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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
ARI	Advocacy Readiness Index
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CA	Common Assembly
CAG	Content Advisory Group
CAHURAST	Campaign for Human Rights and Social Transformation Nepal
CAR	Community Action Researcher
CDC	Community Development Center
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CDJMC	Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communications
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CS:MAP	Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project
COP	Chief of Party
CR	Community Reporter
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCC	District Coordination Committee
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	Development Exchange Center
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EA	Equal Access
ECN	Election Commission of Nepal
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry
FNJ	Federation of Nepali Journalists
FOA	Freedom of Association
FOE	Freedom of Expression
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GGB	Good Governance Barometer
GoGo	Good Governance Foundation
GoN	Government of Nepal

HEAD	Health, Education, Agriculture and Disaster Risk Reduction
HHS	Household Survey
HRPLSC	Human Right Protection and Legal Services Center
HURADEC	Human Right Awareness and Development Center
HURON	Human Rights Organization in Nepal
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
IRDC	Indreni Rural Development Center
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IHRICON	Institute of Human Right Communication Nepal
IIP	Institutional Improvement Plan
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Center
INWOLAG	Indigenous Women's Legal Awareness Group
IRDC	Indreni Rural Development Center Nepal
IRDS	Integrated Rural Development Society
ISO	Intermediary Service Organization
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
KLL	Kathmandu Living Labs
LDAG	Listening Discussion and Action Group
MAG	Media Advocacy Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MITRA Samaj	Measures for Intervention Training Research and Action Samaj
MoAD	Ministry of Agricultural Development
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NEOC	National Election Observation Committee
NEPAN	Nepal Participatory Action Network
NFN	NGO Federation of Nepal
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Information Commission
NMCP	National Mass Communication Policy
NNSWA	Nepal National Social Welfare Association

NPC	National Planning Commission
NRA	National Reconstruction Authority
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OMOD	Online Media Operation Directive
PEAR	Participatory and Evidence-based Action Research
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking System
PPWG	Public-Private Working Group
PSA	Public Service Announcement
PSO	Public Services Oversight
RADO-Nepal	Rural Awareness and Development Organization – Nepal
RTI	Right to Information
RWDC	Rural Women Development Center
SA	Social Accountability
SAP-Nepal	South Asia Partnership Nepal
SBC	<i>Sajha Boli Chautari</i>
SMS	Short Message Service
SOCH	Society for Humanism Nepal
SSMK	<i>Saathi Sanga Manka Kura</i>
SWC	Social Welfare Council
SWDB	Social Welfare and Development Bill
TA	Technical Assistance
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USC Nepal	Unity Service Center Nepal
VDC	Village Development Committee

Executive Summary

Nepal entered the phase of implementing the new constitution in a full-fledged way with the election of national parliament and provinces held in November and December 2017. With the 753 local government units already elected earlier in the year, the country began to move towards a stable democratic course, ending the political transition of more than a decade. Although the elections have taken place and the new three-tier structures of government have come into place, it is going to take several months for the new representatives at local and provincial levels to figure out their effective roles, draft all required laws and regulations and begin to function effectively. While this is not unique in this region, the local government units in the CDCS districts are at an early phase in shaping their own roles, defining working relationships with the province and national government, and in building their own capacities. In the earth-quake affected districts, the election of local government has given a positive message in general, as in other districts. However, post-earthquake reconstruction and recovery efforts have been slow, and earthquake victims' grievances have not addressed as expected.

In the first quarter of Year III, the Civil Society: Mutual Accountability Project (CS:MAP) carried out intensive advocacy and lobbying activities at the national level to improve the civil society and media enabling environment as Nepal enters a new phase in its state restructuring process. CS:MAP civil society and media coalitions on civil society and media contributed to vibrant policy debate on the legal framework for these two sectors, with additional help from a new local partner and grant to Nepal's largest university. CS:MAP also supported national election observation efforts for national and provincial elections, held in November and December 2017. And, activities in 34 districts now have the necessary structures in place to promote civic participation in local government planning and enhance civil society and media's role in service delivery oversight, transparency and accountability. CS:MAP's five intermediary support organization (ISO) partners continued to provide capacity-building support, technical assistance and mentoring to 14 local civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in advocacy and oversight activities.

National-level achievements: CS:MAP facilitated national policy discussions on role of civil society and media have been instrumental in bringing together key actors of the sectors to discuss the status of policy issues. The policy discussion platform and the national level advocacy and lobby work carried out through CS:MAP's partners have resulted in making the advocacy work informed and coordinated. Major civil society and media actors have carried out their advocacy work jointly, organized larger public discussions, interacted with government and political actors to advocate for policy change. The national coalitions on civil society and media supported by CS:MAP have been central platforms to review, assess and develop action plans for coordinated interventions on policy change. The media and civil society coalitions have interacted and agreed that the two sectors cannot advocate separately as the source of freedom and association is one for the two sectors to operate freely.

Advocacy interventions with government and other stakeholders by CS:MAP partners resulted in the removal of the 2017 Sample Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Management Act from the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) website. During the reporting period, MoFALD shared a number of sample laws and policies that provide guidance for local governance. These documents raised concerns related to freedom of association and freedom of expression. CS:MAP organized discussion programs concerning these, focusing on the adverse effects of certain provisions; these concerns were submitted to MoFALD. The Ministry reaffirmed

the need for reforms of these two policies after consulting with major stakeholders. Partners NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) and Tribhuvan University's Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (CDJMC) organized discussions related to the enabling environment for civil society and media self-regulation during elections, respectively. NFN also produced a preliminary draft of its "Understanding CSOs" handbook, which contains information on civil society organizations and their enabling environment. And, in partnership with Interface Nepal, CS:MAP launched a Public Outreach Campaign. Both the handbook and the Campaign are intended to improve perceptions and understanding of the civil society and media sectors.

NFN also mobilized the civil society coalition that was formed in Year II. The first coalition meeting resulted in a task force to draft self-regulation and internal governance guidelines for CSOs, which will be presented at the next coalition meeting. The Task Force Committee, formed by Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), likewise developed an outline for an institutional governance self-assessment toolkit for media. Adopting a self-regulation for the sectors has now been a prominent agenda in the coalitions of media and civil society as a result of the CS:MAP contribution. The civil society and media sectors, as reflected in coalition meetings and in other forums, have realized that unless they adopt a self-regulation and improve their own internal governance, the government may try to impose restrictive laws and policies. This discourse has led to pressure the sectors to enhance their own legitimacy in the eyes of the public too.

CS:MAP partner National Election Observation Committee (NEOC), the civil society coalition for election observation, drafted an advocacy plan aimed at reforming the electoral legal and policy framework, based on findings from observations of federal, provincial and local elections and taking into consideration the established election principles and benchmarks of a democratic election. CS:MAP supported NEOC for these observations of provincial and federal elections, held on November 26 and December 7, 2017. The five key priorities in the draft advocacy plan includes; equal suffrage for all adults, effective voter based on existing technology and resources, improved code of conduct with proper implementation strategies, auditing campaign finance, and operationalizing the inclusion approach at polling center for disabled and women.

A study is being carried out by Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Tribhuvan University to assess to what extent major Nepali media has demonstrated credible (accurate, unbiased, balanced, fair, professional) coverage and implemented self-regulation during provincial and federal election in Nepal. Tribhuvan University will apply this study for improving media credibility through awareness, and the adoption and practice of self-regulation mechanisms. In addition, this study will be applied in curriculum design as academic course material by the Department.

District-level achievements: CS:MAP continued to strengthen the advocacy and government engagement capacity of 14 district-based CSOs and media organizations through trainings and direct mentoring. Partner CSOs are now able to implement Advocacy Readiness Index (ARI) plans, and to lead social accountability trainings for district level stakeholders and Common Assembly (CA) members. In addition, 34 CS:MAP district coordinators – hired by local CSO partners – participated in training related to public services oversight (PSO), including the role of CSOs in PSO and an introduction to PSO software and its uses.

Public-private working groups (PPWGs) continue to function effectively, and offer a mechanism by which CA participants at the municipal or *gaunpalika* level can discuss community concerns, share lessons learned across local units and identify possible solutions to common problems. A

total of 66 CA meetings this quarter also convened both public service providers and service seekers to discuss issues related to local governance, resulting in joint implementation plans to address challenges.

With the formation of four coalitions during this reporting period, CS:MAP has now supported the development of 34 coalitions in the health, education, agriculture and disaster readiness and response sectors, including a number of cross-sectoral coalitions. Coalition members meet to discuss issues in their districts and share memoranda with relevant government offices, especially during elections. In addition, CS:MAP established eight *Shreejanshil Shakhas* (innovation hubs) in Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Rolpa, Surkhet, Palpa, Kapilvastu, Gulmi and Kanchanpur districts during this reporting period. Listening Discussion and Action Groups (LDAGs) and CAs hold meetings at the *Shakhas*, and have begun generating ideas for collective action to improve local-level governance. And, GGB modeling workshops have been conducted in all six *gaunpalikas* that were selected for GGB implementation, and indicators have been finalized.

Project partners have benefited from a number of trainings and tools this quarter, including a participatory and evidence-based action research (PEAR) training manual and a PEAR toolkit that was prepared with technical support from Equal Access (EA) and translated into the Nepali language. Five organizational development trainings were provided for CSOs during this quarter, focusing on organizational capacity assessments (OCAs), the Advocacy Readiness Index (ARI) and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). As envisioned in the Annual Work Plan (AWP), the training and technical assistance to local CSOs focused on monitoring and oversight of public services delivery and public resources use, as well as strategic communications. To prevent training fatigue, CS:MAP ISO partners helped CSOs educate district line agencies, PPWG members, local elected representatives and public service providers on the use of social accountability tools in strengthening local governance. In addition, seven CSOs have selected issues and plan to initiate advocacy activities at the district level.

Media accomplishments: Ten interactive groups have been formed on the *MeroReport* platform, with a total of 38 members, and initial group discussions have begun. Ninety new members joined the platform, and there were 1,332 page visits, of which 1,011 were unique page views.

A total of 19 Content Advisory Group (CAG) meetings were held with 234 members, which informed the production of 66 *Sajha Boli* episodes. Six central-level episodes were produced by EA and the remaining 60 were produced by local production partner radio stations. CS:MAP also launched the third *SMS My Voice* campaign in November 2017 with a focus on addressing corruption. The campaign has resulted in 263 responses to date.

Sustainability and local ownership: At the close of Quarter 1, many of the policy and regulatory reform activities and mechanisms initiated in Year II are now owned by local actors. CS:MAP national advocacy partners, especially coalition leads NFN and Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), have begun coordinating advocacy activities with national-level partners and the wider civil society sector to improve the regulatory framework, assisted by implementing partner the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). Other national advocacy partners, including the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC), Good Governance Foundation (GoGo Foundation), South Asia Partnership Nepal (SAP Nepal) and Freedom Forum are organizing collective actions to strengthen the civil society and media legal environment. Likewise, Samjhauta Nepal and the Media Advocacy Group (MAG) are assisting the coalition in applying a GESI lens to their work. Coalition leads are also spearheading efforts to engage with government, and have distributed a

circular to all its district representatives detailing opportunities for coordination with CS:MAP local CSO partners.

Challenges and Lessons: Some project activities were delayed due to the federal and provincial elections, causing CS:MAP to shift training plans, but local officials remained open to and participated in these and other project activities. In response to quality issues with project support for production partners, CS:MAP also revised its mentoring plan for local FM radio stations, allowing for more effective and intensive support. Other mitigation measures included interventions to increase journalist trainee enthusiasm and buy-in to promote follow-through, revisions to LDAGs to ensure robust participation and diverse representation, and support for improved coordination with Community Reports (CRs) and among project partners. Finally, CS:MAP is planning to find or develop a GESI context analysis tool to ensure that project activities promote meaningful inclusion and participation of women and individuals from marginalized groups.

1. Context

National Context:

The government of Nepal and the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) conducted the first federal and provincial elections under Nepal's new Constitution on November 26 and December 7, 2017. All major political parties and forces participated in the election, including the Madhes-based parties, which had also participated in the third phase of local election despite previous opposition. These elections represent a significant milestone in the implementation of the new Constitution and associated realization of state restructuring.

Although the Maoist faction, led by Netra Bikram Chand 'Biplav', appealed for a boycott of the elections, the group was not able to disrupt the process. But, the bombings they carried out in numerous locations across the country raised concerns about voter safety in the lead-up to the elections. However, the elections proceeded with no major obstructions or violence, and the voter turn-out was 69.58 percent nationwide.

In this quarter 753 newly-elected officials in local government units gained a stronger sense of their roles and responsibilities, beginning their work with high levels of enthusiasm. Public expectations were likewise high as the communities elected new representatives to fill a two decades-long leadership gap. The officials at times faced a lack of clarity regarding their roles and responsibilities, as well as an absence of the regulations needed for effective performance. The restructuring of service delivery offices ranging from the district level to local government is still in process. There are significant capacity needs related to service delivery, including governance challenges involving education and health within local units. Existing capacity at the district level is insufficient, and these gaps further affect local units. Despite these limitations, elections at all three levels have revived citizens' hopes that democratic progress continues.

Also this quarter, the MoFALD has shared a number of sample laws and policies that provide guidance for local governance. These include the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act and the 2017 Sample FM Radio (Management and Operation) Procedures, both of which raised concerns related to freedom of association and freedom of expression. CS:MAP organized discussion programs concerning these two documents, focusing on the adverse effects of certain provisions; these concerns were submitted to MoFALD. The Ministry reaffirmed the need for reforms of these two policies after consulting with major stakeholders.

At the same time, the National Mass Communication Policy Implementation Advisory High-level Committee revealed that they are in the final stage of preparing the drafts of three laws: a law related to regulating advertisement, a law related to the establishment of public service broadcasting and an umbrella law regulating mass communication. Although CS:MAP media coalition FNJ offered to provide feedback during the drafting process, the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Committee did not provide them with an opportunity to do so. FNJ has publicly expressed their disapproval with this Committee. Discussions of these laws have started, and during a program organized by CS:MAP implementing partner Freedom Forum the Chair of the Committee, Kashi Raj Dahal, announced that he will share the draft laws and seek input from civil society. The drafts were not made public during this quarter.

The network of old local government bodies, Municipal Association of Nepal and National Association of Village Development Committees in Nepal have also been assisting their members to draft laws which include provisions on media and CSO management and partnership. CS:MAP

field visits to 16 districts indicate that there is growing interest in discussing the law-making process at the local government level.

Context in Earthquake-Affected Districts:

Due to management and coordination issues, post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction efforts continue at a slow pace. For instance, although the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) deployed engineers, sub-engineers and assistant sub-engineers in required numbers to provide technical support for reconstruction efforts, many have not reported for duty. The NRA has resorted to website appeals asking municipalities and *guanpalikas* to report instances of workers failing to appear for duty at their respective local units so that personnel can be replaced, yet these and other challenges have delayed progress. In addition, the NRA's former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) resigned in October 2017 to contest parliamentary elections. This is the fourth change in leadership in the two years since the NRA has been in existence.

According to an NRA directive, all private houses receiving the government's reconstruction grants are to complete construction of houses by July 2018 (the end of Nepali fiscal year). Yet, according to NRA data as of December 31, 2017 only 20% of the 678,096 beneficiaries who have signed grant agreements with the government have received the second tranche of the grant, although 98.6% received the first tranche; and, only 5.4% have received the third and final tranche. According to a schedule endorsed by the NRA Directive Committee in July 2017, beneficiaries who received the first tranche prior to July 2017 should have started rebuilding their houses by January 15, 2018 to be eligible to receive the second tranche. Given that the deadline was only 15 days away when the data was last updated, it is unlikely that a significant number of beneficiaries were able to begin construction and retain eligibility for the second tranche prior to January 15, 2018. Media sources suggest multiple factors that prevent beneficiaries from rebuilding prior to the stipulated deadline, including delays caused by the local, provincial and federal elections held in multiple phases in 2017; construction material shortages and escalating costs; insufficient human resources; confusion regarding design standards; and migration to urban locations.

To address some of these challenges, CS:MAP has initiated activities aimed at facilitating dialogue between CSO and media partners with local representatives elected through phased local-level elections in May and June 2017. The aim is to develop civil society mechanisms for oversight of and advocacy for reconstruction work, as well as public resources and services in the health, education and agriculture sector, ensuring equitable and timely service delivery. Partner CSOs support mechanisms such as the Common Assembly (CA), PPWGs, and radio Listening Discussion and Action Groups (LDAGs) to discuss priority issues with public officials. Likewise, the CS:MAP partner radio stations produce and broadcast radio program episodes that inform citizens about policies and provisions, and also issue a call to action related to advocacy and oversight related to public resource use and service delivery in earthquake-affected districts. In the coming quarter, additional interventions can build on this momentum.

Context in the Western Districts:

The beginning of federalization increased people's expectation of getting closer to *Singhadurbar*. But, the systems necessary for this are not yet in place. The newly established ward offices – formerly organized into Village Development Committees – lack institutional knowledge or clear processes to fulfill responsibilities. For instance, ward offices at times allocate funds designated for social sectors to infrastructure. Local units are working to develop local laws, policies, regulations and guidelines based on sample laws and policies circulated by the MoFALD. But, the

process suffers from a lack of guidelines, limited human resources and few opportunities for citizen input. Citizens have raised concern over lack of clarity regarding district office and local government officials' roles; this is exacerbated by the unavailability of elected representatives in local units as many *gaunpalikas* and municipalities have established their contact offices in district headquarters. In some places, people have started to question local government capacity and elected representatives' ability to produce concrete results. People were getting basic services related to health and agriculture from the respective district offices before the local elections. But after the elections, the new structure and new system could not provide all the services from the local unit which created confusion in people. As a result, there is delay in public services delivery. There are still people who are going to respective district offices for the services. For example, a local resident in Rasuwa could not find a health worker in the local health post. He then called the District Health Office only to know that he has to go to the respective *gaunpalika* for the services in the new system.

At the *gaunpalika*/municipality level, many of the required government employees are not yet in place. Although all district-level offices will be shifted to local units by April 11, 2018, even staff who are already deployed are struggling to clarify their roles and fulfill citizen demands. The lack of staff and confusion of responsibilities has increased staff workload and made it difficult to maintain quality, timely services. Conflict between elected representatives and government staff has also increased, and several laws and guidelines, including the users' committee formation and mobilization guidelines, have not been developed. This has increased local unit reliance of civil society support for law-making, office management and improvements in governance. While challenging, this reliance provides an opportunity for CS:MAP to support local government develop their capacity for law-making and connect them with individuals who can offer support in this area. In addition, as per the internal informal survey conducted through the implementing partners, almost 51.5% of the total elected officials – including mayors/deputy mayors in municipalities and chairs/vice chairpersons in *gaunpalika* - in 34 CS:MAP working districts have a background of previous work or association with CSOs. As a result, citizens have high expectations of local government openness to civil society and citizen participation in law-making, the handling of grievances, third-party monitoring and increased transparency. At the same time, CSOs are not always capable of meeting the government's needs and expectations, and may lack the systems needed to ensure their legitimacy.

2. Progress against targets per objective

The following immediate outputs and outcomes were achieved as a result of CS:MAP activities during this reporting period.

Objective 1: Strengthened enabling environment for civil society and media

Result 1.1 Improved legal and policy framework based on international standards that leads to a better operating environment and strengthened capacity for civil society.

- Through advocacy and lobbying activities with government and other stakeholders, CS:MAP partners are able to remove the restrictive 2017 Sample NGO Management Act from the MoFALD website. The MoFALD has demonstrated a willingness to improve the Act in consultation with CSOs.

- The civil society coalition NEOC drafted an advocacy plan to improve election-related legal and policy frameworks for reforming electoral processes based on findings from the observation of federal, provincial and local elections held in 2017.
- More than 700 civil society leaders from across the country, endorsed a declaration demanding the formulation of CSO-friendly social development act and reduction of hurdles through state-imposed tax regimes and administrative regulations in the *National Civil Society Conference* on November 7-8, 2017 in Kathmandu.
- Based on the international journalistic and media self-regulation best practices, an assessment of Nepali media is being carried out by Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Tribhuvan University (TU). This will be applied for improving media credibility through awareness; adoption and practice of self-regulation mechanisms; and curriculum design as academic course material by the Department.

Result 1.2 Improved public understanding and confidence in the role of CSOs and media.

- CS:MAP, in partnership with Interface Nepal, launched the Public Outreach Campaign in October 2017. The campaign was designed based on the findings of the perception survey
- Civil society coalition lead of CS:MAP has initiated a discourse to broaden the understanding of civil society. Through a series of discussions and interaction a handbook on “Understanding CSOs” has been drafted. The booklet contains information on CSOs and their enabling environment, and is intended to build understanding of and confidence in the roles of CSOs and civil society activists.
- In consultation with electoral stakeholders and different civil society coalitions, National Election Observation Committee (NEOC) has developed and launched an advocacy plan for the improvement of electoral process in Nepal. CS:MAP supported NEOC during the observation of two phases of provincial and federal elections held on November 26 and December 7, 2017. In order to gain a fuller understanding of dynamics before, during and after the election, 48 long-term observers (one in each electoral constituency in Province 2 and 7) and a total of 480 trained observers (10 in each electoral constituency in all seven provinces) were deployed during the elections.

Result 1.3 Improved self-regulation of the sector and internal governance of CSOs and media.

- NFN activated the civil society coalition, which was formed in Year II. The first coalition meeting was held on December 29, 2017 and resulted in a task force assigned to draft a self-regulation and internal governance guidelines for CSOs. The task force will present their guidelines at the next meeting.
- CDJMC held extensive discussions on the research objectives, modalities and methodologies related to the status of media self-regulation during elections. Participants included faculty-cum-research team members and FHI 360 representatives. The workshop took place on December 17, 2017 as the result of an agreement between CDJMC and FHI 360 to support media self-regulation status and recommendations.
- The Task Force formed by FJN developed an outline for an institutional governance self-assessment toolkit for media. The toolkit could not be finalized by the anticipated deadline due to the engagement of FNJ members and other journalists in November and December 2017 federal and provincial elections.

Application of strategic approach and relevance of critical assumption

Local actors have assumed ownership of the policy and regulatory reform works initiated in Year II. CS:MAP local advocacy partners, especially coalition leads NFN and FNJ, have been able to bring in civil society and media actors and coordinate advocacy activities with all national-level partners and the broader civil society sector to improve the Nepali regulatory framework. In addition, drawing on findings from the Year II consultative multi-stakeholder conferences and comprehensive assessments, CS:MAP partner organizations could contribute to collective actions for strengthening the civil society legal environment. CS:MAP partner ICNL has continued to help the coalition leads develop strategies for legal reform. ICNL also established a regular meeting with FHI 360 program staff to allow for improved communication. NFN and FNJ have sent a communication to all district representatives outlining opportunities for coordination with CS:MAP CSO partners at the district level, and for securing buy-in at the local level.

The critical assumptions made during the development of the Year III Annual Work Plan allowed CS:MAP to account for delays in implementation of the Constitution due to federal and provincial elections which also impacted the legislation of civil society and media laws. But, clarity regarding the roles of NFN and FNJ, and their willingness to move ahead with project activities, helped alleviate any delays. The local government is also eager for governance reform, and interested in improving service delivery and resource use.

Challenges and CS:MAP mitigation measures adapted

As anticipated in the AWP, the elections held in November and December 2017, which is a part of constitutional implementation process, slowed the activities of CS:MAP, including its interventions with key government officials and champions. But, a series of one-on-one meetings with government officials from several ministries and departments, representatives from the Social Welfare Council (SWC), and newly elected officials for local government units helped improve collaboration, coordination and trust among government agencies and civil societies. Instances of CSO collaboration and information sharing with government agencies increased, and the CSOs also realized the importance of self-regulation mechanisms to improve the public perception of CSOs. They have started discussions to identify the best mechanisms for the Nepali context.

Objective 2: Improved civil society and media capacity for effective policy advocacy and government engagement.

Result 2.1 Strengthened CSO initiatives to coordinate with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and to implement constructive advocacy strategies.

- CS:MAP strengthened the advocacy and government-engagement capacity of 14 district-based CSOs and media organizations through four trainings (public services oversight, communication strategy, information and communications technology (ICT) training and facilitation training) and seven instances of direct mentoring.
- Seven local CSO partners were supported to carry out ARI action plans and to conduct social accountability trainings for district-level stakeholders and CA members.
- 34 district coordinators from CS:MAP local CSO partners learned about the concept, scope, and effectiveness of public services oversight (PSO), differences between PSO and social accountability, the role of CSOs in PSO, international and local PSO best practices,

the introduction and application of the PSO software application, PSO software application compared to *Hello Sarkar*, and conflict sensitivity.

- 66 CA meetings assisted in increasing the participation of public service providers and service seekers in a common forum to discuss local governance issues. These meetings contributed to the development of a joint implementation plan to address these issues. And, PPWGs have raised hopes for the establishment of a mechanism at the district or *gaunpalika* level for discussion and information sharing.

Result 2.2 Improved coalition-building between local and national CSOs, and between CSOs and the media, that leads to joint actions undertaken on selected policy priorities across sectors.

- Four coalitions were formed during this reporting period, for a total of 34 CS:MAP coalitions overall: Health, Education, Agriculture and Disaster Risk Reduction (HEAD) - 11, agriculture - four, health - six, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) - two, education - nine, health and education (HE) - one and health, education and agriculture (HEA) - one. Coalition meetings have addressed common district issues and have resulted in memoranda that are shared with the relevant government offices or sectors, especially during the elections.
- Eight *Shreejanshil Shakhas* were established in Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Rolpa, Surkhet, Palpa, Kapilvastu, Gulmi and Kanchanpur districts during the reporting period. The *Shakhas* are being used as neutral venues to conduct meeting with CSOs and media, as well as the regular meetings of LDAGs and CAs. The *Shreejanshil Shakhas* provided the common space for the groups which generated ideas for collective action in improving governance at the local level.

Result 2.3 Improved CSO and media capacity to conduct participatory and evidence-based research on issues, policy, and enforcement in order to benefit marginalized groups.

- MITRA Samaj and NEPAN prepared a PEAR training manual and PEAR toolkit translated into the Nepali language, with technical support from EA.
- Seven CSOs have selected issues and planned related advocacy at the district level.
- 31 participants from CS:MAP ISO partners and local CSO partners were trained during a two-day workshop: “Strategic communications for Civil Society Organizations.”

Application of strategic approach and relevance of critical assumption:

As envisioned in AWP, the capacity building of local CSOs focused on providing in-depth knowledge in monitoring and oversight of public services delivery and public resources use. The comparative knowledge involving tools and techniques for public services oversight, using social accountability tools, helped local CSO partners understand the role of citizens, political parties and elected representatives (local, provincial and federal). The practical knowledge involving strategic communication assisted CSO partners in understanding the elements of an effective communications plan. To prevent training fatigue, CS:MAP ISO partners worked with CSO partners to help district line agencies, PPWG members, local elected representatives and public service providers understand the use of social accountability tools in strengthening local governance. Three ISOs were mobilized to coach and mentor 14 CSOs to provide technical support to promote implementation of OCA and ARI action plans and the use of social accountability tools.

From the beginning of ISO periods of performance, ISOs were assigned to support CSOs based on their geographical location and areas of expertise. Though CS:MAP had to shift some trainings due to federal and provincial elections, the participation of local elected representatives in the structures created by CS:MAP is encouraging. Though it is not feasible to hold large group meetings in *Shreejanshil Shakhas* in all 34 districts, most of the CSOs have started to use the *Shreejanshil Shakhas* for joint meetings of CSOs, media and other local-level stakeholders, along with CA and LDAG meetings. These neutral venues will be used more often in the future to support collaboration.

Challenges and CS:MAP mitigation measures adapted

Though creating HEAD network at the district level has not presented a challenge, genuine collaboration and coordination will require additional effort. In at least 10 districts, HEAD network members are engaged in discussion on the role of CSOs given the changing context and new government structures. In addition, some networks are planning to hold joint meetings among CSOs and media representatives to coordinate efforts aimed at developing laws at the *gaunpalika* and municipal level. Given the differences in CS:MAP-supported policy development at the local and national levels, the CS:MAP team is exploring overlap between the national-level focus on civil society strengthening and local-level focus on improvements in HEAD policies.

Objective 3: More coordinated and effective civil society and media oversight of public resource use and public service delivery.

Result 3.1 Improved capacity of local CSOs, media, and community-based organizations to monitor and report on cross-sectoral public service delivery, based on common standards applicable to each sector.

- CA members, PPWG members, private sectors, and board members from partner organizations received training on social accountability mechanisms.
- CS:MAP partner Indreni Rural Development Center (IRDC) is consulting with Kapilvastu stakeholders to identify the *gaunpalika* in which to implement the Good Governance Barometer (GGB). Based on its population diversity and stakeholder inputs, CS:MAP is approaching the Suddodhan *gaunpalika* to discuss GGB implementation; the outcome will be shared in the next reporting period.
- Each of the six *gaunpalikas* that were previously identified to implement the GGB have conducted GGB modeling workshops and finalized GGB indicators.
- Ten interactive groups have been formed on the *MeroReport* platform and initial discussions between group members have begun. There are a total of 38 members in these groups. This quarter, there were 1,332 page visits, of which 1,011 were unique page views. new members joined in this period with a cumulative membership of 1,965 so far. new blogposts were made this quarter with a cumulative total of 5,770 blogposts made so far. There are now 1,728 fans on the *MeroReport* Facebook page, and 3,733 followers on its Twitter page.

Result 3.2: Improved bottom-up coordination between community, district, and national formal and informal CSOs engaged in public service oversight.

- Coalitions were formed in all CS:MAP working districts; the coalitions have begun joint initiatives.
- Facilitators for all 34 CS:MAP working districts have received facilitation skills training.

Result 3.3 Improved citizen awareness and use of available GoN social accountability mechanisms.

- 19 Content Advisory Group (CAG) meetings were held during this reporting period. A total of 234 members provided their inputs in these meetings.
- 66 *Sajha Boli* episodes produced and broadcast. EA produced six central-level programs, and the remaining 60 programs were produced by CS:MAP's 10 local production partner radio stations.
- Elected representatives in CS:MAP working districts have been trained on GoN social accountability mechanisms.

Result 3.4 Improved citizen engagement in media and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools to strengthen public participation and oversight.

- Kathmandu Living Labs (KLL) provided a training of trainers (ToT) on ICT to partner organization staff.
- The third *SMS My Voice* campaign, which encourages youth to question elected representatives, was launched in November 2017 with a focus on curbing corruption. A total of 263 queries (257 callers via interactive voice response (IVR) and 6 via short message service (SMS)) have been received through this campaign. The campaign will continue until March 2018.

Application of strategic approach and relevance of critical assumption

Although CSOs have varying levels of understanding of the GGB, program coordinators for Human Right Protection and Legal Services (HRPLSC), IRDS and Samudayik Sarathi are successfully implementing the GGB in their respective districts. The ward chairpersons and secretaries, and *gaunpalika* staff in the HEA sectors are being educated on the GGB process to increase buy-in. As anticipated in the AWP, the preparatory period has increased local ownership.

Listenership trends are encouraging for the *Sajha Boli* and *Saathi Sanga Manka Kura* radio programs, with rapid increases in the number of listeners interacting with the programs through the *Sajha Boli Chautari*. *MeroReport* has also seen an increase in the number of members signing in. Also during this quarter, eight cross-sectoral groups were formed and preliminary discussions were initiated. As CS:MAP partner CSOs grow in familiarity with actions emerging from PPWGs, CAs, LDAGs and the expansion of civic activism, it is expected that *MeroReport* will serve as a more vibrant space for such discussions. LDAGs are now functional, and anecdotal evidence suggests that discussions following radio programs are leading to action.

However, a few LDAGs require reform to ensure more effective participation and action resulting from collective listening, discussion and follow-through. The IVR platform has proven effective in engaging radio audiences, as has the *SMS My Voice* campaign. While a GESI analysis of such audience interactivity is difficult, as we refrain from asking questions about ethnicity, there is the need to apply a GESI lens to IVR discussions. Starting this quarter, questions will be framed to support such analysis.

Following the restructuring of local units and completion of local election, the GoN endorsed Local Self Governance Act 2074. Article 15 specifies that *gaunpalika* can mobilize and coordinate CSOs, private sectors and users' committees for improved development and more effective service delivery. Article 25-1 states that CSOs should implement their activities in close coordination with *gaunpalikas*. However, elected representatives and local government officials often do not deal with CSOs as potential change agents; rather, they are seen as donor-supported entities with limited impact. CSOs are also faulted for failing to lead anticorruption movements; their involvement with local units is often a result of nepotism, and they struggle with transparency and accountability.

Challenges and CS:MAP mitigation measures adapted

In *gaunpalikas* selected for GGB implementation, there is a high level of buy-in. Government officials and elected representatives are supportive of implementation, and are active participants in GGB workshops and issue finalization. Stakeholders are sometimes confused by the new process, but understand that the GGB is supporting rather than replacing the existing social accountability tools. This is underscored by Local Governance Act 2074-79, which includes provisions for applying social accountability tools (i.e., public hearings, social audits, public audits). However, the guidelines are not yet final, and previous guidelines recommended by the MoFALD are still in practice (2067).

Only few *gaunpalikas* and municipalities are practicing the application of social accountability tools. The CS:MAP strategic guide has assisted CSO staff in their engagement with elected and government officials, but it needs to be translated into Nepali for better understanding and use.

Objective 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and sustainability of CSOs working in USAID priority sectors to advance local solutions.

Result 4.1 Improved institutional governance of selected CSOs and media organizations.

- A total three coaching, mentoring and follow-up visits were conducted by 3 ISOs. In addition, distance support through emails, phone calls and template sharing was provided to CSOs.
- A total of five trainings were held during this reporting period to support CSOs using OCA, ARI and GESI assessments.

Result 4.2: Improved capacity of select CSOs and media organizations to mobilize social and financial resources for sustainability.

- As a result of the financial sustainability action plan, a total of eight CSOs finalized a resource mobilization plan and guidelines, to be endorsed in the CSOs' board meetings by the end of January 2018. An additional six CSOs are working to finalize the guidelines. These guidelines will assist the CSOs to generate internal as well as external funds for financial diversification.
- A total 34 volunteers (24 female) were selected to conduct PEAR in 34 districts on policy priorities. A total of 32 volunteers were oriented on CS:MAP and its goals, as well as the roles and responsibilities of CS:MAP volunteers.

Result 4.3: Improved capacity of CSOs and media organizations to advance local solutions on priority development issues across sectors and to promote peer-learning opportunities.

- Ten interactive groups formed in *MeroReport.net* to promote cross-sectoral as well as national-to-local peer learning and discussions within the group members started. 38 members altogether are active in these groups. Discussions related to CS:MAP project activities, articles on HEAD themes, issues related to governance and social accountability helped each other's understanding.
- The monthly and quarterly review meetings are being held internally. The challenges faces, mitigation measures and the learnings while working at the local level were shared with CS:MAP through CS:MAP capacity-building unit.

Application of strategic approach and relevance of critical assumption

CS:MAP continues to provide necessary technical assistance to ISOs with the goal of enhancing their skills on their priority areas. ISOs have been supporting local CSOs as per the OCA Institutional Improvement Plan (IIP), ARI capacity building plan and GESI action plans developed during Year II assessments. The capacity building approach of CS:MAP has been welcomed by local CSO partners as an opportunity for them to build their organizational strengths. Five ISOs with different expertise have been providing these services, but CS:MAP is supporting the ISOs to focus their skills for long-term organizational sustainability.

Anticipated challenges and CS:MAP mitigation measures

As anticipated during the preparation of the AWP, providing expert services through ISOs has presented challenges, especially when managing ISO and CSO schedules. ISOs have staff to manage the project, but need consultant support to provide expert services to CSOs. ISO staff are not always effective as resource persons or facilitators, even with capacity-building support, which places increased responsibilities on CS:MAP staff. And, while local CSO board member engagement is notable, the members serve on a voluntary basis, with minimal project implementation, and the transfer of knowledge from board to staff is also limited. In response, CS:MAP has been working closely with ISOs to build staff mentoring and coaching capacity. CS:MAP is also connecting with board members via telephone and in-person visits to increase board engagement.

3. Activity Progress

3.1 Development and submission of deliverables

Narrative and Financial Reports:

Annual Progress Report for Year II (October 1, 2016-September 30, 2017): The second annual CS:MAP progress report was submitted to the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) on October 30, 2017. The team received comments and suggestions for improvement on November 20, 2017. The team submitted the revised version of the report with the comments and suggestions incorporated on December 12, 2017 and received approval from the AOR on December 18, 2017.

Financial Report for Year II: CS:MAP submitted the first quarterly financial report (SF425) for Year III on January 26, 2018.



CSMAP SF425
Report_Dec 2017.pdf

Short-Term Consultant Reports, Technical Briefs/Reports, Special and External Reports: In consultation with the AOR, and to ensure direct communications regarding consultants' focus and findings, CS:MAP has convened a debriefing meeting with its AOR for all consultants who travel and work under CS:MAP at the end of their visits. Suggestions and recommendations from the AOR have been incorporated into the deliverables.

Monthly calendar and updates: CS:MAP is providing a monthly calendar to the AOR on the last day of every month for the upcoming month. At the same time, the CS:MAP team has been sharing updates on the previous month's activities with USAID. In addition, CS:MAP is holding monthly meetings with the AOR.

Development Experience Clearinghouse submission: CS:MAP has submitted reports and knowledge products to the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (<https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>). As of this report, 16 documents have been uploaded to the Development Experience Clearinghouse.

3.2 Progress Achieved toward Project Objectives

Objective 1: Strengthened enabling environment for civil society and media.

Result: 1.1: Improved legal and policy framework, based on international standards that leads to better operating environment and strengthened capacity for civil society.

Activity 1.1.1: Implement advocacy action plans on regulatory reform issues on CSOs and media.

Building on the Year II activities involving regulatory framework assessments and stakeholder consultations that informed advocacy action planning, CS:MAP and its partners undertook the following advocacy efforts to improve the enabling environment for CSOs and media:

1.1.1.1 Policy work

Through its partners, CS:MAP, organized two interactions with stakeholders, two dialogues with policy makers and eight informal meetings with government agencies and political parties for the improvement of existing legal and policy provisions for civil society and media. CS:MAP partner INSEC organized a dialogue to improve the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act. The discussion helped in identifying the complications and multiple layers created for registration and renewal of civil society organizations; law has not recognized the role of civil society organizations for anti-corruption work and governance improvement; civil society organizations are not categorized based on their mission; access to resource for civil society organizations has been made difficult; same format of citizen charter is applied for advocacy organizations, development organizations and interest based organizations; no provision to de-list organizations that are not in existence; and the program area for civil society organizations is limited by different provisions. The findings were discussed and shared with the MoFALD, including requests for revisions. The Secretary of the MOFALD agreed that he would organize a consultation meeting with MoFALD officials and civil society to discuss necessary improvements. Similarly, GoGo Foundation organized a multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ramechhap district to generate evidence from the field to inform advocacy related to policies impacting CSOs, the results of which were shared with CS:MAP's National Advocacy Partners.

CS:MAP civil society coalition lead NFN organized an interaction on civic space and the freedom of CSOs in Nepal to mark the 69th International Human Rights Day. Based on recommendations from the stakeholders, NFN organized three one-on-one meetings with the SWC, Nepal Law

Commission and MoFALD officials to discuss civil society enabling environment at the sub-national level. CS:MAP media partner Freedom Forum organized an interactive workshop on “Freedom of Expression and Media Policy and Law” on October 16, 2017 with diverse stakeholders, including media fraternity. The workshop included a discussion of policies such as the 2016 National Mass Communication Policy (NMCP), 2017 Online Media Operation Directive (OMOD), Bill on Civil and Criminal Code, and Section 47 of the 2008 Electronic Transactions Act, as well as other documents concerning freedom of expression that have been endorsed and passed by the government.

Similarly, CS:MAP partner NEOF drafted an advocacy plan to improve the legal and policy framework for electoral reforms based on the findings from observations of the 2017 federal, provincial and local elections. Five key priorities of this plan are equal suffrage for all adults (for e.g. security personnel, poll officials, observers,); effective voter based on existing technology and resources; improved code of conduct with proper implementation strategies; auditing campaign finance; and operationalizing the inclusion approach at polling center for disables and women. These priorities were set by civil society organizations based on the findings from local, federal and provincial election observation and taking into consideration the established election principles, benchmarks of a democratic election, as well as practicality point of views. A meeting with the electoral community was organized on December 26, 2017 to draft a joint advocacy plan for election observation organizations. Key advocacy issues identified in the plan are: the independence of the Election Commission, voter education, implementation of the code of conduct, campaign financing, and voting rights of election staff, security officials, election observers and migrant workers.

1.1.1.2 Training

CS:MAP media partners FNJ and Freedom Forum conducted Public Interest Reporting training for 54 journalists during this quarter. The training focused on issues related to earthquake recovery, including reconstruction and rehabilitation activities; whether due process and sufficient mechanisms for accountability are in place, including the necessary resources; and the extent to which public concern in this area is adequately represented in the media. As a result of this training, journalists are expected to produce stories from 14 earthquake-affected districts.

1.1.1.3 Dissemination of Findings

CS:MAP disseminated project-developed resources among civil society and other major stakeholders. Through its coalitions and National Advocacy Partners, CS:MAP shared its Assessment of the Legal Environment for Civil Society and Media in Nepal, review and analysis of the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act and analysis of the 2017 Sample FM Radio (Management and Operation) Procedures with CSO federations, politicians, candidates for federal parliament, senior government officials, and newly-elected local government representatives.

Activity 1.1.2: Generate evidence on CSOs’ contributions to Nepal’s development in support of enabling environment advocacy efforts.

CS:MAP partner SAP Nepal carried out a study on CSOs’ contributions to Nepal’s development in support of enabling environment advocacy efforts. The findings of the study were shared with civil society leaders, lawmakers, academicians and the Minister of the Ministry of Population and Environment on November 19, 2017. A total of 28 participants representing different thematic areas provided feedback, which SAP Nepal has incorporated in the revised draft. The study

highlighted CSOs' contributions in five areas: i) Democracy, ii) Good Governance (including eight world-wide governance indicators), iii) Empowerment, iv) Livelihood and v) Service Delivery.. Findings were generated based on the common themes that emerged from qualitative data analysis. The study primarily focused on present-day contributions made by CSOs, beginning with people's revolution after restoration of democracy in the 1990s.

Activity 1.1.3: Hold policy discussions and commission research studies to produce policy analysis and policy briefs.

1.1.3.1 Policy dialogues:

In order to strengthen the media's "watchdog" role for free and fair election, CS:MAP partner FNJ organized a dialogue with the Election Commission of Nepal, government authorities, civil society and media on November 15, 2017. A total of 21 journalists from different national electronic and print media houses, and 23 other stakeholders including the Chief Election Commissioner, former Chief Election Commissioner, member of the National Human Rights Commission, senior government officials and other civil society leaders participated in the program. Acknowledging the role of journalists, Chief Election Commissioner Dr. Ayodhee Prasad Yadav encouraged journalists to write election-related news that complies with the election code of conduct as well as their professional code of conduct. Former Chief Election Commissioner and NEOC President Surya Prasad Shrestha and Department of Information Director General Bir Bahadur Rai asked journalists to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in an impartial way during the elections. FNJ Chairperson Govinda Acharya and other journalists requested that the Election Commission of Nepal provide journalists with timely access to election-related information, and ensure the safety and security of journalists. Journalists also committed to provide the necessary support to make the elections successful.

NFN convened a National Civil Society Conference on November 7-8, 2017 in Kathmandu, concurrent with its 23rd Annual General Meeting. The conference included discussion on "Enabling the Roles of the Non-Government Sector in the Changed Political Context." Nearly 700 participants attended, including prominent CSO leaders, NFN delegates from its district and regional chapters, representatives of the international development community, government officials, and NFN leadership. The session on the enabling environment for CSOs was attended by 99 participants (30 female).

The conference provided an opportunity to disseminate information on the enabling environment for CSOs to diverse groups of stakeholders. Local CSOs also gained awareness of civil society enabling environment issues, and were able to exchange information and share challenges regarding their roles, operating space and priorities. The conference also endorsed a 16-point declaration highlighting issues such as citizens' empowerment, civic space, partnerships, and coordination and collaboration among diverse groups of actors for creating a supportive civil society enabling environment. The declaration also emphasized civil society's role in contributing to the national development agenda in the changing context. The conference was also intended to launch a nationwide civic campaign for the promotion of absolute human rights, sustainable development, justice, national unity, and prosperity in the country in a year to come. Due to elections, however, CS:MAP decided not to convene the planned quarterly policy discussions with political champions, GoN officials, civil society leaders, advocates, lawyers, academicians and intellectuals regarding role of civil society and media.

1.1.3.2 Research:

Upon the request from the National Information Commission (NIC), CS:MAP is conducting research to explore how Right to Information (RTI) can be institutionalized as means of strengthening local governance. This research is led by RTI experts and editors Prashant Aryal and Prakash Rimal, who have, on behalf of the NIC, conducted an audit of the implementation status of RTI in different ministries. CS:MAP will use their findings to promote RTI at the local level for an improved civil society and media enabling environment. In collaboration with the NIC, CS:MAP will organize a national-level interaction with government officials and RTI experts in order to share research findings and discuss implementation of the recommendation.

Tribhuvan University's CDJMC, in partnership with CS:MAP, has initiated research to assess the credibility of Nepali newspapers related to their coverage of the 2017 federal and provincial elections. The research will analyze the extent to which major Nepali broadsheet dailies have demonstrated credible (i.e., accurate, unbiased, balanced, fair, professional) coverage of the 2017 federal and provincial elections. The study will include samples from the *Annapurna Post*, *Kantipur Daily*, *The Kathmandu Post*, *Gorakhpatri Daily*, *The Rising Nepal*, *Nagarik Daily*, *My Republica*, *Nayapatrika*, *The Himalayan Times* and *Rajdhani Daily*. The research will raise awareness among mainstream print dailies on the importance of self-regulation, and support the development and adoption self-regulation mechanisms. The research plan also foresees, as a result, the adoption of self-regulation mechanisms by smaller media outlets. As such, there will be an associated improvement in media credibility.

Activity 1.1.4: Provide ongoing TA to civil society stakeholders on legislation processes.

ICNL continued to provide technical assistance to CS:MAP to support project activities, as well as to help engage coalition leads NFN and FNJ develop strategies for legal reform. FHI 360, EA and ICNL increased their internal partner communications to develop strategies to maintain momentum with the coalitions.

CS:MAP, with support from ICNL, reviewed the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act in Local Government Units and the 2017 Sample FM Radio (Management and Operation) Procedures and shared findings with CSO and media coalitions, national advocacy partners and other stakeholders. INSEC submitted a paper to the MoFALD describing their concerns regarding the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act in Local Government Units. Similarly, media coalition FNJ shared their concerns regarding the 2017 Sample FM Radio (Management and Operation) Procedures with major stakeholders. Both papers drew on evidence from the CS:MAP review and analysis findings.

Activity 1.1.5: Engaging GoN and Parliament stakeholders around legislative drafting.

An FNJ team, led by Acting President Bipul Pokhrel, met with Kashi Raj Dahal, the Chair of the National Mass Communication Policy Implementation Advisory High-level Committee. The meeting took place in December 2017 in *Singhadurbar*. During the meeting FNJ expressed its dissatisfaction over the non-inclusion of media stakeholders, including FNJ, in the process of formulating new media laws to implement the National Mass Communication Policy. FNJ requested that the committee share drafts of any Acts being developed with all media stakeholders, and only finalize drafts after due consultation. Mr. Dahal indicated that he appreciated FNJ's input, and said that he would consult with FNJ and other media stakeholders. The committee subsequently invited FNJ to discuss inputs received from Ministry of Information and

Communication on the 2017 Sample FM Radio (Management and Operation) Procedures; this discussion will take place in January 2018.

GoGo Foundation organized three coordination meetings with the SWC, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) and Nepal Law Commission to assess the development status of all policies between drafted or reviewed by the Nepal Law Commission and provide necessary inputs for improvement:

- The coordination meeting with the SWC, held on November 20, 2017, focused on the need for wider periodic consultations between the SWC and CSOs. SWC officials verbally agreed to organize a discussion between the SWC board, senior staff and CSO representatives in the near future. The SWC agreed to conduct wider public consultation with CSOs on legislation, guidelines and directives to increase CSOs' ownership of guidelines and support effective implementation. Meeting participants also discussed the importance of introducing a Code of Conduct for CSOs.
- The coordination meeting with Naindra Prasad Upadhaya, Secretary of the MoWCSW, was held on November 22, 2017. It focused on sharing CS:MAP initiatives, its mandate and ongoing activities focused on improving the enabling environment for CSOs. The Secretary was also briefed about the existing, restrictive provisions in the Social Welfare and Development Bill (SWDB), and asked to hold consultation meetings on the draft bill. The Secretary was also informed about provisions in the 2017 Sample NGO Management Act that contradict provisions in the Constitution of Nepal. After these briefings, the Secretary agreed to consult with GoGo Foundation in organizing a public consultation, in particular with CSOs, on the SWC draft bill and other upcoming guidelines and directives. The SWC has invited GoGo Foundation and other CSOs for a consultation on January 25, 2018.
- A third coordination meeting was held on December 19, 2017 with Indira Dahal, the Joint-Secretary for the Nepal Law Commission. The meeting discussed challenges with the SWDB, and GoGo Foundation urged her to take the lead in organizing a consultation meeting with CSOs. During the meeting, the team also discussed the importance of participatory law-drafting processes that incorporate inputs from concerned stakeholders. The Joint Secretary promised to invite CSO representatives to a discussion of various bills/acts, such as the SWDB, 2017 Sample NGO Management Act and Associations Registration Act after the bills/acts come to the Commission for feedback and finalization. She also shared that discussions are underway to formulate umbrella legislation to regulate NGOs and CSOs. Finally, she pledged that she would brief the chair and vice-chair of the Nepal Law Commission on the issues discussed in the coordination meeting.

Activity 1.1.6: Training of Public Information Officers.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Result 1.2. Improved public understanding and confidence in the role of CSOs and media.

Activity 1.2.1: Launch outreach campaign to improve public understanding and confidence in CSOs and media.

On October 16, 2017, CS:MAP contracted a public relations company, Interface Nepal, to launch the Public Outreach Campaign to improve public perceptions of CSOs and media. The campaign was designed based on findings from the perception survey conducted in Year II. During the

reporting period, Interface Nepal developed with scripts for radio and video dramas, one focused on CSOs and one on the media, with an approximate duration of three minutes each. Actors Dhurmush and Suntali, whose contributions during the post-earthquake reconstruction have garnered national and international attention, will play lead roles in the dramas. Their participation will allow CS:MAP to reach a broader audience, including listeners from civil society, political parties, media and government. The script for the video documentary was also drafted by Interface Nepal; it deals with the role of CSOs in Nepal's democratic process. This documentary will be used for CS:MAP training activities and as advocacy material.

Activity 1.2.2: Building public understanding on the broad concept of CSOs.

NFN has produced a preliminary draft of the handbook on "Understanding CSOs." The booklet contains information on CSOs and their enabling environment, and is intended to build understanding of and confidence in CSOs' roles, and the participation of their activities. NFN has also been drafting a roadmap for CSOs as they navigate the changing political context. Once these guiding documents are finalized, NFN will organize trainings and interactive discussions at the national and provincial levels to increase public understanding of CSOs' roles and responsibilities.

Activity 1.2.3: Strengthen community and CSOs ties through community consultation and soliciting citizen inputs.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 1.2.4: Foster media and CSO collaboration through dialogue and joint actions.

See "Policy Dialogues," page 19, for a discussion of the meeting organized by FNJ on November 15, 2017 with members of the media, civil society, Election Commission representatives and other senior government officials.

Activity 1.2.5: Improve public perception of the media through public hearings and implementation of media mission and implementation of findings.

During the reporting period, FNJ organized two public hearings in Kapilvastu and Dadeldhura districts on November 28, 2017 and November 30, 2017, respectively. 99 participants attended these public hearings. These events provided an opportunity for citizens to share their concerns and provide input on how the media can report on priority issues in a broader and more representative manner. FNJ also organized four media missions in all seven provinces. The missions in Provinces 1 and 2 were led by FNJ Vice President Dilip Thapa Magar; by General Secretary Ramesh Bista in Provinces 3 and 4 by; by President Govinda Acharya in Provinces 5 and 6 by; and by Vice President Bipul Pokhrel in Province 7. The missions met and engaged in discussions about media content, the physical and professional security of journalists, and challenges that journalists face when reporting on elections. Participants included election officers, Chief District Officers, civil society leaders, police officers and others. The public hearings and media missions helped journalists better understand issues of public interest, and raised stakeholder awareness of freedom of expression challenges. CS:MAP will share the findings of these public hearings in *Partrakarita* and *MeroReport*.

Activity 1.2.6: Conduct community scorecards and social auditing to improve CSO and media transparency and accountability.

SAP Nepal organized a program with Rural Awareness and Development Organization – Nepal (RADO-Nepal) in Hetauda on October 25, 2017 to conduct a social auditing and implement a community scorecard. 18 individuals participated (five female), including RADO-Nepal executive board members, general members and staff. The program was intended to introduce organizations in the district to social accountability tools, and support their ongoing use. On October 27, 2017 SAP Nepal facilitated a similar event with Maiti Nepal Makwanpur. 23 participants, all female, took part in the event, including Maiti Nepal Makwanpur members, staff, constituents and media representatives. The practice of the community scorecard aided the organizations in identifying institutional development needs and gaps in internal governance.

CS:MAP local CSO partners Human Right Awareness and Development Center (HURADEC) and Indreni Rural Development Center Nepal (IRDC) plan to conduct a social audit of their organizations in the next quarter, and the Community Development Center (CDC) plans to conduct their social audit in Quarter 3. Sundar Nepal conducted a social audit in Year II, which was reported accordingly.

Activity 1.2.7: Provide support for people's participation in elections.

CS:MAP supported NEOC during the observation of two phases of federal and provincial elections, which were held on November 26 and December 7, 2017. A ToT on “Conflict-Sensitive Election Observation” was organized at the central level, and those training graduates organized a day-long training in Province 2 and 7; similar trainings were organized at the constituency level. 28 participants (10 female) comprised of NEOC’s seven provincial heads, national secretariat team and election observers attended the training. Participants received training in electoral context analysis and strategies and skills to minimize potential harms and risks. The graduates organized provincials level ToTs for NEOC’s long-term observers in their respective provinces, which was followed by constituency-level training for short-term observers in each constituency throughout the country. CS:MAP also provided a half-day orientation to the district coordinators and possible facilitators in 34 districts on conflict sensitivity, Do No Harm and dialogue approaches, thereby equipping civil society representatives with techniques to contribute to free and fair elections.

A total of 480 trained short-term observers (STOs; 10 in each electoral constituency) were deployed on election days. NEOC also deployed 48 long-term observers (LTOs), one in each electoral constituency in Provinces 2 and 7, in order to gain a fuller understanding of dynamics before, during and after the election

Table One: Observers Deployed for Provincial/Federal Elections

Province No	No. of Districts	No. of Constituencies	STOs	LTOs
2	8	32	320	32
7	9	16	160	16
Total	17	48	480	48

NEOC also mobilized 20 high-level society missions, each comprised of two members, to boost the morale of local observers and strengthen their work, including by enhancing their sense of

security. Their presence supported conflict-free voting and a counting process that was efficient and agreeable to all parties.

In addition, CS:MAP national advocacy partners INSEC, NFN and SAP Nepal also mobilized 695 election observers to observe and monitor the election in CS:MAP implementation districts and other parts of the country.

Result 1.3: Improved self-regulation of the sector and internal governance of CSOs and media.

Activity 1.3.1: Identify institutional governance and self-regulation best practices among CSOs and media in Nepal.

In Year II, NFN published and disseminated IEC materials on CSO self-regulation and internal governance (NFN's Code of Conduct and Istanbul Principles of Development Effectiveness), along with stickers and calendars containing messages regarding accountability, transparency and overall CSO governance. In 2018, NFN will monitor the compliance of those materials in order to assess the status of implementation and figure out gaps and concerns. Once the monitoring is carried out, the best-performing CSOs will be accredited and the good practices adopted by them will be documented and shared among stakeholders. These best practices will be incorporated into the civic charter and self-regulation guidelines for CSOs, to be developed at a later date.

Activity 1.3.2: Capacity building of CSOs and media on developing and implementing self-regulation and internal governance.

To build CSO and media capacity for self-regulation and internal governance, ISOs Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA) and Measures for Intervention Training Research and Action Samaj (MITRA Samaj) supported 10 CSOs: Information and Human Rights Research Center (IHRC), FMDC-Media for Social Development and Change, Rural Women Development Center (RWDC), Sanjeevani Nepal, HURADEC, Society for Humanism Nepal (SOCH), Sundar Nepal, Samudayik Sarathi and Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON). NNSWA and MITRA Samaj, assisted the CSOs in developing internal systems, e.g., preparing salary matrices and conducting general assemblies.

The following 10 CSOs prepared their five-year strategy plans in this quarter: IHRC, FMDC, Sanjeevani Nepal, IRDC, Integrated Rural Development Society (IRDS), Development Exchange Center (DEC), Human Right Protection and Legal Services Center (HRPLSC), Sundar Nepal, HURADEC and Samudayik Sarathi. CDC Nuwakot reviewed their strategy paper with the technical support of NNSWA and MITRA Samaj.

Activity 1.3.3: Develop and implement minimum standards of internal governance and self-regulation for civil society in a participatory way.

To activate the civil society coalition formed in Year II, NFN convened a meeting with coalition members on December 29, 2017. The meeting was attended by members of sectoral federations, alliances, and campaigns such as FNJ, Association of Community Radio Broadcasters Nepal, Association of Family Forest Owners Nepal, Campaign for Human Rights and Social Transformation Nepal (CAHURAST), Collective Campaign for Peace, Disaster Management Network Nepal, Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal, Nepal Agro-forestry Foundation, National Association of Village Development Committees in Nepal, National Federation of Irrigation Water Users' Association Nepal, National Federation of Youth Non-Governmental

Organizations Nepal and Community School Management Committee Federation of Nepal among others, including the executive members of NFN. The meeting focused on the need for civil society self-regulation and internal governance, and discussions regarding an effective mechanism for implementation. The first coalition meeting resulted in a task force to draft self-regulation and internal governance guidelines for CSOs, which will be presented the next meeting. The progress of this will be reported in the subsequent quarter.

CDJMC held extensive discussions on the research objectives, modalities and methodologies related to the status of media self-regulation during elections. Participants included faculty-cum-research team members and FHI 360 representatives. The workshop took place on December 17, 2017 as the result of an agreement between CDJMC and FHI 360 to support media self-regulation status and recommendations.

CDJMC head Professor Chiranjibi Khanal described research objectives and underlined the importance of research related to media self-regulation during election reporting. He suggested that an analysis of newspaper reporting in the week prior to elections could demonstrate the level of media professionalism, and lead to both academic findings and recommendations for the media sector. Dr. Kundan Aryal presented a paper on the research design, including key indicators and research for techniques, and led a discussion during which participants offered suggestions to enhance the design.

Activity 1.3.4: Develop institutional governance self-assessment toolkit for media and implement in five media houses.

FNJ has formed a committee to develop a toolkit for media that guides users through an institutional governance self-assessment. The committee has prepared an outline of the guidelines. The toolkit could not be finalized within the expected time due to the engagement of FNJ members and other journalists in the November and December 2017 federal and provincial elections.

Activity 1.3.5: Interactions with major stakeholders, including government agencies, on self-regulation and internal good governance of CSOs.

INSEC conducted a national-level program on CSO self-regulation and internal governance on December 21, 2017. 44 individuals participated, including the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Central Committee Member and Executive Director of the NGO Federation; Samjhauta Nepal CEO; Human Rights Organization of Nepal (HURON) General Secretary; representatives from the Advocacy Forum, Indigenous Women's Legal Awareness Group (INWOLAG), Maiti Nepal, and FNJ; and INSEC district representatives from 14 earthquake-affected districts.

The program was intended to bring CSOs together in order to discuss good governance practices and policies and develop a strategy for ensuring Nepali CSO accountability. Participants heard about self-regulation mechanisms used in international contexts and among CSOs in Nepal, as well as good governance practices and action items to be adopted by CSOs. After the presentation, INSEC representatives from 14 earthquake-affected districts shared the outcomes of and learnings from their district level interactions on "Self-Regulation and Good Governance of CSOs."

Activity 1.3.6: Workshops with media owners, editors and journalists on institutional governance and self-regulation within media outlets.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Objective 2: Improved civil society and media capacity for effective policy advocacy and government engagement

Result 2.1: Strengthened CSO initiatives to coordinate with the GoN and to implement constructive advocacy strategies.

Activity 2.1.1: Strengthen advocacy and government engagement capacity of 14 district-based CSOs and media organizations.

Activity 2.1.1.1: Continue coaching ISOs in providing advocacy and government engagement capacity building to partner CSOs and media organizations:

In Year II, CS:MAP partnered with five ISOs to build the capacity of 14 local CSOs for more effective advocacy and engagement with the government to strengthen governance at the local level. CS:MAP ISO partner NEPAN provided coaching support to three local CSOs: CDC, Samudayik Sarathi and IHRICON. Similarly, ISO partner NNSWA provided coaching support to four additional CSOs: Sanjeevani Nepal, FMDC, IHRC and IRDC. The support focused on carrying out ARI action plan as well as conducting social accountability trainings for district-level stakeholders and CA members. ISOs provided support to implement public expenditure tracking systems (PETS) in Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Kapilvastu, Palpa, Gorkha and Okhaldhunga districts, and community scorecards in Dang district.

Activity 2.1.1.2: ISOs design and implement advocacy and government-engagement coaching and training based on CSO and media organizations' needs:

CS:MAP partner ISOs provided coaching and mentoring support to CSOs, conducting training and leading orientation for CSO board and staff members. NNSWA provided support to IHRC, FMDC, Sanjeevani Nepal and RWDC to conduct two days of advocacy orientation and training for CSOs and board members. Similarly, NEPAN provided advocacy-related technical support for orientation and training for IHRICON and Sundar Nepal, and MITRA Samaj provided technical support to DEC Nepal to conduct advocacy training for board members and senior staff. In addition, NNSWA and NEPAN also provided support to CDC, Sanjeevani Nepal and RWDC to provide an orientation on social accountability tools to CA and PPWG members and other government officials at the *gaunpalika* and district levels.

MITRA Samaj also conducted a two-day training on PSO for CS:MAP 34 district staff. The training focused on the concept, scope and effectiveness of PSO, differences between PSO and social accountability, the role of CSOs in conducting PSO, international and local PSO best practices, the introduction and application of the PSO software application, PSO software applications compared to *Hello Sarkar*, and conflict sensitivity.

Activity 2.1.1.3: Development of handbook and guidelines on ICT for policy advocacy, good governance and oversight of public service delivery:

Based on diagnostic study findings and consultations with CS:MAP partners, CS:MAP ISO partner KLL prepared a first draft of a handbook and guidelines for CSOs on evidence-based policy advocacy and public service delivery oversight using ICT. This handbook covers ICT in governance, ICT penetration in Nepal and citizens' participation in governance; it includes history, practices and a roadmap. KLL has started to test this handbook for training local CSO partners, and results from these tests and inputs from local CSO partners will be used to revise and finalize the drafts. The handbook is continually being informed by field findings, and also

contains two chapters, one on *Sajha Sabha* and another on municipality portals, that require further study after implementation. Therefore, it is likely that the final version will be ready in Quarter 3.

In addition to the general handbook, KLL has also developed user's guide for *Sajha Sabha* (an ICT tool for governance tracking). The *Sajha Sabha* ICT tool is an open, digital portal to bring citizens, government and local organizations together in one place to address issues of public concern. This tool offers citizens a platform to provide inputs and suggestions to service providers, and helps service providers understand local issues and target group's perceptions.

Activity 2.1.1.4: ToT on ICT for policy advocacy, good governance and public service delivery:

CS:MAP ISO partner KLL provided a day-long training to 34 district coordinators on effective use of information technology in monitoring public services delivery and resource use. The training was held on December 15, 2017. The training covered the usage of ICT tools in public service delivery, such as *Sajha Sabha* (website) and *Mock Sthaniya Sabha*.

KLL is planning to conduct trainings with interactive presentations, demonstrations and hands-on exercises to CSO partners in Quarter 2. This training will cover the tenets of collective intelligence, collaborative mapping and participatory development, including open data and open mapping. Participants will learn, among other things, the importance of and potential uses for ICT tools and platforms to engage the public in governance and public service delivery oversight, and to effectively use ICTs for data-driven policy advocacy.

Activity 2.1.1.5: Conduct refresher training/orientation or review meeting with selected ISOs on usage of the Advocacy Readiness Index (ARI):

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 2.1.2: Form Public-Private Working Groups (PPWGs) and Common Assemblies (CAs) and conduct PPWG and CA meetings.

CS:MAP formed two PPWGs in Makwanpur and Dhading during this reporting period.

A total of 66 CA meetings were held in this quarter, with meetings focused on the availability of free medicine in health posts, student scholarships, school management committees and their roles, and local-level construction work, among other issues. Participants discussed indicators for improved health and education services, and meetings resulted in implementation plans developed with the indicators for improved services during consultations between service providers and citizens. Participants arrived at solutions for certain problems, including the need for medical stretchers in the Dolakha health post, a list of the medicines available at the Rampur Health Post, and the collection of grievances and a mechanism for addressing them at Saraswati Secondary School at Bhushkhata in Arghakhanchi. The immediate results seen were noted, the Health Post in Dolakha arranged medical stretchers, Rampur Health Post in Dang displayed the list of available medicines. The discussion in CA meeting even helped a woman to get citizenship and register her family's name in the voters' list, and Krishnapur Municipality in Kanchanpur allocated NRs 350,000.00 to build health post building in Domilla, Kanchanpur.

Activity 2.1.3: Conduct Sajha Sabhas, or Public Forums.

IRDS Gulmi conducted a *Sajha Sabha* in Arghakhanchi during this reporting period. Other CSOs are still developing plans for *Sajha Sabhas*. The festival season in October and elections in November and December delayed the implementation of *Sajha Sabhas* in many districts.

The Arghakhanchi *Sajha Sabha* resulted in the following action items:

- Raise community awareness regarding availability of the Agriculture Technician in the *gaunpalikas* where CS:MAP is working.
- Draft a letter to the relevant line agency requesting full hours of operation of health posts in CS:MAP implementation areas.
- Conduct regular social audits in 24 health posts; five more health posts will conduct social audits in the coming year.
- Draft a letter to all schools regarding the effective functioning of grievance mechanisms.

Activity 2.1.4: Provide training and mentoring to CA, PPWG and Sajha Sabha facilitators.

CS:MAP trained a total of 28 participants (eight female) from 14 districts on December 30-31, 2017 in Kathmandu. Additional facilitators from 19 districts were trained in January 2018 in Nepalgunj. The training provided an introduction to facilitation skills and process, content versus process facilitation, and the attitude, behavior and qualities of an effective facilitator. Facilitators were trained in the theory of appreciative inquiry, with coaching on managing group dynamics, and they participated in simulations involving meeting facilitation and conflict management.

Result 2.2: Improved coalition-building between local and national CSOs, and between CSOs and the media, that leads to joint actions undertaken on selected policy priorities across sectors.

Activity 2.2.1: Strengthen coalitions and networks to undertake joint advocacy actions on policy priorities across sectors.

Four coalitions (Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Makwanpur and Dhading) were formed during this reporting period, resulting in total of 34 CS:MAP coalitions formed to date. During this quarter, coalitions in Makwanpur, Dhading, Dang, Nuwakot, Okhaldhunga, Kathmandu, Gorkha, Pyuthan, Rolpa, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura and Dolkha met to discuss issues of concern in their districts. In addition, CS:MAP local CSO partners including RWDC, HURADEC, Sundar Nepal, IHRC, IRDS and DEC also initiated interactions between civil society, media and other stakeholders regarding the role of civil society in the federal structure. RWDC conducted meetings with media and civil society in their respective districts on October 23, 2017, focusing on joint actions to increase public awareness on public policy, the ongoing reconstruction process and civic space. The joint meeting decided to monitor school and health centers at local level to ensure their services. Similarly, HURADEC conducted DRR network meeting on December 20, 2017 and made joint action on the mapping of all NGOs working on DRR in the district, drafting a code of conduct for the network, and conducting the regular meeting of the network.

Similarly, IHRICON organized a meeting with public service providers and media in Kathmandu. The meeting was attended by 37 participants including journalists; government officials from the District Coordination Committee, District Education Office, and District Agriculture Office of Lalitpur and Bhaktapur; and newly-elected, local-level representatives from Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts. Participants discussed avenues for improving public service provision, and the production of feature articles related to service delivery. Some of the problems related to education

and reconstruction (especially due to the difficulty in design approval and drainage problem) in the new municipality were published in the *Gorkhapatra* daily.

CDC Nepal organized a day-long coordination meeting with government and other stakeholders on December 27, 2017 in Bidur, Nuwakot in coordination with CS:MAP ISO partner KLL. Participants included leaders and representatives from the District Education Office, District Health Office, District Agriculture Development Office and District Coordination Committee. Representatives from FNJ and FM stations were also present. The meeting focused on the role of CSOs in providing effective oversight of public services use, and public service delivery in the changed context. KLL provided an overview of the *Sajha Sabha* application, which can help service providers identify necessary improvements in services, and support civil society in carrying out monitoring and oversight activities more efficiently.

Activity 2.2.2: Identify Shreejanshil Shakhas (innovation hubs) to serve as CSO-media collaboration hubs.

In this reporting period, a total of eight *Shreejanshil Shakhas* were established in Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Rolpa, Surkhet, Palpa, Kapilvastu, Gulmi and Kanchanpur districts. The *Shakhas* are being used as neutral venues to conduct meeting with CSOs and media. The regular meetings of LDAGs and CAs that are held here have started to generate ideas for collective action to promote improvements in governance at the local level. In the remaining districts, partner CSOs are exploring possible host organizations. Once organizations are identified they will sign MOUs to establish *Shreejanshil Shakhas*.

Additional activities to improve coordination and collaboration between local and national CSOs as well as media and CSOs are described under Activity 3.2.2 and Activity 3.4.3.

Result 2.3: Improved CSO and media capacity to conduct participatory and evidence-based action research on issues, policy, and enforcement in order to benefit marginalized groups.

Activity 2.3.1: Build research capacity for CSOs and media organizations.

This quarter, 34 volunteers have been selected to serve as Community Action Researchers (CARs). Following a PEAR training, these CARs will be expected to carry out local research using basic participatory techniques to identify priority areas for policy advocacy. Equal Access has worked with ISO partners MITRA Samaj and NEPAN to design a PEAR training manual for the ISOs that will conduct the training, and a PEAR toolkit (translated into the Nepali language) for the CARs who receive the training. While the manual will support ISO capacity to deliver the PEAR training, the toolkit is expected to serve as a readily available reference resource for CARs while they undertake actual research. The training is planned for the next quarter. *To ensure research skills are applied following the training, CS:MAP has designed a fellowship program which will be reported in the subsequent quarter.*

Activity 2.3.2: Organize study visit for media partners in Kathmandu for investigative journalism

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 2.3.3: Provide research fellowship for CSO partners

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Additional activities to enhance media capacity at the national and sub-national levels for advocacy, oversight and monitoring.

Activity 2.3.4: Conduct Advocacy and Monitoring/Oversight Training for media organizations.

As a result of journalist trainings conducted in Year II, new reports that contribute to advocacy and oversight of public resource use and public service delivery are now being published or broadcast. For example, a story published by a trainee in the *Annapurna Post* daily on December 15, 2017 reports on the situation of a settlement of about 50 households affected by the blockage of an irrigation canal by a landslide that occurred 12 years ago (<http://annapurnapost.com/news-details/86007>). The story describes how this once-thriving settlement, spanning approximately 205 *ropanis* in the Melauli Municipality in Baitadi district, has now become barren due to the blockage. The irrigation canal, originally constructed by the local community, at one time allowed them to produce up to three harvests per year. After the 2006 landslide they were unable to grow anything, and men from the settlement were forced to leave to find employment elsewhere. Citizen attempts to address his problem through the local government planning process failed, despite repeatedly reaching out to the Ward, Village Development Committee (VDC) and District Councils. The article also details how the scribe approached the newly-elected mayor, who committed to setting aside funds for canal reconstruction. Likewise, the newly elected member of the provincial parliament acknowledged he was aware of this problem and would take necessary steps to address it.

CS:MAP will continue to follow up with the trained journalists to ensure that their attempts at advocacy are carried out in a timely manner and result in solutions that support the public interest.

Activity 2.3.5: Conduct Investigative Journalism Training for media organizations.

Investigative Journalism Training for Year III will begin in Quarter 2. Of the 44 journalists trained in Year II, 18 benefited from a five-day study visit undertaken at the Center for Investigative Journalism in Kathmandu this quarter. Two leading editors have been chosen through an open selection process to mentor and guide the 18 journalists in the identification of a relevant story for investigative reporting, and in documenting and publishing these investigative stories. Twenty-six such stories are to be published in Year III, beginning in Quarter Two.

Activity 2.3.6: Conduct Journalist Safety and Security Training for media organizations.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 2.3.7: Public Interest Reporting training and fellowship.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 2.3.8: Strategic Communications Training for CS:MAP CSO partners.

A two-day training on “Strategic Communications for Civil Society Organizations” was held on December 11-12, 2017 at Hotel Manang, Thamel, Kathmandu. A total of 31 (seven female) participants participated the training, which included 25 participants from 14 CSOs and six participants from three ISOs (MITRA Samaj, NEPAN and NNSWA).

The training was intended to provide an orientation for CSOs on the importance of strategic communications for accomplishing organizational goals and objectives, and to equip them with the skills and tools required to design, adopt and implement a strategic communications plan. The sessions were accordingly designed to meet these objectives. The first day of the training primarily

focused on the concept of strategic communications, its importance for CSOs, the importance of a strategic communications plan and other related concepts. Based on suggestions from the participants, the second day was mostly dedicated to group exercises focused on developing an outline of CSO strategic communications plans. By the end of the training, CSO participants expressed their commitment to develop a strategic communications plan or enhance their existing strategic communications plans.

Overall, participant evaluations suggest that trainees found the training useful in enhancing their knowledge of strategic communications; they expressed particular appreciation for the interactive exercises that allowed them to develop strategic communications plan outlines. Many participants shared that, although there were of strategic communications concepts, the training helped them realize the importance of a strategic communications plan for their organizations.

CS:MAP expects that this training will result in CSO partner organizations beginning to draft organizational strategic communications guidelines and resulting plans. This is expected to be completed and ready for endorsement by their respective boards of directors within Year III, Quarter 2.

Objective 3: More coordinated and effective civil society and media oversight of public resource use and public service delivery

Result 3.1: Improved capacity of local CSOs, media, and community-based organizations to monitor and report on cross-sectoral public service delivery, based on common standards applicable to each sector.

Activity 3.1.1 Good Governance Barometer (GGB).

Activity 3.1.1.1: Identify potential gaunpalikas/local communities in the Tarai region to pilot the GGB:

CS:MAP initially planned to pilot the GGB in three districts (six *gaunpalikas*). In Year II, CS:MAP implemented the GGB in three districts (six *gaunpalikas*) and decided to add a *gaunpalika* in the Tarai region to increase geographic representation. IRDC, a CS:MAP partner implementing activities in Kapilvastu, agreed to implement the GGB in one of the *gaunpalikas* in the district. In this reporting period, IRDC held meetings with the District Coordinating Committee (DCC) in Kapilvastu, and with the administrative officers of 5 municipalities and 4 *gaunpalikas* in the district. Based on its population diversity and inputs from meetings, IRDC approached Suddodhan *gaunpalika* to implement the GGB. Progress will be reported in the next reporting period.

Activity 3.1.1.2: Hold preliminary meetings with pilot local line agencies to introduce the GGB:

CS:MAP local CSO partner IRDC held informal meetings with the DCC Chair and Administrative Officer and the administrative officers of 5 municipalities and 4 *gaunpalikas* in Kapilvastu District to provide a GGB brief. Following the suggestion to approach Suddodhan *gaunpalika*, a separate meeting was organized with the DCC Chair and Administrative Officer and the acting executive officer of Suddodhan *gaunpalika*, as well as the Chairperson of Vijayanagar *gaunpalika*. IRDC then proceeded with the necessary steps to secure approval from Suddhodhan *gaunpalika* to implement the GGB.

Activity 3.1.1.3: Build capacity of CSO partner to facilitate the GGB:

Since IRDC was identified after other partners, it did not undergo the GGB training provided by CS:MAP in Year II. To equip IRDC for GGB facilitation, CS:MAP organized a day-long meeting with all the GGB implementing CSOs and GGB facilitators in Gulmi during the reporting period. A total of nine facilitators (two female) from four districts, including Kapilvastu, attended the meeting. GGB implementing CSOs from three districts shared their achievements, experiences and challenges during GGB implementations. All facilitators were received a GGB refresher orientation, including the GGB modeling process and the process for developing sub-sub criteria. Facilitators then jointly led the modeling workshop in Gulmi Durbar *gaunpalika*, which provided Kapilvastu facilitators with practical knowledge from experienced GGB implementers. In addition, the CS:MAP Governance Advisor will provide a one and half day orientation to CSO staff on GGB facilitation once IRDC finalizes selection of the *gaunpalika* in which it will implement the GGB.

Activity 3.1.1.4: GGB Implementation

CS:MAP partners HRPLSC, IRDS and Samudayik Sarathi undertook the following activities to pilot the GGB in their communities (Triveni and Bafikot *gaunpalikas* in the Rukum district, Gulmi Durbar and Chhatrakot *gaunpalikas* in the Gulmi district and Tripurasundari and Sunkoshi *gaunpalikas* in the Sindhupalchowk district):

- a. *Issue and stakeholder mapping:* CS:MAP GGB implementing partners have conducted their first GGB workshops. The workshops identified a range of governance issues and problems, clarified expectations of the *gaunpalika* officials, and reviewed existing government social accountability tools. At the end of the workshop, participants finalized a list of potential members for the bigger group for the next round of workshops.
- b. *GGB Modeling:* During this reporting period CS:MAP completed GGB modeling workshops in the three previously-identified districts (six *gaunpalikas*). The two-day, multi-stakeholder workshops resulted in a finalized outline of core issues for GGB implementation. The identified issues are: Gulmi - improvements in the community school's physical infrastructure to promote quality education, and increase in agricultural productivity and marketing of products; Rukum – availability of free medicine and quality services through the health center, and improvement in the community school's physical infrastructure to promote quality education; Sindhupalchowk - improvement in the community school's physical infrastructure to promote quality education. The groups also developed sub-sub criteria and indicators for measuring change in each of the identified issue areas. The CS:MAP GGB Expert and Governance Advisor are working in close coordination with the GGB implementing partners in developing detailed sub-sub criteria and indicators.
- c. *Setting values of reference:*
CS:MAP local CSO partners are conducting preparatory works to convene the third GGB workshops to set the values of reference. The workshops are planned for January and February 2018.
- d. *Data collection and validation:*

As per the approved work plan and GGB implementation guidelines, data collection and validation will be completed within a month of setting the values of reference and will be reported in the next reporting period.

- e. *Analyze data, set targets for cross-sector service delivery improvement, develop action plans and form GGB Technical Monitoring Groups:*

As per the approved work plan and the GGB implementation guidelines, GGB action plans and formation of GGB Technical Monitoring Groups will be finalized within a month after the data collection and validation workshop. CS:MAP anticipates that this will be reported in the next reporting period.

- f. *Implement action plans:*

In Quarter 2, the GGB action plans will be developed and will be shared with other CS:MAP partners and stakeholders. The action plan will be endorsed in *gaunpalikas'* action plans through councils and will be incorporated in *gaunpalikas'* regular programs.

- g. *Measuring end lines:*

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 3.1.1.5: Utilize online collaboration platform (MeroReport) to monitor and report on cross-cutting issues:

Ten interactive groups have been formed on the *MeroReport* platform and initial discussions between group members have begun. There are a total of 38 members in these groups. This quarter, there were 1,332 page visits, of which 1,011 were unique page views. Ninety new members joined in this period for a cumulative membership of 1,965. Fifteen new blogposts were made this quarter for a cumulative total of 5,770 blogposts. There are now 1,728 fans in *MeroReport* Facebook page, and 3,733 followers on its Twitter page.

MeroReport has begun generating momentum as a site for sharing and learning around monitoring and reporting on cross-cutting issues, especially related to health, education, agriculture and disaster risk reduction. For example, there was discussion on the need for inclusive membership on the School Management Committee that was formed for management, oversight and coordination, as per legal requirements.

Another group conducted a discussion on the need for integrated infrastructure development accompanied by livelihood options, as opposed to isolated post-earthquake reconstruction. The discussion also explored whether strategic planning had been undertaken for the reconstruction of 8,000 schools and structures of touristic, historical and archeological importance.

A third group focused on GESI concepts in principle and practice in Nepal in the last decade. The discussion revolved around whether GESI was an imposed concept or if there was growing social acceptance and adoption of these principles.

Of the 15 new blogposts this quarter, five were on the following topics:

1. Is the provision for 33% female representation in parliament implementable?
2. Meeting completion of the Disaster Risk Reduction Network in Dolakha district.
3. The role of civil society in the implementation of federalism.
4. What is GESI? Why is it important in the Nepali context?

5. The good governance promotion committee to be formed in the Triveni *gaunpalika*.

Activity 3.1.2 Commission research studies to produce policy analysis and policy briefs.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Result 3.2: Improved bottom-up coordination between community, district, and national formal and informal CSOs engaged in public service oversight.

Activity 3.2.1: Strengthen coalition and networks for public service oversight.

The 34 CS:MAP coalitions and networks: Health, Education, Agriculture and Disaster Risk Reduction (HEAD) - 11, agriculture - four, health - six, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) - two, education - nine, health and education (HE) - one and health, education and agriculture (HEA) – one, are holding meetings every two months to discuss issues of concern. One of the issues the coalitions discussed and jointly forwarded are the issues related to registration of CSOs in the district in Rukum. The joint efforts and discussion with related government agency, finally, resolved the issue. The CSOs in Rukum will have to enlist their projects in the respective local units, not registration. Coalitions have started to work for public services oversight by participating in joint monitoring visits, meetings and public hearings, and by implementing PET/s. In addition, coalitions have started to draft, prepare and submit memoranda to government offices on matters of public interest. Most of the coalitions also worked for peaceful conduction of elections. In the next reporting period, CS:MAP will focus on building bottom-up coordination between community, district and national coalitions, both formal and informal.

Activity 3.2.2: Hold Bi-annual Summits

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Result 3.3: Improved citizen awareness and use of available GoN social accountability mechanisms.

Activity 3.3.1: Conduct Refresher Training on Social Accountability Tools.

As per the approved Year III work plan, the refresher training for CS:MAP local partner staff on SA tools (e.g., social audits, PET/s and community scorecard) will be organized in Quarter 3. However, IHRICON, CDC and IRDS organized SA tool orientation training for elected representatives and government officials in their implementing *gaunpalikas*, and also for the board members of their respective organizations. The DCC Chairperson; representatives from the HEAD coalition/network; representatives from the district chapters of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), FNJ, NGO Federation; and CA members, CSO representatives and chairpersons from the relevant *gaunpalikas* also received the orientation. The newly-elected representatives expressed appreciation for the help in understanding the use and importance of SA tools, and committed to apply the tools in their respective *gaunpalikas* and wards. A total of three CSOs conducted one-to-two day orientations on SA tools for their board members and senior staff. A total of 79 members (34 female) participated in the orientations.

Activity 3.3.2: Conduct Right to Information (RTI) Campaign

IHRC, a CS:MAP partner with expertise in RTI, conducted a total of four RTI campaigns in Janaki and Duduwa *gaunpalikas* and in Nepalgunj sub-metropolitan city-10. The campaigns were conducted during the local “*weekly mela*,” during which 700 local people visited and interacted with volunteers who stressed the importance of RTI. Volunteers displayed booklets describing local government functions and authority, e.g., the roles and responsibilities of *gaunpalika* chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, ward chair and members; human rights considerations; and other relevant information.

Similarly, FMDC, another CS:MAP partner, organized an RTI clinic in Kailali that was visited by 94 individuals. Upon the request, the clinic supported a total of six individuals in preparing RTI applications for their queries.

Activity 3.3.3: Select volunteers (selected as per the technical assistance provided under 4.2.3) and orient them on GoN SA mechanisms and tools.

CS:MAP surveyed CSOs to gather information about their volunteer engagement practices in order to provide tailored, relevant technical assistance. CS:MAP and ISO partner NNSWA worked to develop strategies, organizational policies and guidelines and action plans for engaging volunteers. With technical and financial support from CS:MAP, and in coordination with CSOs, NNSWA provided support to CS:MAP local CSO partners to select volunteers to participate in the orientation to SA tools. NNSWA organized a two-day orientation for 32 volunteers (24 female) representing 32 districts. The selected individuals from Gorkha and Kavrepalanchowk could not join the orientation due to last-minute personal reasons. The volunteers participated in an orientation on CS:MAP and its objectives, CS:MAP working procedures, CS:MAP terminologies, CS:MAP activities in the districts, volunteers roles and responsibilities and SA tools. The volunteers, many of whom were young, demonstrated enthusiastic interest in supporting program activities and commitment to fulfilling their district-level responsibilities.

Activity 3.3.4: Institutionalize regular social audits and public hearings at a fixed venue in selected gaunpalikas.

HRPLSC, IRDS, CDC, HURADEC and Samudayik Sarathi have coordinated closely with *gaunpalikas* to organize and facilitate social audits and public hearings on a fixed date and at a fixed venue on a regular basis. HRPLSC has started to lobby elected representatives of Sarumarani, Triveni and Kapoorkot *gaunpalikas* of Pyuthan, Rolpa and Salyan districts, respectively. Similarly, IRDS has started to lobby elected representatives of Gulmi Durbar *gaunpalika*, and has facilitated one public hearing in Gulmi Durbar-1. Samudayik Sarathi convened a meeting with Panauti and Barhabise municipalities to organize and facilitate public hearings on a fixed date and at a fixed venue. Their progress will be reported on further in the next reporting period.

Activity 3.3.5: Radio programming to raise citizen awareness of SA mechanisms.

Activity 3.3.5.1: Hold Content Advisory Group (CAG) meetings:

Equal Access and partner radio stations for *Sajha Boli* production held a total 19 CAG meetings during this reporting period. EA held a CAG meeting on November 2, 2017. Participants from USAID, FHI 360, GoGo Foundation, Samudayik Sarathi and IHRICON contributed inputs to help select focus issues for CS:MAP radio programs. Drawing on these suggestions, the *Sajha Boli* production team has selected seven topics for the next period:

1. The importance of provincial and federal elections

2. Candidate financing during elections and SA
3. Local-level budgets – expenditures and access to the public
4. Developing laws, policies and regulations at the local level
5. Local-level judicial, executive and legislative branches
6. SA tools (public hearings and public audits)
7. Public perception of CSOs and media, and CSO and media self-governance and self-regulation

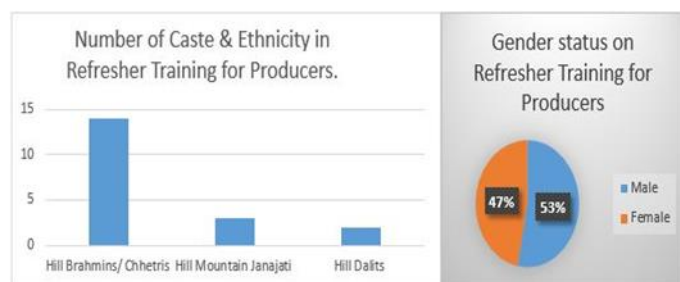
A total of 25 people (10 female) participated in a central CAG meeting. Participants included 17 Hill Brahmins/Chhetris, six Hill Mountain Janajatis, one Hill Dalit and one Tarai/Madhehi Adivasis/Janajatis.

In addition, nine radio stations held two local CAG meeting in November and December; these meetings will continue with the same frequency in future quarters (Ujyalo 90 Network used the central CAG meeting to inform its program production). Each participating station selected an issue of concern for their communities. Most CAG meetings focused on the role of media, CSOs and local governments to minimize violence against women; free education; and the status of free health services in rural areas. CAG meetings also focused on citizen participation in local-level planning processes, victims of natural disaster and the right to food.

Data from *Sajha Boli* partner FM radio stations indicates that a total of 209 participants took part in the local CAG meetings, of which approximately 53% were male and 47% female. This represents an improvement in female participation in CAG meetings since the last quarter (42%). Approximately 63% of local CAG participants are Hill Brahmin/Chhetris; 15% are Mountain Janajatis, and 11% are Hill Dalits. Only one percent of participants are Tarai/Madhesi Brahmins, or Rajput and Tarai/Madhesi Dalits which are one and one in number respectively.

Activity 3.3.5.2: Conduct refresher training on local content production for Sajha Boli local production partners:

A total of 19 producers participated in the “Refresher Training for Producers” on November 7 - 9, 2017 in Kapilvastu, organized by EA. This year, the number of production partner radio stations was reduced from 20 to 10 to allow for more focused guidance and monitoring. Each station also sent alternate producers for the trainings; these alternates will support the lead producers, manage communications with the EA production team and attend meetings in the absence of the lead producer.



The training, led by the CS:MAP Senior Media Manager, focused on building the capacity of producers to develop high-quality programing related to project issues. The training included sessions on script-writing concepts and skills, voice collection,

interview techniques, desk research, audio editing and packaging for quality radio magazines. Participants engaged in hands-on exercises that allowed them to apply their learning. The training also focused on the importance of coordination with EA and other stakeholders.

Following the training, producers will work with EA, community reporters, PPWGs, representatives from the HEAD network and station managers. They will also maintain proper documentation and provide GESI updates.

Activity 3.3.5.3 Meeting with senior management staff of radio partners:

Equal Access organized a two-day FM station managers' meeting on December 22 - 23, 2017 in Bhaktapur. A total of 36 chiefs of broadcast and production partner radio stations participated in the meeting, which included the following objectives:

- Demystify CS:MAP and its mission, vision, goals and objectives.
- Address challenges in order to improve partnerships between CS:MAP/EA and FM stations.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and support in efforts to build media capacity.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with and support existing media organizations and mechanisms in CS:MAP districts.
- Increase FM stations' ownership of *Sajha Boli*.

Due to radio program *Sajha Boli* our producer has increased in capacity and is conducting other programs. So, this program is really helping us. Apart from this, I would like to say regarding the meetings that helped us understand more about CS:MAP and the importance of collaboration among CSO and media partners: we will do our best to communicate and coordinate with them in the future.

Dhruba Budathoki
Station Manager, Sano Bheri FM

Activity 3.3.5.3: Carry out Sajha Boli Program production, broadcast and audience interactivity:

In this quarter, a total of 66 *Sajha Boli* episodes were produced and broadcast. Equal Access produced six central-level episodes and the remaining 60 episodes were produced by CS:MAP's 10 local production partner radio stations. This is 10 episodes less than originally targeted due to changes made, in coordination with FHI 360, to the overall number of partner FM stations.

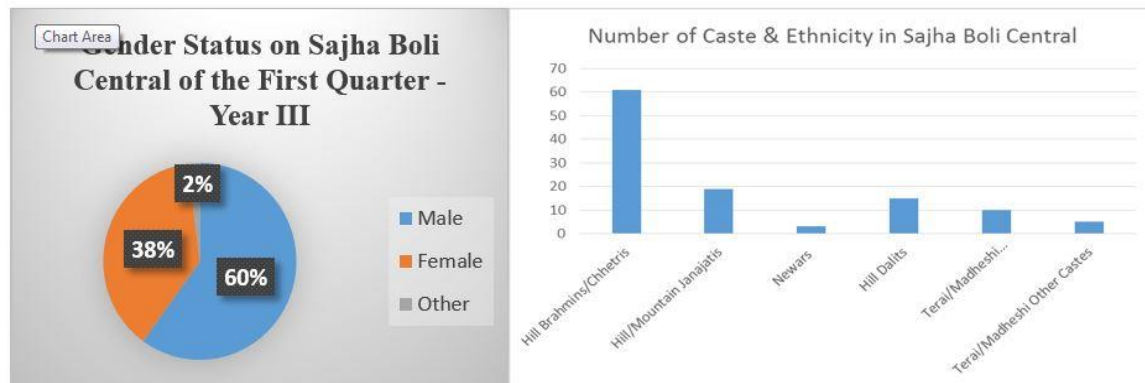
The central-level episodes primarily focused on SA and public oversight. Three of the six episodes also dealt with policy advocacy and civic engagement, and episodes also included content related to policy and legal provisions related to CSOs and media and gender equality and social inclusion. The radio programs highlighted the following issues:

- Episode 22: Female leadership in local-level government: opportunities and challenges.
- Episode 23: The current status of public service delivery at the local level; complaint mechanisms and ways to address complaints.
- Episode 24: SA tools in local-level governance, and the roles of CSOs and the media.
- Episode 25: Importance of elections: why are the federal and provincial elections required?

I found the program very good and I can get information about local-level governance and transparency. The program is really informative. I learned about the roles and responsibilities of the newly-formed local-level office and elected representatives.

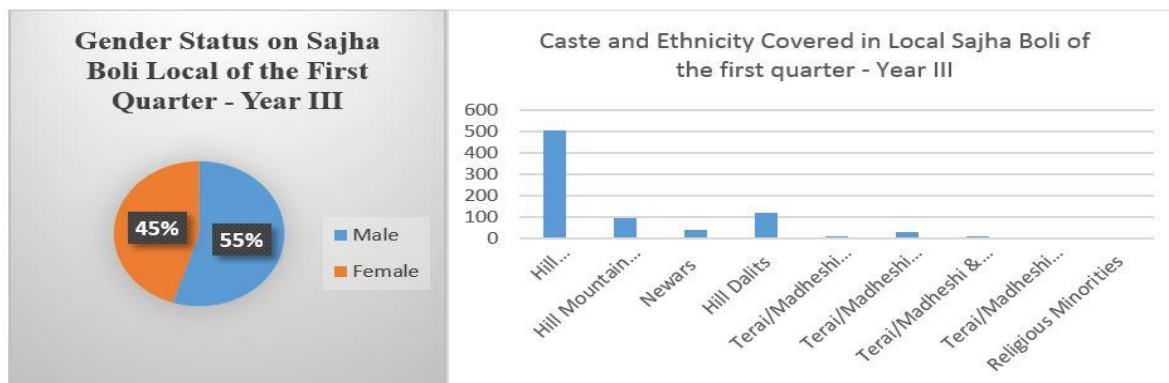
Indra Neupane, Gulmi
Listener

- Episode 26: Expenditures in elections.
- Episode 27: Public access to local government budgets and expenditures.



Community reporters highlighted the voice of local people, ensuring that their concerns were incorporated into the radio programs.

Focusing on pre-designated thematic areas, local radio production partners produced a total of 60 *Sajha Boli* episodes. Topics for the local programs varied, but included issues related to service delivery in the health, education, agriculture and disaster risk reduction sectors, as well as civil society role's in the development of appropriate policies to aid effective service delivery. Additional topics included the role of media, CSOs and local-level government to minimize gender-based violence; local government and disaster management; grants provided by local government for agriculture development; and local government provision of health services. This quarter, local productions of *Sajha Boli* highlighted the voices of 810 individuals.



Activity 3.3.6: Listening, Discussion and Action Groups (LDAGs) to engage citizens in social accountability.

During previous quarters, CS:MAP facilitated the formation of 34 LDAGs linked to 14 CSO partners. Equal Access trained the facilitators of these LDAGs in Year II. Each LDAG is comprised of approximately 20 youth from the same community/*gaunpalika* who will meet every two weeks to discuss the *Sajha Boli* and *Saathi Sanga Manka Kura* (SSMK) episode content and provide feedback to the *Sajha Boli* central and local producers. By holding discussion sessions on issues raised by the radio episodes, the LDAGs will identify oversight and advocacy needs linked

to public service provision that affect their communities, and bring such issues to CAs and PPWGs for further discussion. They will initiate actions that lead to constructive engagement with government and improvement in local governance.

In Year III, CS:MAP will work with local CSO partners to identify 68 more LDAG groups and train one facilitator from each group to conduct facilitated listening and discussion of radio programs. CS:MAP anticipates that focused radio program listening and discussion will help to generate more advocacy for policy and oversight-related actions.

Activity 3.3.7: Engage youth in social accountability:

EA has continued to utilize the well-established “by youth, for youth” radio program, *Saathi Sanga Manka Kura* (SSMK), or “Chatting with My Best Friend.” In this quarter, episodes number 552 and 558 included issues relevant to CS:MAP, and were broadcast on November 1 and December 16, 2017, respectively. The November episode addressed the importance of RTI in local governance. The December episode focused on SA, with a particular emphasis on public hearings. Programs had a discussion-based format, including a report, interview and series drama. They were broadcast 82 times in project districts and repeated with the same frequency.

Result 3.4: Improved citizen engagement in media and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools to strengthen public participation and oversight.

Activity 3.4.1: Conduct SMS My Voice campaigns.

Coinciding with national and provincial elections, a third CS:MAP campaign encouraging youth to question elected representatives was launched in November 2017, focusing on curbing corruption. A total of 263 queries have been received as a part of this campaign, which will continue until March 2018. The campaign has sought commitment from local representatives to ensure transparency in their offices and work. Campaign were promoted through the *Sajha Boli* and *SSMK* radio programs. The *SSMK* and *Sajha Boli* production team promoted the campaign during their field visits in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur districts in December 2017.

As of the reporting date, a total of 263 callers had participated in this campaign (257 callers via IVR system and six via SMS). Of the callers who used the IVR system, only 119 consented to provide demographic details, and only 76 callers provided information about their gender (36 female, 37 male, and three identified as “other”). Of the callers who provided information about their age, the majority were 15-19 years old (46 callers) and 20-24 years old (16 callers).

Campaign responses suggest that participants understand and are committed to the role of youth in initiating engagement with elected representatives to address corruption.

Activity 3.4.2: Organize Public Service Delivery Photo Exhibit.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 3.4.3: Update online collaboration platform (MeroReport).

Described above under activity 3.1.1.5.

Activity 3.4.4: Opening local-level units’ (municipality/gaunpalika) annual budget and plans to the public.

As ICT connects data with people, CS:MAP is working to use ICT technology in helping citizens increase access to information regarding public services and resource use for improved governance

at the local level. CS:MAP partner KLL and Nepalgunj Sub-Metropolitan City signed a contract to develop and implement digital access to the Nepalgunj Sub-Metropolitan City annual plan and budget. The goal is to make municipal governance smarter, more transparent, and closer to public. KLL will also assist the Sub-Metropolitan City increase public access to its annual plans and budget through interactive maps and charts visualizations.

During a previous reporting period, KLL tested the same tool with Neelakantha Municipality in Dhading. In order to increase public access to the Municipality's plans and budget, KLL organized two mapping training events to prepare a base map data in Year II. KLL selected local students (college-level) and trained them on how to use free mapping tools in order to add map data to *OpenStreetMap* (a free wiki map of the world). The map data will be used as a base map layer on top of which the Municipality's annual plan and budget will be overlaid for interactive visualizations.

Objective 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and sustainability of CSOs working in USAID priority sectors to advance local solutions

Result 4.1: Improved institutional governance of selected CSOs and media organizations.

Activity 4.1.1: Train and provide technical assistance and coaching to partner CSOs and media organizations

CS:MAP ISOs NEPAN, MITRA Samaj and NNSWA provided coaching and mentoring to 14 CSOs focusing on how to implement OCA IIPs, ARI capacity building plans and financial sustainability plans, as well as finalization of CSOs' resource mobilization guidelines and implementation of action plans prepared through CS:MAP different trainings and workshops. Coaching and mentoring enabled CSOs to implement these plans, drawing on the technical skills and support from ISO coaches. A total of three coaching, mentoring and follow-up visits were conducted by three ISOs. In addition, ISOs provided CSOs with distance support through emails, phone and resource sharing. ISOs have been sharing their visit updates and progress on action plans with the CS:MAP capacity-building unit in regular basis.

A planned training on "Leadership and Governance" and a workshop to review and revise CSO personnel and financial policies were postponed to Quarter 2 due to overlap with other capacity-building and project activities, and to better manage staff time.

Activity 4.1.2: Conduct annual organizational capacity assessments with partner organizations, and adjust IIPs.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Result 4.2: Improved capacity of select CSOs and media organizations to mobilize social and financial resources for sustainability.

Activity 4.2.1: Develop Financial Sustainability Plans.

Following the development of CSO financial sustainability action plans, a total of eight CSOs finalized their resource mobilization guidelines and plans; these guidelines and plans will be endorsed by CSO board members by the end of January 2018. The remaining six CSO partners are in the process of finalize their guidelines. These guidelines will help the CSOs to generate internal as well as external funds for resource diversification.

Activity 4.2.2: Conduct bi-annual group trainings in financial sustainability

This activity did not take place during this reporting period.

Activity 4.2.3: Provide technical assistance on volunteer engagement.

CS:MAP ISO NNSWA have provided support to 14 CSOs to support their volunteer selection processes (e.g., drafting vacancy notices, short-listing volunteers, providing reference questions for interviews) in 34 program districts. NNSWA guided CSOs to ensure volunteer selection from marginalized and disadvantaged community groups, incorporating GESI considerations. A total of 34 volunteers (24 female) were selected. A two-day volunteer orientation was conducted in Nepalgunj on December 21 and 22, 2017, focusing on an introduction to CS:MAP, as well as volunteer roles and responsibilities and possible contribution to CS:MAP. Volunteer commitments were higher than anticipated, with contributions ranging from three-four hours per day. Volunteer appointments were effective as of Dec 15, 2017, and volunteers were mobilized in the field after the training.

Activity 4.2.4: Conduct open houses to expose CS:MAP partners to new donors.

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Result 4.3: Improved capacity of CSOs and media organizations to advance local solutions on priority development issues across sectors and to promote peer-learning opportunities.

Activity 4.3.1: Train and provide TA to selected CSO and media partners to improve technical and organizational development capacities

These activities are discussed under Results 4.1 and 4.2.

Activity 4.3.2: Strengthen the local marketplace of capacity development services

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 4.3.3: Facilitate peer learning among partner CSOs and media organizations

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

Activity 4.3.4: Refresher Training on CS:MAP concept and strategies in advancing local solutions and peer learning

This activity was not in the plan for this reporting period.

4. Incorporation of Cross-Cutting Interventions

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In this quarter, CS:MAP partner Samjauta Nepal, in coordination with MAG, reviewed a number of national policies using a GESI lens. The findings were discussed with a number of loosely affiliated networks and shared with relevant stakeholders, including CS:MAP CSO and media coalitions.

CS:MAP applied a GESI lens to the 2016 Journalistic Code of Ethics, which was developed by the Press Council of Nepal and enforced with the consent of FNJ. Though the revised Journalist Code of Ethics states that its primary duty is to respect human rights, it is not clear how the Code considers the rights of women, sexual minorities, differently abled individuals and marginalized groups. The Journalist Code of Ethics describes a social responsibility to render special assistance through the dissemination of information in support of the empowerment and development of children, women, the elderly, excluded groups and minorities, but it does not specify journalistic

or media obligations to abide by GESI standards. Furthermore, GESI principles are most fully described in the “decent behavior” clause, which links GESI with social courtesy. This is further complicated by language around decency that is subject to varied interpretation, depending on the context. For example, some may interpret decency as women refraining from taking leadership positions or women journalists not working late hours. Since social courtesy and decency have been predefined in accordance with norms connected to masculinity and femininity, use of such vague terms can adversely affect certain groups, especially women. Though the Code of Ethics does not prescribe specific behaviors, it is vital to incorporate GESI considerations: to promote the participation of women, minorities and marginalized populations as journalists and within media houses; to properly represent issues related to women and marginalized populations and their voices in the media; and to outline specific provisions for enforcement when GESI norms are violated. This can be accomplished by ensuring inclusiveness in the Code of Conduct Monitoring Sub-Committee. FNJ will lead coalition efforts to lobby for these revisions in the next quarter.

A desk review of 2016 National Mass Communication Policy using a GESI lens was shared with a loosely affiliated media network in June 2017. In order to advance advocacy priorities, the feedback solicited from the network was incorporated into the review and shared with the media coalition in this quarter. Working Women Journalists and Sancharika Samuha also participated in this review and dissemination process as a result of their relevant contributions in the media sector and wide membership. CS:MAP also organized an information-sharing event to form an executable action plan for the inclusion of GESI in the 2016 National Mass Communication Policy, either by amendment or through a commitment to include GESI considerations when drafting new laws and directives related to media. The action plan addresses the following concerns:

- The Policy describes inclusiveness in terms of composition, but should also address inclusion as it relates to content.
- The Policy must guarantee in-house GESI policies in all media houses, including GESI-friendly facilities.
- The Policy must use obligatory language rather than persuasive language to ensure a robust GESI-friendly approach.
- The Policy must cover the government as well as private media because, even in government media, the implementation level of GESI is not satisfactory.
- Since the Policy is already in place, attempts to amend the policy to make it GESI friendly must continue. More rigorous attempts must be made to include GESI principles when drafting and formulating related laws.
- Consistent attempts must be made to include GESI-related concerns in the Policy’s Media Directives.

To promote these objectives, the following action plan has been developed by the coalition:

1. Engage women members of the National Mass Communication Policy Implementation Committee and encourage them to lead efforts to pass the Professional Social Physical Security Directive submitted by the previous FNJ Central Committee to the Ministry of Information and Communications.
2. Journalists working to report on and advance GESI principles will serve as watchdogs for proper GESI implementation in media houses, and report on GESI implementation.
3. Encourage the present FNJ Central Committee to implement the decision made by previous Central Committee to put a GESI desk in every media houses.

4. Advocate to include GESI-related concerns in Media Directives and other related laws that have been left in the 2016 National Mass Communication policy.

CS:MAP national advocacy partners Samjhauta and MAG also shared the GESI checklist (Annex 1) with representatives from all major political parties on October 18, 2017. Most of the participants were recent former parliamentarians who shared their challenges incorporating GESI considerations in the law-making process. They shared that, although GESI is theoretically addressed by including women in Parliament, it is still challenging for women parliamentarians to be heard. The women parliamentarians shared that, although they understand the problems expressed by grassroots activists, they cannot be addressed in Parliament because GESI is almost never prioritized. Participants also discussed considerations related to women's issues and intersectionality, which they acknowledged to be a challenge in Nepali politics because most of the representatives come from influential political family backgrounds and are privileged in terms of class and ethnicity.

To mark 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, and as an entry point to engage with newly-elected representatives to improve the civil society enabling environment, a GESI orientation was provided to elected representatives from Lalitpur Metropolitan City on November 30 and December 1, 2017. The orientation covered GESI principles, the evolution of GESI in Nepal and the current context as it relates to GESI. The representatives shared their experiences and challenges that they face in promoting GESI in their respective constituencies. They shared that, as the peoples' representatives, they must deal with a wide range of challenges including obtaining citizenship certificates, problems in divisions of inheritances, budget priorities, etc. Therefore, they need to understand the national policies and related GESI provisions to ensure that those provisions are followed. The representatives shared that, due to the vast gap in governmental understanding regarding these provisions, they are currently unable to fully support GESI mainstreaming in their constituencies. The participants also committed to take a stand against gender-based violence in their respective offices. As a result of the orientation, CS:MAP was able to enhance the capacity of the locally elected representatives from Lalitpur Metropolitan City. Local representative's proximity to people's everyday lives means there is potential to respond more directly to women's and marginalized people's needs when it comes to public policy and service delivery. At these levels, there is great potential to use a GESI lens in an array of services and planning including gender budgeting approaches involving the local population. The orientation was also successful to draw linkages where the locally elected representatives may collaborate with the civil society. One concrete example was that the locally elected representatives were willing to form an advisory body together with the civil society focusing on the issue of GESI at the ward level. Updates from this committee will be provided in the subsequent quarter.

In addition, CS:MAP local partner RWDC partnered with the Women's Development Office to conduct an interaction on the changing trends in gender-based violence in Dang, Banke and Salyan districts as a result of various micro-finance groups. CS:MAP CSO partner SOCH Nepal also organized an interaction with prominent civil society leaders and government counterparts to mark 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The program focused on *Kuriti*, or traditional practices, that contribute to gender-based violence and discrimination in 16 districts in Tarai, Kathmandu, Gorkha and Okhaldhunga. And, CS:MAP ISO partner Shtrii Shakti organized a number of events to mark 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, including a

rally to raise awareness around gender-based violence, followed by a street drama and poetry competition in Kailali, Bardiya, Kaski and Parbat.

Recommendations from the Year II GESI audits and resulting action plans emphasized the absence or insufficiency of partner CSO gender policies (i.e., policies that only addressed gender, and/or were not followed). Based on these findings, during this quarter CS:MAP provided coaching and mentoring to CSOs using a checklist of best practices and minimum requirements for GESI policies. A GESI training was provided to CSO staff and representatives from the board to deepen their GESI understanding. As a result of CS:MAP's mentoring efforts, six of the CSOs including, CDC Nepal, IRDS Nepal, IHRICON, HURADEC, HRPLSC and SOCH Nepal, have finalized their GESI policies. The remaining eight CSOs have prepared a first draft of their GESI policies and will finalize them in the next quarter.

Other GESI-related activities this quarter focused on interventions to establish local CSO partners as GESI role models in their respective communities so that they can catalyze change and inspire other CSOs to implement GESI best practices. Following their audits, some CSOs have made small but significant changes in their organization, for example by making toilets more GESI-friendly, installing ramps for wheelchair accessibility, or committing to allocate funds for GESI alterations in the near future. CSOs have also committed to revise their hiring processes by assigning bonus points to people from minority groups and marginalized populations. In order to track implementation of these policies, a checklist has been developed to review the CSOs' GESI status; it was first applied in Year II. The checklist will be applied again in the future and used to determine the extent to which CSOs have made progress on their GESI action plans.

Youth engagement in social accountability

Youth participation in the IVR platform has increased in this quarter, suggesting growing interest in the issues covered by the *Sajha Boli* and SSMK radio programs. As a result, youth listeners are more likely to understand their role in promoting social accountability, preparing them to engage in social accountability processes at the sub-national level. A total of 200 responses were received via IVR (133) and Voice of Youth (VOY) SMS (67) to 2 SSMK episodes broadcast this quarter. 58.5% of these responses resulted from the November episode, focused on RTI as a key social accountability tool, and 41.5% of the responses resulted from the December episode that dealt with the youth role in social accountability.

A representative response related to service delivery for a minority population is provided below:

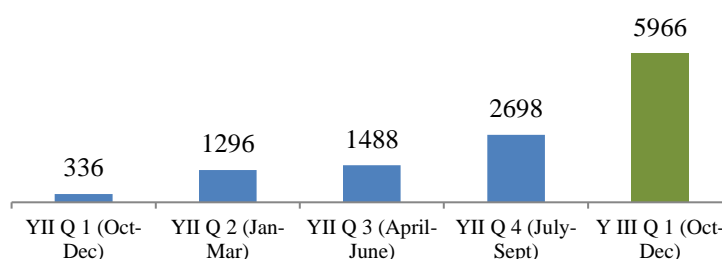
I like this program very much. This program has helped me a lot. The benefits given to disabled persons by government are not sufficient. So government should pay attention in this problem. (Laxman Chaudhary, Kapilvastu)

In order to assess current SSMK listenership, a survey questionnaire was administered via the IVR platform to over 65,000 callers listed in the SSMK listener database in December 2017. A final assessment report is being prepared. Among the 14,499 individuals who responded, 7,809 chose to answer whether they had listened to the program in the last three months, with 28% answering in the affirmative. Forty percent of the respondents who had not been able to listen in the last three months cited a lack of time. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents that confirmed that they had listened in the last three months were between 15 and 29 years of age, indicating the popularity of the program in that age group.

There is also an increase in user interaction with *Sajha Boli Chautari*, the IVR platform for *Sajha Boli*, as indicated by the Figure 4 below.

Eighty-four percent of the callers that disclosed their age were between 15 and 29 years of age, indicating a sizeable youth audience for *Sajha Boli*. Similarly, there has been a growth in the number of LDAG members interacting with the IVR platform, with 391 interactions this quarter compared to 114 in the last quarter. While LDAG membership is still being analyzed, it is clear that the majority of LDAG members are between 15 and 35 years of age.

Number of Callers for *Sajha Boli Chautari*

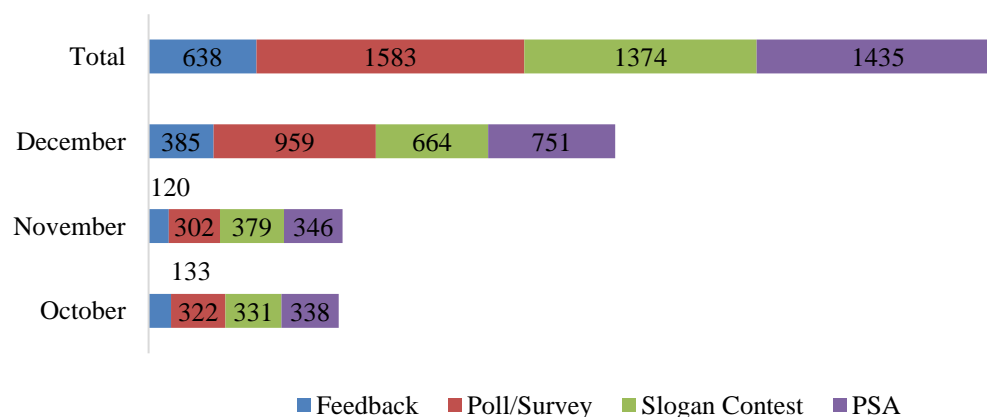


Use of ICTs

As discussed above in the youth engagement suggestion, audiences are increasingly interacting with CS:MAP radio programs via the *Sajha Boli Chautari* (SBC) IVR platform. This is likely due in part to ongoing promotion of SBC among audiences as a platform for providing feedback and expressing views on a topic for possible broadcast or analysis.

The SBC platform has four major segments: Feedback, Poll/Survey, Slogan Contest and Audio segments. Callers can engage with the segments as they choose – one caller may participate in as many segments as s/he wants in a single call. During this quarter 5,030 individuals accessed the Main Menu, which represents a 50% increase over the last quarter. The Poll segment, which allows callers to participate in a survey on a recent socio-cultural or political issue, was the most popular segment during this quarter, with a total of 1,583 participants, followed by 1,435 participants who accessed the Audio segment, during which callers can listen to PSAs on various themes. Participants engaged with Slogan Contest segment 1,374 times, and with the Feedback segment, 638 times.

Callers' engagement with the SBC Main Menu (Oct-Dec 2017)



In the Feedback segment, callers are given an opportunity to leave their comments or questions about the radio program. The callers' responses are then transcribed and translated for further analysis. The messages received are shared with the production team after each episode. After analyzing the feedback, the production team considers changes to the program format and content. A total of 638 feedbacks were received in this quarter, which is higher than the number of feedbacks in the last quarter. Following are some of the feedback responses received during this quarter, which were also broadcast in the radio program.

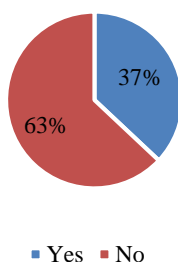
I heard from my friend that this program (Sajha Boli) is very informative. So, I listened to the radio program and I really liked it. I learned about the roles and responsibilities of newly-formed local-level offices and representatives after listening to one of the radio episodes. (Indra Neupane, Gulmi)

I like to listen to this radio program because it gives us information about new local-level restructuring and services delivered by the local level. (Ashish Chhetri)

I regularly listen to this Sajha Boli radio program. I really like it because it raises issues from the local level to the central level. If we want to know more about transparency and accountability, then everyone should listen to this program. (Suman Sharma, Dhading)

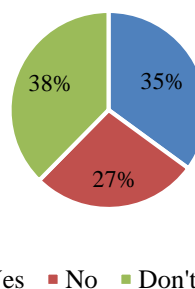
During this quarter, SBC polls included survey questions related to reforms to local planning processes, provincial and federal assembly elections, and the disclosure of assets of elected local representatives. Representative poll questions are below, along with responses. These results were also included in the radio programs, and shared via *MeroReport* and social media pages.

Do you know about the reduction of planning process steps from 14 steps to 7 steps?



Poll question (December 2017, n=854)

Have the newly-elected representatives in your community made their property details public?



Poll question (October 2017, n = 311)

The SBC Slogan Contest segment allows callers to record their slogans related to public accountability, transparency and participation. The best slogan is then selected and rewarded, allowing audiences to use ICT tools to make their voices heard. During this quarter there were 1,374 entries in the slogan contest compared to 828 in the last quarter. Some of the winning slogans are listed below:

सुशासनको लागि हाम्रो कदम, हातेमालो गर्दै बढ्नेछ हरेक

Translation: Our efforts to ensure good governance: Let's work together consistently.
(Saraswati GC, Kanchanpur, October 2017)

स्थानीय तहको निर्वाचन पछि नखेलुन् माफिया, दिगो विकासको संवाहक बनुन् गाउँ, नगरपालिका

Translation: Let's hope that there is no foul play after the local-level elections, and that the municipalities become the agents of sustainable development.

(Mohan Thapa, Arghakhanchi, November 2017)

कति आए चाप्लुसी, राजनीतिक भजन गाउँदै
अब आयो स्थानीय सरकार गाउँघरमै सेवा दिँदै
नयाँ सरकार बन्छ अब, श्रम, सीप, पसिना पोख्नेछन्
स्वदेशमै युवा, साथ दिई सहकार्य गर्न मञ्जुर छन् सरकारलाई युवा

Translation:

*Many a dishonest leaders came, singing political hymns
But now we have a local government to provide services to the community
The new government will value labor, skills and sweat
They youth in country pledge their support to this government.*
(Sapana Singh, Dadeldhura, December 2017)

During this quarter the Audio segment included information on themes such as local-level elections, local-level restructuring, the elections Code of Conduct, disaster risk reduction and other critical issues. This segment was accessed 1,435 times in this quarter, an increase of over 70% from the previous quarter, and was the second most popular SBC segment.

5. Coordination and Collaboration

In this reporting period, CS:MAP team undertook coordination activities with various stakeholders.

Government of Nepal: During this quarter, a total of 39 coordination meetings were conducted by CS:MAP national partners including the MoFALD, Ministry of Local Development, Ministry of Information and Communication, National Law Commission, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD), SWC and NPC. These meetings were intended to assess government perception of CSOs and find entry points for advocacy. The coordination meeting with SWC on November 20, 2017 focused on the need for wider periodic consultations between SWC and CSOs. SWC officials verbally agreed to organize a discussion between SWC board members, senior staff and CSO representatives in the near future. SWC agreed to conduct wider

public consultations, particularly with CSOs, on legislation, guidelines and directives. This will increase CSOs' ownership of these guidelines, which will drive effective implementation.

USAID and CS:MAP joint visit to CS:MAP districts: To monitor field activities, interact with government and civil society stakeholders and learn about CS:MAP best practices and the functioning of sectoral service-providing line agencies and challenges in local government functioning, CS:MAP coordinated a field visit for the USAID AOR to Kailali, Kanchanpur and Baitadi districts from November 21- 27, 2017. In addition, the CS:MAP team conducted joint visits to Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Kapilvastu and Makwanpur districts with the USAID Alternate AOR for CS:MAP from November 10-17, 2017. The CS:MAP team also conducted a joint field visit with the USAID AOR from December 27, 2017 – January 11, 2018. The 16-day visit covered 10 districts: Banke, Surkhet, Dang, Rukum, Salyan, Pyuthan, Rolpa, Gulmi, Arghakhanchi and Makwanpur.

USAID implementers: CS:MAP participated in the USAID partners' meeting, held in Nepalgunj on November 25, 2017 by the USAID Health Office. The US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission was present. Participants discussed USAID partners' focus areas and the political context in mid-west Nepal. In addition, CS:MAP also participated in the USAID implementers meeting held in Nepalgunj on December 15, 2017, which focused on effective collaboration and coordination among USAID partners.

Monthly/Quarterly review and reflections: The CS:MAP team is meeting bi-weekly to discuss project accomplishments, challenges and lessons learned. The team also uses the meetings to plan for the upcoming weeks. In addition, CS:MAP held a strategic meeting on December 4-5, 2017 with all program staff to discuss project progress and review project objectives. The meeting also focused on critical issues from the past five months, and included a discussion on next steps and strategies. To encourage peer-to-peer learning, CS:MAP national advocacy partners are meeting on a monthly basis with rotational coordination responsibilities. CS:MAP ISO partners meet via Skype, while local CSO partners are meeting internally to share lessons learned. Quarterly meetings for national and ISO partners will be convened directly by FHI 360.

Monthly CS:MAP bulletin: As per the approved Year III Annual Work Plan, CS:MAP is releasing a monthly bulletin during the first week of every month for project partners and other stakeholders. The bulletin will detail stories and activities from the previous map, and document CS:MAP and partner successes.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

During this reporting period the CS:MAP MEL unit has conducted regular monitoring and reporting activities. It has also reviewed the CS:MAP Monthly Newsletter - a peer-learning document due to its distribution to partners – and partner quarterly reports that include learning sections in which they address guiding questions for learning and adapting. Based on these reviews, CS:MAP has identified the following lessons:

CSOs engagement with government:

CS:MAP has created various local structures, such as PPWGs and CAs, that aim to identify and explore issues related to the public service delivery. These structures serve as a platform for CSOs' engagement with government. PPWGs have also had success accessing the platforms used by the private sector where they discuss issues related to service delivery that affect both CSOs and the private sectors, and explore possible solutions. The use of these platforms is expected to improve

collaboration between CSOs and the private sector. In addition, CS:MAP has developed a mechanism to track contacts via email, personal visits, letter of invitation, meetings, etc. between CSOs and government officials and/or government agencies. This system will help identify areas of frequent communication whereby CSOs can interact with government, and is intended to improve mutual trust, confidence and understanding of each other's role.

CSOs and media collaboration:

CSOs and media have shared the same platform during multiple meetings and events focused on the role of CSOs and media in Nepal's changing context. Local CSOs have organized interaction sessions in which CSOs and media came together to identify and discuss their cross-sectoral policy priorities, and to undertake joint actions through formal or informal CSO-media coalitions. During this reporting period, CS:MAP district-level partners organized three events in three districts, with more than 40 representatives from district-level CSOs, media and local government.

Institutionalization of internal governance and self-regulation

CS:MAP, in partnership with CSO and media coalition leads NFN and FNJ, is drafting minimum standards for CSO self-regulation and a self-assessment toolkit that will be circulated among network members and five media houses. These tools will help partners apply self-regulation and internal governance practices at the organization level. The standards and toolkit may be used for CSO and media organization certification and accreditation at a later date. A mid-term public perception survey anticipated for the beginning of FY2019 will assess the extent to which CSOs have improved their public image through self-regulation and internal governance systems.

Capacity building activity pertinent to MEL and CS:MAP Data Management System:

To establish partner understanding of key CS:MAP MEL concepts and processes, and to enhance expertise around participatory MEL and knowledge of the data management system, the M&E Manager continued leading regular orientation sessions for partners. These sessions were conducted through one-on-one meetings during partner visits, and they have helped partners better understand the reporting timeframe, align activities with the project goal, and expand their technical capacity to manage the database and update it periodically.

Conduct Data Quality Assurance (DQA) of CS:MAP partners:

Following the project's standard checklist and procedures, CS:MAP conducted a general Data Quality Assurance (DQA) of partner HURADEC in Dolakha during this reporting period. The DQA assessed five aspects of data quality (validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity) with customized indicators. Findings and action points were later documented. CS:MAP plans to conduct this activity in upcoming reporting periods as well.

Launch CS:MAP M&E database management system

This activity was conducted in previous reporting quarters. As of now, the CS:MAP database management system is operational.

Monthly/Quarterly Review and Reflections

Please refer to Section 5, Coordination and Collaboration

7. Activity Progress Summary



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8. Priorities for Quarter 2 (January 1-March 31, 2018)

- Implement advocacy action plans on regulatory reform issues on CSOs and media;
- Generate evidence on CSOs' contributions to Nepal's development in support of enabling environment advocacy efforts;
- Hold policy discussion and commission research studies to produce policy analysis and policy briefs;
- Engaging government and parliament stakeholders around legislative drafting;
- Train 200 Public Information Officers on RTI and conduct an information tracking survey of public agencies and government offices to gauge impact;
- Produce and disseminate 3-minute video and radio dramas to improve public understanding of and confidence in the roles of CSOs and media;
- Strengthen community-CSO ties through 34 community consultation meetings and the solicitation citizen inputs to inform the forthcoming NGO roadmap;
- Foster media and CSO collaboration through dialogue and joint actions;
- Conduct at least one joint meeting to improve public perception of the media through public hearings, implementation of media missions and implementation of findings;
- Conduct social audits of at least three CSOs to improve CSO and media transparency and accountability;
- Build the capacity of CSOs and media on developing and implementing self-regulation and internal governance through participatory processes. A related event with major stakeholders, including governments agencies, on the self-regulation and internal governance of CSOs will be held in Quarter 4;
- Conduct workshops with media owners, editors and journalists on self-regulation within media outlets;
- Continue coaching ISOs in providing advocacy and government engagement capacity building to partner CSOs and media organizations;
- Develop handbook and guidelines on ICT for policy advocacy, good governance and oversight of public service delivery;
- Conduct at least 10 *Sajha Sabhas*;
- Strengthen coalitions and networks to undertake joint advocacy actions on policy priorities across sectors;
- Build research capacity for CSOs and media organizations and provide research fellowship for CSO partners;
- Conduct public interest reporting training, support a public interest reporting fellowship and conduct two investigative journalism trainings for media organizations. Produce and publish 18 investigative news (priority carried over from Year II);
- Hold 19 CAG meetings for both central and local *Sajha Boli* radio programs;
- Produce and broadcast 25 public service announcements, 66 episodes of *Sajha Boli* and three episodes of *SSMK*;

- Complete the first phase of the SMS My Voice campaign and update *MeroReport* online platform, resulting in a minimum of 500 hits;
- Conduct a refresher training for partners on GESI, MEL and the CS:MAP Database Management System;
- Conduct bi-annual financial orientations for CS:MAP partners;
- Hold CS:MAP Bi-annual Summit and bi-annual review and reflection meeting for partners.

9. Success Story



Success_Story_Training_Participants.docx

10. Challenges and Mitigation Measures

Contextual challenges: Federal and provincial elections and the end of the tenure for parliament affected the advocacy schedule for CS:MAP national partners. With national attention focused on elections, there was less interest in civil society strengthening, policy advocacy and governance oversight. These events also affected scheduled trainings and ICNL's technical assistance to partners, especially coalition leads.

Communication and coordination with Community Reporters (CR)s: CRs have to travel frequently to CS:MAP local units to report on community-level voices. Coordination between CSO district coordinators and CRs is of critical importance. Coordination and communication was a challenge at times, in part due to operational differences between FHI 360 and EA. In response, CRs received refresher trainings and mentoring to support meaningful coordination with CS:MAP mechanisms, CSOs and other stakeholders. Two CRs were also discontinued due to negligence on their part.

Reformation of LDAGs: LDAGs are intended to not only support listener action based on radio program content, but also link individuals from diverse marginalized groups. In some LDAGs, however, most participants were from the same community, and/or were already aware of the issues under discussion. At the same time, facilitators occasionally failed to conduct timely meetings, and some participants could not contribute the time needed for meaningful participation (e.g., students who had exams during the reporting period). As a result, group membership was reconsidered and groups were re-formed to support inclusive and effective LDAGs.

Low response rate for the SMS My Voice campaign: Whereas previous SMS My Voice campaigns resulted in a SMS response rate of over 20%, during this quarter the campaign resulted in a SMS response rate of less than two percent. The MEL team will hold discussions with the production and ICT teams to assess campaign activities and attempt to identify causes of the low response rate. The campaign is scheduled to continue through March 2018, and CS:MAP will continue to promote the campaign through radio programs and project activities to ensure maximum participation.

11. Lessons Learned

GESI beyond numbers: In order to mainstream GESI in project activities, CS:MAP has been using disaggregated data to assess GESI elements in project structures and programs. GESI-specific indicators also inform project targets, e.g., 40% women or members of marginalized communities in USG-supported leadership positions. However, though numbers are critical for promoting the

participation of specific groups, it is important ensure that the numbers reflected in the datasheet also denote meaningful participation of those individuals and groups. To this end, CS:MAP is working to identify or develop a GESI context analysis tool, including a power relations checklist and barriers analysis. The resulting findings will be included in local-level CA meeting agendas, and used to develop a plan with the GESI ISO to mainstream GESI in CS:MAP local structures.

Fewer production partners for better mentoring: Prior to this quarter, CS:MAP was partnering with twenty FM radio stations to produce local versions of *Sajha Boli*, with the EA team providing mentoring support for quality program production. Mentoring 20 different FM radio stations with varying levels of capacity was difficult, as was facilitating Skype meetings with 20 partners to discuss content, and coordinating with 20 different producers. As a result, the quality of project mentoring was below anticipated levels. In response, EA decided to limit the number of production partners to 10. With this change, the remaining producers reaffirmed their commitment, and began submitting timely reports, which provided the EA production team with enough time to review scripts and provide suggestions. Conversely, EA experienced difficulties in working with only one producer for local *Sajha Boli* programming. To mitigate this challenge, EA trained an alternative producer from the same FM radio stations to support a smoother production process.

Commitment level and capacity of training participants: Throughout CS:MAP's period of performance, EA has conducted trainings for producers and CRs to improve radio programs. However, not all trainees have successfully applied their learning following the trainings. Trainee commitment and enthusiasm has emerged as a key variable for effective follow-through. To promote active listening and commitment, EA has begun implementing a mandatory quiz at the conclusion of daily training sessions. These quizzes ask participants objective questions based on the day's training content. Participants who answer quickly and correctly receive small gifts, which encourage participant attention. This technique could be used in other CS:MAP trainings.

Monthly coordination among CS:MAP partners: This practice, initiated during the previous quarter, assists in creating synergy and fostering a common understanding of policy advocacy issues. These meetings also help establish institutional relationships among the partners.

12. Annex



Annex 1 GESI
Checklist.pdf

Annex 1: GESI Checklist