (Executive Director), Bhakta Biskwakarma (President of Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organisation).
- Field interaction with a Dalit organisation in Banke.

Email from Meenakshi Ganguly, Human Rights Watch, Delhi, India (25 March 2017): “The Dalit rights movement has gained significantly in recent decades, and now has international recognition. Several UN special mandate holders now incorporate Dalit rights into their analysis. State reviews of the rights of women and children now include analysis of efforts to end discrimination and violence against Dalit communities... IDSN (international secretariat for Dalit) and support from Danida, played a key role in getting groups organised, holding consultations, inviting community leaders to collaborate with partner organisations in the region. I still remember Dalit groups from Nepal when they first started attending these sessions. They had commitment, but did not have capacity or knowledge to build a campaign. The Dalit rights movement has gained in Nepal because of a now confident leadership that can mobilise communities. None of these groups would have had the advocacy capacity without support from donors like Danida, and international organisations and networks.”

Types of Danida contribution	Before partnership with Danida	Situation in 2016-17
Internal Policies and Regulation	7	12
No. of partners/donors	5	12
No. of projects	6	14
Annual expenditure	NPR 25 million (2005-6)	NPR 74 million (2015-16)
Staff	District (68), Central (11), Total (77)	District (174), Central (14), Total (188)
Programming approach	Project-based, fragmented	Institutional and global planning
Strategic planning	Need external support	Current strategic plan was internally developed
International networking and advocacy	No participation in international platforms and advocacy	Continuously engaged in international advocacy
Source: Presentation from Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organisation May 2017 about Danida results.		

Annex G.3 Improving governance through performance-based grants

Summary

There were no elections for local and district level bodies since 1997 while Nepal passed a new Local Self Governance Act and re-invented its forms of governance, but local administration continued as did efforts to decentralise and improve it. Danida and others supported this through the government's own Local Governance and Community Development programmes, which put new laws and systems in place. Performance-based grants proved vital here, since they helped ensure that the capacity of Local Bodies meet minimum criteria, but the same programmes achieved many other things that all added up to the transformation of local democracy and accountable administration, ready for the 2017 elections.

Why was it needed

Decentralisation began with multi-party democracy in 1990 and high expectations that decentralisation would be the means for "ensuring optimum participation of people in governance and hence enjoy the benefit of democracy" as stated in the 1990 Constitution. The first local democratic elections were held in 1992, and a fiscal transfer system was initiated from 1993. In 1999, the Government consolidated its local government system through the enactment of the Local Self Governance Act (LSGA). However, from the mid-1990s, increasing civil turmoil resulted from the Maoist insurgency. Local elections were cancelled in 2002 and the political decentralisation process stalled.

After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006, preparations for a new Constitution became the focus, while the decentralisation process continued to be slow. With the 2015 Constitution and the federal state, however, there is a need to further enhance local participatory governance and improve delivery of efficient and equitable public services. It has been decided to set up 744 village and municipal councils ('Local Bodies') under the federal system. Earlier, there had been 3,157 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and 217 Municipalities across the country. Local elections were held in May-June 2017, 20 years after the last ones.

Danida supported the decentralisation process in Nepal from 1992, and contributed to getting the Local Self-Governance Act (1999) adopted by Parliament. The objectives of the first programme in 1998 very much reflect why decentralisation should be supported, stating them to be: "the establishment of a public

administration that is accountable, transparent and effective in the delivery of services and goods, and a local government that is able to secure political representation for disadvantaged groups”. These principles, although adjusted in future programmes, continued to be the main purpose of the intervention. In the absence of regular elected bodies, decentralisation support also included alternative accountability measures at the district and village level.

What was done

Danida was the main contributor at the time to the establishment and strengthening of the new Local Bodies Fiscal Commission (LBFC), including studies of fiscal decentralisation, the Association of District Development Committees in Nepal, and national training systems. A special advisory unit with Danida advisers known as DASU provided strategic advice to key Nepalese stakeholders. Denmark was among the lead donors, but other donors were also very active in decentralisation. Based on the LBFC’s studies, the first discussions took place on a grant scheme to local governments based on performance, recognizing that their capacity was weak. Danida joined other donors in supporting the roll-out of results-based grants at local level, but the civil conflict made it hard to operate in some districts. DASU was closed in 2006 and decentralisation was integrated into the work of the other Danida advisory unit for good governance, DanidaHUGOU, under which support to the LGCDP continued.

The Performance-Based Grant (PBG) System. This is an intra-governmental fiscal transfer system for block grants. It was introduced by government from 2004/05 and piloted in 20 districts with the technical and financial support of the Decentralised Financing and Development Programme (DFDP) financed by UNCDF and DFID, and implemented by the Ministry of Local Development. It benefited from previous Danida support to the legal framework for Local Bodies and capacity building efforts, and Danida was active in getting the system scaled up to country level. The essence of the system is that it evaluates the annual performance of Local Bodies according to indicators such as planning and budgeting, financial management, fiscal resource mobilisation, transparency budget releases, and programme contribution. Performance is measured using ‘Minimum Conditions’ and ‘Performance Measures’. The first takes the basic functions of Local Bodies into account, so if a Local Body fails to meet any of the Minimum Conditions, it will not be eligible for PBGs but only for ‘minimum secured grants’ and ‘capacity development grants’. The second covers additional functions that determine how much more or less a Local Body will receive if it meets all the Minimum Conditions. Thus the Minimum Conditions ensure that the critical functions of Local Bodies, such as approval of annual budgets and programmes, are discharged in a timely way. The Performance Measures then measure the extent to which the Local Bodies have succeeded in accomplishing tasks and achieving results in key performance areas.

The LGCDP. In 2008, Denmark was active in promoting coordination among the various donor contributions to the LGCDP. With government encouragement, five bilateral and one multilateral donor contributed to a first basket funding of the LGCDP in 2008-2013, while six UN agencies and two other bilateral donors aligned their programmes with it. It took many meetings to develop this partnership and many of these meetings were held in the DanidaHUGOU premises, while Denmark provided the lead consultants for the design. Danida was quick to provide inception funds to initiate the programme. The LGCDP was followed by a second phase (2013-2017), again with Danida participation although as a basket-fund arrangement with seven bilaterals and nine multilaterals contributing a total of about USD 100 million it is not possible to identify specifically ‘Danish’ results. Danida also committed DKK 62 million through the Peace, Rights and Governance Programme, both through a general basket and to a technical assistance fund administered by UNDP.

What was achieved

Impact. The LGCDP continued to support fiscal decentralisation, including the government’s PBG System. In 2010, a review by Dege Consult assessed the impact of this as follows: “The analysis of the performance results, consultation with the stakeholders and field visit observations and findings clearly point out the fact that the Minimum Conditions (MC)/Performance Measurement (PM) system in general has been successful to bring several positive impacts on LB performance. The number of District

Development Committees (DDCs) that have met the MCs, thus have become eligible for grants, has been increasing. ...the DDCs have improved performance in the intended areas; namely, planning and programming, public financial management, good governance, and transparency. There is a strong belief amongst all stakeholders ranging from central and local government politicians and officials, DPs and associations that the system has an overall positive impact.” But it was also necessary to create better links between citizens and the Local Bodies. Since there were no local elected bodies, the LGCDP promoted more than 31,000 Ward Citizen Forums (WCFs) to contribute to more inclusive development at the local level. Local planning began in the WCF and upwards through Village and District Development Committees (VDCs and DDCs); accountability was improved, and the PBG System ensured that Local Bodies were assessed through annual independent performance assessments, and that there could be a dialogue around how to improve performance. To improve accountability further, a Local Governance Accountability Facility (LGAF) was set up to provide grants to CSOs to monitor the performance of Local Bodies in carrying out agreed plans.

Lessons learned.

- Denmark made key contributions on fiscal decentralisation at the right time to influence its development. The process gained momentum in the late 90s with the Local Self Governance Act, but the conflict in 1996-2006 and the lack of local elections since 2002 have hampered the process.
- In the absence of elected authorities, donors – including Denmark - opted to support decentralisation with elements that stimulate technical capacity (through the PBG System), accountability, and involvement of citizens, and with some progress regarding service delivery. This shows that even in states affected by conflict, ways can be found to promote certain local governance aspects and promote more effective and accountable local administrations.
- The arrangements - useful as they have been for service delivery with certain checks and balances – cannot substitute for the democratic legitimacy of elected councils.
- A PBG System, based on minimum conditions to access basic grants and ‘top-up’ grants to reward performance, can stimulate the capacity of Local Bodies to focus on performance and dialogue between local stakeholders about the efficiency of local government. Joint donor programmes help to sustain a uniform system. The system can be supplemented with support to civil society organisations which can monitor the work of local bodies and social mobilisation from below.

Sustainability. The Local Bodies Fiscal Commission in 2015/16 found that the PBG System had stimulated a gradual improvement in municipal and districts performance. On the other hand, the performance of the VDCs remained weak, possibly because they had such a limited number of staff. The WCFs, in the absence of local elections, offered a way to involve citizens in channelling demands to the authorities. The LGAF was also ensuring some accountability, while the PBG System stimulated an increase in technical capacity. Also, informants from nine districts stressed that service delivery – although still at a low level - had improved in areas of VDC and DDC competence over the previous ten years. The new structure for Local Bodies laid down in the 2015 Constitution is gradually being implemented. The next task is thus to ensure that performance-based grants, accountability and citizens’ involvement will be continued. The Local Bodies Fiscal Commission is expected to be dissolved and its functions passed on to the National Natural Resources and Financial Commission as outlined in the 2015 Constitution. The experiences from the PBG System will be very useful in the future reform process.

Notes and sources

- Dege Consult: Analysis of the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measurement (MC/PM System) in Nepal (Jesper Steffensen Dege Consult Ltd and Yadab Chapagain, HURDEC in Cooperation with LBFC and MLD/LGCDP).
- Government of Nepal, Local Body Fiscal Commission: Journal of Fiscal Federalism.
- Danida Evaluation: Danish Support to Promotion of Human Rights and Democratisation, Volume 9, Nepal, 1999/11.
- Danida, Project Completion, Decentralisation Advisory Support Unit: Decentralisation Support

Programme, 2005.

Additional information from field visit, May 2017:

- The District Development Committee in Banke finds that the PBGS has benefitted the district. “When the system was introduced we started with very low or average scores. But gradually we improved capacity, among other things, by holding public hearings. Today we are number 2 among 75 districts in the Nepal ranking” reported Hari Pyakurel, the Local Development Officer (May 2017). The system’s additional grant is not crucial for Banke District, as it also have considerable revenue income alone from resources such as sand and boulders. In one of the VDCs (Chisapani), the secretary (Mr. Basanta Kamal Acharya) says that the PBGS “has helped us to focus more on improving our capacity. For example, we have increased the number of public hearings we hold and have thereby gotten a better score.”
- Local Governance Accountability Facility. The local NGO OCDC in Banke District used funds to facilitate public hearings on the District Development Committee and Village Development Committee budgets, broadcast radio messages on local governance, announced open public hearings and carried out visits to infrastructure projects in an initial phase. In some cases, it had to recommend that minor aspects of the infrastructure built be redone – something which the authorities have accepted. The CSO has ensured that groups such as the Dalit receive their share of the grants made to the Village Development Committees (VDCs), according to the law (35% of the VDC budget should go to Dalits and other marginalised groups).
- It should be mentioned that most grants from government to the Local Bodies were not linked to the performance-based grant system in FY 2014/15, as can be seen in the ‘Mid-Term Review of LGCDP II’ of May 2016, prepared by independent consultants hired by UNCDF, implying that the system was not as performance-enhancing as it had the potential to be.

Annex G.4 Promoting inclusion through ‘social families’

Summary

The ‘social family’ approach, promoted by SAMAGRA, is a strategy to encourage and enable people in a fragmented social context to recognise their common interests and cooperate in advancing them together. It is therefore based on class, caste, ethnicity and collective economic relations rather than on sector. Other examples of Danida’s work with GESI, include NGO partners such as NEMAF which has yielded progress across multiple GESI themes of caste, gender and youth. There are also highlights such as the community radio system, of which Danida was an early supporter.

Why was it needed

Inequality, discrimination, and exclusion are key drivers of poverty and weak governance in Nepal, and the state’s failure to address social exclusion remains a source of tension. Achieving greater social, political and economic inclusion therefore lies at the heart not only of poverty reduction, but also of peace- and state-building in Nepal. The country has made some progress in creating the legal and organisational framework for greater inclusion and more equitable citizenship. It is recognised that marginalised groups should benefit from positive discrimination and that racial discrimination and untouchability are unacceptable, but authorities have still found it hard to reach many of the marginalised groups.

What was done

Community-based organisations can offer a bridge between local communities and government authorities. The Holistic Development Service Centre known as SAMAGRA is a non-profit, non-political NGO that offers such a service. Its mission is to empower marginalised and poor people to claim and exercise their basic rights. It was registered in 1996 to promote *Swabalamban* – a self-reliance approach to development based on ‘social families’ that promote human rights, community development, and conciliatory conflict

management. Each Social Family is an inclusive community group, typically of up to 30 members mostly of women who are often from poor, marginalised and excluded backgrounds. Its members are encouraged to bond emotionally with one another and share each other's joys and sorrows. In 2004, Danida/HUGOU supported SAMAGRA in carrying out a pilot project in two districts with the largest Dalit populations of any in Nepal, where discrimination was rife. The project supported the organisation of some of the excluded villages, and provided staff and volunteers to the groups to act as facilitators and educators on local authorities, on self-reliance, and on how to establish group savings initiatives.

In 2009, Danida and SAMAGRA entered into a strategic partnership. The intention was that all interested donors could jointly support SAMAGRA's strategic plans. Only a few donors joined because most had their own requirements for reporting which did not match those of SAMAGRA. The strategic partnership with Danida allowed for strengthening SAMAGRA internally, including setting up a new accounting system, and a monitoring and evaluation framework for the organisation. It also included support related to training, transport and facilitators for the social families in most of the 14 districts where SAMAGRA was working. In 2014, however, Danida-HUGOU was closed and replaced by the Governance Facility, which was supported by Denmark, the UK and Switzerland. This ended the strategic partnership in favour of a system based on calls for proposals, which SAMAGRA managed to navigate and obtained a grant of USD 740,000 over three years, allowing it to continue many of its activities.

What was achieved

Impact. Supported by Danida, SAMAGRA has established a network of social families that affects more than 75,000 people among the most marginalised communities of Terai-Madhesh and a few hill districts, two-thirds of them being women from Dalit, Adibasi-Janajati and Muslim communities. During a visit to Dhading, in the Central Region of Nepal in May 2017, members of five social families told the evaluation team about their activities. Informants were mostly indigenous Tamang people, with some Chepang, mostly women, and each living with own families but sharing one community. As a savings group, they meet regularly and pay a small sum monthly into a common fund, which they administer together. A social worker from SAMAGRA receives a small, monthly stipend and carries out training and follow-up on issues such as how to manage village savings, what their rights are, the role of the local institutions and how to advocate for their groups. The informants stated that before joining the social family they felt powerless and voiceless, but since then their self-esteem has increased and they are now capable of speaking and contacting authorities. They reported that all social families carry out the following activities:

- They manage a small savings fund, which they manage as a group and use to buy animals, such as pigs, which they rear.
- They identify needs for presentation to the authorities. In some cases they have received support, such as construction of a road (which also will benefit other communities than their own), and access to a poverty alleviation programme.
- Some have participated in literacy activities.
- They were all informed about the June 2017 local elections, were all registered to vote, and all voted freely with the encouragement of SAMAGRA.
- Some of the women have been active in the Ward Citizen Forums, which are supported by the Danida-supported LGCDP.

The evaluation team concluded that the change in behaviour as individuals and groups may be the most important impact of Danida's support through SAMAGRA, followed by the effects of increased access to services as a result of advocacy and demanding rights.

Lessons learned. (a) Social families have been an efficient way to promote inclusion of otherwise marginalised and voiceless groups. (b) A clear priority on promoting women's rights combined with local level knowledge makes it possible to reach groups and women that previously were voiceless and powerless. (c) Savings seem to unify women around a concrete activity; savings give them management skills and immediate power over joint resources. (d) Poor women who receive training on advocacy and empowerment can gradually become citizens capable of influencing authorities, including being elected to

their local bodies as the experience from Dhading shows. (e) The long-term relationship between Danida and SAMAGRA has increased the likelihood of sustainability.

Sustainability. Other social families outside Dhading have established small cooperatives, or have stood up against discrimination, for example by requesting (and receiving) higher salaries as casual labourers – or by demanding (and ensuring) that Dalit children were allowed seats in the school. In other places, including Dhading, social families have used funds from their savings schemes to help individual members access medicines they could otherwise not have afforded. Regarding the partnership with Danida, SAMAGRA values the use of annual ‘synergy workshops’ in 2009-2014, in which Danida brought all 13 strategic partners together. These resulted in SAMAGRA establishing relationship with partners such as CRSC on land rights information, and with CeLLRd on legal aid. With the introduction of the Governance Facility, synergy and collaboration with other like-minded organisations is still encouraged. For example, collaboration between SAMAGRA and the Niti Foundation has been initiated for promoting the rights of people affected by the Budhi Gandaki hydro-power scheme, and in relation to conflict resolution and compensation for the displaced people. Although SAMAGRA has other donors, Denmark has been the most important. The relationship was based on shared values - such as a strong emphasis on the rights of women and marginalised groups - and mutual respect, since Danida is seen as a ‘non-imposing donor’.

Notes and sources

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- Interviews with members of Social Families in Dhading, Nepal.
- Interviews with Dornath Neupane (Executive Director) and Prem Dhungel (SAMAGRA).

Notes from a field visit to the ‘social family’ at Dhading (see frontispieces).

In Dhading, two of the women from the social families were elected to the new municipal council (Thakre Gaupalika), these being both the oldest woman and a youngest, the latter a 27-year-old Tapang woman, Rajani Lama. During the meeting, Rajani thanked her social family by saying: “You have elected your daughter. I will now do my best to carry out the promises I made. I will do my best to take away the domestic violence.” Some other women explained that domestic violence was not a big problem, although of course even it is just affecting a few, it is still closely related to respect for rights of women. When the women were asked about the men’s reactions to the women having ‘separate meetings’, most of them said that it was accepted. A few said that the men did not like it. However, the social families seem to be well consolidated, some of them having had a social family for more than six years.

Annex G.5 Registering voters to improve democracy

Summary

Democracy needs voters, but they can be hard to register in remote areas and especially during a nationwide conflict. With peace in 2006, Danida saw that voter rolls needed to be updated and the registration system modernised. So in 2009 it supported the Electoral Commission in a trial of biometric voter registration, with good results in several districts. Other donors had been reluctant to support this, but recognised its success and moved quickly to support the new way of working.

Why it was needed

In 2009, Nepal had a system that called for annual voter registration updates. This civil registration system was administered by Village Development Committees which were responsible for the recording of births, marriages, and deaths. During the conflict, the maintenance of both the civil and voter registration processes has fallen behind. Also, in the first election for the Constituent Assembly in 2008, there were some problems. Many people lost their vote as they were not on the voters’ roll or because someone else had already voted in their place. Many migrants and internally displaced persons were disenfranchised

because they did not live at the place where they are formally registered, and lacked the means or the courage to return there to vote. According to the 2009 Danida Programme Document, other problems included the lack of adequate mechanisms for regular maintenance and auditing of the voter register to identify anomalies and add voters who come of age.

What was done

The Election Commission presented a project to support the development of a new, more reliable, and more credible voter registration system. The new registration system would facilitate future processes to provide Nepal with an effective civil registry and a durable multipurpose national identification (NID) card. None of the other donors were interested at the time but Danida was, seeing this as a strategic opportunity for improving the quality of elections. The Election Commission had prepared a Multi-Year Strategic Plan (2009-2013) aimed at reforming Nepal's electoral process with the purpose of having a positive impact on achieving free, fair and credible elections. It sought to establish a new voter registration system with photographic and biometric information used to protect voters' rights and promote easier electoral management. The objective of a nation-wide project was to develop a continuously updateable Voter List with photograph and biometrics, and to institutionalise mechanisms for the continued maintenance and support of this process.

The Election Commission was already geared towards establishing the new system, keeping in view the first general election which was expected the coming year. Government had included the project in its programme and had assigned a (small and insufficient) budget to link the new voter registration system to a NID system, and to establish a Civil Registry. The adoption of a modern registration system and development of a Voter List database with photographs and fingerprints were expected to have important benefits, among them the clear identification of voters on Election Day, the deterrence of false voting, the ability to detect and remove duplicate registrations, and the ability to manage internal migration of voters between locations.

In 2009, Danida supported the Election Commission with a grant of almost USD 540,000 to finance such things as software, ICT infrastructure, field worker training, voter awareness campaigns and materials, and voter registration equipment, while the Election Commission contributed nearly USD 135,000. A pilot project involved 10 days of voter education followed by 15 days of enumeration and registration, during which 35,583 voters were enumerated of whom 34,431 were registered. The project was based on a series of steps: capacity building of the staff; orientation to concerned stakeholders; logistic management; voter education programme at local level; enumeration at household level; and registration at the polling registration centre. After staff training, the voter education used posters, pamphlets and local FM radios. Voters were presented at the registration centre with the counterfoil from the enumeration form. Later, the voters were met in the registration centre with the receipt and were registered by giving their photo and biometric data at a cost of about NPR 100 (USD 1.00). The registration centre was open for 15 days.

What was achieved

Impact. After the piloting of the biometric voter registration in 2009, Danida in 2010 joined a multi-donor basket fund, managed by the Electoral Support Project of UNDP, to assist the roll-out of the new system nation-wide during 2010. A biometric database was established including names, photos and fingerprints of a total of 12.2 million voters. This is far fewer than the number of voters previously registered by the Election Commission, since voters who were ineligible (because they had died or were working abroad, for example) were deleted, along with double registrants. In 2011, Danida made an additional grant of USD 0.23 million in response to an urgent request by the Election Commission to build an Electoral Assets Store (i.e. a warehouse) for the safe-keeping of valuable equipment and material, and Denmark continued to support the Election Commission thereafter.

Lessons learned.

- Free and fair elections are key to promoting democracy and maintaining peace, and the technical part of an election is important, especially the capacity to register all voters.
- Danida's support to the Election Commission has been crucial and strategic, in its willingness to offer

support in 1991 when the Election Commission had no capacity, in its willingness to be a ‘first mover’ on introducing a better voter registration system, and in promoting the participation of other donors.

- The case shows that Danida – through an advisory unit – was able to act quickly with considerable impact. It underlines the need for a flexible set-up where not all funds are tied to long-term activities but some are kept available to overcome difficulties as they arise.

Sustainability. In November 2013, Nepal held its a second Constituent Assembly Elections to replace the assembly that was dissolved in May 2012 after failing to draft a new Constitution. Overall the elections went well. The EU issued a statement congratulating the people of Nepal “for having exercised their right to vote in large numbers, despite attempts to prevent them from doing so”. The Carter Center found that the election was conducted remarkably well, especially in the face of attempts by boycotting parties to disrupt the process through violence. The Election Commission estimated the voter turnout at more than 70%. Denmark has continued to support to the Election Commission. The biometric card can still be used, including in the local elections recently held. The Election Commission has also promoted increased female participation, both in its own staff and among those who carry out voter education. More than half of all voters in recent elections are women. Neel Kantha Uprety, former Chief Election Commissioner and an employee of the Election Commission since 1991, recalls that Danida has in fact contributed to the electoral process since 1991, and observed that Danida provided a quick grant to buy the necessary equipment, adding that “Denmark never imposed anything on us. They provided us support according to our needs. I really think that Denmark has contributed to plant democracy in Nepal.”

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Annex G.6 Ending police abuse of detainees

Summary

The abuse of detainees, including torture, can be a tempting way for the police and other forces to end investigations quickly, especially at times of civil emergency, but this violates human rights and often leads to injustice. Danida has long focused on showing officers new and better ways to investigate crimes through the scientific collection and analysis of evidence, human rights training, taking them to see how things are done at police stations in Denmark, and providing legal aid to help detainees protect themselves. Partly as a result, a tipping point may be approaching in Nepal, after which the use of torture will no longer be seen as reasonable or expected by anyone.

Why it was needed

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) estimates that two-thirds of detainees were abused and 17,000 tortured during the conflict of 1996-2006, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture stated in 2005 that “torture and ill-treatment are systematically practiced in Nepal by the police, armed police and

the national army.” Although the incidence declined after the conflict, the problem continues. In 2015, the NGO Advocacy Forum interviewed 1,212 detainees in ten detention centres across the country, 17% of whom claimed that they had been subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment while in detention. It seems that the temptation to abuse the powerless to obtain quick results remains strong, and is not always resisted.

What was done

Denmark has worked with ‘access to justice’ and ‘human rights’ since near the start of its partnership with Nepal in 1991, and the fight against torture has been integral to this. Various approaches have been used to tackle the problem, including the following.

- From the early 1990s the Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), and from 1998 also the Centre for Legal Research and Resource Development (CeLRRd), were supported in documenting human rights violations and providing legal aid to those affected. UNDP programme staff familiar with CeLRRd’s work confirm that the project was effective in reducing the abuse of detainees.
- In 1999-2003, Danida and DFID supported the Central Police Science Laboratory (CPSL), supplying equipment and training, and later establishing new police laboratories. Although a Danida review found little sign that the equipment was being much used, the CPSL itself claimed that investigations had started to use confessions less and evidence more.
- From 2003, Danida supported the NHRC in registering complaints of human rights violations, including torture, and investigating them. The NHRC is an important and reliable source of information on human rights and has contributed to raise the issue on torture at the highest level. Its limitation is that it can only make recommendations to the government.
- In 2005, Denmark and other donors encouraged Nepal to accept an inspection visit by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, which occurred that year.

After 2006, the focus was on implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which included anti-torture efforts. In 2014, a new phase of targeted activity and collaboration with the Nepalese law enforcement agencies began, including the use of inter-force cooperation as a way to change behaviour of the police. Danida began supporting the ‘Enhancing Human Rights Protection in Law Enforcement and Security Agencies in Nepal’ project, with the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), the Kathmandu School of Law (KSL), and the Danish Police Force as a source of technical expertise. It gave special attention to building the first-ever programme of systematic cooperation among the police, armed police, and forest guard services in Nepal. Much use has been made of study tours to Denmark to build direct contact between local police services in the two countries, and working at this level proved very effective at undermining the idea that torture was a valid and permissible way to obtain information from detainees.

- First, a national baseline was established on the prevalence of torture and improper use of force, and the current policy and institutional framework related to securing human rights in the security forces.
- Then, the KSL, DIHR and Danish Police and DIHR helped the Nepalese law enforcement agencies to carry out six-month projects in 57 work stations nationwide, aiming to encourage officers to see the use of torture as unacceptable behaviour, and to understand the root causes of ill treatment. The KSL, DIHR and the Danish Police participated in training and monitoring of the projects.
- Finally, policy dialogue will be promoted among key stakeholders in Nepal, which is expected to result in national institutional changes in policy and practice for preventing torture and other human rights issues.

Meanwhile, in 2015, Danida through DIHR advised the Office of the Prime Minister on a new anti-torture law and on Nepal’s ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT). The passage of this legislation has been delayed by political turbulence, but the technical inputs were considered to be of high-quality and to have sensitised high-level government officials to the issues involved.

What was achieved

Impact. Highlights of cooperation between the Nepalese law enforcement agencies, KSL, DIHR and the Danish Police include the following.

- Behaviour change. The Mid-term Evaluation in May 2017 found that the project target group and beneficiaries are much more sensitised and willing to prevent torture and the improper use of force. It also reports that the activities strengthened police officer capacity to prepare need analyses, collect data and use data analysis techniques. Even if the project were to be discontinued, many members of the law enforcement agencies are capable of undertaking activities based on local needs and drawing the government's attention to the significance of human rights activities.
- Ownership of anti-torture activism. One of the small work station projects (with a budget of about USD 2,000) was prepared by Deputy Superintendent of Nepal Police Mr Binod Silwal. Its goal was to expose police personnel to additional human rights training. The workshop sessions took place twice over three days, with a total of around 50 junior police officers in attendance. It was based on existing and new material, including some from external speakers from two other long-term Danida-partners: the NHRC and the non-governmental human rights organization INSEC, among others. Knowledge tests took place before and after the training, and some changes could be noted, for example regarding the junior staff knowledge on how detention should take place, how to conduct interviews with detainees and procedures regarding the detainees contact with family members. New leaflets have been printed on standard operating procedures for detention and interrogation. Based on the training, Mr Binod Silwal is expecting to integrate human rights training into the Nepal Police's existing training. The final test regarding change will be to monitor what the newly-trained staff do in practice.
- New focus on human rights. The Danish Police reported changes in attitude among staff involved in the project from the Department of Forests and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation. Before, their focus was exclusively on the protection on forest and animals. After, they tended to involve the surrounding local population in their planning, and have established Standard Operational Procedures and training with a focus on human rights. This is important, since people who used protected forests illegally had previously been treated very harshly.
- Exchange visits with Denmark. Participants in the exchange visits reported that they learned from the Danish Police a number of ways to improve their work, including: on documenting cases; on planning responses to demonstrations to prevent escalating violence; on how to treat detainees; and on how to resist political pressure. Likewise, police officers from Denmark monitoring progress in the field seem to have built rapport with local officers based on their common work experiences.

Lessons learned.

- For a country to admit publicly and at high level that it has a 'torture problem' can be hard, in many cases (including Nepal's) because of the involvement of senior politicians and officials in past human rights abuses. Through a collaborative approach good progress can still be made 'on the ground' and at a practical and technical level, especially through inter-police service dialogue, and it is important that this is endorsed at least tacitly by leaders so that behaviour change can be resourced and validated.
- The technical improvement of police laboratories is too limited an approach, although it may be appreciated by the police, and attention to behaviour change is also needed.
- Supporting the NHRC was logical since it has the most relevant mandate, and such an institution is necessary to oppose torture in the long term, but it is only one of a number of relevant actors.
- Supporting legal aid through NGOs was considered by many to be the most efficient way to reach detainees quickly and to document cases of abuse, but the NGOs concerned each worked in their own areas, so national coverage requires a system of NGOs with overlapping geographical capabilities.
- Supporting a collaborative approach and inter-police service cooperation can inspire changes in police behaviour, while also facilitating links through shared experience and dialogue among the local, national, 'on the ground' and policy levels. The facilitating role was performed by representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, and the law enforcement agencies in a project Steering Committee with technical support from KSL and DIHR.

Sustainability. Many of the 57 small projects yielded documents and other resources for use in the longer term by police institutions (70% of projects) or were considered by stakeholders to be likely to generate useful ideas for policy, regulation or replication (all projects). More generally, changes in behaviour and expectations of behaviour coupled with awareness of rights, channels of complaint and redress, and discipline and supervision, all reinforce one another, so that a cultural tipping point can be reached whereby a new and stable arrangement can arise, in which torture is no longer seen as reasonable by anyone. Such a transition may be approaching in Nepal.

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- Interviews with key stakeholders in the project.

Annex G.7 Promoting equity in education

Summary

As government's top priority, education was supported by Danida for many years. Achievements include: that the vast majority of children in Nepal now have access to primary education which was not the case in the early 1990s; that a much larger percentage of children also has access to early childhood education and development opportunities which known to be vital to improving chances once the child is in education; that the average years that children stay at school have increased; and that all this applies whether or not children are from marginalised caste and ethnic groups. Such improvements may have important long-term consequences for the quality of society, governance, and economic performance.

Why it was needed

In the early 1990s, the education system in Nepal was under-funded and poorly organised, and providing access to education was a serious challenge. Ensuring that Nepalese children had access to quality education was seen as necessary if Nepal was to reach a level of development that would allow for universal public well-being, balanced development, and national competitiveness. But large numbers of children were being excluded from education, or else would quickly drop out of school even if they were enrolled, with very few managing to complete their basic education (i.e. grades 1-5 in the early 1990s, later defined as grades 1-8), and even fewer reaching secondary level.

Equity was also a serious concern. Figures for girls' access, participation and completion were consistently worse than for boys, and persistent exclusion of disadvantaged groups such as Dalits and Janajatis was a particular problem, as was access to education in remote and inaccessible parts of the country. This is shown by the gender parity index (GPI) which in the early 1990s stood at 0.7 for primary, and at 0.35 for the education system as a whole. These problems were rooted in complex factors that affected demand for education (e.g. lack of awareness of education, economic and social difficulties, and cultural constraints in the communities) and also the attractiveness of the education on offer (e.g. physical facilities, books, number of teachers, teacher qualifications, quality and relevance of the curriculum in the schools themselves). It was hard to address them because of the weak capacity of the education system in all key areas, including planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting.

What was done

Danida committed itself to supporting a succession of government education plans that started in 1992 and still continue, although Danida withdrew from the sector in 2013. Much was achieved in over 20 years of Danish involvement, although it is hard to isolate Danida's particular contribution given that efforts in the education sector were increasingly harmonised around a common plan supported by the Government, donors and other actors. However, interview and documentary evidence converges in a general conclusion that Danida played a key role in driving the education sector agenda and in effecting change, through its leadership of the sector and donor group, provision of unique holistic and long-term support to capacity development and systems strengthening, promoting innovations including multi-grade teaching, multilingual education (minority languages), access to scholarships for girls and minorities, by promoting the disability agenda (e.g. materials for blind students in Braille and the mainstreaming of children with different abilities in the education system), and promotion of adult and non-formal education. The most spectacular progress in gender equity, particularly in districts with the lowest scores, was made during the EFAP period in 2004-2009, and this was consolidated in the SSRP period that followed it. The strategies that made most difference include:

- an annual nationwide 'Welcome to School' campaign, aimed at bringing large numbers of un-enrolled and dropped-out children back into school or into non-formal education programmes;
- scholarships and other incentives such as free school meals to encourage children to go to school and stay there;

- improving reporting and accountability in the system, driven also by donor support for sector-wide processes and for decentralisation;
- the introduction of ‘school improvement planning’ and decentralised funding, including special grants for improving equity;
- non-formal and alternative methods of educational delivery, including working closely with traditional institutions which provide education, such as Madrasas, Gurukuls and Gumba;
- opening textbook production and distribution to the private sector to ensure timely delivery of textbooks to the learners and close monitoring of timely delivery; and
- improvements in teacher management, including redeployment of teachers to schools in need, provision of additional teachers, and promoting equity in teacher recruitment in terms of gender and ethnicity.

What was achieved

Impact. The number of children who should be in primary school and who are actually enrolled there went up from 70% of the total in 1990 to 96% in 2015. The increase in enrolment of girls was even steeper, from 40% to 95% over the same 23 years, and this almost-equal enrolment between boys and girls was also achieved in steps across different levels (primary, secondary) of the education system. The number of Dalits and indigenous people enrolled in school also now matches their share in the total population. Meanwhile, the average number of years that children stay at school has been increasing, and this applies whoever the children are, whether from marginalised caste and ethnic groups or not. Finally, the number of primary teachers who are women also increased from 23% of the total in 1998 to 46.5% in 2015, and the proportion of teachers from ethnic minority groups also rose.

Lessons learned. (a) Decentralising school governance can bring the schools closer to the communities, increasing awareness about the importance of education and encouraging enrolment and participation. (b) Access and equity can be improved through out-reach and incentives such as scholarships, but if children are to stay in school it must also be attractive and offer high-quality education. (c) A holistic approach to capacity development can improve planning, decision making, and implementation, at all levels of the education system, and ensure that the equity agenda is promoted. (d) Working with government and the teachers’ unions it is possible to build a culture of research and innovation, and evidence-based decision making, and that this can eventually affect mainstream policies with transformative effects.

Sustainability. Danida consistently funded investments that contributed to increasing equitable access for generations of Nepalese youngsters, and made particular efforts to ensure equitable access for girls, inclusion of out-of-school and disabled pupils, and those from disadvantaged communities. As a result, these groups are much better represented than before among professionals and elected representatives of the people. Sustainability is likely for many of the changes and policies adopted by government, although its own funding constraints, and reducing donor contributions to education, may threaten the scope of some of the key incentive schemes for girls and ethnic minorities (e.g. scholarships) and make it hard to continue to make progress on the disability agenda.

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Annex G.8 Delivering renewable energy

<p>Summary</p> <p>With most rural energy coming from burning wood, farm wastes and fossil fuels, Danida and other donors supported government efforts over many years to deliver solar power and micro-hydroelectric systems to off-grid households and communities, along with improved cooking stoves and biogas systems. This has brought reliable light and power to many households, making it possible to read at night, to communicate by phone, and to create new businesses, while relieving women and children especially from the drudgery of carrying water and wood, and the threat to their health caused by being exposed to indoor smoke.</p>
<p>Why it was needed</p> <p>In the 1990s, rural Nepal lacked clean and renewable small-scale sources of energy. Most households relied on kerosene lamps or candles for light. Cooking was based on traditional open fires, which meant that kitchens were smoke-filled, leading to respiratory and eye problems particularly for women and children. Women spent considerable time and effort carrying water up steep slopes, grinding grain by hand, and collecting firewood. There was no opportunity to run appliances such as televisions or computers, meaning villages were largely cut off from the outside world. Initial work on inventing and promoting renewable energy technologies had begun with NGOs and the newly-founded Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPIC). But further technical and financial inputs were needed to make a significant impact on energy access, particularly in rural areas and for poor households. As these programmes developed, it became clear that policies and guidelines were also needed to guide public and private institutions in working together more effectively.</p>
<p>What was done</p> <p>Danida started supporting the AEPIC in 1999, through an Energy Sector Assistance Programme (ESAP), and other donors joined in, starting with Norway in 2003. For years thereafter, some donors pursued their activities through different programmes and administrative systems, making the AEPIC seem more like a 'hotel' for guest projects than the headquarters of an integrated government programme. All this changed with the National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme (NRREP), which was designed to allow all the donors to contribute to one sector-wide programme on renewable energy. Under NRREP, donors included Denmark, Norway, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, the UN, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. While support for the two phases of ESAP had mainly targeted technology, under NRREP it focused more on institutional development and, in principle, on meeting the needs of energy users and the priorities of gender equity and social inclusion (GESI). Implementation at the local level involved subsidies, to encourage the development of private technology suppliers, but local-level</p>

organisations also provided outreach to communities, giving training, technical and administrative support. While focusing and coordinating efforts in the renewable energy sector, NRREP also introduced three new elements: a Compliance Unit and a Climate and Carbon Unit (CCU) that were managed within NRREP itself, and a Central Renewable Energy Fund (CREF) that was based within a private bank. The Compliance Unit was to detect and investigate financial and procurement irregularities; the CCU was tasked with monitoring greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions achieved using renewable energy technologies (and find ways to make money from them); and the CREF was to channel subsidies and loans through private banks to businesses, communities and individuals (while aiming to phase out subsidies in favour of loans as fast as capacity building among its clients would allow). An unexpected but important role of NRREP was to distribute emergency stoves, lighting and mobile charging points after the 2015 earthquake, and to use its technical resources to rehabilitate damaged equipment.

What was achieved

Impact. As lead donor from 1999-2016, Denmark has made a big contribution to increasing energy access in rural areas and reducing fuelwood consumption. Over 17 years, Danida funded the distribution of solar power and micro-hydro systems that effectively brought light, communication, knowledge and enterprise opportunities to rural households and communities. Improved cooking stoves and biogas improved the health and local environment and reduced drudgery, especially for women who benefit from the delivery of water using solar pumps rather than hand carrying, and a reduced need for firewood collection. Improved water mills permit grinding of grain, saving time and labour. Meanwhile, the organisations involved were strengthened, procurement systems were tightened, and AEPC procedures were streamlined. Impact studies show that solar home systems have helped households gain better access to information from TV and radio (presumably including the community radio stations that were also supported by Danida through other programmes), that children were studying longer each night, and that many households had started using the extra energy to begin small businesses. Having light in the evenings also had a huge social impact. Meanwhile, the NRREP also aimed to improve GESI. Women were clearly benefiting from improved cooking stoves and water mills, and biogas technologies, although less progress was being made in involving them as active managers of the activities. As regards GHG emissions, AEPC has so far registered eight projects (representing 80% of Nepal's total) under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, which generate USD 5.8 million in carbon revenue for the state. None of this was recycled to AEPC or CREF, however, which is a matter subject to negotiation since this could be an important and sustainable source of revenue for renewable energy development.

Lessons learned. (a) Although donor coordination under NRREP has been excellent, and efficiency has improved with most donors working through the AEPC rather than duplicating units and systems, it is clear that AEPC had insufficient capacity to handle its new responsibilities, and that the change should have been phased in more gradually, with agreed milestones. (b) The Compliance Unit has been very successful in streamlining systems, introducing government procurement procedures, and improving monitoring, but it is unclear exactly what the Steering Committee should do when it detects irregularities, and this should have been defined in the Programme Document and Joint Financing Agreement. (c) Subsidies have stimulated the growth of private technology suppliers as expected, and pre-qualification of suppliers was initially able to assure quality products. Prequalified companies colluded with one another, however, to cause compliance problems and high prices. Action should have been taken earlier by AEPC to follow the revised Subsidy Policy and remove prequalification as the only way for private companies to benefit from subsidies.

Sustainability. Installed technologies are only as sustainable as maintenance can make them, and some are more demanding of maintenance than others. Household-level technologies are generally easy to maintain, but the community-managed Micro-hydro and Mini-Grid systems are more technically, financially and organisationally problematic, unless they can be linked to the national grid in the future. The idea that power would be used in enterprise development, and that the new businesses would maintain the technology, was a good one in principle, but the component could not meet its targets. Regarding the CREF, although Denmark's withdrawal from Nepal has forced it to retrieve money prematurely from

revolving loan funds with private banks, it is likely that the fund will continue with support from other donors. Whether this will be in the context of a continuing NRREP is another question, as other donors are withdrawing to run separate programmes, though still working to some degree with AEPC. The NRREP itself is likely to continue as a government programme, but it is uncertain what form it will take (and it is unlikely to continue as a single programme modality). AEPC itself may need to reinvent itself as a much 'lighter' institution in response to decentralised arrangements under the 2015 Constitution, and the continuing changes that will bring most of Nepal into a national grid powered by large-scale hydropower systems within a few years. Meanwhile, though, the ESAP and NRREP arrangements can be seen as having been ways to accelerate delivery of much-needed power to tens of thousands of rural households that would otherwise have been waiting for a very long time.

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Annex G.9 Reversing deforestation

Summary

Government took up the idea of community forestry in the 1980s, hoping to slow deforestation. In the 1990s, first with World Bank and then Danida support, reforms focused on enabling Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) to own and manage forests, with technical advice from government foresters. This continues, and there are now 19,316 CFUGs, each with a forest to manage legally, three-quarters of them along with most of the front-line government forest staff in the country trained with Danida support. The net result of this national process, despite the sudden departure of Danida from the sector in 2005, is that forest cover has increased from less than 40% to almost 45% of land area (most of it through natural regeneration), and forest quality has improved (likewise), making Nepal one of a tiny group of countries that have reversed net deforestation, and a world leader in community forestry. The CFUGs also kept alive the idea and practices of participatory democracy between elections and during the civil emergency, giving Danida's role in forestry another vital impact, in promoting good governance.

Why it was needed

The livelihoods of many rural people in Nepal depended and still depend on natural forest ecosystems as sources of goods and services that are used directly or indirectly, and can easily be over-used resulting in depletion of renewable natural resources. Nepal had picked up a typical early-20th century forestry system based on government ownership and management of forest lands, which was proving inadequate to prevent over-harvesting, land colonisation, forest degradation and deforestation - dangerous outcomes in such a geologically-fragile landscape with a high rainfall. By the late 1970s, the World Bank was predicting widespread desertification in Nepal, and began working with government to conceptualise a new way forward, based on the idea that forests could be safeguarded and improved if communities had the authority, ecological knowledge and managerial skills to control specific forest areas and use them exclusively and permanently in their own interests.

What was done

From 1978, with World Bank support, government began developing a new forest policy, starting with a Master Plan for the Forestry Sector in 1988 that led to a Community Forestry Directive in 1994, a new Forest Sector Policy in 2000 and then the 10th Five Year Plan and Forest Act in 2003 and Forest Regulations in 2005. The consistent theme was to develop a framework of policy and law to encourage and enable the process of appointing Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) as managers of Community Forests within the national forest estate. The idea was tested through the Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project, and then replicated through the Danida-funded Community Forestry Training Project in the late 1990s, before being extended through Danida's Natural Resource Management Sector Assistance Programme (NARMSAP) in 1999-2005.

These initiatives supported the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) deliver training and extension programmes in 38 hill districts, and five Regional Training and Extension (RTE) Centres. It mainly focused on training and capacity building of District Forest Office (DFO) staff and CFUG members. The strong convergence of policy support and public demand for community forest management meant that large numbers of training events of various kinds were delivered, including about 5,000 involving nearly 165,000 CFUG members (aimed at building their capacity to manage their Community Forests), nearly 1,100 events that involved over 18,000 government field staff (mainly on technical issues concerning inventory and mapping of the Community Forests, non-timber forest products and basic education of forest guards), as well as over 700 events oriented to income-generating activities and nearly 1,100 CFUG networking workshops. In parallel, another component facilitated the legal establishment of CFUGs, handing over of the Community Forests, and the preparation and updating of operational plans of the CFUGs; 2,050 new CFUGs and Community Forests were established, and 3,720 operational plans were prepared or revised.

In addition, Danida had also previously supported the Nepal-Denmark Watershed Management Project in 1996-2001, which focused on the three pilot districts but later also covered nine districts, and with NARMSAP was further extended to 17 districts. Here, the aim was to support government partners and 715 local Community Development Groups (CDGs) in the implementation of natural hazard prevention, development infrastructure protection, land productivity conservation and income generation activities among. The approach to implementation was participatory using CDG formation, bottom-up planning, household budgeting and extension teams of government officers and (female) Community Motivators as vehicles for field implementation. And there were also components on addressing the preservation, improvement and availability of a gene base of important tree species and improving management practices in seed handling and silviculture methods applicable to forest and farmland trees, and on capacity strengthening for the MoFSC itself.

What was achieved

Impact. There is a confidence in all the completion reports and in all interviews that, taken as a whole and over the entire duration of the Danida programme, it has deeply influenced ideas, confidence, motivation and collective capacity among rural communities in the direction of managing their forests and farmlands more sustainably and productively, and among government forestry staff in the direction of accepting and

supporting these priorities. One key knowledge-holder estimated the overall distribution of contributions to the community forestry system in Nepal to be about 20% to the World Bank and Australia for pioneering it, 50% to Denmark for implementing and replicating it, and 30% to the UK and Switzerland for helping to consolidate it after Denmark's departure from the sector. Thus Danida contributed decisively to the formation of new partnerships between the government and local people in forest management, and the system is still being used in Nepal while similar models have been applied successfully in many other countries. More particularly:

- Danida encouraged and enabled the formation of CFUGs in 38 districts, where participatory and inclusive democracy was kept alive for two decades between elections while the number of CFUGs rose to 19,316, making them a vital guarantor of decentralised democratic governance, quite possibly the most potent of all those created with Danida's assistance in Nepal. In the process, they empowered women, the poor, and disadvantaged groups, and many provided resources for community development activities like support for schools, irrigation schemes, and alternative energy programmes, while promoting income-generating activities that improved local livelihoods.
- Danida helped three-quarters of those same CFUGs acquire the rights that have allowed sustainable forest management to prevail in the Mid Hills, covering about 1.8 million hectares of national forest and involving about 1.45 million households (35% of the population of Nepal). Danida facilitated the training of thousands of community members and front-line forestry staff in the principles of multiple-output forestry, making Nepal into a world leader in community-based forest management. As a result, Nepal is one of a tiny group of countries world-wide where deforestation has been reversed, with forest cover having increased from less than 40% to almost 45% of land area (most of it through natural regeneration), and forest quality has improved (likewise).
- Danida also supported implementation of soil conservation and catchment management in 20 districts at various scales through the training and motivation of Community Development Groups (CDGs), which was a major success, mainly due to 'learning by doing', 'coaching' and 'back-stopping' with the support of (female) Community Motivators. Meanwhile, with forests coming under local control, there were gaps in knowledge and skills among and between communities and government foresters which were addressed by establishing Regional Seed Centres and Breeding Seedling Orchards, by training people in how to grow trees better, and by promoting 'conservation through use' of diverse products from local tree species.

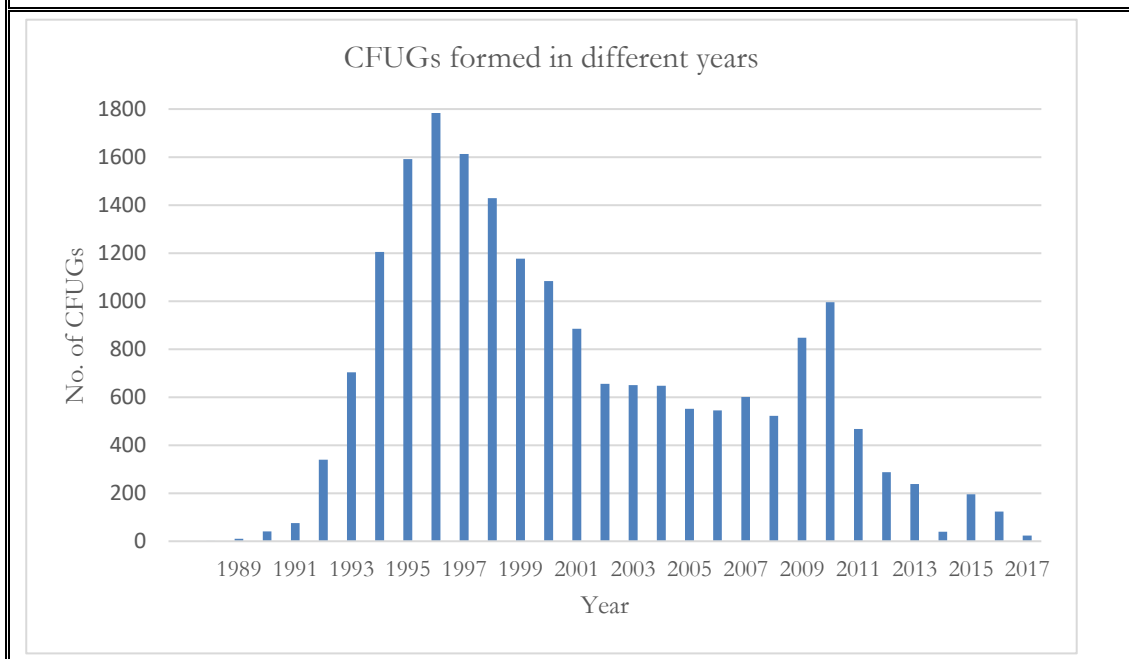
Lessons learned. The key lesson from NARMSAP and its predecessors and legacies is that the community-based resource management (CBRM) approach can be effective if supported by policies and laws that enable the transfer of real powers over renewable natural resources (RNRs) to local management bodies, and training to impart the necessary understanding and skills, and is widely applicable and to any kind of RNR. Its long-term role in community forestry training since 1989 and catchment landscape management since 1996 positioned Danida to have a uniquely constructive role in a formative period in Nepal's forest governance history in 1999-2005. Danida's withdrawal when the 'fruits' of all this were about to ripen was remarked upon with regret by interviewees, despite the important legacy effects that persist to date.

Sustainability. The Forest Policy 2015 recognised community forestry as an important component in overall policy framework. Today, about 35% of the development budget allocated to MoFSC goes to the community forestry programme (or about NPR 400 million). Thus sustainability is likely for key legacies of the Danida programme, including the CFUGs and community forestry in general. The CFUGs persist and continue to multiply as more and more forests are handed over to their management. Because of their longevity and influence at the local level they have tended to take on a role in community development that is more inclusive than was originally envisioned. How the CFUG role will evolve in relation to the newly-elected Local Bodies is unclear and will no doubt vary from place to place, but the CFUGs are permanent and their forests are growing.

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Annex G.10 Improving urban environments

Summary

In 1999-2005, Danida supported the government in a spectacular demonstration of how to build urban environmental awareness, how to regulate environmental standards and encourage both cleaner production and energy efficiency in partnership with business, and how to improve air quality in a growing metropolis. It also, unfortunately, demonstrated how not to build a waste water treatment plant, and how not to disengage from an important sector. Even so, some of the ideas, approaches and skills lived on within government, among the public, and in the form of programmes supported by other donors.

Why it was needed

In the late 1990s, there was a serious lack of capacity for environmental management in the industrial sector, and industrial zones had become extremely polluted because businesses had been protected from regulation to encourage their growth, with the result that they used resources excessively, with low productivity and generating unnecessary wastes, and seemed unlikely to be able to comply with any environmental standards set under the 1993 Nepal Environmental Policy and Action Plan (NEPAP) without considerable technical and other support. Meanwhile, air quality was becoming a problem in the Kathmandu Valley with the rapid growth of poorly-maintained fossil-fuel vehicles, and generators to

compensate for irregular electricity supplies. To correct these trends a high-impact programme to encourage and enable compliance with environmental standards was urgently needed, and would have to involve setting standards, formulating regulations to mandate them, training to enable them to be met, and various incentives and disincentives to encourage them to be complied with.

What was done

Danida's Environment Sector Programme Support targeted the following main areas:

- establishing a new Institute of Environmental Management to take the lead on awareness-raising, training, research and advising on standards;
- assessing industrial businesses for cleaner production needs and opportunities, and establishing a credit mechanism to finance investments in cleaner production;
- helping businesses identify self-financing ways in which they could increase their energy efficiency;
- building a waste-water treatment plant (WWTP) in one of the industrial zones, along with a district-level sewer system for industrial wastewater and an extended and rehabilitated drainage system;
- institutional strengthening of the three ministries responsible for environmental management; and
- improving air quality in the Kathmandu Valley, by promoting use of electric vehicles and establishing an ambient air quality monitoring system (AQMS).

What was achieved

Impact. The WWTP was rather unsuccessful due to design issues, but the other components of Danida's ESPPS achieved the following.

- Institute of Environmental Management. By 2005, the IEM had created high levels of public awareness, including through training, posters, brochures, manuals, schools curricula, and 'baseline study reports' on various industrial sub-sectors (leather tanning, vegetable oil & ghee, soap, wool dyeing, sugar, fermentation, textiles, dairy, jute mills, brick-making, pulp & paper, paint, plastic bags, and cement).
- Cleaner Production. Almost all industrial businesses were assessed for cleaner production needs and opportunities, and many cleaner production options were identified and responses designed. A Cleaner Production Fund (CPF) was established with Himalayan Bank Limited as manager, and loan approvals increased steadily (the fund was later transferred to another component to compensate for a shortfall there). Monitoring and reporting occurred at numerous businesses, and confirmed annual reductions of 9,600 tonnes of solid waste and 43,600 tonnes of GHGs in total, and cost saving of over NPR 805,000 per business per year.
- Energy efficiency. Some 65 training events had about 1,700 participants, energy efficiency audits were done of 360 business units, over 2,100 options for energy and emission savings were identified, significant energy and emission savings at 117 business units were demonstrated, an industrial energy efficiency policy was developed, and public awareness was raised.
- Institutional Strengthening of ministries (MoPE, MoICS & MoLTM). Improved institutional capacity was achieved through or in terms of: staff training; formulation and enforcement of environmental standards; preparation, evaluation and monitoring of Compliance Plans for industries; monitoring of ambient pollution levels; managing data on cleaner technologies among industries; industry and public awareness raising; demonstration and integration of environmental management systems and cleaner production and energy efficiency policies; and review and revision of legislation.
- Air Quality Management in the Kathmandu Valley. There were intense efforts to promote use of electric vehicles (lobbying groups, training of mechanics and drivers, and a Clean Vehicle Promotion Fund), and better maintenance and emission control for other vehicles. Vehicle emission standards were established, and enforcement and testing systems introduced to cover about 60,000 vehicles per year. An ambient air quality monitoring system (AQMS) was established in the Kathmandu Valley and used to monitor particulates, benzene, nitrogen and sulphur oxides, advise the public, and inform policy, and improved air quality was achieved (e.g. a 10% reduction in PM10 - particulate matter with

a diameter of 10 µm or less). A huge impact on public awareness was achieved.

Lessons learned.

- The concept of a training institution like the IEM, and the principle that businesses should be required, and expected to be willing, to pay for compliance with environmental standards and to invest in cost-savings associated with cleaner production and particularly energy efficiency (which has an immediate effect on profitability) were in the process of being established when the programme ended in 2005. That the approach is valid is shown by the global system of National Cleaner Production Centres sponsored and monitored by UNIDO and UNEP, which embraces several Asian countries not including Nepal.
- Urban air quality can be improved, but multiple processes have to happen at once, including legislation, monitoring, enforcement, awareness-raising, targeted investment incentives, institutional cooperation, and for electric vehicles, battery and power-unit technology, battery charging, exchange, reuse and recycling, electricity supply and distribution, and training.
- There is sometimes a historic opportunity to put in place ideas, regulations, and enforcement and compliance systems at the right time to head off a predictable deterioration in environmental quality, which if the timing is missed will allow irreversible damage to occur and problems to become impossibly severe later on, as happened with air quality in the Kathmandu Valley.

Sustainability. Sustainability is likely for legacies of the programme where environmental management regulations exist, including the compliance sector based on ISO14001 (the core set of standards used by organizations for designing and implementing an effective Environmental Management System), which was taken up by the private sector through the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and the Confederation of Nepalese Industry (CNI), as well as energy efficiency activities taken over by the Nepal Energy Efficiency Programme funded by Germany, and an air quality monitoring programme in the Kathmandu Valley later funded by the US and others. Some aspects of institutional strengthening also suggest sustainability, including the agreement of roles and responsibilities between the ministries, the establishment of new regulations and standards, and the creation of the Nepal Occupational Safety and Health Association by the ministries. All in all, the ESPS was a spectacular demonstration of how to create mass awareness of urban and industrial environmental issues, how to introduce the idea that businesses must pay to comply with regulated environmental standards and adopt clean technology and energy efficiency measures, and how to implement and monitor environmental quality standards.

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