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TAYAR NEPAL PROGRAM

YEAR 3 POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF DRR GOVERNANCE IN NEPAL

Final Report

31 March 2022

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Cover Photo: Workers place gabion wire retention walls at the site of a quick win DRR project for riverbed protection against flooding at the Godawari River in Godawari Municipality.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the process, findings and recommendation of the third yearly PEA study assigned to NIURS by the Tayar Nepal Project. The objective of this assessment is to evaluate the status of project activities, assess the likely contextual factors affecting project implementation, and suggest adaptation and/or prioritization of project activities in light of the upcoming scenario.

1. USAID's Tayar Nepal project is designed to at the national and local level. Its major focus is on improving DRM policies, procedures, and institutional capacities that will contribute to stronger systems at federal level. Similarly, a multi-hazard risk integrated approach to DRM will contribute to a safer settlement improving overall DRM governance at local level. Local level support is implemented across eight municipalities of four provinces—Bagmati, Lumbini, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim. This study is conducted at the end of the third year of implementation.

2. In order to conduct this study, we follow a three-prong approach—in depth interview, group discussions, and documents reviews. Our initial plan was to conduct visits to all program municipalities and conduct interviews, interactions, and observe the implementation of project activities. As per this plan, we made visits to two municipalities in two districts—Bhimeswor in Dolakha and Neelakantha in Dhading.

3. Because of the third wave of COVID-19, we had to drop this physical presence and conduct the interviews virtually. We completed virtual meetings at the national level with the key government ministries and departments, and the political leaders and administrative staff. We also interviewed civil society organization leaders and private sector representatives.

4. There were ten key questions that the team was trying to answer

- a. What are the roles of key national agencies (MOHA, NDRRMA, MOFAGA, MOUD) in coordinating DRRM activities and facilitating their implementation at the local municipalities level?
- b. How will the presently evolving political environment and upcoming election result impact DRRM activities at the national and local levels?
- c. How has the understanding of the concept of DRR changed after the implementation of Tayar Nepal?
- d. How are the recently developed DRRM laws and legislations implemented? How successfully are they applied and what are the results, compliance rate, and challenges in general?
- e. How have Tayar Nepal activities helped build DRRM capacity in the program municipalities?
- f. What has been the collaboration and cooperation among the civil society, private sector and other stakeholders in the project implementation?
- g. Given that there will be political transition following the upcoming local level elections, what is the likelihood of the achievements made so far continue and effectively used?
- h. What adjustments, if any, should be made in the annual work activities of the project?
- i. How are the most needs of the affected sections of society addressed in terms of DRR planning?
- j. How has the assurance been done such that the reliefs and targeted programs reached the targeted groups?

5. Findings- Based on the data and our analysis, we have come up with the following general findings and subsequent recommendations for Tayar Nepal for the next year's programming:

- a. With the declaration of local elections to be held 13th May 2022, the political parties are fully engaged in orienting their cadres and launching their election campaign in towns and villages of Nepal. The political parties are also busy consulting people and hearing their thoughts for developing their political agenda leading to drafting of their political manifesto. The project

- j. Tayar Nepal seems to be recognized as a reliable partner by the program municipalities. During the PEA reporting timeline, in Neelakantha municipality, they have located the project within their premises. As of now, all Tayar Nepal's municipal offices have shifted within the municipality premises. In general, the project staff in all partner municipalities is found to be working in close coordination and collaboration with their respective municipal team.
- k. The Tayar Nepal team maintains close relations and interacts with relevant partners and stakeholders, including private sector and civil society leaders, on a regular basis. The posters and banners found in the office area confirmed and provided necessary visibility to the partnership efforts.
- l. Ward Chairs, community leaders and Community Based Organizations are fully aware of Tayar Nepal's role and they expect some tangible work besides policy and plan documents. They want some problems solved, and they want to see long lasting impact. As one community leader said, "when Tayar goes, we expect it to leave behind something long lasting for us."
- m. The Mayors and administrative staff all seem satisfied with the Tayar Nepal work and its effect on thinking about DRR. They claim to have made a good foundation with plan, policy and regulations in place for the next leadership to build on this foundation. They feel good that they can measure their achievements vis-à-vis the other municipalities with the DRRM Index self-assessment mechanism that Tayar Nepal has helped establish.
- n. Tayar Nepal has been able to build the capacity of municipalities to predict and mitigate disasters. They feel equipped with tools and skills to mitigate the effect of disaster and effectively rescue and provide relief in their jurisdiction. The network of communication and the system Tayar Nepal has introduced make them feel more confident than before.
- o. The community infrastructure is still seen largely as a project like any other project, making people demand more of such projects rather than trying to learn from these demonstrations to be copied in their normal development projects. Here, there is a room for Tayar Nepal to work more in terms of awareness raising and knowledge building. Engineers and other municipal staff, however, seem to learn quite a lot from these pilot projects, like bio engineering, lightning protection, enterprise building and others.
- p. Regarding ownership and continuity of the achievements by the new leadership following the upcoming local election, most local level leaders, in politics, administration, civic organization, and community, are categorical that they will make sure it does not get lost. They claim that regarding the participatory and inclusive approach they followed in the planning, policy making, and system building, no one will think of doing otherwise.
- q. For a smooth transition, however, both the political leadership and the administration suggest some extensive sessions of orientation, workshop, and briefing sessions to the new leadership early in their tenure. They suggest knowledge sharing and cross learning during these sessions. Some current leaders could be used as resource persons in these sessions.
- r. The project selection process should allow local municipal teams to discuss and prioritize areas for Tayar Nepal activities so that they can make them relevant to the context and learn from different experiments. The contextual variation should be taken seriously into consideration when making annual plans and designing the activities. The difference in Bhimeswor, Dullu, Godawari, and Tulsipur should be given due importance in planning the project. Tayar Nepal has been coordinating with the municipalities as a part of co-creation consultation for its annual workplan development.
- s. Land use planning is critical for most of the issues related to disaster and livelihood. Therefore, the RSLUP should be finished early on so that it can be implemented immediately after the new leadership comes into place—ideally at the beginning of next (2079/80) fiscal year. RSLUP implementation is a challenge as it requires managing private land use consistent with RSLUP recommendations and can have serious political, social and institutional implications.
- t. Programs such as Cash for Work (CFW), Conditional Cash Grant (CCG) support, and Enterprise Development support to local communities with priority to women, poor and marginalized communities during COVID-19 were found very effective.

- u. DRRM programs have addressed the need of excluded groups, but there are no concrete mechanisms developed so that the relief and targeted programs reach the women and marginalized groups. Specifically, the following should be done:
 - Identify the excluded and vulnerable households before the program intervention takes place.
 - Capacity strengthening for municipalities' staff and beneficiaries.
 - Ensure Inclusive Participation and conduct GESI analysis and GESI audit