

# Report on Internal Review and Reflection

## ***Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods***

a project partnership between  
Disability and Development Partners (UK)  
Disabled Human Rights Center (Nepal)  
and downstream partner Disabled Welfare Association, Dhading



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DHRC-Nepal



Dhading Welfare Association

Report submitted by: Ability Manch, September 2021

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Shudarshan Subedi with Rita Shrestha

Ability Manch

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## Executive Summary

The *Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods* project (WDIL), developed with technical support from DDP and funding from UK AID was implemented from July 2018 to July 2021 in four municipalities of Dhading district. The project has been able to support marginalized people to strengthen their capacity to take care of disabled family members, their knowledge on tackling disability issues and challenges, and also in generating income, so that they can be more confident and happier with their lives. Likewise, the project has provided assistance to children with disabilities and single women who need moral and income-generation support. DHRC and DWA carried out the project activities at the local level.

The **main purpose of this evaluation** exercise has been to review and reflect on what went well, what have been the main learnings from the project, what were the main activities that have left an impact on the community and beneficiaries, and what could have done better, through interactions with the project team, beneficiaries, government stakeholders, a document review, meetings and focus group discussions etc.

### **Target Groups**

The main target beneficiaries of this project were women with disabilities, but also included their carers and family members. In total, the project has worked directly with 640 persons with disabilities and their carers.

### **Review methods and process**

This review is based on both primary and secondary sources of information. Secondary information was mostly based on project documentation, while primary information was collected from the field. Key informant interviews and in-depth interviews were carried out with different stakeholders, target beneficiaries and social mobilizers in order to elicit first-hand information. The collection of primary source information was limited by COVID-19 and lockdown, but through telephone calls and visits we were able to obtain information which helped to validate the secondary information. Similarly, meetings were held with staff of DHRC and DWA.

### **Limitation of the review**

The analysis has been based on a document review and individual interviews. Due to the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, some interviews were done face-to-face with direct beneficiaries and stakeholders, and other interviews were carried out over the telephone.

## **Achievements of the project**

### **Approach taken to project implementation at local level**

Different approaches were taken to make the project successful and to reach the most vulnerable people and communities. These include the formation of Self-Help Groups and a Steering Committee of stakeholders. Using a local partner and downstream partners to monitor the activities has reduced the cost of the project. The deployment of Social Mobilizers as a first contact point for direct beneficiaries helped the project to communicate regularly with its beneficiaries.

### **Relevance of the project**

Overall, the project has shown its relevance in addressing the perceived needs of community members, and we found that the intervention was relevant to the project areas. The activities effectively addressed the perceived needs of the communities and helped them to develop autonomy and self-sufficiency. The project also raised awareness and informed people of the social safety nets provided by the government. Similarly, the project's objectives were well aligned with international and national frameworks on disability/inclusion.

### **Project effectiveness**

Despite the COVID-19 challenges and resulting delays in implementation of activities, all the activities were carried out. It was found that beneficiaries appreciated the support they received from the project, which has contributed to the empowerment of people with disabilities: not only economically, but also socially. The cash grants (seed money) they received helped to increase their income. Similarly, greater awareness of rights and justice issues has helped to empower persons with disabilities to fight for justice. There is evidence that this project has contributed to a change in attitudes towards persons with disabilities. The project has also helped people to access services: as well as providing legal and economic support, the project have helped women with disabilities and their carers to access other services such as assistive devices, disability ID cards etc. Self-Help Groups created a common platform for sharing and learning.

Along with the direct beneficiaries, the downstream partner DWA and the team of Social Mobilizers enhanced their capacity through training and technical support. The project has taken a multiple approach to empower persons with disabilities through economic empowerment, social empowerment, linking stakeholders to beneficiaries, awareness-raising, and strengthening advocacy capacity.

### **Efficiency**

It is found that support of DDP played an important supporting role for implementing the action plan. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting delays in implementation of some activities, execution of the action plan has been managed efficiently. The project has used money very wisely, for instance by using low-cost venues and using municipal premises for SHG meetings.

## Impact

It is too early to see the long-term impact of project activities, but some positive changes are already visible. The increased leadership of women with disabilities is very much in evidence, as they display the capacity to lead and manage groups and make decisions. In a similar vein, DHRC undertook a review of Nepal's disability laws and policy relating to women, with action recommendations based on the findings. SHG members have also begun to explore finding support from other stakeholders. In some Municipalities, local government support for persons with disability shows the impact of the project.

## Sustainability

Some of the project's achievements are quite visible and ensuring sustainability. Establishment of grass root level structures leads to sustainability of persons with disabilities. Linkage with local level stakeholders might create the ownership. Training and counselling have empowered people with disabilities to make decisions for themselves and to be proactive.

**Good Practices:** Some of the good practices that has established by the project was registering the risk regularly to minimize the risk, Safeguarding policy and ensure that every one have understood and establishment of mechanism to collect feedback from beneficiaries, joint monitoring mechanism have increased the credibility of project. Similarly regular feedback and technical support from DDP has helped on smooth intervention of activities.

## Inclusion

Despite the project for women with disabilities it included male with disabilities also. Inclusion of men with disabilities in the project as baseline indicated males are also vulnerable in the target areas. Selection of target groups are based on the findings of baseline survey.

## Recommendations

- DHRC carried out quarterly monitoring visits, but this may not have been enough to provide support and interact with beneficiaries, so it is recommended that **monitoring visits need to be on a monthly basis.**
- Gender equality: groups were inclusive of men with disabilities and their carers, but for cultural reasons there is a risk that men may come to dominate, so **ensure that women are leading the groups.**
- When selecting beneficiaries, **priority should be given to ultra-poor and single women** which was lacking in this project.
- Most of Self-Help Group members are from vulnerable communities and have only just started to understand about SHGs, savings, credit, their rights, and livelihoods. It is too early to leave them in isolation without any further support. It is recommended that there be **continuous monitoring visits for at least a year to provide technical support** to these groups, strengthen them and ensure their sustainability.

- To motivate SHG members to be part of a group and attend the regular meetings, **a revolving fund in the name of SHG members** would be one option. If the amount of savings is minimal, few members will be able to benefit from loans. But if there is a certain sum in the SHG account, needy people would be able to access loans from the group in this way.
- A number of activities were carried out, on a limited budget. However a gap was still seen in assessing the capacity development needs of beneficiaries. They expressed that though they have initiated livelihood activities, they still lack awareness and knowledge of business and marketing. To increase the income of target beneficiaries, **business should be expanded and livelihood activities diversified**.
- It is recommended to **establish a sharing mechanism for the transfer of learning** to wider groups (training to other members). Select SHG leaders for ‘train-the-trainer’ workshops, to mobilize them to train other SHG members in different areas.
- **Ensure that monthly SHG meetings are purposeful with a clear, set agenda**. SHG activities need to be defined with objectives. If this meeting can be more structured as a platform to discuss and share different issues like violence, community issues, sharing of skills and knowledge, it would provide more benefit to the members and communities and motivate them to attend regular meetings.
- There are various organizations for whom working with vulnerable communities/people with disabilities can be a policy and a priority, so **explore the possibility of collaboration with such organizations for joint intervention**.
- Sustainability: **provide regular technical support to persons with disabilities for their selected livelihood activities** and establish collaborative mechanisms with local/province-based organizations like District Livestock Service Office, for further support and monitoring.
- If project is going to focus on livelihood capacity development for persons with disabilities, then it is recommended to **carry out a market analysis, and develop market linkages and help to increase the basic understanding of business management**, which is important.
- **Regular advocacy/lobbying with municipality** to support SHGs and further capacity-building for greater sustainability.
- Establish a mechanism to address the issues that came up during monitoring visits.

## Abbreviations

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DDP	Disability and Development Partners (UK)
DHRC-Nepal	Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center
DIC	Disability identity card
DPO	Disabled People's Organization
DWA	Disabled Welfare Association, Dhading
HRDC	Hospital and Rehabilitation for Disabled Children
NDWAD	Nepal Disabled Women's Association, Dhading
PWDs	Persons with disabilities
SHG	Self-Help Group
SM	Social Mobilizer
WDIL	Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods Project
WWDs	Women with disabilities

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# CHAPTER 1

## 1.1 Background

### a. Contextual background

The official data from the population census in 2011 mentions that there are 1.9% persons with disabilities in Nepal but several organizations have estimated that the percentage is much higher. Surveys from different organizations have estimated disability prevalence ranging from 1 to 13% of the total population. It's difficult to get accurate data on the prevalence of disability in Nepal due to various reasons, including the lack of a common understanding about how to define disabilities. It's also true that often family members do not want to disclose the disabilities of their children. In Nepali cultures, disability is still seen as a sin of the previous life and hence shameful for the family, which often results in concealment of family members from society and denying them a dignified life.

Persons with disabilities experience higher rates of poverty. Disability may lead to poverty through loss of income, lack of employment or underemployment, and through the additional costs of living with disability, such as extra medical, housing, and transport costs. They cannot always live independently or participate fully in community activities.

Poverty is a consequence of disability since people with disabilities often lack access to education, health services and income-generating activities: they are often denied their human, social and economic rights.<sup>1</sup> Persons with disabilities experience higher rates of poverty. Disability may lead to poverty through loss of income, lack of employment or underemployment, and through the additional costs of living with disability, such as extra medical, housing, and transport costs. They cannot always live independently or participate fully in community activities. Despite all those challenges women and men with disabilities can and want to be productive members of society

Employment is a key factor in the empowerment and inclusion of people with disabilities. In reality, however, the majority of adults with disabilities remain unemployed despite their potential and/or their desire to contribute. Most of the Women with disability (WWDs) have to depend on support of their family members as there are virtually no livelihood supports to Women with disability by state.

### b. Background of the Project

People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals in Nepal. Women with disabilities bear the double burden of being disabled and female in a traditional patriarchal society. They are often dominated, neglected and discriminated against, and often receive little support from their family. They form one of the most vulnerable groups of society. Similarly, men and women who have a disabled husband/wife, children or any other disabled family members constitute another vulnerable group. Carer for disabled family members brings

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<sup>1</sup> Leymat, Anne et al, 2006, 'Good Practices for the Economic Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Developing Countries Funding Mechanisms for Self-Employment', Handicap International.

suffering and many sacrifices and lost opportunities in the outside world; poverty only serves to exacerbate the situation.

Main issues of project area (Dhading) are higher levels of poverty among families with disabled members in Nepal, linked to exclusion of disabled people (especially disabled women) from economic opportunities, heightened abuse and low self-esteem/well-being. To address those issues economic empowerment might be one of the main strategy that could contribute to reduced poverty and equalisation of opportunity of vulnerable groups. Many of the projects carried out by I/NGOs and the government in the past have also neglected such groups;

DDP developed this project with DHRC based on their previous similar partnerships and secure funding from UKAID and provided the technical support. Women Led Disability Inclusive Livelihood Project (WDIL) was implemented from July 2018 to July 2021 at four municipalities of Dhading district. Project has been able to support such marginalized people to strengthen their capacity to take care of disabled family members, their knowledge on tackling disability issues and challenges, and also in generating income, so that they can be more confident and happier with their life. Likewise, the project has provided assistance to children with disabilities and single women who need moral and income-generation support.

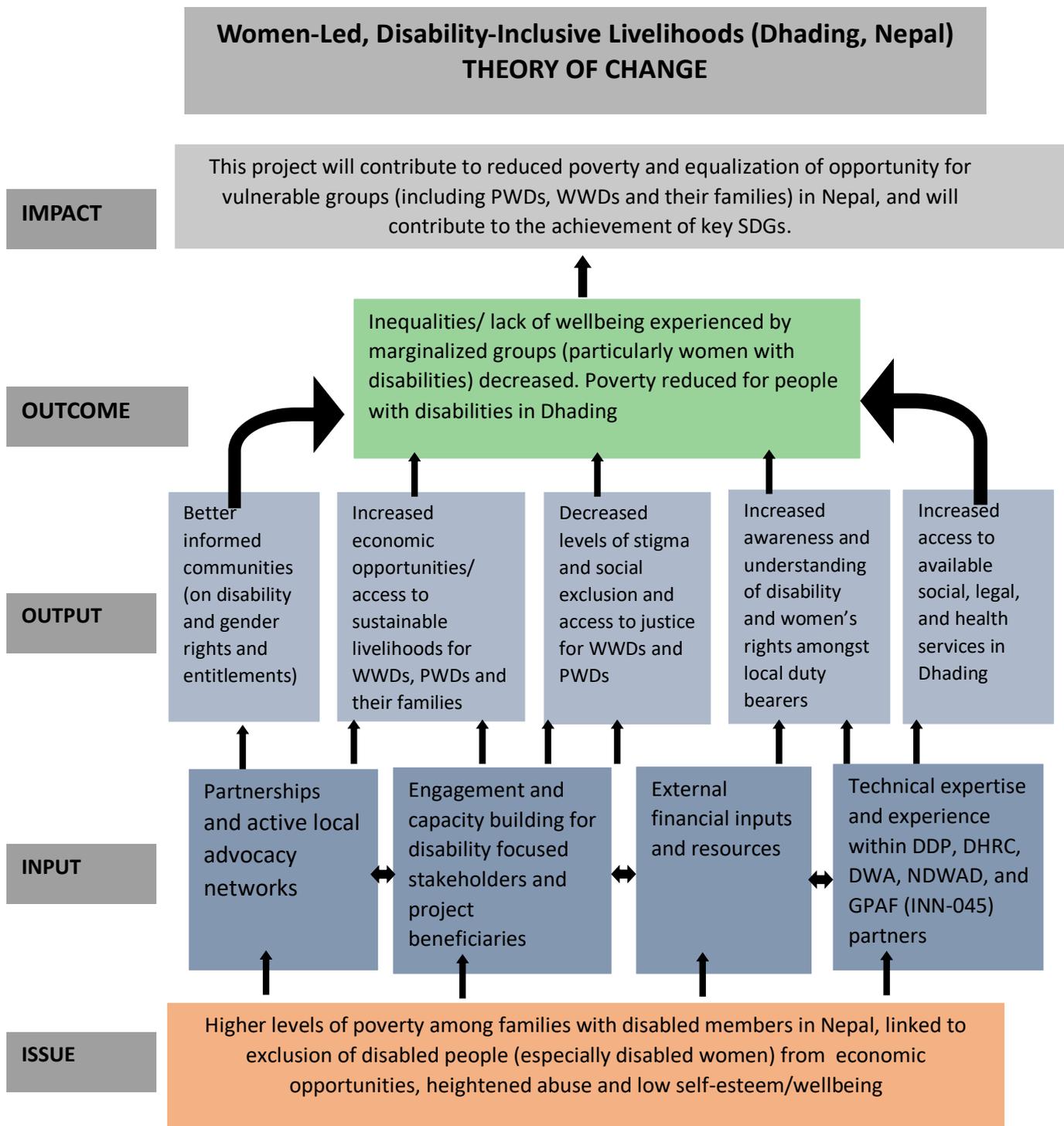
## **1.2 Presentation of project outcome, outputs and activities**

Main outcome of this project:

- 624 women with disabilities, women carers of Persons With Disabilities, and their families/households in Dhading district, Nepal have increased wellbeing characterized by increased income, self-expressed social inclusion and improved access to services and entitlements

### 1.3 Project Strategy: Theory of change

This theory of change has envisioned how change will happen following implementation of the Women-led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods project

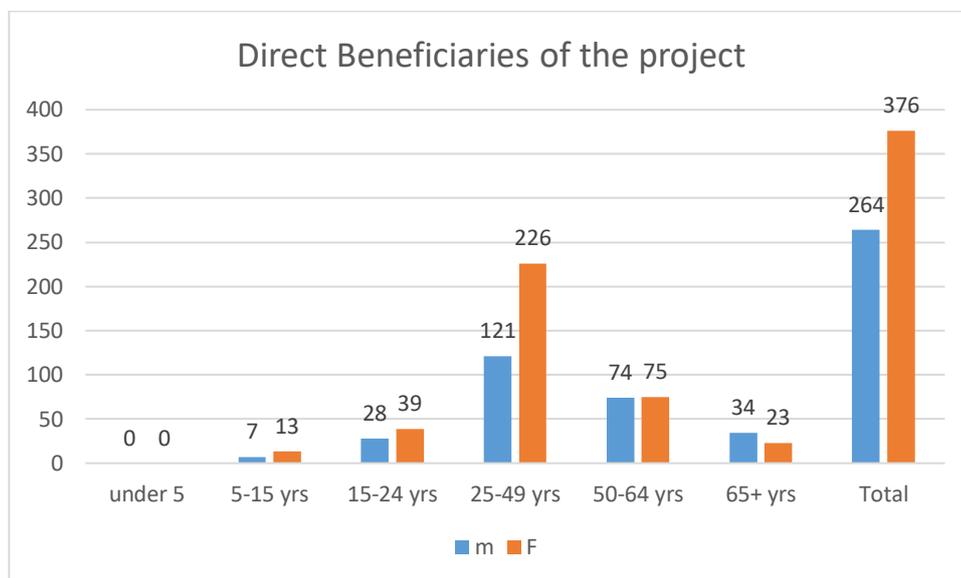


(Source: Project Document)

## 1.4 Target Groups

### Direct Beneficiaries

The main target beneficiaries of this project are women with disabilities but also the carers and family members of people with disabilities. In total project has worked directly with 640 persons with disabilities and their carers.



### Indirect Beneficiaries

Indirectly 2,962 people have benefited from this project. These are family members.

	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>total indirect beneficiaries</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>1,863</b>	<b>2,962</b>
	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>
under 5	94	330	<b>424</b>
5-14 years	95	86	<b>181</b>
15-24	248	217	<b>465</b>
25-49	308	253	<b>561</b>
50-64	255	202	<b>457</b>
65+	99	775	<b>874</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>1,863</b>	<b>2,962</b>

## 1.5 Working Areas

Women led disability inclusion livelihood project was implemented in four municipalities (3 rural and one urban municipality) of Dhading district:

- a. Siddalekh
- b. Nilkantha
- c. Galchhi
- d. Gajuri

## **1.6 Partners and their roles**

### *A. Disability and Development Partners (DDP):*

Disability and Development Partners (DDP) was founded in 1992. It is a UK-registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. DDP is the grant-holder for this project, responsible for project development, reporting and coordinating with UK-AID. It also carried out overall supervision, coordination and technical support to DHRC. DDP has been working in collaboration with DHRC-Nepal since 2009, on a 5-year DFID-funded 'Disabled people's advocacy for change' programme to enshrine disability rights in Nepal's new constitution, promoting education and participation through a dedicated disabled street theatre troupe; *Disability Voice* magazine, radio and TV and disability-inclusive livelihood programmes in 4 districts with 4 grassroots DPOs in western Nepal (2014 to 2017), both projects funded by UKAid).

### *B. Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC):*

DHRC is a national disabled people's organization formed in 2000 to promote the rights of all disabled people: political, social, legal and economic. DHRC was the lead Implementing Partner of this project. DHRC was responsible for development and approval procedural at all levels of government of Nepal. Additional to this they played an overall coordination role with DDP and DWA, and carried out project management and support for the effective implementation of the project at field level, regular monitoring and guidance to downstream partners.

### *C. Disabled Welfare Association (DWA):*

DWA is the implementing partner at local level in Dhading district. They worked at community level, mobilized Social Mobilizers and played a coordinating role with local government and the community. They identified the communities, undertook outreach to the beneficiaries and conducted the ongoing local monitoring of project activities.

DDP and DHRC worked together since 2007 and have partnered on and completed two other UKAid-funded programmes, 1) Disabled People's Advocacy for Change, a 5 year programme under the Civil Society Challenge Fund and 2) poverty alleviation in 4 western Nepal districts, a 3-year project under the Global Poverty Alleviation programme.

## **1.7 Purpose and objective of review**

The main purpose of the assignment was to review and reflect back on what went well, what were the main learnings from the project, what were the main activities that had an impact on the community and beneficiaries, and what could have done better, through interaction with the project team, beneficiaries, government stakeholders, through a document review, meetings, focus group discussion etc.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. REVIEW METHODS AND PROCESS

#### 2.1 Data collection methods

This review is based on both primary and secondary sources of information. Secondary information is mostly based on project documents. Primary information was collected from the field. Key informant interviews and in-depth interviews were carried out with different stakeholders, target beneficiaries and social mobilizers to obtain first hand information. COVID-19 and lockdown in Nepal limited the collection of primary source information. However, through phone calls and visits we were able to get the information which helped to validate the secondary information. Similarly, meetings were carried out with staff of DHRC and DWA.

##### a. Document review

TOC, yearly and quarterly progress reports, log-frame and case studies were reviewed to assess the information. (See annex for list of documents).

##### b. Interviews:

##### In-depth interviews (IDI)

In-depth interviews were conducted with recipients of seed funding and Self-Help Group members from this project who are involved in different project activities, in order to understand the effectiveness and impact of the project. In total 10 interviews were carried out with recipients of seed funding and 18 individuals from self-help groups.

##### Key informant Interviews

Interviews were carried out with various stakeholders who were engaged directly or indirectly with the project. Key informant interviews were conducted with key stakeholders such as government and district officials. In total 5 interviews were carried out with stakeholders.

##### Interviews with social mobilizers:

Social mobilizers, who are the first point of contact for direct beneficiaries, were also interviewed to understand the good practices and challenges of the project. All 10 social mobilizers were interviewed.

Interview with	No of interviews
DHRC and DWA	2
Project advisory team	5
Social Mobilizers	10
Livelihood seed funding recipients and SHG member	10
Self-help group members	18

In total 45 interviews/meetings were conducted. These interviews helped to explore particular contexts and prevalence by specific individuals or groups through the use of guided questions.

## **2.2 Limitation of the Review**

Analysis is based on the document review and interviews with individuals. Due to Covid-19 and lockdown, some of these were face-to-face interviews with direct beneficiaries and stakeholders and some interviews were conducted by telephone.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROJECT

To identify the most significant achievements of the project, the following areas have been assessed:

- a. Approach
- b. Relevance of the project
- c. Project effectiveness
- d. Efficiency
- e. Impacts

#### 3.1 Approach taken to project implementation at local level

A combination of different approaches was taken to make the project successful and to reach the most vulnerable people and communities.

- **Formation of Self-Help Groups**

The project has not worked with individual beneficiaries in isolation. Instead, it brought people together and formed 36 self-help groups (SHGs). This has provided the platform to meet and interact with each other, which has built their confidence and leadership qualities. In addition, SHG members themselves were the decision-makers of their groups, which further increased their confidence and strengthened their capacities. This approach helped to increase a sense of ownership among the self-help groups.

- **Steering Committee of stakeholders**

Another approach taken by this project was the formation of a Steering Committee consisting of the Vice-President and Deputy Mayor of the Municipality, Advocate of the Dhading Bar Association, Chair of Nepal Disabled Women's Association, Dhading, representative from Small and Cottage Industry department, DHRC team and DWA team, for regular interactions. This has reduced the danger of duplication of work, informed all the stakeholders about the project's progress, and obtained the regular support of different stakeholders for the smooth implementation of the project. The Steering Group was also set up to ensure that the achievements of the project would continue after the project ends, and that current and new disabled people will be included in Municipalities' mainstream development projects.

- **Local partner and downstream partners to monitor the activities**

Instead of working directly in the community, the project has envisioned three tiers of project management: DDP as grant-holder, responsible to the donor; DHRC at central level; and DWA at community level ensured the project's smooth intervention. DWA and DHRC have ensured that ward and district leaders have been involved at all stages of project implementation and have been kept informed of all project activities. In return the ward and district leaders have been actively supporting project implementation and participating in all ward and district level meetings.

- **Deployment of Social Mobilizers as a first contact point for direct beneficiaries:**

10 Social Mobilizers (6 female and 4 male) who themselves or family members are disabled, were mobilized in the project locations, so that they could have regular interaction and reach to target beneficiaries. They are the first point of contact between prospective beneficiaries and the project. As they are local residents, this has not only reduced the cost of the project, but also helped to provide immediate support to beneficiaries.

### 3.2 Relevance of the Project

In assessing the relevance of the program intervention, the review considered the following factors:

- *To what extent were the specific interventions relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries?*
- *How did project objectives align with national and international frameworks?*

#### 3.2.1 Interventions relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries:

There is no doubt that the project was highly relevant in terms of addressing the needs of persons with disabilities. Most of the interventions are found to be very much relevant to the need and priority of the beneficiaries. It has reached vulnerable, deprived and excluded communities, women with disabilities and persons with disabilities of Dhading district.

Activities are based on the perceived needs of the beneficiaries. Before implementation of activities a baseline survey was carried out to understand socio-economic situation of persons with disabilities and identify their real needs and to reach the most needed person. Information was collected from 620 persons with disabilities. This has helped project to understand the economic and social situations of target group.

Baseline indicated that 56.94% people have an income of less than Rs 6800 per month which means they are living below poverty line i.e. less than 1.90 USD a day equivalent. Their source of income is either social security allowance or farming for consumption. Similarly, around 20% of respondent of baseline were jobless. Economic activities were carried out to support target groups for the enhancement of their economic condition. The Project also supported them to be economically sustainable by building their skills on livelihood and providing funds to establish their business.

During KII with some of the target group also expressed, this project has helped them to increase their social and economic status and gain respect from family and society.

I already had a small fancy store, I added more stuff from the seed money (Rs 12000) which I received from project. This has helped to increase my business and more profit I gain. Surprisingly family attitude toward me has also changed. Now they care about me and help me. I have started saving for the future too as monthly there is income of Nrs. 20000. Paru Sharma, WDIL beneficiary and SHG member.

In line with these findings, the project activities were derived from the need and demand of people with disabilities of those working area.

### 3.2.2 Alignment of the project objectives with international and national frameworks on disability/inclusion:

This review also assessed how the project objectives are aligned with international and national frameworks.

Some key areas defined under the Act Relating to Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2074 (2017):

#### a. Act Relating to Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2074 (2017)

1. Persons with disabilities shall have the right to obtain assistive materials and community assistance in order to earn the living respectfully
2. **Right of participation in policy making:** (1) Persons with disabilities shall have the right to participate on their own or through their related unions and organisations in the process of development of important policies that may affect them.
3. **Right to social security:** (1) Persons with disabilities shall have the right to obtain economic assistance or social security as prescribed from the Government of Nepal.
4. **Rights of Women with Disabilities:** (1) The Government of Nepal shall make necessary provisions as prescribed to protect the rights of women with disabilities and to create an environment that is conducive to the maximum use of their knowledge, skill and potential.
5. **Vocational training and self-employment:** (1) The Government of Nepal shall provide vocational training in order to develop professionalism and create self-employment by enhancing the skills of the persons with disabilities.

In all of these points, the project contributed directly to achieving the Disability Right Act of Nepal.

#### b. The project contributed to achieving the local government action plan

Although one of the priority areas for local government is to support vulnerable and marginalized communities, they were not able to reach women with disabilities. So this project has contributed to achieving the local government plan too by mobilizing key decision-makers in project activities.

*We want to work for the most marginalized and vulnerable people, but with limited resources and capacity we could not reach them. This project has contributed to achieving our local level plan by working with women with disabilities.*

Kalpana Sharma, Vice-Chair, Siddhalekh Village Municipality

#### c. The project has contributed to achieving the following articles of the UNCRPD:

1. Article 6 on women with disabilities
2. Article 7 on children with disabilities
3. Article on work and employment
4. Article 29 on participation on political and public life

**In conclusion, project objects are directly aligned with national and international frameworks.**

### 3.3 Project effectiveness

In addressing the question of how effective the project has been, implementation of the logical framework was considered. Four outputs provided the review with the basis for identifying topics that would help assess the effectiveness of the project. The four results are listed to help organize the findings related to effectiveness.

#### Output 1

***Increased access by 624 women with disabilities/women carers of disabled family members, to economic opportunities***

The project worked directly with 640 women with disabilities and women carers of disabled family members. As the priority of the project, it has worked with women with disabilities and empowered them both economically and socially.

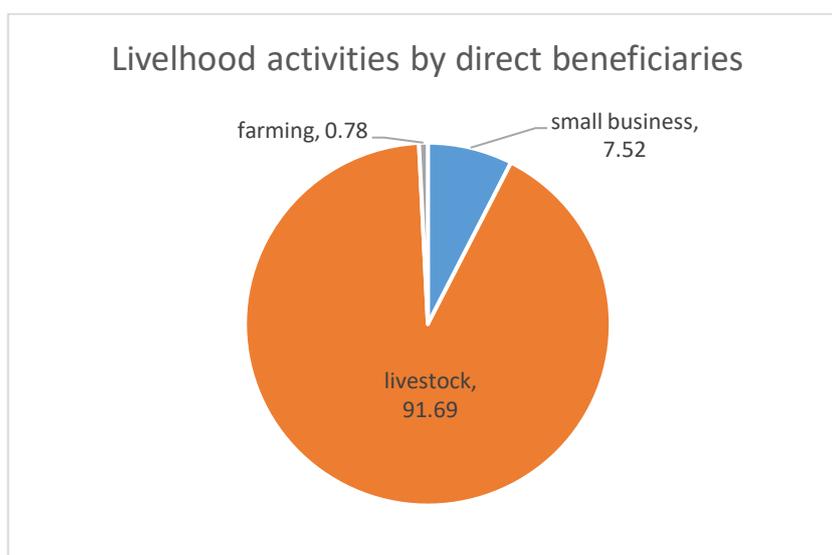
#### **Economically-empowered persons with disabilities**

Economic independence plays an important role in the development of self-esteem and to change the perception of family and community members that people with disabilities contribute towards their family and society as well. Therefore, for economic independence, livelihood support is important. The project has contributed to establishing sources of income for its target beneficiaries. As per the report shared by the program it shows that project has reached 638 women with disabilities/women and men carers of disabled family member, which is more than the target set by the organization. Almost all beneficiaries, that is 638 self-help group members, received financial and technical support for their livelihood initiatives or expansion of ongoing activities. Those members received NRs 12,000 as seed money for their livelihood activities. One good thing about the seed money is that all the target beneficiaries received it, so there were no conflicts arising among the members. Below are the categories of new or expanded livelihood initiatives: Most beneficiaries (91.6%) have chosen animal husbandry due to the easy availability of fodder.

Table: Livelihood Categories

S.N	Small Business	Male	Female	Total
1	Clothes/fancy shop	4	2	6
2	Local electric shop	1	1	2
3	Furniture making	2	0	2
4	Tea shop	9	5	14
5	Grocery shop	8	6	14
6	Fertilizer shop	0	1	1
7	Spicy snack shop	1	2	3
8	Tailoring	2	2	4
9	Fruit shop	1	0	1
10	Vegetable shop	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>48</b>

Livestock				
11	bee keeping	2	2	4
12	fish pond		1	1
13	goat keeping	206	300	506
14	poultry	11	25	36
15	pig keeping	4	7	11
16	Baby buffalo	10	17	27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>585</b>
Farming				
17	Vegetable farming	2	3	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>



### Cash grants (seed money) helped increase incomes

Although the cash grant was a small amount, it has had a big impact on people with disabilities who had never received any support from other sources, or who needed to establish a source of income. It is too early to observe the long-term benefit of this support, but several members shared that development of their income has already started. The cash support has been useful for increasing the income of people with disabilities.

When it was planned to bring people with disabilities together into a group and help them to start saving, it was thought that less than 50% of beneficiaries would be interested in being involved in savings and credit activities. It was overwhelming to learn that in fact 100% of members are saving, which shows trust among the members and also in the project; low-interest loans to members have been another reason to get involved.

Some case studies from the project show an improvement in beneficiaries' incomes, and some examples show that they have been able to meet their basic needs as a result.

.... Nor Bahadur Magar is 44 years old and a person of restricted growth. His height is 76.2cm, and he has struggled with this physical disability in his life. His family's and society's attitudes toward him was not respectful: as a person with disability, and as member of the family who did not earn or contribute enough. When he joined a SHG (Manakamana Apanga Samuha), formed under the WDIL project, his life changed. With the financial support from the project (Rs 12,000) he started bee-keeping. From three beehives at the start, he has increased to 12 hives over the three years, bringing a corresponding increase in income. His wife is supporting him to manage the bee farm. Similarly, he also started to save money in his group, which he could never have done before on the limited income from his job as a postman.

... Though the amount was small for me, it helped me a lot, and saved me from having to get a loan at a high interest rate. I have been raising goats for a few years, and was planning to take out a loan to expand the goat shed. As a member of the self-help group, and considering my need, I was given a cash grant of Rs 12,000 from the project, which I used to expand my herd. This support has saved me from the high interest I would have paid, if I had taken a loan from other sources  
Ram Hari Aryal, Siddhalekh

Ambika Rizal, 50, and Tej Bahadur Rana also started their own small business and were able to earn NR20-25,000 a month. This is very good amount of money – not only to survive, but also enough to make savings. They reported that they have been able to save Rs 15,000 per month, which has made them excited about their work.

### **Awareness of rights and justice has helped empower people with disabilities to fight for justice**

It has been seen that this project has contributed to changing people's attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Some examples from the project report show that the awareness raised by the project has created positive impressions towards persons with disabilities. When the project began, many of its beneficiaries were marginalized, felt isolated, and lacked knowledge of disability rights and entitlements. The SHGs have brought opportunities to unite and share concerns, but also changed attitudes and perceptions of disability in the community, demonstrating that people with disabilities can be independent and economically active. Local government has also become more aware of disability issues, and started allocating a budget for disability-inclusive development. Many of the beneficiaries have started livelihood activities and are earning for themselves and for their families.

In individual interviews, SHG members expressed that the counselling provided to them has been changing their own negative perceptions of their disability and fostered the **feeling of being an equally important part of community**. They also started to respect themselves. The activities initiated at community-level, like awareness raising, regular SHG meetings and trainings, started to **increase the visibility of persons with disabilities** in their communities. Many beneficiaries with disability and parents/carers have learnt about social security allowances, health and education services, and how to access them. Some of the beneficiaries shared that their family members and neighbours started to respect them.

## **The project has helped people to access services**

**The project has not only provided legal and economic support, but also helped women with disabilities and their carers to access other services.** The project has helped to meet immediate needs in practical ways by referring people for medical treatment, assistive devices and psychosocial support. 118 people were referred for medical treatment, psychosocial counselling and assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walking sticks, prosthetic hand, prosthetic foot, crutches, special shoes, hearing aids etc.

Mana Maya Gurung has a physical disability and was having difficulties in movement. She never expected to be able to get around by herself. The project's downstream partner and social mobilizer explored and coordinated with different disabled people's organizations (DPOs), and finally the Nepal Rehabilitation Centre agreed to provide a wheelchair that fits her, costing around Rs 40,000. If the project had not intervened, she might never have been able to get a suitable wheelchair, and thus become mobile.

## **Output 2**

***36 SHGs formed and led by disabled women/ women carers of disabled family members are formed, active and also able to advocate for access to justice and services***

### **Self-help groups created a common platform to share and learn**

Belonging to a group (or organization) is one of the means by which people with disabilities can participate in their communities. The project took the initiative to bring isolated, scattered people with disabilities together into a common platform, forming self-help groups where they could get involved in saving and credit activities. This platform has also been used to issue loans to fulfil immediate individual needs.

In total 36 SHGs were established in the project area: groups which have now become a platform for them to share their issues and problems and serve as a mechanism for mutual support. The activities designed under this project, and especially the formation of Self-Help Groups, have therefore been relevant in strengthening their social security. Rather than being controlled by the project, as the designation 'self-help group' implies, most of the activities are conducted by SHG members themselves. SHGs have become the platform for bringing discrimination and abuse into the open and finding legal assistance.

***Taking action to demand their rights:*** The project raised awareness and informed beneficiaries of the social safety net provided by the government. The project has played a coordinating role for accessing local resources, and assisted the groups in accessing Disability ID Cards. The project baseline survey clearly showed that over 50% of persons with disabilities had not received a Disability ID Card, despite it being one of the most important components for them, as they were simply unaware of its importance. In addressing this gap, the project worked closely with local government to distribute disability ID cards to those who had not received them, or had not realized they needed them. The project helped 572 persons with disabilities to get disability ID cards, which will bring them many direct benefits. To ensure that all those eligible received a DIC, the downstream partner DWA got involved in the process with local government.

### **Constructive engagement created community awareness**

By involving people with disabilities, project activities such as celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Human Rights Day, and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, continuing for 16 days of activism, have increased the visibility of people with disabilities and created awareness of their issues. Involvement in these events of ward Vice-Presidents and other stakeholders, as well as family members of people with disabilities, has added value, making people aware of the existence of those in their communities with disabilities, and making them realize their importance.

### **Registration of self-help groups**

In order to access funding and also for the groups' sustainability, group registration is very important. The project supported the self-help groups to be registered at the local level. Not every SHG did register, but the fact that 25 self-help groups are already registered at local level is a good sign for the sustainability of the project intervention. Regardless of registration, SHGs have an identity and name, membership, bank account and their own byelaws, and are recognized by the local authorities.

### **Social mobilizers trained and capacitated to support SHG members and individual beneficiaries**

Social Mobilizers working at grassroots level are familiar, trusted figures who meet and communicate frequently with direct beneficiaries. They supported beneficiaries to obtain Disability Identity Cards (DIC), which allow them to claim government social security benefits. Their regular contact, moral and technical support have boosted the confidence of beneficiaries. They also helped beneficiaries to understand more about disabilities issues and how to address them. Similarly, they also facilitated the process of securing access to free education and medical treatment through their municipalities. The role of the Social Mobilizers proved especially effective during Nepal's lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They ensured that people with disabilities received emergency food supplies from local government.

*...Rita Silwal, a 13-year-old 8<sup>th</sup> Grade orphan and physically disabled girl, received a scholarship of NR 40,000 through the efforts of Urmila Panday, one of the project's Social Mobilizers, who helped to prepare the application. She also made arrangements for Rita's treatment at the HRDC rehabilitation hospital in Banepa, near Kathmandu.*

### Output 3

***Advocacy activities undertaken at local, district and national level, with the aim of reducing stigma, increasing awareness and understanding of rights, and access by disabled people to services and justice.***

The project has taken a multi-faceted approach to empowering people with disabilities. Only when people are economically sustained can they can raise their voice, a fact corroborated by this project, which simultaneously strengthened beneficiaries' economic status and their social status. With regular awareness-raising and legal support, it helped to boost the confidence of beneficiaries to fight against the discrimination towards them. ***Regular support with legal cases helped women with disabilities to get justice.***

*To cite examples of such cases:-*

*...Phampha Devi Dharel, 40 years old, was verbally and physically abused by another resident of her municipality. Phampha was badly beaten and was taken to Gajuri community hospital for treatment. A case was registered. The police called in the accused and detained her in custody for a day. Later, both parties met for mediation at the police station where the accused admitted her bad conduct, apologized and promised never to repeat the offence.*

*....Tej Bahadur Rana, a 52-year-old man with a physical disability, who was cursed by his neighbour. His case was filed with the district police and a press conference was also called. The neighbour apologized and expressed regret for what she had done.*

In addition to raising awareness among target beneficiaries and their communities, the project also used different means to sensitize and educate people regarding disability issues. A weekly radio program (Kantipur FM) and quarterly *Disability Voice* magazine helped to sensitize members of Nepalese society on disability issues. DHRC Nepal coordinated and collaborated with CBM Nepal who funded the production of the TV series *Apangata Awaaz* (Disability Voice), and negotiated with the Ministry of Communication and Information technology to bear the broadcasting costs. The 32 episodes of this TV programme on national Nepal TV reached a huge audience, with two episodes entirely focused on the WDIL project.

DHRC coordinated with different organizations and delegations such as Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, National Human Rights Commission, Central Bureau of Statistics, NFDN, Nepal Stutterers Association, Nepal Haemophilia Society, CBM Nepal etc, for interview slots in the *Apangata Awaaz* TV programmes.

**Steering Group meetings were one of the very good approaches taken by the project to bring different stakeholders together to review and reflect on project activities and to inform them about the needs of persons with disabilities.** This has helped to disseminate good practice and how to minimize challenges, as well as avoiding the duplication of work. Most of the stakeholders appreciated the way the project involved them from the beginning. As a result of these regular meetings and advocacy, the amount of support received by people with disabilities – like cash grants, disability ID cards, and assistive devices – went up. Local authorities also committed to

supporting the SHGs after the project phase-out. One outcome of these meetings which came out during discussions with government officials was that the project worked as a catalyst, adding value to the work of government. By mobilizing people with disabilities to access local resources and bringing them in to local government for ID cards, very good coordination was established between local government and the project for the distribution of Disability ID Cards. The work of the project was transparent and built up a sense of the stakeholders' ownership.

Thanks to continuous advocacy, wards 10 and 11 of Nilkantha municipality have allocated a budget for assistive devices. There used to be a budget for vulnerable groups before, but it was never used for persons with disabilities. The fact that they have started to think about persons with disabilities is one of the outcomes of project advocacy.

Sundari Thapaliya, SM, Nilkantha municipality 10, 11

## Output 4

***DHRC and DWA demonstrate improved capacity to implement disability-inclusive and gender-balanced development projects.***

### **Inclusive organizations to promote inclusion in the project**

DHRC-Nepal's Executive Board consists of 5 women and 2 men. The DHRC staff team is well balanced with 5 male and 5 female staff, with roles supporting the day-to-day operation and management of DHRC-Nepal. Similarly, the downstream partner DWA's Executive Board membership is 4 men and 3 women. The Vice-President and Treasurer positions are held by women. The WDIL team in Dhading has 7 female and 5 male Social Mobilizers who are responsible for the implementation of the project at community level.

### **Enhancement of staff capacity has brought added value to the project for its success**

Along with target beneficiaries and Social Mobilizers, the capacity of downstream partner DWA has also been enhanced. DWA has never implemented a project on this scale before. This was the first high-budget project they have managed. With regular technical support from DHRC and DDP, capacity-building through the WDIL project helped DWA to strengthen their capacity and it successfully delivered the local level activities with great coordination and collaboration with local stakeholders.

In the third year of the project, the COVID-19 pandemic also affected the project activities. But looking back over this period, we can see that the project initiated activities which helped to mitigate the pandemic. DDP shared information which helped to raise awareness about COVID-19 and its prevention. The Executive Director and Project Coordinator of DHRC conducted regular awareness sessions on prevention and precautions related to COVID-19 through online and telephone calls with all staff, and also with the downstream partner. All staff were provided with masks, sanitiser and reminders on social distancing and to listen out for and follow government guidelines.

### **Recognition from governmental and non-governmental organizations**

DHRC-Nepal received recognition for its disability rights work from both government and non-governmental agencies. Jagadish Adhikari, DHRC's Executive Director, was invited to join the 5-member monitoring team of the National Human Rights Commission to monitor human rights in the current complex situation arising from COVID-19.

He was also invited to join the prestigious newly-formed cross-ministerial National Disability Steering Committee formed by the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (Hon'ble Minister level). This Committee will coordinate, monitor and promote activities related to the rights, facilities, services and protection of people with disabilities, and give direction in all related activities. Representation at this level brings recognition and status for DHRC and also the opportunity to effect changes at the national level.

### 3.4 Efficiency

- **Capacity-building of staff and Social Mobilizers helped to implement project activities efficiently**

Working at grassroots level, the Social Mobilizers, themselves persons with disabilities, are familiar, trusted figures who meet and communicate frequently with the direct beneficiaries. In return, they bear accountability for responding to them in a timely way, and providing disability-related information. They supported beneficiaries to obtain Disability Identity Cards (DIC), which allow them to claim social security benefits. Regular technical support, feedback and suggestions from DHRC and DDP helped local partners to implement the project effectively and efficiently.

- **Coordination with local level organizations makes for efficient use of resources**

By building linkages and connections with other stakeholders, the project enabled beneficiaries to receive assistive devices from local government and other development organizations.

- **Value for money**

The project's design helped to reduce the implementation costs. Steering Committee meetings were combined with regular monitoring visits, and technical support to target beneficiaries was carried out by the local partner, reducing the cost of transportation and other associated project costs. The project's budget was very tight, and tried to economise and cut costs throughout. Both DHRC and DWA collected 3 quotations for purchases over NR 20K, following the procedures set out in DHRC's procurement policy, which is also used by DWA. Training programmes were held in low-cost venues, and Social Mobilizers and the local Project Officer managed to secure ward offices (e.g. in Siddhalekh 3 and Gajuri wards) to hold their monthly meetings and where necessary other training sessions in these venues.

- **COVID-19 challenges and action taken by the project**

The COVID-19 pandemic affected project activities. DHRC increased the frequency of contact (mobile calls) with the downstream partner DWA e.g. sometimes daily if the situation demands, rather than sticking strictly to the mandatory and agreed times. They also tried to manage budgets efficiently to be able to conduct all activities on time.

DDP and DHRC also increased the frequency of their communications via Skype, WhatsApp and Zoom. Social mobilizers kept to their timetable of monthly meetings, to avoid gaps in discussion or in collecting the savings. SMs were also conscious of the need to keep up their regular contact with individual beneficiaries and their families: remotely when required, and resuming home visits as soon as the situation allowed, to avoid gaps developing or problems going unaddressed.

DWA coordinated with municipalities and different organizations such as FOCUS Nepal, Parilachhit Nepal (Forward Looking Nepal), and supported in food relief distributions. SHG members who received food relief were grateful to the project. (Raju Regmi, SM)

DHRC-Nepal coordinated with the National Human Rights Commission and other Disabled Peoples' Organizations to produce and broadcast weekly COVID-19 response-related radio programs. These broadcasts drew attention to the problems and challenges faced by people with disabilities and publicized the activities of government and DPOs to mitigate these challenges, explained the nature of COVID-19, the causes of transmission, prevention measures, etc.

### 3.5 Impact

It is too early to judge the project's full impact, but some positive changes are already visible.

- **Leadership of women with disabilities developed:** The primary beneficiaries are women with disabilities, and they are the decision-makers of their self-help groups. With continuous support from the project, women with disabilities have built their leadership capacity and become able to advocate for their rights. Some members shared that they are confident to speak in front of anyone. Similarly, the project has facilitated training on disability and legal rights, bringing beneficiaries new knowledge and awareness. They also learned the skills for mobilizing their savings and knowing where to invest it.
- **Review of Laws and Policy:** *DHRC undertook a review of Nepal's disability laws and policy relating to women, with action recommendations based on the findings.*
- **Sustainability of self-help groups:** 70% of the SHGs are able to operate on their own, conducting monthly meetings, collecting savings and providing loans to their group members. Loan repayments go into a revolving fund, which is good practice for the sustainability of the project. Among the 36 SHGs, 25 are formally registered at local level.
- **SHGs members empowered to seek support from other stakeholders:** Some of the self-help groups have already started to explore other local support for their betterment. The project helped them to build their leadership skills and become informed about their rights and entitlements. Some beneficiaries expressed that they are no longer shy about talking to people, and understand that there is a budget at local level for persons with disabilities.
- **Local Government initiated support for persons with disabilities:** The project helped connect persons with disabilities to their local authorities. It assisted beneficiaries to obtain Disability Identity Cards that allow access to social security and other government provisions. Thanks to continuous advocacy, 30 people, mostly existing project beneficiaries, were able to secure an additional Rs 300,000 for livelihood support.
- **Local government involved project partners and staff in their disabled coordination committee:** Municipalities recognized the project's efforts to empower women and persons with disabilities in their area, so they invited DWA to provide technical disability input in relation to the distribution of disability identity cards. DWA/WDIL staff, including Social Mobilizers (5 people) became members of the 4 municipalities' Disability Coordination Committees. This will strengthen the future inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of municipality planning and budgeting.
- **Stakeholders aware about accessibility issues for persons with disabilities:** Accessibility is a right as well as a requirement for people living with different forms of disability, towards increasing their reach to facilities and services, and supporting their participation in society. Persons with disabilities face numerous barriers in accessing public infrastructure, transportation and communication services. The project advocated for new government building construction to be accessible for persons with disabilities. Thanks to continuous advocacy, the district court built a ramp and lift in their building. Additionally, Nilkantha municipality is going to build a disability friendly toilet at their premises.

**The project helped establish systems at DWA:** The project not only helped to build the capacity of staff, but also supported the establishment of the organization's systems. DWA has developed a Financial, Human Resources and Child Protection policies. Furthermore, they have started to develop an annual work plan, and established a regular meeting system. There were no new projects before WDIL, but now they have 4-5 new projects as a direct result of the WDIL project.

## CHAPTER 4

### SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is assessed by measuring whether activities implemented during the project are likely to continue even after the project has been phased out. Project sustainability was examined in relation to the empowerment of persons with disabilities in the project area. Once again, it is too early to assess the sustainability of this project. However, there are some activities which are leading in the direction of long-term sustainability.

The establishment of grassroots-level structures leads to sustainability for persons with disabilities: at the ward level, there are 36 SHGs of which 25 are already registered at local level. The concept of awareness-building and bringing people with disabilities together in the same platform through group formation could lead to the sustainability of activities. However, sustainability of these groups needs to be ensured through different kinds of support mechanism like encouraging them to continue making monthly savings, organizing monthly meeting, and forging linkages with local level stakeholders.

Training and counselling has empowered people with disabilities to make decisions for themselves and to be proactive. SHGs in some areas were already exploring possibilities of building linkages with other local organizations. This will help a group to find support and continue their activities after the completion of the project period.

There are some achievements which are already visibly promoting sustainability. Savings and credit and income through the livelihood activities will lead to financial independence. Even though these livelihoods have only just got underway, some of the people with disabilities interviewed were already making profits.

## CHAPTER 5

### GOOD PRACTICE

#### **Risk Register**

Regularly registering risks is one of the good practices established by the project. The project team regularly registered risks, and efforts were made to minimize the risks.

**Project staff have good channels of communication in the circumstances**, and SMs helped to disseminate the ‘stay home – stay safe’ message. People in Nepal have long experience of disruption to travel and the local economy. The project has successfully established positive relationships with local government and other organizations, bringing the possibilities for collaboration outlined in this report.

#### **Safeguarding**

The introduction of a safeguarding policy helped the organization to be more aware of its responsibilities towards staff and volunteers as well as the beneficiaries.

Orientation sessions on safeguarding ensured that both project staff on the ground and their managers had a common understanding of what constitutes abuse, organizational and individual responsibilities, and how to deal with any incidents, allegations and concerns. DHRC and DDP will continue to review and revisit these issues, in order to consolidate this culture of safeguarding within organizations and the communities where they work. After all, a core objective of this project and of the partner organizations is to tackle discrimination and abuse, irrespective of gender, age or disability, in vulnerable communities.

#### **Established mechanisms to collect the feedback of beneficiaries**

The project established a mechanism for collecting feedback from project beneficiaries, using a bottom-up approach. Social Mobilizers (SMs) were the focal persons for beneficiaries to approach to share not only their problems, but also the progress they are making with livelihoods and other activities. The team of SMs played a vital role, organizing and conducting monthly meetings, making sure that monthly savings are made and recorded, and providing updated information on COVID-19 and disability issues. They made regular home visits and monitored beneficiaries.

#### **Joint monitoring system**

Joint monitoring which includes Municipality and Ward duty-bearers is an effective tool to showcase the project's interventions and effectiveness, where they (the duty-bearers) have opportunities to meet beneficiaries and directly observe project impact in the community. It also provided opportunities for interaction between duty-bearers, key project staff and beneficiaries, where they could learn about government provision and what could sustain the achievements when the project is over.

### **Feedback provided by DDP and UK AID**

There were regular monitoring visits, feedback, suggestions and technical support by DDP which helped project staff for the improvement and smooth implementation of activities. Similarly, regular feedback provided by UK AID helped the partners to understand gaps in the project and to do their best to fill them.

The last DDP monitoring visit was in November 2019, as the one planned for March 2020 was cancelled due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on any travel to Nepal. Despite the cancellation of DDP's visit, there was no gap in technical support from DDP. They provided regular support through enhanced virtual communication.

### **Inclusion**

Although the project was aimed at women with disabilities, it also included men with disabilities, on the basis that they too experience great vulnerability, as indicated by the project baseline study. The selection of target groups was based on the findings of this baseline survey.

## CHAPTER 6

### UNDERLYING CHALLENGES

**COVID-19 outbreak:** a big challenge at the end of Y2. Due to lockdown, meetings and visits could not take place, and activities were delayed. Lockdown was extended, and further restrictions put in place. However, SMs were able to visit beneficiaries at home in their respective wards and continue their activities. Regular meetings with WDIL staff were maintained through electronic means.

**Livelihood activities not diversified:** most beneficiaries opted to keep goats, as fodder is freely available and the landscape very suitable for livestock. The challenge was how to diversify livelihoods when assessing beneficiaries' abilities and family situation – and their natural inclination, as rural people, for keeping livestock. One drawback emerged when an uninsured animal died without insurance, which was not originally budgeted for. Although insurance cover is not expensive, beneficiaries may lack experience or the means to pay; agents can be unwilling to travel to remote areas or visit regularly to collect premiums.

**Delay in formal SHG registration and re-registration:** due to delays in Gajuri municipality's annual plan, SHGs formed there could not formally register. Of 36 SHGs formed, 11 lacked formal municipal registration.

**Geographical challenges to visiting direct beneficiaries:** The project team members needed to visit rural areas, including many places where local transportation services did not run. Where local transportation was available, it was also halted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This added challenges for social mobilizers to visit self-help groups regularly.

**No formal mechanism for sharing of learning:** Capacity-building training was limited to certain SHG members, so very few people with disabilities had opportunities to take part in the trainings. There was no formal mechanism or support established to ensure that those leaders shared/disseminated their learning to the other members afterwards.

**Irregular attendance at SHG meetings:** Many monthly SHG meetings focused on the collection of savings and distribution of credit. Without any agenda the group meeting would not be effective or useful and people seems to be demotivated from joining the meetings regularly. Some members had the attitude that "I have already received seed money so why should I go for meetings?" Geographical hardship was another challenge for persons with disabilities to attending the meetings regularly. The high cost of local transport and its absence during the rainy seasons also added disincentives.

SHG membership seemed to have a greater representation of carers/family members rather than the people with disabilities themselves, as it was generally quite challenging for people with disabilities to reach the meeting venues due to geographical obstacles. Most of the people who came to the meetings were representatives, rather than people with disabilities themselves. One of the challenges this causes is that instead of discussing "own issues", it becomes discussions on "others' issues".

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

Before the project began, people displayed negative attitudes towards people with disabilities. Even the persons with disabilities themselves lacked confidence and the awareness that having a disability did not necessarily prevent their involvement in income-generation activities. Many had no knowledge of the rights of people with disabilities or government provision of social security allowances, free health care, education facilities etc. Nor were they aware of the allocation of a budget at ward level for disability rights.

Women with disabilities bear the double burden of being disabled and female in a traditional patriarchal society. They are often dominated, neglected and discriminated against, and often receive little support from their family. They form one of the most vulnerable groups who were the main targeted beneficiaries of the project, which gave priority to such women. Similarly, carers who have a disabled husband/wife, children or any other disabled family members were also targeted.

The project had a very strong component of empowerment of women with disabilities and persons with disabilities. The project approach was built on a clear set of principles, which has contributed to the effectiveness of implementation. These principles are:

- The participation and central role of women with disabilities and persons with disabilities in all steps of the process, which has contributed to reducing discrimination towards people with disabilities
- Collaboration with multiple actors to ensure a cross-disability focus and linkages between persons with disabilities and local government and other organizations
- Sustainability both in developing the capacity of self-help groups and in economic empowerment
- Strengthening the capacity of implementing partners and giving them a better position from which to advocate for and serve people with disabilities.

The formation of SHG and registration of these groups at local level already shows the sustainability that group membership can bring for people with disabilities. The project's design ensured a clear approach and objective to bring women with disabilities into mainstream development.

**Developing and using partnership to promote greater accountability:** Instead of direct project implementation by an outside agency, the activities were carried out by local partners DHRC and downstream partner DWA. Regular technical support and monitoring visits from DDP have improved the quality of the project. Collaborative approaches resulted in an increased sense of local government ownership, sensitization and positive response for the wellbeing of persons with disabilities, as reflected in the increased allocation for disability-related development of Wards' annual budgets. Similarly, local government has realized that persons with disabilities are not only recipients and dependent on social service allowances, but they are capable of undertaking various livelihood activities and can be self-reliant. Disability leadership and self-advocacy training has had positive effects and raised the profile of disability issues, resulting in persons with disabilities being invited into various governmental and other forums.

It can be concluded that the project is highly relevant and was effective in empowering the most vulnerable people of the communities of Dhading to address their needs. Despite COVID-19 challenges and continuous nationwide lockdown, all the activities were carried out. These are significant measures taken in the direction of sustainability; like bringing people with disabilities into groups, raising awareness of their rights, providing livelihood support with cash grants, and linking with local stakeholders. The project has tackled on the priority needs of the target communities, but the intervention has only just started and needs further support to keep up the momentum of SHG activities and empowerment. There are good prospects for the long-term sustainability of the project if the SHGs are supported regularly, whether it be by local partners or through links with local government.

## CHAPTER 8

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- DHRC carried out quarterly monitoring visits, but this may not have been enough to provide support and interact with beneficiaries, so it is recommended that **monitoring visits need to be on a monthly basis**.
- Gender equality: groups were inclusive of men with disabilities and their carers, but for cultural reasons there is a risk that men may come to dominate, so **ensure that women are leading the groups**.
- When selecting beneficiaries, **priority should be given to ultra-poor and single women** which was lacking in this project.
- Most Self-Help Group members are from vulnerable communities and have only just started to understand about SHGs, savings, credit, their rights, and livelihoods. It is too early to leave them in isolation without any further support. It is recommended that there be **continuous monitoring visits for at least a year to provide technical support** to these groups, strengthen them and ensure their sustainability.
- To motivate SHG members to be part of a group and attend the regular meetings, **a revolving fund in the name of SHG members** would be one option. If the amount of savings is minimal, few members will be able to benefit from loans. But if there is a certain sum in the SHG account, needy people would be able to access loans from the group in this way.
- A number of activities were carried out, on a limited budget. However a gap was still seen in assessing the capacity development needs of beneficiaries. They expressed that though they have initiated livelihood activities, they still lack awareness and knowledge of business and marketing. To increase the income of target beneficiaries, **business should be expanded and livelihood activities diversified**.
- It is recommended to **establish a sharing mechanism for the transfer of learning** to wider groups (training to other members). Select SHG leaders for 'train-the-trainer' workshops, to mobilize them to train other SHG members in different areas.
- **Ensure that monthly SHG meetings are purposeful with a clear, set agenda**. SHG activities need to be defined with objectives. If this meeting can be more structured as a platform to discuss and share different issues like violence, community issues, sharing of skills and knowledge, it would provide more benefit to the members and communities and motivate them to attend regular meetings.
- There are various organizations for whom working with vulnerable communities/people with disabilities can be a policy and a priority, so **explore the possibility of collaboration with such organizations for joint intervention**.
- Sustainability: **provide regular technical support to persons with disabilities for their selected livelihood activities** and establish collaborative mechanisms with local/province-based organizations like District Livestock Service Office, for further support and monitoring.

- If a project is going to focus on livelihood capacity development for persons with disabilities, then it is recommended to **carry out a market analysis, and develop market linkages and help to increase the basic understanding of business management**, which is important.
- **Regular advocacy/lobbying with municipalities** to support SHGs and further capacity-building for greater sustainability.
- Establish a mechanism to address the issues that came up during monitoring visits.

## Annex 1

### Terms of Reference

#### For conducting Internal Review and Reflection of the *Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods Project*

<b>Name of Project</b>	<b>Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods (WDIL)</b>
<b>Country</b>	Nepal
<b>Project Location</b>	Dhading (Nilkantha Municipality, Galchhi Municipality, Gajuri Municipality and Siddhalekh and Kathmandu)
<b>Project duration</b>	8 July 2018 to 31 July 2021
<b>No. of direct beneficiaries and indirect beneficiaries the project targeted</b>	624 direct beneficiaries and 1908 indirect beneficiaries
<b>Duration of review</b>	50 days (25 May - 15 July 2021)
<b>Purpose of the Review</b>	The main purpose of the assignment is to review and reflect back on what went well, what were the main learnings from the project, what were the main activities that had an impact on the community and beneficiaries, and what could have done better – through interaction with the project team, beneficiaries, government stakeholders, a document review, meetings, focus group discussion etc.

### About the Project

Nepal Disabled Human Right Center (DHRC-Nepal) is implementing the Women-Led, Disability-Inclusive Livelihoods Project (WDIL) from 8 July 2018 to 31 July 2021, with a 1-month no-cost extension, in partnership with downstream partner Disabled Welfare Association (DWA), Dhading. The project is working in 4 municipalities of Dhading district, as mentioned above. The project envisions the socio-economic uplifting of women with disabilities and disabled persons' family member/carers. The project has aimed to reach 624 women with disabilities/carers directly, providing seed money of Rs.12,000 each to start income generation livelihood activities. The project has developed a Self-Help Groups (SHG) model, forming 36 SHGs that give members an opportunity to share their issues and problems among their peers, providing a platform for sharing and mutual moral support. Members meet at regular monthly meetings, and also save small amounts agreed by each SHG, and the project's Social Mobilizers speak on different disability-related issues such as disability rights, government provision for persons with disabilities, and practising intra-loans on a needs basis. The key position holders of 36 SHGs were trained in group management, disability rights and leadership. The project has been funded by UKAid, with Disability and Development Partners (DDP) as the coordinating grant-holding partner. DDP as a mother organization been supporting DHRC-Nepal for more than 15 years, developing projects and effective implementation, taking a coordinating role in M&E and regular follow-up, support, and donor reporting.

**Lead Partner** - DHRC-Nepal has been leading this project. It is one of the leading Human Rights organizations advocating for the rights of People with Disabilities (PwDs) in Nepal. It was established in 2000 AD by a group of young disabled people. The vision of DHRC is "to establish an inclusive society where a disabled person can live a dignified life and possess secured rights." The organization is located in Kathmandu and works in association with local level Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs). It is registered as Non-Government Organization under the government of Nepal's NGO Registration Act. It is also affiliated with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) and a member organization of the National Federation of Disabled Nepal (NFDN).

**Downstream Partner** – The WDIL project has been implemented in Dhading by the local organization Disabled Welfare Association (DWA). DWA is a non-profit making, non-governmental organization and self-help organization established in 1994 AD, formally registered at District Administration Office, Dhading. The organization has been working for the welfare of disabled people to ensure equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities. It is one of the pioneering Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) in Dhading district. The main vision of the organization is to reintegrate people with disabilities into their community through initiatives such as awareness-raising; vocational training such as sewing; advocacy, and coordination with different organizations including the local government.

### **Scope of work**

The consultant will review the following document to prepare the learning and sharing document. Review and reflection shall analyse the following policies:

- Project proposal along with logframe, Theory of Change, Delivery Chain mapping
- Project implementation procedures
- Quarterly and Annual reports
- Partnership Management Procedures
- Project Management Cycle

### **Outputs/Report:**

DHRC expects a comprehensive report of project achievements and a learning/sharing document. The consultant will cover the following areas in the report.

- Identify and analyse the significant achievements of the project
- Assess the impact of the project to the beneficiaries and community
- Identify the areas for improvement and learning for improvement in future
- Identify good practice of the project for future collaboration with other organization and scaling-up
- Identify and document the best example of the relation between partners and government stakeholders
- Assess the project in terms of 'Value for Money'
- Promoting gender equality in livelihoods opportunities - was this achieved? To what extent?
- Promoting participation of disabled people in livelihoods opportunities - was this achieved? To what extent?
- Sustainability – the SHG model – assess success
- Provide recommendations for future work

### **Methodological approach and design**

- Desk review
- Focus Group Discussion
- Interviews, meeting with staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Field visits as needed
- Feedback collection and validation workshop
- Drafting of report with recommendations for learning

## Timeline

S.no	Activities	May	June				July	
		4 <sup>th</sup> week	1 <sup>st</sup> week	2 <sup>nd</sup> week	3 <sup>rd</sup> week	4 <sup>th</sup> week	1 <sup>st</sup> week	2 <sup>nd</sup> week
1	Preliminary meeting with DHRC team and Consultant							
2	Sharing TOR, contract agreement							
3	Documentation sharing, review and research							
4	Meeting with DHRC Nepal staff							
5	Field visit, interaction with DWA, beneficiaries, government stakeholders							
6	First draft report preparation and submission							
7	Feedback collection and preparation of Final Report							
8	Final Report with findings and recommendations							

## Annex 2

### List of Interviews

#### Interviews with DWA and DHRC staff

Jagadish Adhikari	Executive Director
Chanda Shrestha	Program Coordinator
Smriti Sharma Poudel	Finance Officer
BhumiKala Poudel	Television Program Coordinator
Gunaraj Khatiwada	President, DWA
Sudip Duwadi	District Project Officer
Samjhana Adhikari	Finance Assistant and Data Input

#### Interview with Project Advisor team

Kamala Sharma	Siddalekh Rural Municipality	Vice-Chair
Radha Timalsena	Galchhi Rural Municipality	Vice-Chair
Sita Dhungana	Gajuri Rural Municipality	Vice-Chair
Samjhana Rijal	NDWA Dhading	Chairman
Biswaraj Adhikari	Dhading	Lawyer

#### Interview with the project's Social Mobilizers

Puja Duwadi	Social Mobilizer
Nisha Pariyar	Social Mobilizer
Kalyan Nepal	Social Mobilizer
Sundari Thapaliya	Social Mobilizer
Achyut Khatiwada	Social Mobilizer
Urmila Pande	Social Mobilizer
Sumitra Dhital	Social Mobilizer
Raju Regmi	Social Mobilizer
Krisna Khatiwada	Social Mobilizer
Sharmila Khatiwada	Social Mobilizer

#### Interview with project beneficiaries, recipients of livelihood seed funding

Sunmaya Tamang	Pig rearing
Nischal Shrestha	Shop
Ram Hari Aryal	Goat farming
Ram Pd Rijal	Chatpate (snacks)
Paaru Sarma	Tailor
Prakash Ghale	Goat farming
Chandra Maya Lamsal	Buffalo rearing
Nur Bahadur Thapa Magar	Beekeeping
Januka Subedi	Vegetable shop
Kali Sunar	Poultry farming

Self-Help Group Members/Leaders

Sunita Itaniu	Secretary	Shanti Devi Aapangata Samuha
Sita Shrestha	Chair	Uddar Aapangata Samuha
Bimala Dural	Chair	Swabalamba Apangata Samuha
Susira Karakheti	Chair	Chisapani Apangata Krishik Samuha
sarita ghale		Bungchung Apangata Samuha
Kopila Giri	Secretary	Puneshwori Krishi Tatha Pasupalan Apangata Samuha
Debaki Bk	Secretary	Sayapatri Apangata Samuha
Dhan Maya Karnel	Chair	Bagg Bachhala AKS
Goma Shrestha	Secretary	Kederashwor Apangata Samuha
Ganga Bhujel	Secretary	Pragatishil Apangata Krishak Samuha
Sita Nepal	Secretary	Samabesi Apangara Samuha
Sarmila Rijal	Chair	Bageshwari Apangata Samuha
Ram Maya Thapa	Chair	Baraha Debi Apangata Pashu Palan Samuha
Ru maya Thapa	Chair	Manakamana Pashupanchhi Palan AKS
Mina Shrestha	Chair	Juntara Apangar KS
Parwati Magrati	Chair	Kalleri Apangata Krishak Samuha
Kabita BK	Chair	Kalika Unnat Pashupanchhi Palan Samuha Siddalek 6
Hari Gurung		Bageswari

## Annex 3

### Documents Reviewed

1. UK AID TOC
2. Case Studies of SHGs
3. Case studies of SMS
4. Project proposal
5. Annual Reports 2018, 2019,2020
6. Quarterly reports t2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
7. WDIL Log Frame
8. UKAID Risk Register
9. Delivery Chain Map