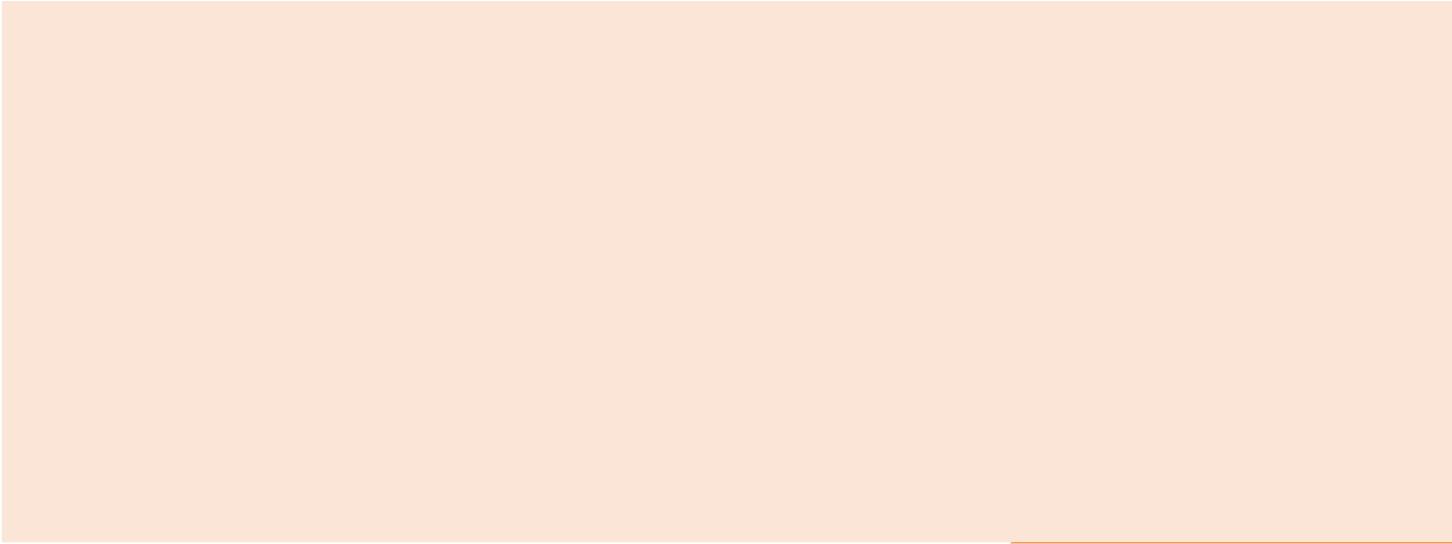




**Annual  
Report of  
MITRA  
Samaj  
Fiscal Year 2020-2021**



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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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**I**t is my immense pleasure to bring forth this Annual Report of MITRA Samaj of the fiscal year 2020-2021.

This year, we designed and conducted a total 11 projects in wide ranging issues, such as maternal, infant and neonatal mortality, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), abortion, sexual and reproductive health services especially among persons with disability, anti-human trafficking, tuberculosis, HIV and malaria, illegal wildlife trade, etc. We adopted various measures to fulfill the objectives of this projects, including research, advocacy, consultations, etc. with and among high level government functionaries at all levels (federal, provincial and local level), national and international development partners, CSOs (Civil Society Organizations), networks, groups, private sectors, beneficiaries at receiving end, among others.

We are deeply indebted to all the funding organizations, viz, OHW (One Heart Worldwide) Nepal, WaterAid Nepal, Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), Sunaulo Parivar Nepal/Marie Stopes International, Winrock International, Save the Children/Global Fund, WWF Nepal, and Saral Designs.

The team at MITRA Samaj regards it an honor and a matter of wisdom to appreciate donors, government functionaries, partner organizations, beneficiaries, and others for supporting us in our endeavors.

We believe the projects have contributed to the attainment of our vision of Touching Lives Positively.



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Mr. Vivek Singh Thakuri  
Executive Director  
MITRA Samaj

# 1. ABOUT MITRA Samaj

**M**ITRA (Measures for Intervention Training Research and Action) Samaj, established in 2006, is a non-government organization with proven distinction in designing and implementing large to larger scales of different types of researches, development programs, communication campaigns, etc. in wider ranging health and non-health sectors. It was registered (Regd. No. 117/063) with the Government of Nepal (GoN) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

## VISION

Touch lives positively

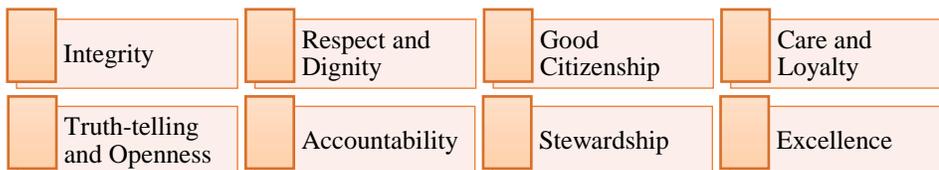
## MISSION

Strive to improve the wellbeing of the communities we serve

## OBJECTIVES

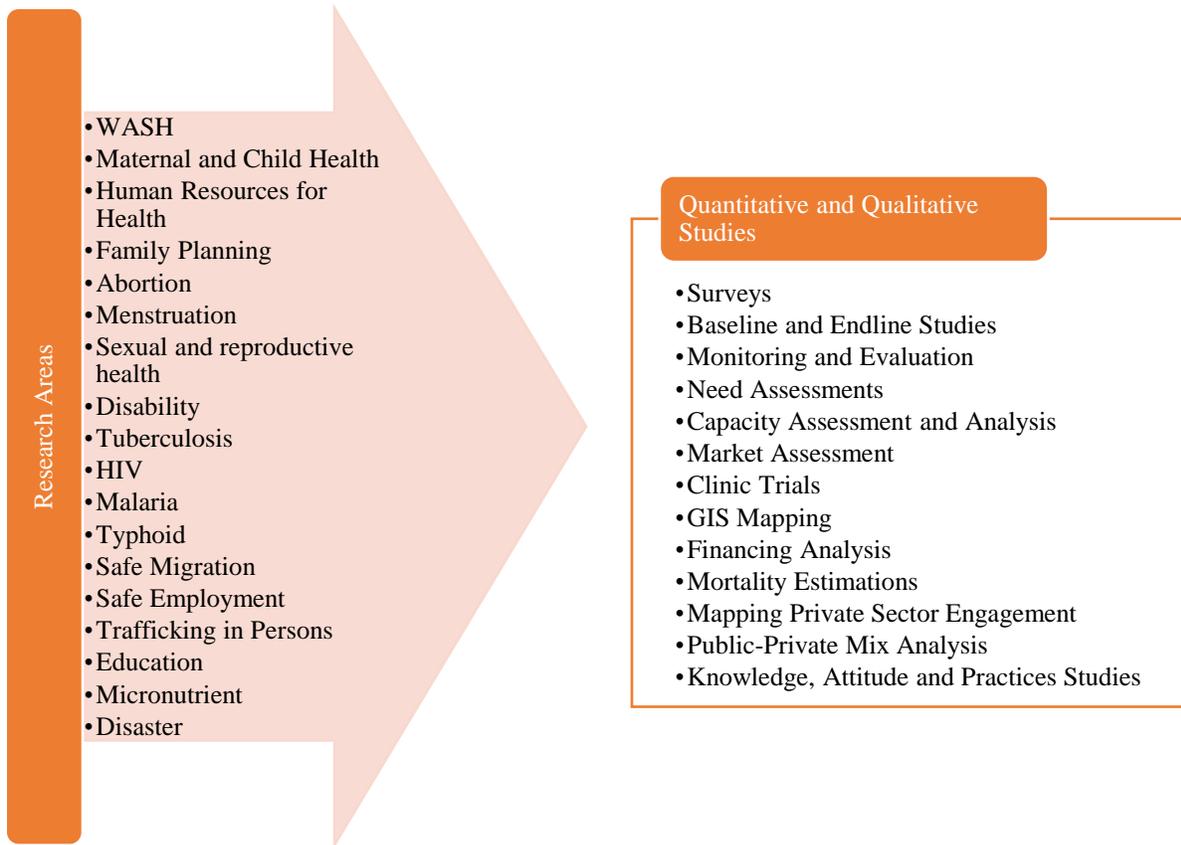
- Implement programs/projects by providing technical assistance (such as capacity building, social marketing, research and management support) to partnering organizations in order to fulfill basic human rights and alleviate poverty.
- Use evidence-based advocacy through research, policies, and other means to empower marginalized communities in the best way possible way.
- Implement programs/projects that benefits society at large through strategic alliances at local and grassroots level.
- Conduct research and provide technical support in order to contribute for improvement in health, education and poverty alleviation
- Implement capacity building and human resource development programs by working with NGOs, CBOs, civil society organizations and other institutions to contribute for developing strong vibrant civil society,
- Develop a wider network and forge partnership to contribute for achieving goals of poverty alleviation and inclusive development in the national and international level.
- Implement Social Marketing and Strategic Behavior Communication campaign to achieve positive behavior change to contribute in improvement of health, education and development of society,
- Implement empowerment programs for disadvantaged women, dalits, and other ethnic groups to increase their access to poverty alleviation initiatives thereby contributing in poverty alleviation.

## CORE VALUES



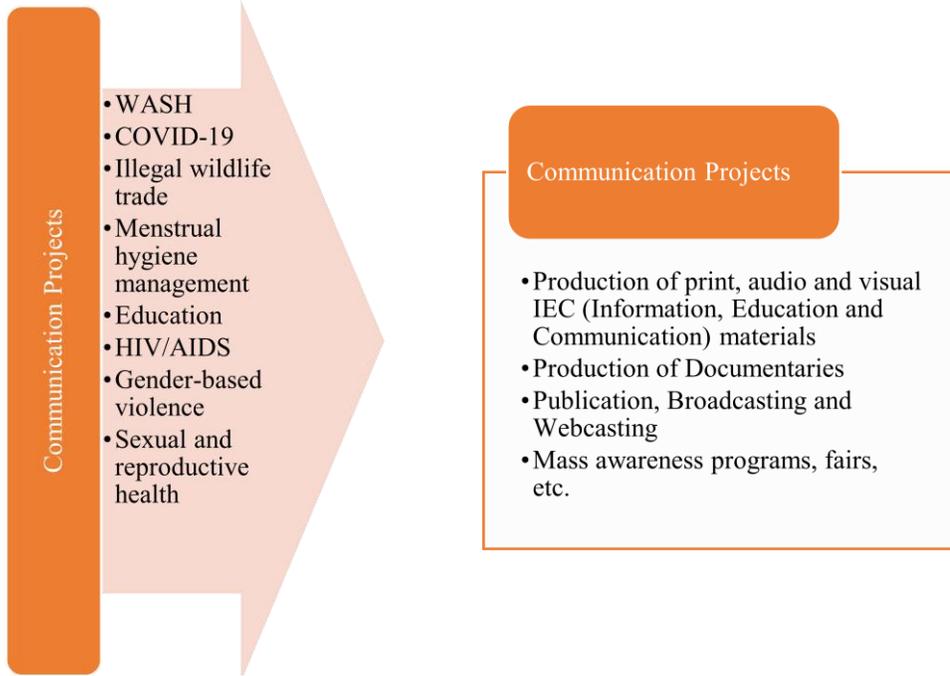
Since 2006, MITRA Samaj has successfully designed and implemented over 3 dozens of large to larger scales of quantitative and qualitative researches in various health and non-health sectors and supported government agencies and international and domestic non-government development partners in making informed and evidence-based decisions in program planning and delivery at local, sub-national and national levels which are instrumental in achieving national targets, sustainable development goals, and other regional and global commitments (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Research Areas and Types of Researches conducted in the past**



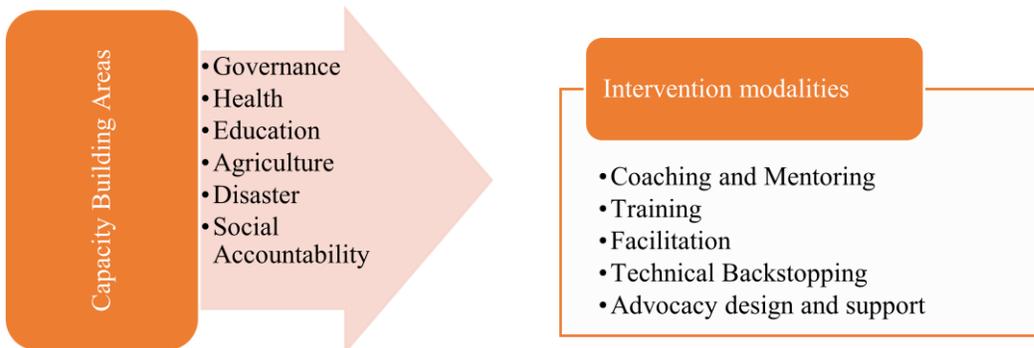
Communication is yet another expertise of MITRA Samaj. Since 2006, MITRA Samaj has not only designed and produced various print, audio and visual IEC (Information, Education and Communication) materials and documentaries on issues like WASH, COVID-19, illegal wildlife trade, menstrual hygiene management, education, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, etc., but has also widely circulated, broadcasted and webcasted through various modern and traditional medium of media, such as television, online portal, radio bands, social networking platforms, etc.

**Figure 2: Communication Projects in the past**



MITRA Samaj has also been designing and implementing projects on Capacity Building. For this, MITRA Samaj has designed and implemented capacity assessments like Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), Advocacy Readiness Index (ARI), etc. Recently, MITRA Samaj carried out ‘Human Resources Capacity Assessment of Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC), National Tuberculosis Control Center (NTCC) and Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) at Federal, Provincial and Palika Level to implement national HIV, TB and Malaria programs’ under Save the Children/Global Fund.

**Figure: Experience in Capacity Building**



## 2. PROJECTS

### 2.1. Network of Safety Program Baseline Survey

**Project 1: Status and Determinants of Maternal, Neonatal and Infant Deaths and Knowledge, Practice and Utilization of Maternal Health Services in Dolakha, Udayapur, Kavre, Myagdi, Sarlahi and Parbat Districts of Nepal**

**Funded by:** One Hearth Worldwide Nepal (OHW)

**Project Budget:** NPR 16,801,099/-

**Project Period:** 2nd January 2020 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Nepal is one of the signatories of Sustainable Development Goals and has vowed to achieve the targets related to maternal and child health i.e. reduce the maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births and end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age with an aim to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.

Since 2010, OHW adopted Network of Safety model that centralizes on enhancing every woman's access to safe delivery in healthcare facilities, particularly in remote and rural areas around the world. The implementation of this model addresses the barriers that limit access to quality maternal and neonatal healthcare services at all levels.

In Nepal as well, OHW follows the same model and concentrates its efforts on health facilities, service providers, governance and communities in order to save lives of mothers and newborns. OHW does not intervene to establish a parallel healthcare system, but strives to strengthen existing government-owned facilities by enhancing the local capacity. For this, OHW aligns the model's efforts with local government priorities and policies.

The program upgrades both first-level of healthcare facilities (health posts) and referral hospitals by supporting or providing necessary medical equipment and infrastructure. The program also provides training scholarships to nurses on obstetrics and immediate neonatal care. This way, OHW creates a network of well-equipped functioning healthcare facilities operated by trained staff/healthcare providers to ensure quality maternal and newborn healthcare.

Various types of community-based programs are key interventions under the model, whereby, OHW integrates community and grassroots-level entrepreneurs to design, implement and sustain the program through community engagement activities such as focus group discussions, collaboration with women's groups and religious leaders, etc. The program teaches families how to support pregnancies, prepare for giving birth, recognize danger signs, respond appropriately to potential pregnancy-related problems, and other important aspects. The implementing partners of OHW train FCHVs to directly reach out to community women and their families, including women

enrolled in prenatal care, and teach them to recognize and respond to pregnancy-related danger signs, referring expecting mothers to trained health personnel or healthcare facilities, etc.

Program expansion is OHW's continuous effort. In 2020, OHW progressed to expand the Network of Safety Program in Kavrepalanchowk, Dolakha and Udayapur districts.

## **MITRA Samaj**

### **Estimated maternal, neonatal and infant mortality and proportion of institutional delivery as well as maternal and neonatal health service utilization.**

- Estimated maternal mortality ratio in the last three years
- Estimated neonatal mortality rate in the last three years
- Estimated infant mortality rate in the last three years
- Assessed the level of maternal and neonatal health service utilization
- Assessed the level of knowledge of the danger signs during pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum period among recently delivered women
- Assessed the practice and knowledge regarding birth preparedness and complication readiness among recently delivered women

#### **Methods**

- Listed the neonatal, infant and maternal deaths and live births from all the health facilities by reviewing the records (HMIS 3.6 and HMIS 2.4)
- Verified the recorded births and deaths with the community providers, key informants and other relevant knowledgeable local leaders.
- Verbal Autopsy
- Survey of recently delivered women on utilization of maternal and neonatal health services

## **2.2. WASH Financing Study**

### **Project 2: Technical Assistance To Three Municipalities For Conducting WASH Financing In Their Constituencies**

**Funded by:** WaterAid Nepal

**Project Budget:** NPR 1,739,180/-

**Project Period:** 11th November 2020 till 31st March 2021

**T**he Constitution of Nepal 2015 has ensured citizen's right to water and sanitation. In this newly-formed federal structure of the government, the local governments are responsible to provide WASH services and can formulate policies and legislations of their constituencies without contradicting the federal and provincial laws.

Nepal has vowed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but one of the key challenges to meet SDG commitments on WASH is the financing gap in the sector to meet WASH targets and indicators by 2030. To meet the targets and indicators, stronger, smarter and inclusive financing in the sector is a must. This is possible after diversifying the roles of stakeholders in planning and utilizing resources generated from Tax, Tariff, Transfer and Trade. Thus, identifying the financing in WASH is imperative.

With the devolution and mandating of the power to local government, the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS) has been supporting the local governments to develop WASH plans that is informed by the WASH-Plan Guideline. WASH Financing Analysis is one of the activities which is guided by WASH Financing Analysis Guideline developed by the ministry. The guideline guides for the use of mobile to web-based geo-referred N-WASH software for collecting data.

In this context, WaterAid Nepal has been providing technical support to the ministry for the same. It is anticipated that the findings of the analysis will contribute to craft financing strategy in the WASH-Plan. In this background, WaterAid Nepal (WAN) is working to influence, promote accountability and enable delivery of sustainable and equitable WASH services to the people of Nepal, leaving no-one behind. And this is a part of its Country Strategy 2017-2021. Now, WAN has been implementing the project titled 'Sanitation Policy and Financing (SPF) Project' in Nepal with the support of Bill Gates and Melinda Foundation (BMGF).

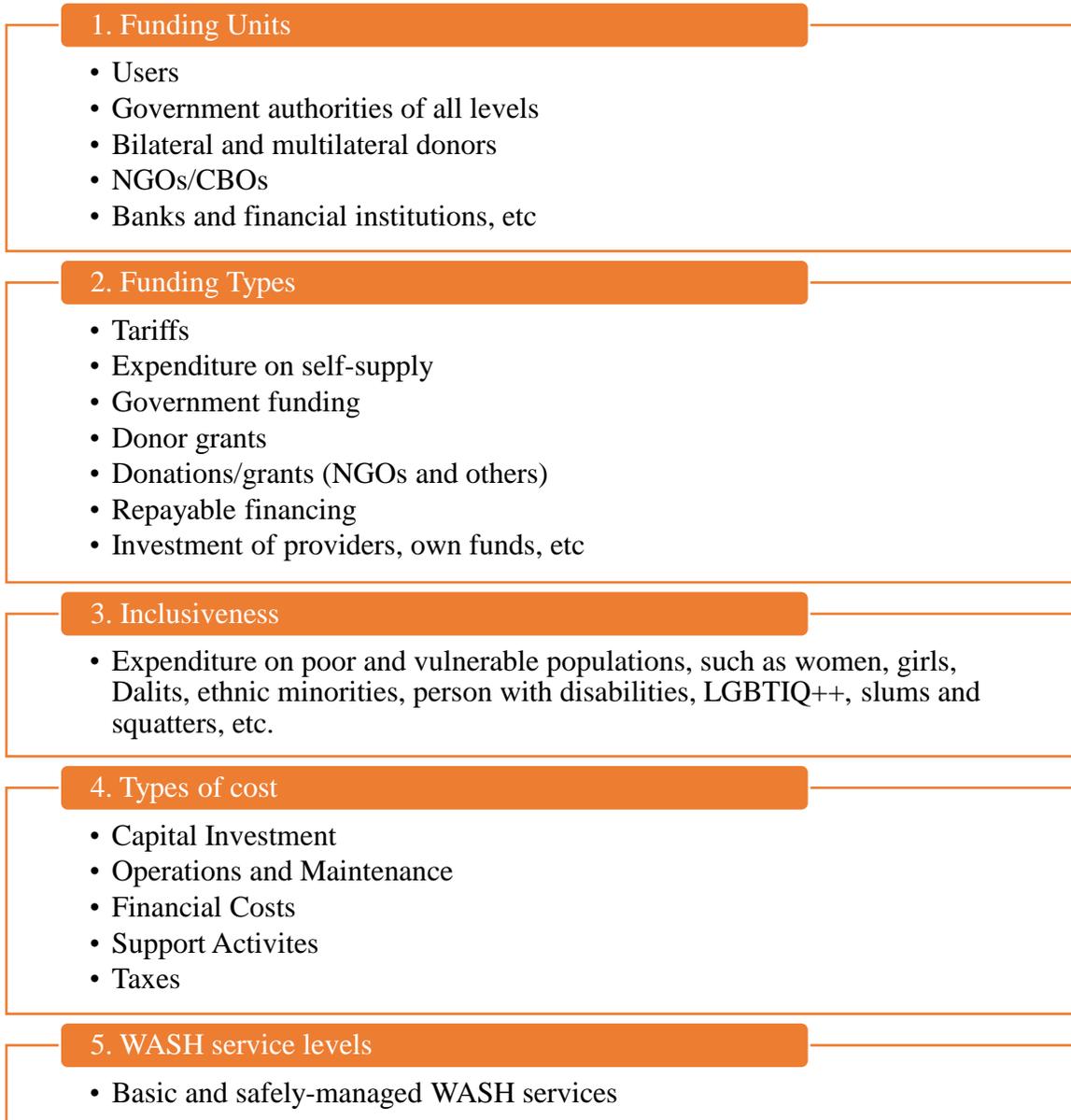
WAN is intending to support the three municipalities, viz, Lalitpur Metropolitan City and Golbazar Municipality (Siraha district) and Kirtipur Municipality to draft WASH Financing Analysis Guideline at the Local Level, for which it is intending to conduct a study on WASH financing in their constituencies.

**MITRA Samaj provided Technical Assistance To Three Municipalities For Conducting WASH Financing In Their Constituencies**

## Objective of WASH Financing Study

The primary objective of the WASH Financing Study is to understand the financing landscape of Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Kirtipur Municipality and Golbazar Municipality in WASH sector in their respective constituencies. MITRA Samaj conducted the study to understand the financing landscape of three local levels (Lalitpur, Kirtipur, and Golbazar) in WASH sector within five broad financial domains, viz, funding units, funding types, inclusiveness, types of cost, and WASH service levels.

**Figure : Components of WASH Financing Study**



## 2.3. Stigma Free Abortion

### Project 3: Endline Survey of Strengthening Young People's Access to Stigma Free Abortion Information and Services

**Funded by:** Family Planning Association of Nepal

**Project Budget:** NRs 48,69,74/-

**Project Period:** November 2020 to December 2020

Unsafe abortions continue to occur in Nepal despite the impressive progress in safe abortion service expansion by the Government of Nepal. Many Nepalese women continue to rely upon illegal and unskilled providers for abortion, leading to maternal morbidity and mortality (Reproductive Health Research Policy Brief, 2011). This also leads to stigma and discrimination against women and increase vulnerabilities of gender-based violence. And stigma has been identified as a fundamental cause of social injustices and inequities in health, which has been creating negative results in people's health. In Nepal, women still do not have the right to make one of the most important and life-transformative decisions: to carry a pregnancy or not. In spite of the fact that it is a very common experience during women's reproductive lives, abortion is still considered as a sin.

The 2016 Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) showed that, of total pregnancies, 9% were induced abortions. Overall, two out of five (i.e., 41%) women aged 15-49 were aware that abortion is legal in Nepal (Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016, 2017). Several studies have shown that most of the women from socially-marginalized communities of Nepal such as the Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis and Muslims lack knowledge about the abortion law and safe abortion services compared to other women representing the general population. Utilization of safe abortion services by women from these marginalized communities was also low (Reproductive Health Research Policy Brief, 2011).

In this background, FPAN (Family Planning Association of Nepal), Nepal's first national sexual and reproductive health service delivery and advocacy organization that is a member association of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and a major partner of the Government of Nepal's national family planning program, implemented the project "Strengthening Young People's Access to Stigma-Free Abortion Information and Services" in three districts of Nepal (Morang, Kavre and Palpa) from Oct 2018 to Jan 2021 under IPPF, which is funded by David and Lucile Packard Foundation under the stigma III projects.

#### Activity

Carried out the endline survey to assess the effectiveness of the project against the target under the program objectives, MITRA Samaj has been contracted by FPAN for conducting the endline survey.

**Sample:** 200

**Study Districts:** Morang and Kavre

## 2.4. SRH Study among Persons with Disability

### **Project 4: Understanding The Factors Affecting Access And Utilization Of Sexual And Reproductive Health Services Among Persons With Disability In Nepal**

**Funded by:** Sunaulo Parivar Nepal/Marie Stopes International (Nepal)

**Project Budget:** NPR 29,99,477/-

**Project Period:** 29th September 2020 to 4th December 2020

Nepal has committed to reducing the unmet need for Family Planning (FP) and improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) (4). However, the 2016 Nepal Demographic Health Survey shows insufficient progress towards achieving Nepal's SDG and FP2020 commitments. Both the mCPR and the unmet need for family planning have stagnated over the last decade.

Especially, persons with disability have consistently not been included in SRH and health programs and policies in general, and the group has struggled with access to family planning services. Person with disability are amongst the most marginalized and poorest groups and are often overlooked or neglected within society and by Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in policy and program implementation despite having the same SRH education and service needs as those without disabilities.

Persons with disability face many challenges to accessing SRH information and services including social and cultural assumptions regarding sexuality and sexual needs of persons with disability, discrimination, lack of accessible information and communication materials, service infrastructure and negative provider attitudes. Furthermore, persons with disability are at greater risk of being denied the right to make decisions for themselves including their reproductive rights.

Marie Stopes International (MSI), the global SRH service providing organization, provides technical and managerial support to local NGOs for increasing access and utilization of quality FP/SRH services with a mission of enabling people to have children by choice not chance. In Nepal, it works with SPN, a local not-for-profit NGO, since 1994 A.D., and provides a wide range of services to meet the SRH needs of the men, women and young people of Nepal. SPN is increasing awareness and understanding of SRH with increasing access to affordable quality services to prevent unwanted births.

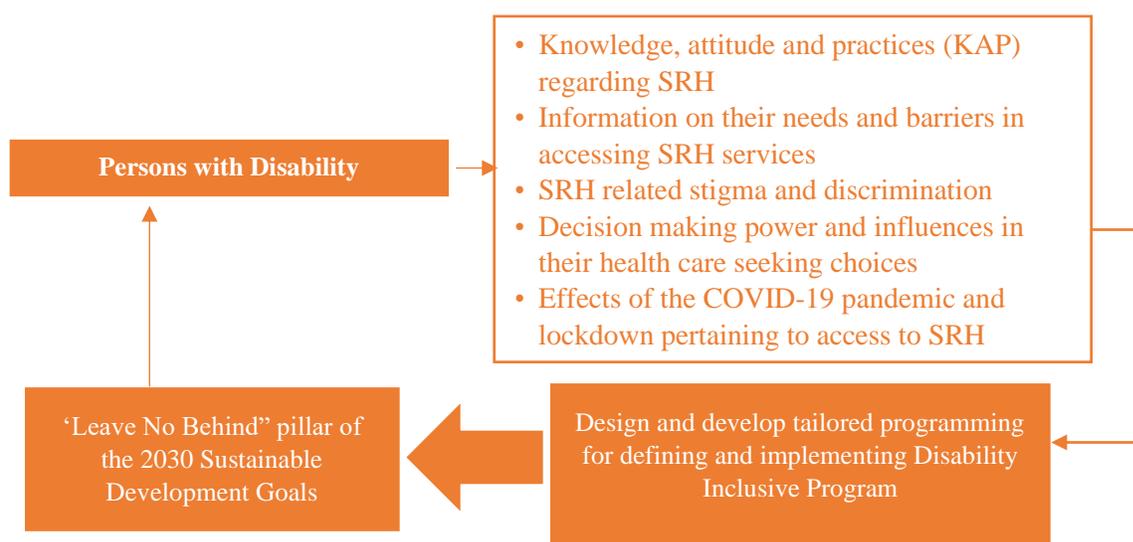
MSI has always been keen to design disability-inclusive FP programs in alignment with the "Leave No one Behind" pillar of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. It has been noted that persons with disability are at a disadvantage regarding most indicators in the SDG (3). Continuing its keenness to design programs for persons with disability, SPN, the implementing partner of MSI, had intended to develop targeted interventions to address their specific SRH needs and facilitate access to information and services.

### Purpose of the Study

SPN had intended to better understand the specific domains of challenges faced by persons with disability in accessing SRH services and design program with a specific focus on Province 2 and Province 3 (Bagmati Province) of Nepal. For this, SPN had intended to conduct a study with an aim to explore the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) regarding SRH among persons with disability and provide a deeper assessment of their needs and barriers in accessing SRH services.

In this background, MITRA Samaj was commissioned to design and implement the study through competitive process. By the end of December 2020, MITRA Samaj completed the study.

Figure : Conceptual Framework of the study



### Methodology

Multi-stage stratified cluster sampling strategy was adopted for this retrospective cross-sectional survey and systematic random sampling was adopted for selection of respondents (80 sample).

Data collection from persons with disability in sampled palikas of four districts (Kathmandu, Chitwan, Mahottari, and Bara) took place from November 30, 2020 and ended on December 16, 2020, and were carried out by trained research assistants using CSPro-based (CAPI) data entry software under the monitoring and close supervision of research experts at MITRA Samaj. In addition, FGDs, KIIs, and IDIs were conducted among representatives of persons with disability, community-based organizations, local government authorities, and health cadres.

## 2.5. Media Campaign Measurement

### Project 5: Measurement Of Exposure Of Radio Campaign And Recall Of Distinct Messages From Mass Media Campaigns

**Funded by:** Winrock International (Nepal)

**Project Budget:** NPR 802,300/-

**Project Period:** 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Nepal continues to be a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children who are subjected to forced labor, sex trafficking and other forms of trafficking. Trafficking-in-persons (TIP) is recognized as a crime against the state and punishable under the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act of 2007 (HTTCA). It criminalizes human trafficking but it does not provide a wider definition of such trafficking to include all forms, including labor trafficking, in consistent with the 2000 UN TIP Protocol (Palermo Protocol). Similarly, the HTTCA established a comprehensive legal framework to combat trafficking. However, lack of coordination among government institutions, policy overlap, and inadequate ICT systems allows traffickers to operate with impunity. Despite these challenges, Nepal continues to demonstrate progress annually to maintain its Tier 2 status on the U.S. State Department TIP Report for the last several years. The new federal structure of the country also presents opportunities to mainstream TIP into policies and guidelines at the sub-national level (USAID, 2020).

In this foreground, Winrock International implemented Hamro Samman, a five-year program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Department For International Development (UK Aid). The project is being implemented in 10 districts of Nepal that falls within three different provinces, and they are as follows:

- **Province 3** - Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk, and Kathmandu
- **Province 5** – Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, Banke, and Bardiya
- **Province 7** - Kailali and Kanchanpur

The project works closely with the Government of Nepal (GON), civil society, and private sector to foster collaborative partnerships among these stakeholders to better address human trafficking. Together, these stakeholders increase attention, information, and efforts to strategically and sustainably combat TIP through a system-based approach.

**Media Campaign Measurement** is the routine and periodic activity required to be carried out to measure the reach of radio campaigns and messages of TIP Awareness Communication Campaign. Focus Group Discussions (proposed) is the activity to measure the distinct messages recalled by the target audience.

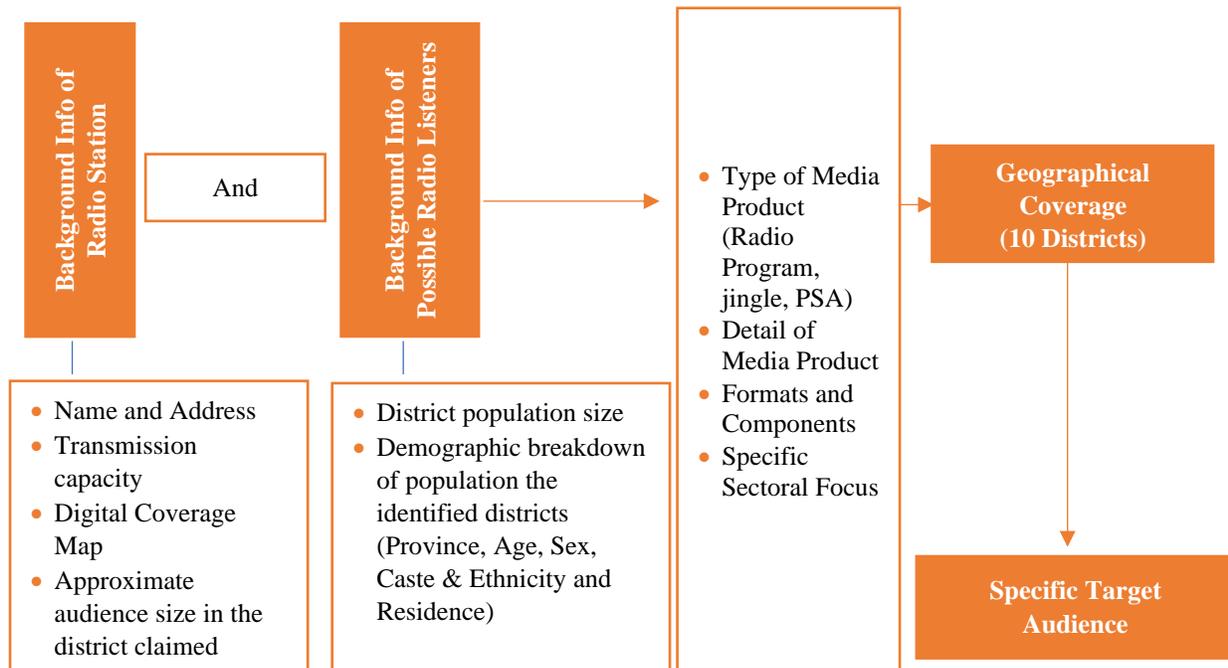
The general objective of the media campaign measurement is to measure the exposure of radio campaign among the targeted population of Hamro Samman project and the recall of distinct messages disseminated from mass media campaigns.

The specific objectives are:

- To measure the number of people in targeted populations, including vulnerable populations, law enforcement, health care providers, educators, and others, exposed to radio campaign(s) that provides information about TIP and adult entertainment sector.
- To measure the distinct messages recalled from mass media campaigns

MITRA Samaj developed a Media Campaign Measurement Tools.

### Framework of Exposure Calculation Tool



## 2.6. Mobilization of Media

### Project 6: Effective Mobilization of Media (EMM)

**Funded by:** WaterAid Nepal

**Project Budget:** NPR 44,50,537/-

**Project Period:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2021

Very often development programs use Mass Media merely as a medium to communicate its activities and lessons learned. But the project titled **“Effective Mobilization of Media”** envisioned to use media as a tool to add value to the approach adopted by the WaterAid Nepal. Under the project, the media was strategically collaborated to its full potential during and even beyond its tenure.

**“Effective Mobilization of Media (EMM)”** was launched to influence stakeholders through engagement of journalists/reporters on WASH in general and Total Sanitation, Safely Managed Sanitation, Citywide Inclusive Sanitation, through Media Sensitization to encourage publication of quality write-ups/articles.

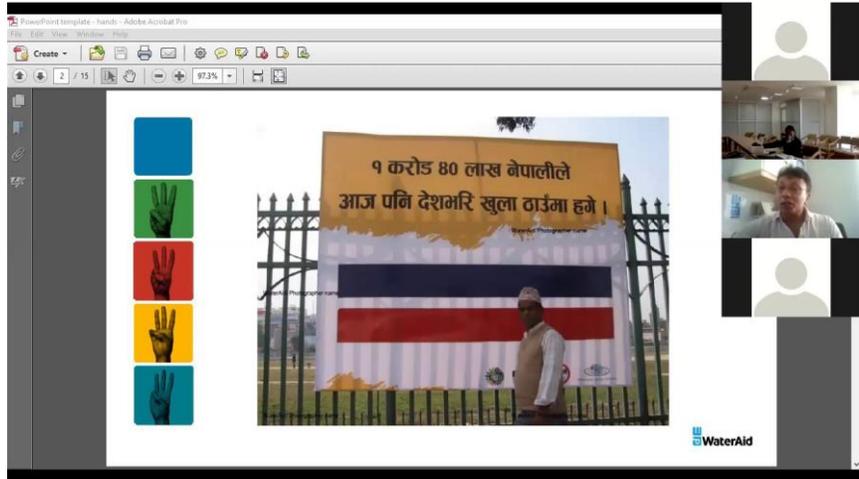
In order to achieve the desired objectives the project, MITRA Samaj adopted “A” framework for advocacy.

- The project carried out an in-depth analysis at the first stage to dig out the key factors that have an influence over the project interventions. The strategy was primarily based on the analysis and the recommendations of the stakeholders.
- A need assessment was conducted in February and March 2019 among representatives from top media houses for Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and In-Depth Interviews (IDI) who were selected using a stratified purposive sampling method to ensure representation of all forms of mass media such as print, radio, television, and online.
- In the later stages, the project envisioned to use a mix of innovative as well as proven methods of media mobilization, and one of such methods is the “Training on Underlying Issues of Safely Managed Sanitation” that was organized from September 27 till 30, 2020 on Zoom. A total of 24 selected journalists from all provinces of Nepal were selected by Society for Healthcare Journalists, the collaborating partner of MITRA Samaj. This training has encouraged and motivated the media journalists to cover stories on their respective media vehicles on a sustained manner.
- Following the training, the trained journalists carried out reporting in various issues and published the same in their respective media outlets. A total of 18 articles were published as of January 26, 2021.



Some participants of the training

Policy Specialist of WaterAid Nepal Mr Govinda Shrestha sharing his presentation.



### Key Training Contents during the training

Understanding Sanitation—Overview, barriers/challenges and opportunities to attain safe sanitation

Understanding Fecal Sludge Management

Sustainable Development Goals and Enabling Environment for fulfilling commitments

Understanding City Wide Inclusive Sanitation and its application

Understanding investigative journalism

## 2.7. Impact of COVID-19 on General Population

### Project 7 (A): Rapid Assessment To Access Impact Of COVID-19 In Selected Communities

**Funded by:** WaterAid Nepal

**Project Budget:** NRs 758,000/-

**Project Period:** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020 to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Ever since the first case of COVID-19 was identified on January 23, 2020, handwashing with soap and water has become one of the critical behaviors being promoted to reduce the risk of transmission of the novel disease. In fact, the pandemic has triggered renewed global attention on handwashing both at home and outside.

In order to assess how people belonging to poor, marginalized and vulnerable groups in Nepal are receiving and understanding the messages on handwashing with soap and water and what factors and barriers are driving behavior change and preventing them from adopting good hand hygiene behaviors, WaterAid Nepal (WAN), together with MITRA Samaj, conducted this rapid assessment from May 15 to 24, 2020.

#### Population and methodology

Population of this study are general people and Dalits from Lahan municipality, people of Thami community from Kalinchowk Rural Municipality, hard-to-reach population from Sailung Rural Municipality, slum dwellers from Kathmandu valley and people with disabilities possibly from anywhere across Nepal.

The study adopted mixed sampling technique i.e. a random sampling to draw a sample of 130 general population of Lahan municipality, and purposive sampling to select a sample size of 50 in each category for other population. Thus, a total of 380 individuals were interviewed and 3781 were included in the study.

#### Key Conclusions

- 99% population received messages on handwashing with soap and water from family/friend/neighbor, mobile phones, TV, and radio
- Door-to-door campaigns and radio [contents in local languages] can be effective mediums to reach left-out population
- Most people have clearly understood the messages on handwashing with soap and water
- Most people realised the importance of handwashing with soap and water in this COVID-19 pandemic
- 97% changed their hand washing behaviours at home after exposure to messages on handwashing with soap and water
- Knowledge on washing hands with soap and water to prevent transmission of COVID-19 is low comparatively to other practices
- Not everyone is properly washing their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds



“Messages are not clear among people with disability because the use of specific medium is very less in disseminating information. The use of braille and sign language is significantly less.”— KII, Representative, Association of people with disability.

- Unaffordability and unavailability of soap and water are discouraging handwashing behaviours at home to a few
- Unavailability, non-functionality, inaccessibility and difficulty in use of hygiene materials—compounded by the facilities being unhygienic—are factors affecting handwashing behaviours in public places for a few
- Barriers in handwashing with soap outside homes are in marketplaces (65%), public toilets (57%) and public water points (50%) as such points.
- Fear - a key motivational factor for most to adopt handwashing behaviour

## **Project 7.B: Rapid Assessment of Measures on Safety of Sanitation and Waste Workers during COVID-19 in Nepal**

**Funded by:** WaterAid Nepal

**Project Budget:** NRs 351,900/-

**Project Period:** 1st June 2020 to November 2020

In the COVID-19 pandemic, Government of Nepal repeatedly imposed nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19. Sanitation and waste workers, however, continued providing essential services during the lockdown despite the risk of exposure to coronavirus prevailed. This added risk to occupational health hazards they regularly face, including illness, injury, and even death. Although these workers have been central to the functioning of towns and cities under lockdown, little is known about how they have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how they are coping with this new situation, and the normal now.

MITRA Samaj, with support from WaterAid, conducted a rapid assessment in three locations—Lahan municipality, Kathmandu Metropolitan City, and Lalitpur Metropolitan City—to understand the knowledge on COVID-19 that sanitation and waste workers have, health and safety measures in place, and the social, economic and personal impacts on their lives.

Thirty-one sanitation and waste workers were interviewed who were engaged in solid waste collection and transportation, sweeping, pit emptying, sewer maintenance and toilet cleaning. Additionally, eight experts in sanitation and waste management were interviewed.

### **Key Findings**

- Most sanitation and waste workers knew about the symptoms and transmission mode of COVID-19. There were only a very few cases of misinformation among the workers.
- All sanitation and waste workers knew at least 3 to 5 highly promoted safety measures such as wearing masks, wearing gloves, washing hands with soap and water, sanitising hands and maintaining social distancing.
- All sanitation and waste workers shared that while their employers had not provided any formal training due to challenges in maintaining social distancing, they had provided guidance and instructions on how to do their jobs during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The Government of Nepal had issued an interim guidance titled “Health Care Waste Management in the context of COVID-19 Emergency”, but there are no COVID-19-specific operational guidelines for other sanitation and waste workers, except for those working in medical waste collection.
- Most sanitation and waste workers know about personal protective equipment (PPE), and were provided by PPE by their employers. However, a few of them buy PPE at their own cost. Those who were provided with PPE mostly re-used it after washing, except for medical masks and gloves, which they disposed regularly.
- All sanitation and waste workers always wear masks and gloves, wash hands with soap and water, apply sanitizer, and maintain social distancing at all times.

- Most sanitation and waste workers are not covered by any form of insurance.
- The behaviour of the public, clients or their employers towards sanitation and waste workers have improved in the COVID-19 pandemic believing that sanitation and waste workers were practicing good hygiene and were working for public good, hence “people had started treating them well”. But some sanitation and waste workers felt the change was for the worse.



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**A public toilet cleaner cleaning the squat toilet in Kathmandu. *Photo by: Prashanna Shakya***

## 2.8. Human Resources Capacity Assessment of MoHP

**Project 8: Human Resources Capacity Assessment Of Ministry Of Health And Population (MoHP), National Centre For AIDS And STD Control (NCASC), National Tuberculosis Control Center (NTCC) And Epidemiology And Disease Control Division (EDCD) At Federal, Provincial And Palika Level To Implement National HIV, TB And Malaria Programs**

**Funded by:** Save the Children/Global Fund

**Project Budget:** NPR 27,08,979.00/-

**Project Period:** 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

### Background

Previously, disease entities like Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD), National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC), and National Tuberculosis Control Centre (NTCC) of Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) implemented Global Fund grants as the Principal Recipients. In 2015, this responsibility was transferred to Save the Children after the Global Fund communicated to Nepal Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) that the MoHP entities lack adequate financial, programmatic, monitoring and evaluation and human resource capacities to adequately manage Global Fund grants.

Save the Children, as the current sole PR, was requested to develop a long-term human resources plan. This assessment was carried out to identify best viable solutions that could guide in the development of the human resource plan of the ministry and disease entities at federal, provincial and palika level that is expected to take a systems approach and address all three diseases (TB, HIV and malaria) with the aim of building a self-reliant, effective and efficient health system for the country considering the current federal structure in the country and to implement HIV, TB and malaria programs and realize the commitments and targets.

### Methodology

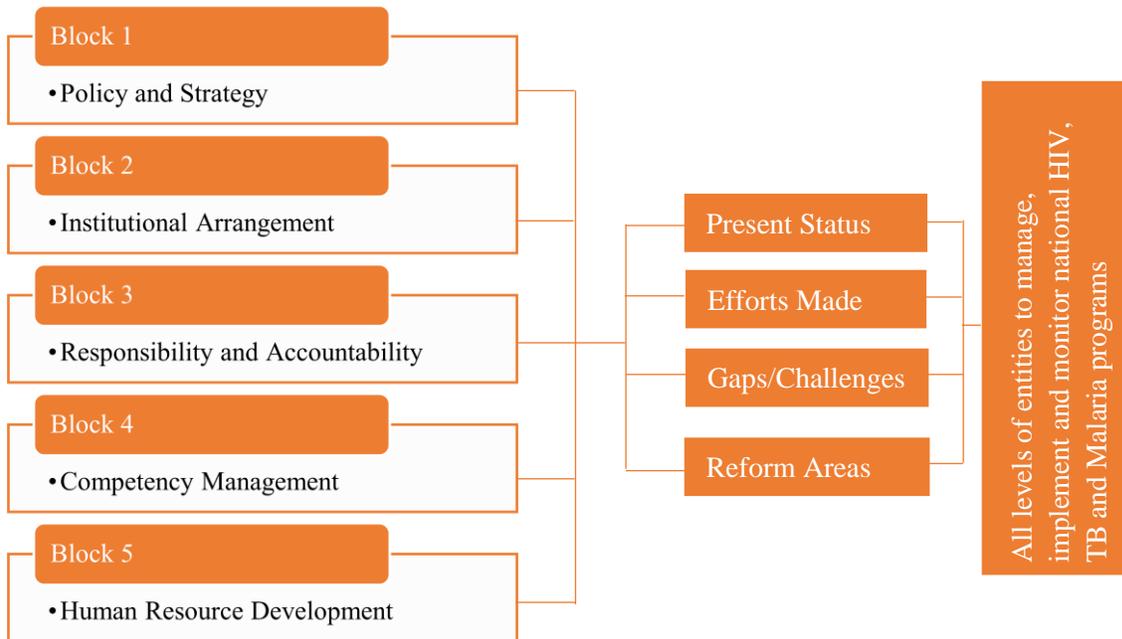
Both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted for the assessment. Exploratory and descriptive designs were used to apply the critical theory of analysis. A multi-stage sampling methodology, whereby, the samples—interviewees and discussants—were selected from all levels and stratified as per the federal structure of the country. A purposive sampling approach was used to select the respondents who included MoHP officials, heads of three disease entities, officials/subordinates, and representatives of external development partners.

### Assessment Framework

The study was carried out within the framework that collated information about the present status, efforts made, gaps/challenges and reform areas on policy and strategy, institutional

arrangements, responsibility and accountability, competency management and human resource development at all levels with a specific focus on TB, HIV and malaria programs.

**Figure: Framework of Human Resource Capacity Assessment**



## 2.9. Hygiene Behavior Change

### Project 9: Hygiene Behavior Change Coalition-Media Campaign

**Funded by:** WaterAid Nepal

**Project Budget:** NRs 9,966,731/-

**Project Period:** Phase I (June 2020-November 2020) and Phase II (October 2020-15<sup>th</sup> March 202)

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) which was first identified in Wuhan Province of China in the late 2019 quickly spread across the world and still is recognized as pandemic. With the start of the rise in cases across the globe, countries across the world directed its effort in containing the disease. Almost all the countries across the world went into a lockdown to break the chain of transmission. Global recorded cases of COVID-19 as of 13th March was 120M with 2.65M deaths. In Nepal, there were 275K confirmed cases with 3014 deaths.

The Government of Nepal (GoN) also adopted similar strategies to stop the spread of the disease. Besides imposing a nationwide lockdown, under the leadership of the GoN, preventive messages were disseminated through different channels. First such initiative taken was the caller back tune with preventive messages on mobile and landline phones. The GoN along with different donor agencies were quick to leverage in using other media platforms for delivering preventive messages since the start of the pandemic. One such initiative was the Hygiene Behavior Change Coalition-Media Mobilization (HBCC) supported by WaterAid Nepal (WAN).

National Health Education, Information and Communication Center (NHEICC), a government wing responsible for health communication programs under the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), was leading the Media Mobilization campaign with support from WaterAid Nepal. Under the aegis of the Senior Health Education Administrator different communication materials were produced under the HBCC project. The media campaign was officially launched virtually on 20 July, 2020. The government representatives, WAN staff, celebrated and senior artist were among the participants/panelists in the virtual event. During the launch, first PSA featuring Mr. Madan Krishna Shrestha and Mr. Hari Bansha Acharya (MAHA Jodi), two of the most celebrated senior artist duo, was also released.

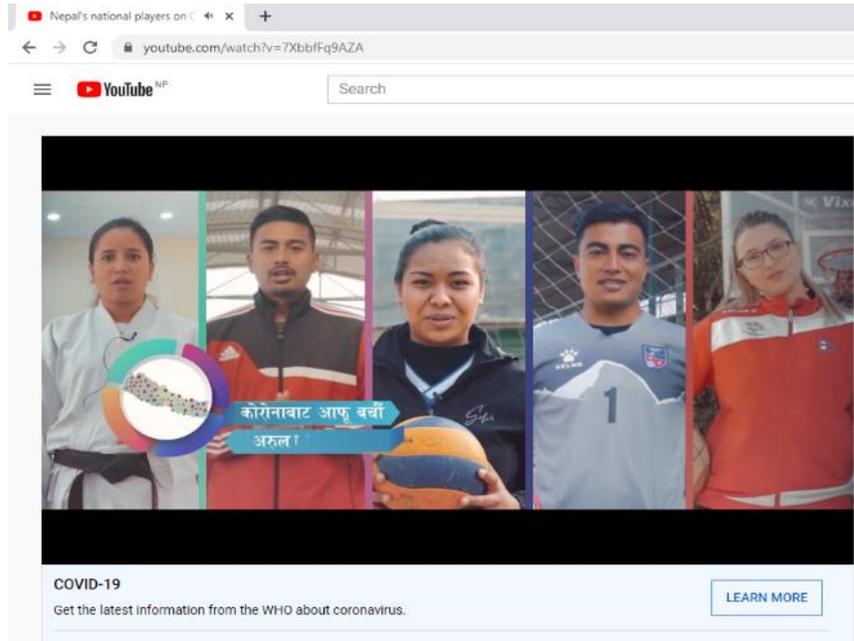
A creative team under the leadership of the senior Government official of the concerned government agency National Health Information Education and Communication Center (NHIECC), WAN and MITRA Samaj's representatives was formed to gather feedback, ensure the contents alignment with government's priorities and approve the creative content before releasing in different media channels. This also helped the creative contents to be aligned with the WHO's advice on COVID-19.

The creative team meeting generally met virtually when the movements were restricted and met in-person occasionally to review and provide feedback to the contents. The feedback thus received helped finetune the media contents before disseminating the contents through different media channels.

- **TVC/PSAs**

A total of six Television Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were produced and aired since the start of the project. The TV/PSAs were aired through state owned television- Nepal Television, which has the highest viewership in the country. The TVC/PSAs were aired 14 times a day on a prime-time slot when the national news was broadcasted.

**TVC 4: Nepal national players on COVID-19**



- **Billboards**

Billboards were placed at areas with a high foot fall like the market areas, boarder areas, health facilities, government offices and bus stops.



**Wall billboard on COVID-19 preventive measures at District Police Office in Gulariya, Bardiya district.**

- **Social media**

A total of forty-one (33 in the first phase and 8 in the second phase) digital media inserts were produced under the HBCC project. Out of the total, seven were animated and the rest were static. These digital inserts were posted on WAN Facebook page and Instagram handle.



A sample of social media insert on COVID-19 prevention.

- **Loudspeaker**

Loudspeaker messages on prevention of COVID-19 were played in Siraha, Bardiya and Kavre districts during both the phases. Messages issued by the government, radio jingles and additional jingles were played during the miking event. The messages were in Maithali and Tharu languages to be played in Siraha and Bardiya districts.



Miking around the market area - Terai

- **Radio**

A total of seven (4 in first phase and 3 in second phase) radio jingles were produced and aired. The radio jingles were aired through Image FM (Station with Nation-wide coverage) and 2 FMs in 4 WAN working districts namely Siraha, Bardiya and Kavre districts (a total of 8 local FMs).

- **Tik Tok**

Marking the Global Hand Washing Day (October 15) a Tik Tok video was launched with message on hand washing. The song for Tik Tok was composed and sung by one of the most popular pop singer/song writer/composer of Nepal; James Pradhan and the music was based on his chart buster song “Aaiedeu aaiedeu”. Several celebrities including Malvika Subba and Sugarika KC (Former Miss Nepal), Sandhya KC (Actress), Prisma and Princi and Samjhana Rijal (Tik Tok Stars) collaborated and shared their video on their social media reaching out to more than 2 millions views and counting.

- **Cross Border Music**

A cross border music was produced with the use of typical Nepali instruments fused with modern instruments in simple and spoken language to reach out to larger audiences within Nepal. A video of the song was also produced featuring actors clad in different dress to represent high risk population and general public including people of different age group. The song was aired numerous times from more than 9 National level Television Stations including state owned Nepal Television. The song was also uploaded in YouTube channel and Facebook page of WAN.



नेपाल सरकार  
स्वास्थ्य तथा जनसंख्या मन्त्रालय  
राष्ट्रिय स्वास्थ्य विद्या, बुधना तथा संचार केन्द्र

**Creative 4: Social distancing during Covid-19.**

## 2.10. Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade

### **Project 10: Sensitization On Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade To Transportation Workers Using BCC Tools**

**Funded by:** WWF Nepal

**Project Budget:** NRs 12,072.54/-

**Project Period:** January 30, 2020 to October 15, 2020

Nepal is endowed with exceptionally-rich biodiversity and provides refuge for globally-significant wildlife species, including snow leopard, red panda, brown bear, musk deer, wild ass, rhino, tiger, Asian Elephant, dolphin, gharial, etc. Similarly, Nepal is a repository of medicinal and aromatic (MAPS) plants, and other commercially valuable flora as well.

However, the biodiversity in Nepal is under immense threats. Key wildlife populations, including rhino, tiger, snow leopard, musk deer, red panda and other protected species are still threatened by poaching and illegal trade of their body parts. Huge number of different MAPS and other commercially-valuable plant species are extracted illegally and traded. Several seizures of wildlife parts such as skin and bones of tiger, leopard and snow leopard; plants and their bi-products; and arrest of poachers and illegal traders in these landscapes imply that Nepal is used as a major hub and transit country by organized wildlife poachers and illegal wildlife traders.

The Environment Investigation Agency (EIA) reports that Nepal is used as a transit point for illicit trade of wildlife parts and derivatives. Commodities such as shahtoosh, fur, musk pods, bear bile, tiger skin and bones, ivory, rhino horn, leopard parts and live animals (turtles, birds), etc. are mostly traded off through Nepal.

According to Trade Record Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC), the wildlife trade-monitoring network, transportation and logistics businesses such as passenger and cargo airlines, shipping companies, express couriers and freight forwarding companies are becoming increasingly vulnerable to exploitation by illegal wildlife traffickers. In Nepal, it has been detected that vehicle, air and by foot have been used for illegal wildlife trade in and across the border. Especially, there are porous borders with India in East, West and South and difficult terrain in the North with China. Because of this borders' connectivity, Nepal is, all the time, vulnerable country to be used as transit point or trade route for illegal wildlife trade. The highways that connect to China are vulnerable for the same. The seizures/arrest reports verified the statement.

Thus, transportation workers and other logistics business workers such as lorry workers, truck workers, and cargo workers need to be sensitized on illegal wildlife parts trade. For this, the transportation workers that ply the public vehicles in the Highways have been sensitized on conventional methods. But to impact the target group in an effective way, a research was

completed in 2019 by WWF Nepal, Hariyo Ban Program which suggested the methods that could be useful in sensitizing transportation sectors as well as general people on combating wildlife crime effectively. The research provided some recommendations about the best appropriate methods that could be adopted in sensitizing transportation sectors and relevant stakeholders in the highway linking south and north. In 2020, WWF Nepal commissioned MITRA Samaj with the project “*Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade to Transportation Workers Using BCC Tools*” to implement the BCC campaigns and tools.

### Activities

- The project team members ventured out for a scouting trip from February 26 to March 3, 2020 to identify appropriate intervention sites. It all started with a series of consultation meetings with the key stakeholders such as concerned transport associations, relevant local government bodies and conservation partners primarily to garner their ownership and support for the project intervention. This trip provided much-needed insights to the project team for identifying key stakeholders and best BCC strategy and tools. The trip also helped the team to validate the fact that the BCC materials used in the earlier campaign could still be the most effective medium to reach out to the target group—transport workers.
- In consultation with the key stakeholders, the team decided to add a key chain with messages to its portfolio of BCC materials which comprised of reflective stickers of various sizes and blue book covers with important messages. These materials were chosen as the most effective materials for reaching out the drivers and conductors as these items would remain with them on a day-to-day basis since these items had utility value for them.
- In the course of reaching out to the target group directly, SMS containing approved messages for increased awareness on legal provisions of illegal wildlife trade were sent out to more than 8,000 phone numbers collected by the team from various transport associations and check posts during the scouting visit.
- *As per the feedback received from the key stakeholders, the campaign drastically increased the level of awareness of illegal wildlife trade among the transport workers. And due to the nature of the BCC materials used by the campaign, it is believed that the campaign will continue to have impact for a sustained period of time.*

**BCC Tool 1:**  
A sample of key ring with  
the messages on illegal  
wildlife trade engrossed on  
it.



**BCC Tool 2:**  
A sample of sticker with  
the messages on illegal  
wildlife trade engrossed  
on it.



**BCC Tool 5:**  
A sample of blue book  
cover with the messages  
on illegal wildlife trade  
engrossed on it.



## 2.11. Menstrual Hygiene Management

### Project 11: Menstrual Hygiene Management For Community Women

**Funded by:** Saral Designs Pvt. Ltd

**Project Budget:** NRs 9,808,800/-

**Project Period:** July 2019 to June 2021

#### Project Background

In Nepal, only 15% menstruating women use sanitary pads regularly, while the remaining use unhygienic menstrual products. Existing evidence reveals that majority of adolescent girls in Nepal, lack knowledge on menstrual physiology. This is a common problem prevalent in several developing countries and there have been reported cases, where improper menstrual hygiene has led to reproductive tract infections, tetanus and even death. Although, many organizations are working on menstrual hygiene, the challenge around accessibility and affordability still exists. Like most of the developing countries with small population, the current market size for sanitary pad in Nepal is ~10 million. Hence, multinational brands are not incentivized to set-up their large-scale manufacturing units. Except for two local brands (Safety and Padluxe), all multinational brands are imported from India, thereby high-quality pads are unaffordable. Due to inadequate scale and poor quality of pads using manual/semi-automatic machines from India, local village level production models have not worked in Nepal.

#### Scope of the project

The project intends in creating MHM (Menstrual Hygiene Management) awareness and last mile access of sanitary pads of mutual interest to Saral Designs, Millennium Alliance and MITRA Samaj and the associated strategies and business model.

#### Project goal

To solve the challenges of menstrual hygiene in Nepal, the project aims at starting a sustainable and comprehensive model for decentralized production, distribution and menstrual education in 4municipalities in Kathmandu Valley (Dakshinkali, Godavari, Shankharapur and Tarkeshwor).

#### Project Description

The project was executed with the signing of the MoU on 16th June, 2019 by Saral Designs and MITRA Samaj. The project started with the implementation of pilot phase until December 2019. In this phase, MITRA Samaj started by understanding and learning the community need and piloting different education sharing techniques. In addition, 500 menstruating girls/women were trained on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) and 30 Sales Outreach Agents (SoAs) were recruited.

Following the pilot phase, MITRA Samaj with help from Saral Designs will set up a machine for production of sanitary napkins. The feedback gathered from the pilot will serve as the basis for product design, communication and distribution model for the project.

At the start of the project, it had targeted to reach 38,000 girls and women through MHM orientation and recruit 250 SoAs for door-to-door distribution of sanitary pads in the selected 4 intervention areas. As the COVID-19 pandemic hit hard across the globe and decrease in the overall fund, in consultation with Saral Designs the project targets were revised and a new modality was devised and approved.

The approved new target for the project is 15,775 and the recruited Field Coordinators to conduct orientations in the field (Schools and communities) and would also sell the pads in schools, community and also shops during the time in the field.

**Table: Reach through orientation sessions**

Municipality	Total Reach		Total achieved	
	Target	Schools	Community	Schools and Community
<b>Dakshinkali</b>	1822	960	885	1845
<b>Godawari</b>	5873	3323	2772	6095
<b>Shankarapur</b>	1900	1127	830	1957
<b>Tarkeshwor</b>	6180	3808	2436	6244
<b>Total</b>	<b>15775</b>	<b>9218</b>	<b>6923</b>	<b>16141</b>



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