

**CEPPS**  
**Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening**



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**CEPPS Quarterly Report: July 1, 2012 to September 30, 2012**

**NEPAL: Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes**  
**USAID Associate Cooperative Agreement No. AID-367-LA-10-00001, under the Leader**  
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**IFES: Total budget: \$9,478,000 Expenses to date: \$3,130,984**

**NDI: Total budget: \$14,422,000 Expenses to date: \$4,496,687**

**Total budget: \$23,900,000 Expenses to date: \$7,627,671**

This cover memorandum accompanies the detailed reports submitted by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) of the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for the “Nepal: Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes” program:

**I. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES**

Nepal is undergoing a critical and historic period of political transition. The completion of the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections in April 2008 marked the beginning of the country’s course in drafting a new constitution and solidifying peace after a decade-long civil war. Major political stakeholders anticipate that the drafting process will lay out a new federal government structure more representative than the current centralized system.

However, the country’s political environment has become increasingly unstable and the constitution drafting process has been slow. The poor performance of political parties and the lack of consensus within parliament have fed the loss of public confidence in multi-party politics. Nepalis have characterized parties as being disconnected from citizen concerns outside of Kathmandu, unable to deliver on electoral campaign promises, and beset with corruption and opaque internal processes. In the CA, which acts as an interim parliament, negotiations of political arrangements have been difficult both in the aftermath of a socially and politically destabilizing civil war. In addition, nearly a third of all members are new to elected office and lack the knowledge, skills and resources to fulfill their mandates. Civic engagement within the political process is uneven, and the culture of monitoring and holding political leaders accountable is underdeveloped.

The politics of this reporting period have been dominated by the failure to promulgate a draft constitution by the May 27 deadline. The remaining differences on the federalist structure appeared to be resolvable within a relatively short period of time, even though whatever agreement had emerged from party leaderships was almost certain to be unacceptable to one or other of the activist groups promoting incompatible forms of federalism and protesting in different ways and lengths of time since early April to May 27. Shortly before midnight on May 27, PM Bhattarai unilaterally dissolved the CA and called for fresh CA elections for November 22 2012, surprising the entire country. Effective public participation in the election will be critical in determining the government that is formed in its wake and the future of country's political stability.

After the dissolution of the CA/Parliament, the timing of elections to choose representatives to a successor legislature is uncertain. The legitimacy of such institutions will be critical in managing tensions associated with diverse ethnicities, castes, and political groupings in Nepali society. This underscores the importance of an electoral process that is publicly viewed as credible and that involves the meaningful participation of voters and citizens. Effective public participation in these processes will be critical in determining the legitimacy of the new constitution, the government that is formed in its wake, and the future of country's political stability.

The CEPPS partners have identified the following challenges, organized by program component that will be addressed through this program:

#### Promote and Strengthen Broader Political Processes

- Organizational weaknesses and the poor governance record of Nepali political parties have led to a loss of public confidence in a multiparty system of democracy.
- Political parties lack internal democratic practices that encourage local party branches and members, including women youth and marginalized groups, to participate in the development of positions on policy issues.
- Political parties lack organized and transparent resource mobilization, and have difficulties in membership recruitment and retention.
- Political parties lack the institutional ability to formulate policy solutions and engage constituents and non-governmental stakeholders in public policy discussions.
- Organizational weaknesses have contributed to the parties' poor electoral preparation and performance. The lack of understanding of citizen concerns and priorities have resulted in party platforms and campaign strategies that were neither relevant nor compelling.
- In preparing for previous elections, candidate selection processes were not transparent, and candidates were not fully aware of their respective parties' policy positions.
- Political parties lack the capacity to plan and organize effective electoral campaigns, and are short on technical and practical resources to conduct campaigns in a competitive political environment.
- There is an underdeveloped culture within civil society and the media of monitoring the activities of political parties.

#### Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants

- While the CA election of 2008 was praised a credible electoral process and well managed by the ECN, as expected in the first post-conflict election in a country with as many challenges as Nepal, there were shortcomings and irregularities in the electoral process (voter registration

process, limitations of the voter education program, lack of a clear election disputes resolution mechanism).

- In an ongoing spirit of collaboration and transparency, in the post-election period, the ECN undertook a series of post-election evaluations with stakeholders at a national and local level. During the coming years, it will be crucial to maintain the ECN's credibility and build on its institutional capacity to remain a strong pillar in Nepal's ongoing march from war to peace and from a monarchy to a Federal Democratic Republic.
- Although the 2008 general elections were mostly free of violence and administered without widespread problems, shortcomings in Nepal's election process persist, including: problems with the voter list and registration process; interference from some election and government officials; abuse of state resources for campaign purposes; and an inadequate process to resolve election complaints.
- Given the performance of civil society during previous elections, domestic monitoring groups and the media could play a stronger role in observing the elections and fostering greater transparency and fairness in the electoral process.

#### Improve the democratic functioning of the Constituent Assembly (CA)/Parliament

- Previous parliaments and the current Constituent Assembly have not been effective in their outreach and representation functions.
- There is a shortage of CA members that with the technical expertise to draft and review proposed legislation.
- With the promulgation of the new constitution and the anticipated shift to a federal system of government, it is likely that many newly elected members will have little or no experience in serving as elected representatives.
- Key bodies within parliament institutions are understaffed and under-resourced. The Parliament Secretariat lacks adequate technical knowledge and material resources to effectively support the legislative process.
- The CA/Parliament conducts few committee hearings and does not have a formalized public consultation process. Little interaction exists between members of the CA/Parliament and their constituents, and this lack of interface breeds gaps in government responsiveness to citizen needs, citizen inclusion in public policy development and the accountability of officials and their use of public resources.
- There is little public information on the latest developments in the constitutional development process and the work of the legislature.

## **II. OBJECTIVES**

The program aims to strengthen political parties, electoral and legislative processes in Nepal. To this end, IFES and NDI would be working to achieve the following specific objectives:

### **IFES**

- Ensure that Nepal develops a body of legislation on the electoral process that is comprehensive, coherent and consistent; which conforms to international standards and suits the socio-economic context and new political realities of Nepal.
- Improve the capacity of the ECN to manage future elections and consolidate its mandate and performance through the provision of high level technical assistance in the legal, management and technical aspects of elections and long-term professional development capacity building

- Expand and improve the delivery of voter education by working with the ECN and selected non-governmental organizations to plan, develop, and implement effective voter education programs, with a focus on capacity building, in order to enhance the electorate’s understanding of democratic practices and rights, and increase participation in the electoral process.
- Closely monitor, analyze and report on the overall electoral process with a focus on the Election Commission’s internal activities and external interaction with other electoral stakeholders.
- Provide a facility that can address unforeseen windows of opportunity that may arise in Nepal’s unpredictable post-conflict political and electoral environment, in order to achieve immediate beneficial results in line with the program objectives.

## NDI

- Promote and strengthen democratic political processes through political party development assistance.  
Sub-Objective 1.A: Improve democratic political party organizational structures and operations  
Sub-Objective 1.B: Enhance the electoral competitiveness of political parties
- Strengthen the capacity of citizen oversight of the electoral process.  
Sub-Objective 2.A: Enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor elections  
Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthen the capacity of media to report on the electoral process
- Support the institutional strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/ Parliament and improve its capacity to address constituent needs.  
Sub-Objective 3.A: Strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the legislature  
Sub-Objective 3.B: Increase communication between representatives and their constituents

## III. ACTIVITIES

### A. Promote and Strengthen Democratic Political Processes through Political Party Development Assistance

#### *Effective Political Party Organizing and Outreach*

From July 1 to 5, NDI concluded the second phase of its Future Leadership Academy (FLA-II) in Katmandu. The five-day workshop for young political leaders, from 18 to 35 years old, focused on effective communication, candidate debates, political campaigns and team building. Participants—the same who completed FLA-I in early June—represented nine political parties and 31 districts, including 18 districts from the West, Mid-West and Western Regions. A total of 48 participants, of whom 25 were women, graduated from the Academy.

From August 6 to 8, the Institute conducted a three-day workshop on political parties and election campaign procedures in Kathmandu. A total of 34 political party leaders, including 10 women, representing nine political parties participated in the three-day workshop.

NDI conducted a three-day regional workshop on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures in Parsa and Kaski districts from August 12-14 and August 16-18, respectively. A total of 76 political party leaders, mostly district presidents and secretaries, participated in both events.

From June 26 to July 2, the Inter Party Women’s Alliance (IPWA) established the IPWA district sub-committee in Rolpa, followed by a three-day capacity building program for women activists. With the IPWA district sub-committee in Rolpa, IPWA have established 15 district sub-committees under this current grant.

From September 10-14, NDI conducted the second phase of the training-of-trainers (ToT) workshop in Kathmandu for 54 participants, 17 women, from 10 political parties.<sup>1</sup> These master trainers represented 29 districts, including 13 districts of the West, Mid-West and Far-West regions. Some of these participants previously received voter registration training from NDI or participated in ToT phase one.

## **B. Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants**

### *Technical Assistance to the ECN in the Legal, Management and Technical Aspects of Elections*

During this quarter, IFES has continued to provide technical and capacity building support on legal reform to the ECN and other stakeholders. In addition to a continuing focus on systems of representation, IFES has particularly focused on advising the ECN on practical constitutional and legal changes needed in order to hold an election following the dissolution of the CA, developing a clear, comprehensive legal framework for voter registration, and guiding further revisions to the draft political party law.

IFES’ USAID and Norwegian government funded law reform programs have closely coordinated their activities during this past quarter, each taking the lead on different aspects of the legal reform initiative. More progress in drafting has been made in this quarter compared to past quarters due to this being assigned priority within the ECN’s legal department.

IFES has continued to use its continuous access to key political decision makers, CSO leaders and ECN Commissioners and staff to improve their understanding of effective methods for developing electoral law; international good practice in electoral law; the effects of systems of representation for minority groups and remote areas; and required changes to current legal frameworks to enable an election to be held.

### *Strengthen ECN’s Electoral Management Capacity*

IFES’ support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of: the voter registration activities including voter roll display, claims and objections and re-opening of voter registration program for missed voters in two remaining districts - Kapilvastu and Banke; voter roll data re-verification process in 75 districts; and further development of the ECN’s continuous voter registration (CVR) processes.

IFES also continued to monitor the progress of voter register data re-verification. By end quarter ECN has largely completed the identification and correction of errors in allocation of wards to voters, using procedures based on a joint draft from UNDP ESP. IFES has also been providing advice to ECN on the content and layout of a new voter registration application form, in an attempt to make it more relevant and simpler than the ECN’s draft. While the ECN has now simplified the design, discussions on the joint IFES/UNDP ESP advice were continuing with ECN as at end-quarter.

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<sup>1</sup> UCPN-M, CPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMDP, MJF-N, MJFN-D, SP and CPN-ML

### *Capacity Building*

During this quarter, IFES provided logistics coordination and materials development and facilitation support for the UNDP ESP funded Gender and Election BRIDGE workshop for media and conducted a BRIDGE tutorial session on electoral systems. IFES continues to assess and evaluate outcomes of BRIDGE workshops in Nepal through its pre-post survey tests, and later follow up with workshop participants.

IFES played a significant role in shaping ECN's annual review and planning workshops, and its thinking on developing a new 5 year strategic plan. IFES guidance on workshop agendas and content, training manuals and products, and website is developing the capacities of the ECN's training and voter education teams, IT team and EEIC library staff. IFES is preparing to support a four-member ECN delegation team to attend a study trip to the 2012 US election. On a daily basis IFES' in house team at ECN - the Training Advisor (TA), Public Information Specialist (PIS) and Library Development Consultant (LDC) engage in capacity building support for their ECN counterparts.

IFES played a significant role in shaping ECN's annual review and planning workshops, and its thinking on developing a new 5 year strategic plan. IFES guidance on workshop agendas and content, training manuals and products, and website is developing the capacities of the ECN's training and voter education teams, IT team and EEIC library staff. IFES is preparing to support a four-member ECN delegation team to attend a study trip to the 2012 US election. On a daily basis IFES' in house team at ECN - the Training Advisor (TA), Public Information Specialist (PIS) and Library Development Consultant (LDC) engage in capacity building support for their ECN counterparts.

### *Expand and Improve Delivery of Voter Education*

IFES continues to provide ongoing and daily capacity building support in ECN and EEIC voter education efforts. IFES' work on voter education this quarter has supported the ECN in the design of new outreach products including motivational voter registration TV PSA and radio promotional *Lok Dohari* song. IFES worked with the ECN to support the implementation of national and regional workshops and finalize the materials for training of 251 trainers/electoral educators from ECN HQ and District Election Offices, and Department of Education staff. IFES worked with EEIC to conduct public outreach events. Capacity development for the ECN website has progressed slowly, due to ECN inactivity.

During this quarter IFES has continued to support the redevelopment of the ECN's website and the design and production of printed and audio visual information materials including a TV PSA and radio promotional song, leaflets, banners and greeting cards used by EEIC and IFES' five CSO sub grantees to support the ECN's continuous voter registration program. IFES also supported the production of 2000 trainers' manuals and 2000 DVDs for the ECN's cascaded training program for electoral educators.

IFES five sub awardees completed a few remaining activities (mainly during July) and used no-cost extensions to their awards from end July to end September to produce their annual reports and plans for CSO activities post September. All five CSO sub-grantees completed all their scheduled activities to end September. There was continued close liaison by CSOs with their counterparts in District Election Offices.

## C. Support the Institutional Strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/Parliament and Improve its Capacity to Address Constituent Needs

### *Strengthening the Capacity of the Parliamentary Secretariat*

NDI subgrantee, The Asia Foundation (TAF), has continued to work with the Parliament Secretariat to implement the Parliament Secretariat Library Improvement Plan, which includes the purchase of books, equipping the library with archiving equipment, and training and staffing.

### *Promoting Dialogue between Elected Members and Their Constituencies*

With the dissolution of the parliament, many of the planned activities under this sub-objective, such as Community Dialogues and Citizen Forums, have moved under objective one.

### *Supporting Greater Public Awareness and Engagement in the Work of Parliament*

TAF continued to partner with the Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF) to convene a broad coalition of five specific interest groups, which include Dalit, Madheshi, women, youth and *Janajati*, to conduct legislative audits. The bills audited this quarter include: Bill on Amendment of Nepal Education Act; Bill on Guaranteeing Employment to Eradicate Poverty; Bill to Control Torture or any other Cruel, Inhuman or Humiliating Treatment. TAF also continued working with its three partners – Samudayak Sarathi (SS), Rural Community Development Service Council (RCDS), and WomenAct (WA) – to conduct more than 40 townhall meetings.

## IV. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE INDICATORS

Foreign Assistance Indicators	IFES	NDI	Quarter Total	Total up to previous Quarter	Grand Total
Number of individuals who received USG-assisted political party training.	N/A	445	445	1,918	2,363
Number of domestic election observers trained with USG assistance.	N/A	0	0	0	0
Number of laws or amendments to ensure credible elections drafted with USG technical assistance	0 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	0	0	0
Number of USG-assisted public sessions held regarding proposed changes to the country's legal framework	0 <sup>3</sup>	N/A	0	8	8
Number of local CSOs strengthened that promote electoral reform and/or improvements in the electoral system.	0 <sup>4</sup>	N/A	18	47	65
Number of electoral administration procedures and systems strengthened with USG assistance.	2 <sup>5</sup>	N/A	2	7	9

<sup>2</sup> No activity this quarter.

<sup>3</sup> No activity this quarter.

<sup>4</sup> No activity this quarter.

<sup>5</sup> Technical support provided for developing procedures/methodologies for ECN's Annual Review workshop and EEIC library management.

Number of electoral officials trained with USG assistance	108 <sup>6</sup>	N/A	108	88,641	88,749
Number of national legislators and national legislative staff attending USG sponsored training or educational events.	N/A	11	11	385	396
Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which national legislators and members of the public interact.	N/A	0	0	29	29

## V. EVALUATION

### Success Stories

IFES' commitment to high quality advice and products continues to gain respect from the ECN. IFES' in-house staff supporting the ECN's training, public outreach and knowledge management activities are relied upon by ECN to advise and build their capacities in electoral polices, planning training and education/information work and are seen as highly reliable, committed and skilled contributors to the ECN's goals. ECN HQ as well as DEOs appears now to be fully supportive of the value of IFES CSO sub awardees to the ECN's public outreach program and IFES' relationships with ECN. However, in some respects, IFES may need to work hard to maintain its current excellent relationship.

The program of motivational and educational work in marginalized communities by IFES' five sub-awardees continues to be an innovative, successful model for engaging under represented populations in the electoral process, in the limited areas in which it has operated. The links built between local CSOs and District Election Offices have proven to be a stable platform for institutional/civil society cooperation. The program is increasingly being seen by ECN senior management as a necessary extension of their activities – both in extending the reach of voter education, making their tasks easier as they are dealing with a broader informed public, and in providing information that allows better targeting of ECN activities.

The ECN's Electoral Education and Information Center is being practically used by ECN as a focal point from which to commence national wide motivational and educational activity. IFES support for the training of electoral educator trainers this past quarter will be extended to district level by ECN in the coming quarter, resulting in a pool of around 1700 trained voter educators available, ECN finding permitting, for school and community based voter education nation-wide.

NDI provided financial and technical assistance to the Inter Party Women's Alliance (IPWA), which established district subcommittees in 15 districts. Each district subcommittee formation was followed by a three-day capacity building program. In total, 617 women activists were trained. In the months of August and September, the Institute contacted IPWA district subcommittees in the fifteen districts. A majority of the contacted district committees reported that they had successfully lobbied for funding from the District Development Committees (DDC). Each fiscal year, the government allocates funds to districts and each district is required to earmark a certain amount of the funds for women development. In the absence of an elected local government there is no proper mechanism to disburse these funds. IPWA, as an alliance of women political activists, have established themselves as a strong political force in their districts.

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<sup>6</sup> Participants of EEIC Library Management Training, MToT for Electoral Education Resource Person Development and RTOT for Electoral Education Resource Person Development.

The funding that the IPWA subcommittees across Nepal have received from local government offices and entities have been utilized for projects such as building women shelters in Baitadi in the Far-West and conducting capacity building trainings in village development committees in Surkhet in the Mid-West. In the district of Tehrathum, the IPWA district subcommittee is coordinating with the central IPWA board members to provide legal services for 22 year-old Srijana Limbu, whose father refused to acknowledge her as his daughter. Due to his refusal, she has been unable to obtain a citizenship card. When the district court rejected her plea for justice, IPWA Tehrathum sought the help of its central board members, which are comprised of senior leaders and well known political figures, many of whom are former parliamentarians. In another example, in the district of Baitadi, when 26 year-old Kalsa Parki was sold by her husband in trafficking and was banished by her mother in-law, the IPWA Baitadi district subcommittee stepped in to support her. With the intervention of IPWA members, Kalsa has returned to her village and is beginning a new chapter in her life. These examples illustrate how IPWA has effectively established itself as a vehicle for women's rights and empowerment.

During this quarter, after the completion of the national and district level workshops on campaign seminars, the Madheshi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal (MJF-N) independently conducted two-day residential trainings on political parties and election campaign procedures in five districts: Rupandhei, Kapilbastu, Parsa, Bara and Rautahat. A total of 384 party activists were trained. All the trainings were facilitated by Arjun Thapa, an Inter Party Alliance (IPA) member with support from the party president. These replicate trainings, conducted at the party's own initiative, demonstrate the utility and value that parties associate with NDI's ToT trainings and modules.

TAF has been working with the Nepal Investment Board for the past several months in areas ranging from the drafting of the Board's working guidelines (particularly in hydropower and infrastructure sectors) to developing the Board's website. TAF and the Board have mutual interests: the Board wants to seek community feedback on their mandate to bring foreign direction investment; TAF wants to encourage community involvement in local development and has previously worked on rapid hydropower development in Nepal. The Foundation offered to include the topic of Nepal's investment climate in the townhall meetings being conducted under this program, and the Board agreed to closely coordinate with TAF on the activity, including serving as resource persons in select districts. The Board intends to work closely with the communities in future investments in Nepal, and this round of townhall meetings will help them understand better the public sentiment and identify ways to increase investment in Nepal while ensuring that potential investors fold local communities into a more equitable partnership.

### Lessons Learned

With the approaching retirement of all three Election Commissioners, and no current mechanism available for them to be replaced or their terms of office extended, the ECN may be approaching a period of instability or at least lack of guiding vision. If there is no independent leadership of the ECN, it may find it hard to maintain its past stance of needing the electoral legal framework in place 120 days before a proposed election date (180 days if EVMs are to be used) for it to agree to conduct an election – which would affect the quality of the election. It may also be more susceptible to government and general political pressure.

The voter register data re-verification in DEOs has not identified as many address errors as could have been expected from IFES pilot testing, though results appear to show that the errors are highly

concentrated in specific VDCs rather than evenly spread – perhaps correlated to individual staff locations. Even so, more than 250,000 errors have so far been identified. There are indications that in some cases ‘bulk corrections’ have been made without reference to original enumeration form data – such corrections may or may not be ‘correct’. Potential errors in out-of- district registrations remain a concern, with ECN so far content to allow DEOs to review these without specific instructions that deal with the different character of out of district registration.

During this quarter, Institute staff contacted the fifteen IPWA district sub-committees formed during the current program to determine if they were functioning. One of the three criteria the Institute has used to determine if an IPWA district sub-committee is functioning is whether there was annual rotation of the district board members - Chair, Vice Chair, Joint Secretary and Treasurer. In most cases, IPWA district sub-committees have failed to meet this clause and some of the reasons cited included the following: 1) the existing board members are working exceptionally well, so there is no valid reason to change the board; 2) recent split in the UCPN-M has disrupted party structure at the district level; 3) an existing board member is on maternity leave; and 4) conflict between IPWA members, as every member wants to be the Chair.

However, labeling these subcommittees as non-functioning because they do not meet the rotation clause would disregard IPWA important work in the districts. A majority of these district sub-committees play a major role in their community, by giving a collective voice to victimized women against accusations of witchcraft, domestic violence and sexual abuse. Therefore, the Institute will revise this tool so that it does not overlook the very substantial work that IPWA continues to do in the districts because of non-compliance with officer rotation.

### Challenges

This has been a challenging last quarter, with uncertainty about future political and electoral prospects making planning, particularly in support of a body such as ECN, a frustrating process. Once it became clear that there would be no election on November 22, 2012, and with total uncertainty about any future election date, IFES has focused on longer term, non-election date dependent activities.

The ECN has now had a restructure of its secretariat accepted, resulting in a strengthening of the administrative structure for its IT operations. However this has yet to be translated into any practical effects, with voter register IT operations still being reliant on a small number of internationally funded local and international contractors. The ECN has yet to digest all the components of the continuous voter registration system and be attitudinally and operationally ready to produce voter lists of sufficient quality for election purposes. Until the ECN can achieve this, it would seem unwise to attempt to implement another nationwide technology based system, such as the introduction of EVMs in all polling stations. IFES is continuing to advise the ECN against doing this at this time, and for the ECN to be careful in its ultimate choice of EVM, so that its chosen EVM ensures public and political confidence in the security and transparency of voting.”

This quarter, the Institute continued to receive information on replicate trainings conducted by political parties in the districts. In earlier quarterly reports, the Institute explained that information on these replicate trainings from major political parties - such as the NC, CPN-UML and UCPN-M - had not been forthcoming. However, the CPN-UML has now submitted information on its district replicate trainings. The Institute learned that the CPN-UML had been conducting district level trainings all along, utilizing either the skills of NDI-trained master trainers or by replicating one or

more of the Institute's modules. Lack of communication between district offices and the central office in Kathmandu led to information not being relayed to NDI, even though political parties have engaged in such training activities. To address this issue and to establish a system whereby there is two-way communication between party offices in Kathmandu and in the districts, NDI has offered support to political party to create their own internship program. Interns would be solely responsible for collecting information on any replicate trainings parties conduct in the district. The Institute has developed a set of criteria for intern selection, such as preference to youth between the ages of 18-35, women and student candidates, and FLA participants if available.

The failure of the CA to produce a new constitution and its subsequent dissolution has meant that the country is now functioning without a legislative body. While there has been some work advanced with the Secretariat, the lack of a constitution has restricted other activities. For example, the planned activity to align current legislation with the new constitution, developing the rules of procedure for the new parliament and the subsequent compliance monitoring will have to be postponed for the time being. However, in anticipation of a new legislative body, TAF is currently investigating the technical reasons behind the previous failure, including the dual role of the CA and legislative body and the failure of parties to agree principally on the major issues. This analysis will serve as the basis for future discussion and in drafting of the new rules of procedure so that the next legislative body is not designed to fail yet again.

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

### **Promote and strengthen democratic political processes through political party development assistance**

- NDI will support political parties to conduct district level trainings replicating one or more of NDI modules.
- NDI, in coordination with its local partner NGOs, will finalize mapping action plans for nine districts and conduct follow-up activities to achieve district specific targets set during community dialogues.
- NDI will conduct issue-based meetings with national stakeholders and relevant ministries to enable former parliamentarians to lobby relevant ministries on district-specific issues such as the allocation of budgets for the implementation of district-level activities.
- NDI will conduct at least one seminar or capacity building event for NGPG members.
- NDI will conduct a district-level Citizen's Open Forum in Baglung district.

### **Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants**

- Support the ECN in any required further analyses, recommendations or drafts for a constitutional/legal framework to conduct an election before a new constitution is promulgated.
- Support the ECN to finalize review of amalgamated and synchronized draft segments of the new post-constitution electoral law, including incorporation of the voter registration framework.

- Continue to support ECN in the quality assurance of all voter register data, including out of district registration data, and monitor voter register data quality.
- Review data from the audit of the voter register and advise ECN on strategies to improve the register.
- Provide further advice to ECN in the design of new data capture forms for voter registration.
- Support the ECN with the assessment, development and planning of balloting facilities for the next election, whether by EVM, paper ballot or a mix of these.
- Support the ECN to analyze data collected as part of its 2012 Annual Review process.
- Support the ECN BRIDGE team to develop and implement a 10-day BRIDGE training of facilitators workshop.
- Work with the ECN BRIDGE team to identify and translate content for an Elections and Technology BRIDGE workshop now scheduled for first quarter 2013.
- Support a four-member ECN delegation team to attend a study tour to Washington DC for the 2012 U.S. Election.
- Continue to provide technical, capacity building and material support to the ECN's voter education for voter registration, focusing on support for continuous voter registration.
- Continue the implementation and monitoring of sub-grants with five CSOs to facilitate the delivery of voter education campaigns to support continuous voter registration, focusing this quarter in particular on Nepali workers returning for the holiday season.
- Train CSO sub awardees in survey implementation and data aggregation, and commence the implementation of mini surveys in up to 10 local areas.
- Commence implementation of IFES CSO sub-awardee program to develop leadership and increase electoral participation of people with disabilities.

### **Support the Institutional Strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/Parliament and Improve its Capacity to Address Constituent Needs**

- NDI will conduct issue-based meetings with national stakeholders and relevant ministries to enable former parliamentarians to lobby relevant ministries on district-specific issues such as the allocation of budgets for the implementation of district-level activities.
- NDI will conduct at least one seminar or capacity building event for NGPG members.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will begin to organize a 10-day study tour to India for the Secretariat staff.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will coordinate closely with the Secretariat to complete improving of the library, including cataloging of books (current as well as the newly acquired books), updating of library policies, and archiving of Constituent Assembly records.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will operate in accordance to the work plan created by Writing Workshop Pvt. Ltd. to finalize the communication and outreach strategy of the Secretariat.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will continue to closely work with SS, WA, RCDSC in conducting the townhall meetings on a bimonthly basis.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will continue to work closely with NCF and the interest group in identifying and auditing relevant legislation in the coming quarter. Furthermore, TAF will coordinate with New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to ensure a proper dissemination of the findings/recommendations of the interest group audits through print media.
- NDI subgrantee TAF will continue to work closely with Interface Nepal to identify relevant legislation and provide assistance in producing and broadcasting the weekly radio show.

## **International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Quarterly Report**

### **I. SUMMARY**

During this quarter, a major milestone was achieved in Nepal's peace process, with the closing of all remaining Maoist ex combatant cantonment sites and integration into the Nepal Army or retirement of all 17,074 participating and qualified former Maoist fighters. However, on the political front, since the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (CA) on May 27, 2012, the country remains in a political deadlock. The caretaker government under UCPM(M) Prime Minister Bhattarai has abandoned the announced November 22, 2012 election due to the failure of political parties and government to agree on the required constitutional and electoral amendments. The government has refused to meet the key pre-condition by opposition parties, mainly Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) for any consensus on future actions, which is for PM Bhattarai to step down and a national consensus/unity government be formed. Competing claims to lead the government, allied with disagreements on federalism and the method of resolving remaining constitutional issues, have led to inter and intra party polarization. The International Crisis Group's most recent report released during this quarter marked that Nepal's major political parties must urgently agree on a roadmap to negotiate on federalism and write the new constitution, whether by holding elections to a new Constituent Assembly (CA) or reviving the previous body.

During this quarter, IFES has continued to provide technical and capacity building support on legal reform to the ECN and other stakeholders. In addition to a continuing focus on systems of representation, IFES has particularly focused on advising the ECN on practical constitutional and legal changes needed in order to hold an election following the dissolution of the CA, developing a clear, comprehensive legal framework for voter registration, and guiding further revisions to the draft political party law.

During this period, IFES' support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of the voter registration activities including voter roll display, claims and objections and re-opening of voter registration program for missed voters in two districts - Kapilvastu and Banke and the voter roll data re-verification process in all 75 district election offices. IFES has also been working with ECN to improve the forms used for voter registration data collection, and providing advice to the ECN on assessing the use of EVMs in Nepal.

IFES maintained its lead coordination role in BRIDGE, working with the ECN and its BRIDGE partners, UNDP and International IDEA. During this quarter IFES provided logistics coordination and materials development and facilitation support for the UNDP ESP funded Gender and Election BRIDGE workshop for media and conducted a BRIDGE tutorial session on electoral systems. IFES has engaged an international expert BRIDGE accrediting facilitator for a ten-day Training the Facilitators (TtF) BRIDGE workshop, to be jointly funded with UNDP ESP. IFES continues to assess and evaluate outcomes of BRIDGE workshops in Nepal through its pre-post survey tests, and later follow up with workshop participants.

IFES played a significant role in shaping ECN's annual review and planning workshops, and its thinking on developing a new five-year strategic plan. IFES guidance on workshop agendas and content, training manuals and products, and website is developing the capacity of the ECN's training and voter education teams, IT team and EEIC library staff. IFES is preparing to support a four-

member ECN delegation team to attend a study trip to the 2012 US Election Program. On a daily basis IFES' in house team at ECN - the Training Advisor (TA), Public Information Specialist (PIS) and Library Development Consultant (LDC) engage in capacity building support for their ECN counterparts.

IFES continues to provide capacity building support in ECN and EEIC voter education efforts. IFES' work on voter education this quarter has supported the ECN in the design of new outreach products including motivational voter registration TV PSA and radio promotional *Lok Dohari* song as well as leaflets, banners and greeting cards used by EEIC and IFES' five CSO sub grantees to support the ECN's continuous voter registration program. ECN and IFES worked together to implement national and regional workshops and finalize the materials for training of 251 trainers/electoral educators from ECN HQ and District Election Offices, and Department of Education staff. IFES worked with EEIC to conduct public outreach events. IFES also has continued to support the redevelopment of the ECN's website and to support the Electoral Education and Information Center (EEIC) in nits public outreach activities. To support the ECN's cascaded training program for electoral educators, IFES produced 2000 trainers' manuals and 2000 DVDs.

Uncertainty about election prospects until end-July hindered CSO activity this quarter. IFES' five sub awardees completed remaining activities (mainly during July) and used no-cost extensions to their awards from end July to end September to produce their annual reports and plans for CSO activities post-September. All five CSO sub-grantees completed all their scheduled activities to end September. There was continued close liaison by CSOs with their counterparts in District Election Offices.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

### ***Political Updates***

During this quarter, the army integration and retirement process for Maoist ex-combatants progressed, All remaining 15 cantonment sites (out of a total of 28) were closed. Of 17,074 participating and qualified Maoist ex-combatants, 1,463 are being integrated into the Nepal Army and 15,611 took retirement - a major milestone in Nepal's peace process. However, since the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (CA) in May 27, 2012, the country remains in political deadlock. The November 22, 2012 election announced by the care-taker government (led by Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (UCPM(M)) Prime Minister Bhattarai) was abandoned due to failure to reach agreement on the required constitutional and electoral law amendments.

The President refused to pass the government's proposed election related ordinances, as they lacked political consensus. The caretaker government has disputed the President's warning that he will reject all draft ordinances without consensus backing, arguing that constitutionally he must accept ordinances presented by the caretaker government. The Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) allowed the government an additional week, after its deadline of 120 days before election day to have the election legal framework in place had not been met, before advising the government it would be unable to conduct an election on 22 November. Without political issues being resolved, an election date, no matter how administratively feasible, cannot be determined.

The continuing claim on government leadership by UCPN(M) and the insistence by the opposition parties, mainly Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist Leninist

(UML) that UCPN(M) vacate government leadership for a national consensus government before there can be any agreement on future representative bodies or elections, is causing increasing inter- and intra-party polarization. Negativity has characterized political discourse, with discussion tending to focus on who will not be prime minister, rather than the proposal of any alternatives. The International Crisis Group's most recent report released during this quarter marked that Nepal's major political parties must urgently agree on a roadmap to negotiate on federalism and write the new constitution, whether by holding elections to a new Constituent Assembly (CA) or reviving the previous body.

There have been major intra- and inter-party divisions on how the Constitution making process should proceed and on the nature of the resulting federal state. Two basic lines of thought are an "election first" line – election of a new representative body which will then have a limited time to finalize the constitution and may then become a parliament; and a "constitution first" line - either through negotiations led by party leaderships, or by a revival of the existing CA, the constitution is finalized or promulgated by the existing CA revived for this purpose, prior to an election being held. In mid-September, senior party leaders from CPN-UML, UCPN(M), NC and Madhes-based parties in the governing coalition agreed that there should first be an election, at a time determined by a new consensus government. How this consensus government could be formed is yet to be seriously discussed. The President has been meeting major political parties periodically to pressure them to form a national consensus government. The latest of many deadlines proposed for this is mid-October.

There are powerful dissenting views to these leaders' position within their own parties, particularly in UML and NC. Major parties are also internally fractured in their support for either multi-identity or single-identity federalism. In UML, disgruntled Janajati-Madhesi leaders supporting single identity federalism have made on/off attempts to form a new party, reaching out to Janajati/Madhesi members of other major parties and to fringe political parties committed to federal socialism.

All parties have focused more on consolidating alliances more than in trying to forge consensus for ending the current impasse. The Federal Democratic Republican Alliance (FDRA) has been formed by the ruling parties to back single identity federalism and includes over 20 of the total 33 political parties represented in the former CA. Around 20 political parties including CPN-Maoist (splinter party from UCPN(M)), have sided with the opposition party alliance of NC and UML. The opposition alliance has supported regular "bandhs" in attempts to force Prime Minister Bhattarai to step down.

The ECN, which had not registered any new political parties since the CA elections in 2008, registered 18 more parties, of the 33 applications received, in mid-September, and will continue to register new parties in the future. A total of 93 parties are now registered. Gyan Darshan Udas was appointed as ECN Secretary in August, after ECN Secretary Koirala and three other senior secretaries resigned in protest at the caretaker government's appointment of a more junior secretary as Chief Secretary. The terms of office of the A/g Chief Electoral Commissioner and the two other Commissioners end on 7 November 2012 and 12 January 2013 respectively. The current political impasse means there is no mechanism by which these positions can be filled.

### ***Program Objectives***

Under the Consortium of Elections and Political Strengthening (CEPPS III), IFES activities will support one of the three principal objectives as detailed by USAID: 2) Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants and the following sub-objectives:

- Strengthen democratic legal framework
- Strengthen the ECN's electoral management capacity and
- Expand and improve delivery of voter education

In support of the above, IFES will achieve the following objectives:

- To ensure that Nepal develops a body of legislation on the electoral process that is comprehensive, coherent and consistent; which conforms to international standards and suits the socio-economic context and new political realities of Nepal.
- To improve the capacity of the ECN to manage future elections and consolidate its mandate and performance through the provision of high level technical assistance in the legal, management and technical aspects of elections and long-term professional development capacity building.
- To expand and improve the delivery of voter education by working with the ECN and selected non-governmental organizations to plan, develop, and implement effective voter education programs, with a focus on capacity building, in order to enhance the electorate's understanding of democratic practices and rights, and increase participation in the electoral process.
  - To closely monitor, analyze and report on the overall electoral process with a focus on the Election Commission's internal activities and external interaction with other electoral stakeholders.
  - To provide a facility that can address unforeseen windows of opportunity that may arise in Nepal's unpredictable post-conflict political and electoral environment, in order to achieve immediate beneficial results in line with the program objectives.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### **1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework**

*Summary:* During this quarter IFES has continued to provide technical and capacity building support on legal reform to the ECN and other stakeholders. In addition to a continuing focus on systems of representation, IFES has particularly focused on advising the ECN on practical constitutional and legal changes needed in order to hold an election following the dissolution of the CA, developing a clear, comprehensive legal framework for voter registration, and guiding further revisions to the draft political party law.

##### *Activity 1.1 – Technical Assistance*

IFES' USAID and Norwegian government funded law reform programs have closely coordinated their activities during this past quarter, each taking the lead on different aspects of the legal reform initiative. More progress in drafting has been made in this quarter compared to past quarters due to this being assigned priority within the ECN's legal department. IFES Country Director and IFES' sub-contractor under the Norwegian-funded program, Quality AS, have worked very closely in assisting the ECN to provide advice to the government on the constitutional and legal changes required for an election to be held following the dissolution of the CA. IFES advised the ECN on issues in ECN's initial analysis of the amendments required, related to issues such as redistricting, party vote thresholds, clarification of quota requirements, that required further consideration. In the main, IFES advice was accepted in the ECN's final submission to the government.

IFES Country Director and USAID-funded staff worked closely with the ECN's legal department and the contract drafter engaged under IFES Norwegian-funded program on the new draft legal framework for voter registration. During this period eight iterations of the draft law were produced by the drafters and reviewed by ECN with IFES assistance. As at end quarter a near-comprehensive draft framework for voter registration - awaiting ECN policy decisions on out of country registration and temporary voter registers - was being incorporated into the discussion draft of the new electoral law.

IFES Norwegian government funded program took the lead this quarter on political party law and systems of representation issues. Following further discussions in an inter- departmental committee, at end-quarter the ECN with IFES advice is revising the discussion draft of the political party law. Under IFES' Norwegian funded program, regular meetings were held with major and minor party leaders, and civil society organisations representing minority groups, on representational quotas and electoral systems.

*Results:* Improved ECN advice to government on legal amendments required to hold an election in current circumstances. Another revised draft of the political party law. Further IFES advice on appropriate electoral systems and simplified electoral quotas provided. Voter registration legal framework draft significantly refined and incorporated into draft election law.

### *Activity 1.2 – Capacity Building*

*Summary:* As in past quarters, IFES has continued to use its continuous access to key political decision makers, CSO leaders and ECN Commissioners and staff to improve their understanding of effective methods for developing electoral law; international good practice in electoral law; the effects of systems of representation for minority groups and remote areas; and required changes to current legal frameworks to enable an election to be held.

Through to end July, IFES continued to work with ECN secretariat staff and Commissioners to enhance their understanding of some more complex issues that needed to be carefully handled in any legal amendments for a fresh election if the election were to run effectively. These included the use of census data in districting, the difficulties of imposing vote thresholds in first past the post elections, practical potential changes to campaign finance regulation, and the legal language necessary to underpin current quota requirements in Nepal

One noticeable impact of IFES capacity building work this quarter has been the improvement in the drafting of the voter registration section of the electoral law. Issues which earlier had not been fully comprehended in the drafting - such as the operation of continuous voter registration systems, residence, temporary voting rights - by the last iteration of the draft, these had been effectively and practically legally defined.

On July 6, IFES Norwegian government funded consultant presented a paper to the Social Science Baha on 'Affirmative Action and Power Sharing Arrangements: Possible Electoral Arrangements for Nepal'. From 19-28 August IFES' Norwegian government funded program arranged a trip to Norway for an ECN delegation, to study electoral law development methods, minority electoral rights, and legal frameworks for issues such as electoral systems, electoral management, candidacy and intra party democracy. During the study tour the delegation met with experts and political party leaders, and visited the Norwegian Parliament and Oslo City Council.

*Results:* Enhanced ECN knowledge of practical impacts of its proposed amendments to the existing election law to enable an election to be held. Enhanced ECN knowledge of international practices in electoral law development and electoral law standards. Increase in knowledge of the ECN's legal department of practical legal frameworks for continuous voter registration.

## **2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN**

### *Activity 2.1 – Technical Assistance*

*Summary:* IFES' support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of: the voter registration activities including voter roll display, claims and objections and re-opening of voter registration program for missed voters in two remaining districts - Kapilvastu and Banke; voter roll data re-verification process in 75 districts; and further development of the ECN's continuous voter registration (CVR) processes.

IFES continued to support the ECN in preparing and conducting the display of voter rolls and registration of 'missed' voters and the lodging of claims and objections by voters in two remaining districts - Kapilvastu and Banke. IFES continued to provide required technical assistance for producing public outreach messages and conducting interaction programs for stakeholders in the two districts. During the quarter voter registration has remained open at all District Election Offices (DEOs) and selected District and Area Administration Offices. Latest ECN data (as at 9 August 2012) shows 10.8 million people registered, estimated at 77% of those in country and eligible to register.

During the July-August period IFES also continued to monitor the progress of voter register data re-verification. By end quarter ECN has largely completed the identification and correction of errors in allocation of wards to voters, using procedures based on a joint draft from UNDP ESP. IFES monitored the correction of ward addresses process in eight DEOs including Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Kathmandu and found around 1% of total registrations had an incorrect ward of residence recorded. Nationally, the number of errors corrected was significantly lower than would have been expected from IFES' pilot testing. During IFES monitoring it was learned that DEOs had also been making bulk corrections on data for gender and for cases where polling location recorded was not within the ward of residence. ECN was strongly advised by IFES and UNDP ESP not to correct data in bulk, without checking against the original enumeration forms. ECN denied data correction was occurring without reference to the original enumeration forms. IFES also strongly advised ECN to develop additional procedures for checking out-of-district registration data, which DEOs appear to have been verifying without appropriate guidelines. The success of the data re-verification will be known after the UNDP ESP funded voter registration audit is conducted, planned for late 2012. During the quarter IFES advised UNDP ESP on the terms of reference and sampling techniques for this audit.

In conjunction with UNDP ESP, IFES has been providing joint advice to ECN on the content and layout of a new voter registration application form, in an attempt to make it more relevant and simpler than the ECN's draft. While the ECN has now simplified the design, discussions on the joint IFES/UNDP ESP advice were continuing with ECN as at end-quarter.

Both IFES and UNDP ESP have been counseling ECN to be very cautious in introducing EVMs, both in the choice of an appropriate EVM and in being sure ECN has the management capacity to operate them. During the quarter IFES has also been advising key donors on transparency, legal and operational management issues with the ECN's preferred Indian-model EVM.

*Results:* Correction of critical systematic errors in the ECN's recording of voters' addresses. Technical assistance on voter roll display, claims and objection and new voter registration in Banke and Kapilvastu districts. Improvements in ECN's proposed continuous voter registration form. Advice to ECN and donors on assessing EVM suitability.

### *Activity 2.2 – Capacity Building*

#### *a) Implementing a Program of Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) Training*

*Summary:* IFES maintained its lead coordination role in BRIDGE, working with the ECN and its BRIDGE partners, UNDP and International IDEA. During this quarter IFES provided logistics coordination and materials development and facilitation support for the UNDP ESP funded Gender and Election BRIDGE workshop for media and conducted a BRIDGE tutorial session on electoral systems. IFES has engaged an international expert BRIDGE accrediting facilitator for a 10-day Training the Facilitators (TtF) BRIDGE workshop, to be jointly funded with UNDP ESP. IFES continues to assess and evaluate outcomes of BRIDGE workshops in Nepal through its pre-post survey tests, and later follow up with workshop participants.

IFES provided logistics coordination, materials development and facilitation support for the UNDP ESP-funded Gender and Elections BRIDGE 3-day workshop for media staff, held in Kavre district, from July 25-27, which was attended by 21 participants (6 women, 15 men) and facilitated by six BRIDGE facilitators and two media experts, of whom four were women. Materials developed by IFES for this workshop will be used for a further workshop in Dhangadi in early October, which will be similarly supported by IFES and UNDP ESP. IFES also conducted a half-day BRIDGE tutorial session on electoral systems at the EEIC, attended by staff from ECN, IDEA, UNDP ESP and IFES.

IFES initiated and pressed for conducting a crucial BRIDGE partners meeting to review BRIDGE plans for the remainder of 2012 and draft a 2013 program. The partners determined to postpone to 2013 some planned activities, including the IFES funded IT BRIDGE planned for this quarter, due to ECN's other training commitments. Following the meeting, IFES contracted an international expert BRIDGE accrediting facilitator for the 10-day TtF BRIDGE program to be conducted at end November in Pokhara. In conjunction with the BRIDGE partners IFES developed Terms of reference for an evaluation of the Impact of Elections BRIDGE in Nepal to be conducted early next quarter.

*Results:* Materials developed for Gender and Elections BRIDGE workshops, and logistics coordination provided and facilitation support for one Gender and Elections BRIDGE workshop for media. One BRIDGE tutorial conducted on electoral systems. BRIDGE accrediting facilitator hired for BRIDGE TtF. Realistic review of BRIDGE 2012 program accomplished. Terms of reference v for BRIDGE evaluation finalised, in conjunction with BRIDGE partners.

#### *b) Organizational Capacity Building*

*Summary:* IFES played a significant role in shaping ECN's annual review and planning workshops, and its thinking on developing a new 5 year strategic plan. IFES guidance on workshop agendas and content, training manuals and products, and website is developing the capacities of the ECN's training and voter education teams, IT team and EEIC library staff. IFES is preparing to support a four-member ECN delegation team to attend a study trip to the 2012 US election. On a daily basis IFES' in

house team at ECN - the Training Advisor (TA), Public Information Specialist (PIS) and Library Development Consultant (LDC) engage in capacity building support for their ECN counterparts.

Working in consultation with ECN and UNDP ESP, IFES shaped the development of regional and national level annual review and planning workshop data reporting formats, and supported the ECN to draft the agenda for the national workshop. IFES also provided facilitation support at one regional and at the national workshop. These workshops proved the most successful to date, with a healthy and respectful exchange of ideas on performance and future planning between district and HQ based staff and a new emphasis on bottom up planning, forming the basis for the initiation of the 2013-1017 strategic planning process.



*EEIC staff training in September 2012*

Working in conjunction with the EEIC, IFES has helped to develop the capacity of the EEIC library and research center staff to manage and operate library systems and to conduct public outreach events to publicize the EEIC and its library. IFES trained 14 EEIC staff, (35% of whom were women) on library system management and operation, in late August. Under IFES guidance EEIC staff are now close to completing the cataloguing of the library's physical and electronic resources. IFES has supported the EEIC to draft a concept paper on digitization of ECN documents currently only available in hard copies, such as political party records. IFES continues to support EEIC staff to

seek outreach and publicity opportunities for the EEIC and its library. IFES supported EEIC's collaboration with Tribhuvan University in publicizing the EEIC library and EEIC activities to its students. IFES also initiated and supported the EEIC's stand at the July Kathmandu Book Fair/Exhibition: the EEIC's stand had over 25,000 visitors in seven days; 2500 brochures advertising the library's services were distributed. IFES supported the EEIC to design new EEIC brochures which were disseminated for the first time at the book fair. As a result of such IFES-supported promotional efforts the EEIC is now attracting over 30-40 researchers a month to its facilities. IFES has extended the contract of the Library Development Consultant to end-December 2012, to provide mentoring for the ECN's librarian, due to be appointed during the next quarter.

At end-quarter IFES was making preparations for a four-member ECN delegation to attend IFES 2012 U.S. Election Program, to be held from November 4-7, in Washington, D.C. IFES is also providing some logistics support for a fifth delegation member being funded by UNDP.

*Results:* More professional approaches to conducting review workshops and planning processes. EEIC staff trained and mentored to manage and operate EEIC library and research center and conduct public outreach activities. ECN participation in United States Election study tour.

### **3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education**

#### *Activity 3.1 Capacity Building Support to the ECN on the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Voter Education Campaign*

*Summary:* IFES continues to provide ongoing and daily capacity building support in ECN and EEIC voter education efforts. IFES' work on voter education this quarter has supported the ECN in the design of new outreach products including motivational voter registration TV PSA and radio promotional *Lok Dohari* song. IFES worked with the ECN to support the implementation of national and regional workshops and finalize the materials for training of 251 trainers/electoral educators from ECN HQ and District Election Offices, and Department of Education staff. IFES worked with EEIC to conduct public outreach events. Capacity development for the ECN website has progressed slowly, due to ECN inactivity.

A major project for IFES this quarter has been the support to the ECN in developing trainers and resource persons to conduct electoral education (EE) at the school and community levels. Frequent rescheduling of this program and changes to content requirements by ECN added to the complexity of this task. IFES supported the EEIC's voter education team to develop content for a trainers' manual, DVD, training curriculum and power point training presentations for the training of master trainers (MTOT) and ten regional training of trainers (RTOT). A design consultant was contracted by IFES to work with ECN to design the trainers' manual, similarly a video-editor to develop visual presentations of the EEIC. IFES and ECN co-funded the national and 10 regional trainer training workshops: a total of 251 electoral educators were trained of whom 32% are women. IFES also supported the post MTOT and RTOT review/reflection workshop to discuss lessons learned for the implementation of district TOTs (to train around 1400 electoral educators) and school and community level electoral education programs, scheduled to be implemented over the following two quarters.

The ECN's IT department has been closely involved with IFES contractor Yomari in all stages of the ECN website redesign, including testing of bugs in the redesigned shell, thus ensuring that the ECN is capable of technical maintenance of the site. However, little progress has been made this quarter on developing the ECN's capacities to maintain the content of its new website. The committee the ECN has appointed to develop and control website content has yet to meet, despite constant IFES urging to ECN management. Hence the website remains an empty shell and little development of ECN capacity to provide and maintain content can be done until ECN accords this task a higher priority. IFES has also been working with EEIC and UNDP ESP to make some EEIC library materials available through the website: some confusion over software permissions has delayed progress on this to next quarter.

IFES is continuously working with the ECN's voter education team to improve its capacity to plan for and produce outreach programs. At the end of the quarter IFES supported the ECN in developing the concept and script for a motivational TV PSA, publicising continuous voter registration, with the popular comedy duo MaHa. Similarly, IFES is supporting the ECN to develop a 5-minute song, in *Lok Dohari* (folk song) style, to motivate voters residing in the remote hills and mountain areas to register, for production early next quarter.

*Results:* Curriculum and course content finalised for electoral educator training. Developed 25 master trainers and 226 regional trainers for electoral educators. Capacity building support to ECN IT department in technical areas of ECN website redesign. Capacity building support to EEIC staff in library management and promotional activities. Capacity building support provided to ECN's EEIC and training staff in the development of concepts and content for manuals and AV materials for electoral educator trainers and voter registration PSAs.

*Activity 3.2 Material and Broadcasting Support for Voter Education Campaigns*

**Summary:** IFES continues to support the redevelopment of the ECN’s website and the design and production of printed and audio visual information materials including a TV PSA and radio promotional song, leaflets, banners and greeting cards used by EEIC and IFES’ five CSO sub grantees to support the ECN’s continuous voter registration program. IFES also supported the production of 2000 trainers’ manuals and 2000 DVDs for the ECN’s cascaded training program for electoral educators.



*Dashain Greeting Cards*

ECN continues to be extremely happy with the quality of the educational products it is producing with IFES support, such as the MaHa PSA, and the innovative flow of ideas within the ECN/IFES partnership, leading to new products such as the Dashain greeting cards promoting voter registration.

Following on from its support for the ECN’s development of content and design of the manual and audio visual materials to be used by trainers in the electoral educator trainer training workshops, IFES

supported the production of 2000 copies of the trainers manuals and 2000 DVDs containing the audio visual materials. These manuals were used by all participants in the master and regional trainer training sessions in August/September, and will be used similarly at the district level trainer training currently scheduled by ECN for the next quarter.

IFES also supported the production of a number of materials promoting the ECN’s continuous voter registration program. At end quarter IFES supported the production of a motivational TV PSA on continuous voter registration using the popular comedy duo MaHa. This will be approved for broadcast by ECN early next quarter. In consultation with the ECN, IFES supported its five CSO sub-grantees to design continuous voter registration awareness raising materials including banners, leaflets (120,000) and festival season greeting cards (85,000) to be distribute at 32 border checkpoints, targeting Nepali migrant labourers returning from India for the Dashain/Tihar/Chaat holiday season. Production of these materials commenced at end quarter and will continue through October.

IFES continues to act as an advisor and a liaison between Yomari, the website design contractor, and the ECN for the ECN website redevelopment. During this reporting period, Yomari redesigned more specific elements of the website such as a news-database, voter register checking system, subscription system, online polling, photo and video gallery module, user management, enhancement of past election results, website search and the intranet modules. After the redesigned website was tested for bugs and compatibility on various browsers, it was transferred to the ECN server system, from the developers' virtual ECN server environment.

**Results:** Additional modules completed for ECN website, site de-bugged and successfully migrated to ECN server. Support for production of a TV PSA motivating voters to use continuous voter registration facilities. Support for development and printing of 85,000 copies of festival season greeting cards and 120,000 leaflets with continuous voter registration messages. Support for content, design and printing of 2000 electoral educator trainers’ manuals and 2000 electoral education training DVDs.

*Activity 3.3 Sub grants to selected NGOs to Develop and Deliver Voter Education Efforts*

*Summary:* Uncertainty about election prospects until end-July hindered CSO activity this quarter. IFES five sub awardees completed a few remaining activities (mainly during July) and used no-cost extensions to their awards from end July to end September to produce their annual reports and plans for CSO activities post September. All five CSO sub-grantees completed all their scheduled activities to end September. There was continued close liaison by CSOs with their counterparts in District Election Offices.

During this quarter, IFES' five CSO sub grantees – Dalit National Federation (DNF), Janaki Women's Awareness Society (JWAS), Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization (NNDSWO), Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA), and Youth Initiative (YI) finalised activities required under a cost extension for their programs from April 1 through July 31, and a subsequent no-cost extension for the months of August and September. As in the previous quarter, CSOs continued their work in the 25 target districts. Targets in general had been met by end July, and the small amounts of remaining funding for the no cost extension through to end September were used for developing comprehensive reports on the program to date and planning for activities post September 30.

DNF continued their partnership with the five Dalit member organizations in the selected VDCs of Rautahat, Surkhet, Kapilvastu, Salyan and Jajarkot districts. In this quarter, DNF's partner organizations reached 5,807 Dalits, through high school visits and meetings of community groups such as mothers, farmers, and teachers groups, and Dalit self-help group visits. DNF provided counseling and support services to 665 Dalits on the voter registration process. DNF held 11 formal and informal meetings with their relevant DEOs.

JWAS continued their work with their local NGO partners in selected VDCs in Dhanusha, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Sindhuli and Bara districts to reach women and their household members. JWAS reached over 6,155 females through high school visits and meetings of community groups such as mothers and women's groups. JWAS provided counseling and support services to 360 people on voter registration process and held 16 formal and informal meetings with DEOs in these districts.

NNDSWO worked through its district chapters in selected VDCs in nine districts in the far west region, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Doti, Baitadi, Darchula, Bajhang, Bajura, and Accham, focusing on Dalit groups in target communities. NNDSWO reached 13,115 Dalits through educating Dalit groups at orientation sessions at the community level, and held 35 formal and informal meetings with DEOs in these districts.

NNSWA worked in the districts of Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur. NNSWA used Freed Kamaiya Society (FKS) (Mukta Kamaiya Samaj) to conduct household visits in FKS camps and provide educational sessions to different groups of the FKS through which they were able to reach 10,692 freed Kamaiyas. FKS provided counseling and support services to 333 freed Kamaiyas on voter registration process and maintained coordination with the DEO staff through 10 formal and informal meetings.

YI mobilized 140 trained youth champions in the districts of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Dang, to conduct voter registration orientation sessions at educational institutions, targeting youth 16 years old and above. This quarter, YI educated 12,777 students through 593 awareness raising events conducted at educational institutions. YI also provided counseling and support services to 7,124 youths for voter registration and held 12 formal and informal coordination meetings with DEOs. In this quarter, YI conducted a mini survey to identify the voter registration status of urban college going youth in Kathmandu valley. A total of 500 college-going youths were interviewed for the survey

purpose. A survey report has been produced and provided to USAID. The survey results indicate around 16% of college attendees in the Kathmandu Valley do not have a citizenship certificate; that 41% of those surveyed had registered to vote; and that only 19% of private college students had registered. The survey results will be used to focus future ECN and YI registration efforts with students in the Kathmandu Valley. Under the new cost extension, IFES will train each of the CSO partners to conduct similar surveys: it is expected surveys will be implemented in up to ten locations.

At the community, school and college level voter education sessions, a sample of attendees was tested both before and after the education sessions, to give some indicative measure of information transfer. Data was collected for this quarter from 3,036 participants. Average scores were 61.4% for the pre-event survey and 88.3% for the post-test survey; thus indicating a significant rise (26.9 percentage points) in knowledge of voter registration directly impacted by the CSOs education program. Detailed results are as follows:

**Assessment of pre & post test results of voter education events conducted by CSOs in July 2012**

	No. of Participants	Correct Answers		Increased % point
		Pre Test	Post Test	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,036</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>88.3%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>
<b>Disaggregated by Region:</b>				
Far western	866	61.2%	93.3%	32.1%
Mid-western	232	63.5%	86.6%	23.1%
Western	80	40.0%	83.4%	43.4%
Central	1,858	62.1%	86.4%	24.3%
Eastern	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Disaggregated by CSOs:</b>				
DNF	212	41.7%	77.9%	36.2%
JWAS	834	46.8%	76.0%	29.2%
NNDSWO	748	59.3%	92.9%	33.6%
NNSWA	259	75.0%	94.7%	19.7%
Youth Initiative	983	76.0%	95.7%	19.7%

On 14 and 15 August representatives of all 5 CSO sub awardees, ECN HQ, IFES, EU, EU voter education grantees, UNDP ESP and NDI attended a workshop to review the activities of the first year of the CSO's voter education program, identify lessons learned and recommendations for future improvements, and plan activities under a proposed cost extension through to end January 2013. There was a high level of cooperative and frank engagement by ECN in this workshop, including detailed discussion of how the CSOs could further support District Election Offices, with research, voter education and help desk activity.

*Results:* A total of 57,528 members of marginalized populations were reached through the five CSOs of which 28,536 were reached through community and school level voter education activities and the rest through household visits, college-level activities, survey and one-on-one direct voter registration support. Intensive coordination with relevant DEOs through 84 formal and informal meetings, and ECN request for CSO assistance to target remaining unregistered populations. Results of a mini survey on voter registration amongst college students in Kathmandu Valley will be used for targeting future voter education campaigns. Annual reports finalised by each of the 5 CSO sub awardees.

Improved project management skills evident in all five sub grantee CSOs. Finalization and approval of cost extensions for all five CSO sub-awardees from October 2012 through January 2013.

#### **4. Monitor, Analyze and Report on the Overall Electoral Process**

##### *Activity 4.1 – On-going Analysis and Reporting on the Evolving Electoral Environment*

*Summary:* IFES continued monitoring, analyzing and reporting on the progress of electoral related developments and ECN activities, specifically on voter registration progress and ECN's plans to use electronic voting machines. Regular reports on program activity and analysis of the political and electoral environment were provided to U.S. Embassy officials, USAID, and other relevant stakeholders. The "Godavari Declarations" made at the National Annual General Review and Planning workshop, decisions made by the ECN related to the November 22 CA election date being called off, voter registration and voter data verification process, and voter registration data, were translated and provided to relevant stakeholders, accompanied by IFES analysis.

*Results:* U.S. Embassy and USAID staff and other relevant stakeholders were kept abreast of electoral developments through regular briefings. Regular updates and briefings to international stakeholders on the election related updates, ECN's activities and voter registration process. Regular IFES program updates to USAID DGO for inclusion in DGO weekly newsletter.

##### *Activity 4.2 – Provision of News Clipping Service*

*Summary:* IFES Nepal continued to deliver its daily news clipping service throughout the reporting period. This service is a compilation of online news reports that are relevant to the evolving political and electoral situation in Nepal. News reports are taken from the major news outlets in Nepal, such as the *Republica*, *Kathmandu Post* and the *Himalayan Times* as well as other reputable online sources of news and analysis on Nepali politics.

*Results:* Daily news clippings service provided to interested subscribers, serving to keep all domestic and international electoral stakeholders well-informed on developments in the political and electoral environment in Nepal.

#### **5. Provision for unforeseen windows of opportunity**

Nothing to report this reporting period.

#### **6. General Management**

Following USAID's guidance, IFES has not signed the project agreement with Social Welfare Council, due to concerns about some of the wording drafted by SWC. Also following USAID's advice, the IFES Country Director applied for and received an extension of his non-tourist visa, until mid- December 2012, pending resolution of issues with Home Ministry over issue of an official or some other form of gratis visa. IFES awaits USAID's further guidance following USAID meetings with relevant Ministries.

## **IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

During the reporting period the IFES Nepal program has achieved the following major results:

### **1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework**

#### *Technical Assistance*

- Improved ECN advice to government on legal amendments required to hold an election in current circumstances.
- Another revised draft of the political party law.
- Further IFES advice on appropriate electoral systems and simplified electoral quotas provided.
- Voter registration legal framework draft significantly refined and incorporated into draft election law.

#### *Organizational Capacity Building*

- Enhanced ECN knowledge of practical impacts of its proposed amendments to the existing election law to enable an election to be held.
- Enhanced ECN knowledge of international practices in electoral law development and electoral law standards.
- Increase in knowledge of the ECN's legal department of practical legal frameworks for continuous voter registration.

### **2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN**

#### *Technical Assistance*

- Correction of critical systematic errors in the ECN's recording of voters' addresses.
- Technical assistance on voter roll display, claims and objection and new voter registration in Banke and Kapilvastu districts.
- Improvements in ECN's proposed continuous voter registration form.
- Advice to ECN and donors on assessing EVM suitability.

#### *Organizational Capacity Building*

- Materials developed for Gender and Elections BRIDGE workshops, and logistics coordination provided and facilitation support for one Gender and Elections BRIDGE workshop for media.
- One BRIDGE tutorial conducted on electoral systems.
- BRIDGE accrediting facilitator hired for BRIDGE TtF.
- Realistic review of BRIDGE 2012 program accomplished.
- Terms of reference v for BRIDGE evaluation finalised, in conjunction with BRIDGE partners.
- More professional approaches to conducting review workshops and planning processes.
- EEIC staff trained and mentored to manage and operate EEIC library and research center and conduct public outreach activities.
- ECN participation in United States Election study tour.

### **3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education**

*Capacity Building Support to the ECN on the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Voter Education Campaign*

- Curriculum and course content finalised for electoral educator training.
- Developed 25 master trainers and 226 regional trainers for electoral educators.
- Capacity building support to ECN IT department in technical areas of ECN website redesign.
- Capacity building support to EEIC staff in library management and promotional activities.
- Capacity building support to ECN's EEIC and training staff in the development of concepts and content for manuals and AV materials for electoral educator trainers and voter registration PSAs.

*Material and Broadcasting Support for Voter Education Campaigns*

- Additional modules completed for ECN website, site de-bugged and successfully migrated to ECN server.
- Support for production of a TV PSA motivating voters to use continuous voter registration facilities.
- Support for development and printing of 85,000 copies of festival season greeting cards and 120,000 leaflets with continuous voter registration messages.
- Support for content, design and printing of 2000 electoral educator trainers' manuals and 2000 electoral education training DVDs.

*Sub grants to selected NGOs to develop and Deliver Voter Education Efforts*

- A total of 57,528 members of marginalized populations were reached through the five CSOs of which 28,536 were reached through community and school level voter education activities and the rest through household visits, college-level activities, survey and one-on-one direct voter registration support.
- Intensive coordination with relevant DEOs through 84 formal and informal meetings, and ECN request for CSO assistance to target remaining unregistered populations.
- Results of a mini survey on voter registration amongst college students in Kathmandu Valley will be used for targeting future voter education campaigns.
- Annual reports finalised by each of the 5 CSO sub awardees.
- Improved project management skills evident in all five sub grantee CSOs.
- Finalization and approval of cost extensions for all five CSO sub-awardees from October 2012 through January 2013.

**4. Monitor, Analyze and Report on the Overall Electoral Process**

*On-going Analysis and Reporting on the Evolving Electoral Environment*

- U.S. Embassy and USAID staff and other relevant stakeholders were kept abreast of electoral developments through regular briefings.
- Regular updates and briefings to international stakeholders on the election related updates, ECN's activities and voter registration process.
- Regular IFES program updates to USAID DGO for inclusion in DGO weekly newsletter.

*Provision of News Clipping Service*

- Daily news clippings service provided to interested subscribers, serving to keep all domestic and international electoral stakeholders well-informed on developments in the political and electoral environment in Nepal.

## V. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

For the next quarter IFES currently plans to focus on the following activities. These activities are based on the assumption that it is more likely than not that there will not be an election before the start of the wet season in 2013. IFES will need to retain flexibility in these activities in case political agreements on the government, the constitution making process and any election framework are made during the next quarter and sufficiently in time to require preparatory work during this next quarter for a possible election in late first or second quarter 2013.

### 1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework

- Support the ECN in any required further analyses, recommendations or drafts for a constitutional/legal framework to conduct an election before a new constitution is promulgated.
- Support the ECN to finalize review of amalgamated and synchronized draft segments of the new post-constitution electoral law, including incorporation of the voter registration framework
- Support ECN in further inter-departmental discussions on the draft political party law so a draft can be released for discussion.
- Continue to work with stakeholders to gain acceptance and broad consensus on a simplified electoral system for Nepal.
- Support the ECN to develop a new regulation for voter registration.
- Support the ECN in assessing changes required to the legal framework to ensure the transparent and secure use of electronic voting machines.

### 2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN

- Continue to provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN for the implementation of the continuous voter registration program.
- Continue to support ECN in the quality assurance of all voter register data, including out of district registration data, and monitor voter register data quality.
- Review data from the audit of the voter register and advise ECN on strategies to improve the register.
- Provide further advice to ECN in the design of new data capture forms for voter registration.
- Support the ECN with the assessment, development and planning of balloting facilities for the next election, whether by EVM, paper ballot or a mix of these.
- Continue to work with the ECN to improve the professionalism of training for its staff, particularly with regard to curriculum and training material development.
- Support the ECN to analyse data collected as part of its 2012 Annual Review process.
- Continue to support the development of the ECN's library and knowledge management, mentoring the ECN's new librarian and training selected EEIC staff in library operations.
- Support the ECN to ensure gender inclusion is taken into account in programmatic activities.
- Support the ECN BRIDGE team to implement at least one three-day regional BRIDGE training workshop for media on gender and elections
- Support the ECN BRIDGE team to develop and implement a 10-day BRIDGE training of facilitators workshop.
- Work with the ECN BRIDGE team to identify and translate content for an Elections and Technology BRIDGE workshop now scheduled for first quarter 2013.

- Continue to work with the ECN to develop and implement at least one tutorial program for core ECN staff using tailored BRIDGE methodology and materials.
- Support a four-member ECN delegation team to attend a study tour to Washington DC for the 2012 U.S. Election.

### **3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education**

- Continue to provide technical, capacity building and material support to the ECN's voter education for voter registration, focusing on support for continuous voter registration.
- Support the district level training of trainers workshops for electoral educators.
- Support school and community level electoral education orientation programs for school students and community residents at the VDC level.
- Work with the ECN to develop support mechanisms and any further materials required for district electoral educators.
- Work with the ECN on support mechanisms and materials for school and community level electoral education orientation programs.
- Support the EEIC to design and produce publicity materials, such as brochures booklets and bags for use in community level programs.
- Support the EEIC to develop an outreach strategy and to publicize its activities through outreach events.
- Finalise production of Lok Dohari to promote continuous voter registration, particularly to residents of more remote hill and mountain areas.
- Support ECN initiatives for the development of additional voter education materials or events it identifies as essential during the continuous voter registration process.
- Continue to assist the ECN with the re-development of the ECN website, including the completion of phase 3, uploading of content, and further sustainability training.
- Continue to support the development of resources for the ECN's EEIC Library.
- Continue the implementation and monitoring of sub-grants with five CSOs to facilitate the delivery of voter education campaigns to support continuous voter registration, focusing this quarter in particular on Nepali workers returning for the holiday season.
- Train CSO sub awardees in survey implementation and data aggregation, and commence the implementation of mini surveys in up to 10 local areas.
- Commence implementation of IFES CSO sub-awardee program to develop leadership and increase electoral participation of people with disabilities.

### **4. Monitoring, Analyzing and Reporting on the Electoral Process**

- Continue to provide ongoing analysis to the U.S. Embassy, USAID and other stakeholders on the emerging electoral environment and identification of key issues.

## **VI. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS**

- IFES' commitment to high quality advice and products continues to gain respect from the ECN. IFES' in-house staff supporting the ECN's training, public outreach and knowledge management activities are relied upon by ECN to advise and build their capacities in electoral polices, planning training and education/information work and are seen as highly reliable, committed and skilled contributors to the ECN's goals. ECN HQ as well as DEOs appears now to be fully supportive of the value of IFES CSO sub awardees to the ECN's public outreach program and IFES' relationships with ECN. However in some respects IFES may need to work hard to maintain its

current excellent relationship. The issue of electronic voting machines (EVMs), where the ECN's emotional commitment to their nation-wide introduction for the next election may collide with IFES' objective advice on the deficiencies of the EVM chosen by ECN, and the lack of planning for managing EVMs in Nepal, will need to be managed carefully

- This has been a challenging last quarter, with uncertainty about future political and electoral prospects making planning, particularly in support of a body such as ECN, a frustrating process. Once it became clear that there would be no election on November 22, 2012, and with total uncertainty about any future election date, IFES has focused on longer term, non-election date dependent activities: supporting continuous voter registration, the training of electoral educators and developing and producing their materials, the continuing development of other EEIC related activities such as the ECN website and library, and extending the capacities and reach into marginalized communities of IFES' CSO sub awardees. This approach will be continued during the next quarter, amplified by the introduction of further CSO activities in disabled communities.
- There is little indication that the multi-layer political impasse in Nepal – over the composition of a caretaker government, the method of finalizing the constitution, and the timing and rules for an election for a new representative body and its nature - will end soon. There are no current incentives or threats that would push the current caretaker government and the opposition into agreement, and it may well suit a wide variety of political interests to have the current situation of no oversight of activities by any elected body continue. While no reliable research data is available, anecdotal evidence suggest that Nepalis in general do not appear to see their lives being any different under the current situation than they were previously. Possible circuit-breakers - such as the President refusing to sign off on a three monthly emergency government budget, or pressure from neighboring states, bring with them some potential for conflict. It is always possible in Nepal that a revelatory event could bring a sufficiently broad coalition of interests within the government and opposition parties to consensus on a way forward; however it currently seems more likely that the current political stagnation will continue, at least over the next one to two quarters.
- With the approaching retirement of all three Election Commissioners, and no current mechanism available for them to be replaced or their terms of office extended, the ECN may be approaching a period of instability or at least lack of guiding vision. If there is no independent leadership of the ECN, it may find it hard to maintain its past stance of needing the electoral legal framework in place 120 days before a proposed election date (180 days if EVMs are to be used) for it to agree to conduct an election – which would affect the quality of the election. It may also be more susceptible to government and general political pressure. In general, ECN's electoral activities continue to be hampered by not knowing if it will be required to run an election in the near future, and if so when and under what electoral system and legal framework.
- The program of motivational and educational work in marginalized communities by IFES' five sub-awardees continues to be an innovative, successful model for engaging under represented populations in the electoral process, in the limited areas in which it has operated. The links built between local CSOs and District Election Offices have proven to be a stable platform for institutional/civil society cooperation. The program is increasingly being seen by ECN senior management as a necessary extension of their activities – both in extending the reach of voter education, making their tasks easier as they are dealing with a broader informed public, and in

providing information that allows better targeting of ECN activities. The planned implementation of a series of mini surveys by IFES' CSO partners will assist this latter goal. Towards the end of the quarter ECN met with marginalized community representatives to assess how it could better provide services to them.

- Voter registration activity has been relatively quiet this quarter, restricted to continuous voter registration at DEOs and selected district/area administration offices. The continuing lack of any relevant data from the 2011 census has hampered ECN efforts to assess how many people remain to be registered, their profile, and where they are located (this lack of census data will also make it difficult to have a fair apportionment of seats for any election in the near future). Best guesses from rather poor available data are that 77-80% of eligible 16+ year olds in Nepal have registered, leaving around 3 million or more yet to register. While ECN is planning, with IFES support, more targeted local level action to reach these 'missing' voters, those not registered represent the more difficult sectors of the population for the ECN to work with – remote and/or marginalized communities, those without the necessary documents, and a large number of apathetic or politically turned off urban dwellers, especially in the Kathmandu Valley.
- Of those remaining to be registered, a substantial but undefined number - estimated by ECN as at least 1 million - lack the citizenship certificate necessary to prove eligibility to register. Without a concentrated, pro-active and non-discriminatory effort by Home Ministry to identify those eligible to obtain a citizenship certificate and issue the necessary certificates, a substantial proportion of the population will have one of its basic human rights denied. During the past quarter ECN staff visited three countries (Korea, Philippines, Thailand) to examine out of country registration and voting - which if implemented for Nepal could enfranchise 2 million or more Nepalis outside Nepal. However the ECN's ability to administer out of country programs is uncertain and other countries' experience with such programs indicates that they are very expensive, and few out of country voters take advantage of them.
- The voter register data re-verification in DEOs has not identified as many address errors as could have been expected from IFES pilot testing, though results appear to show that the errors are highly concentrated in specific VDCs rather than evenly spread – perhaps correlated to individual staff locations. Even so, more than 250,000 errors have so far been identified. There are indications that in some cases 'bulk corrections' have been made without reference to original enumeration form data – such corrections may or may not be 'correct'. Potential errors in out-of-district registrations remain a concern, with ECN so far content to allow DEOs to review these without specific instructions that deal with the different character of out of district registration. At end-quarter UNDP ESP was preparing to issue a proposal request for a voter register audit which, optimistically, is planned to be conducted in November 2012. The results of this audit will provide ECN with a guide as to what further register quality control measures are required.
- The ECN's Electoral Education and Information Center is being practically used by ECN as a focal point from which to commence national wide motivational and educational activity. IFES support for the training of electoral educator trainers this past quarter will be extended to district level by ECN in the coming quarter, resulting in a pool of around 1700 trained voter educators available, ECN finding permitting, for school and community based voter education nation-wide. Discussions will be held with ECN on how to integrate these activities with the community education programs implemented by IFES CSO sub awardees and by EU sub grantees. The ECN

has changed its plans from targeting small group community education activities to dealing with large groups – perhaps all of a school in one session. This may affect information transfer, and will require very careful thought as to appropriate supporting materials in environments likely to be unsuitable for the electronic mass education materials used at district and regional levels.

- The ECN has now had a restructure of its secretariat accepted, resulting in a strengthening of the administrative structure for its IT operations. However this has yet to be translated into any practical effects, with voter register IT operations still being reliant on a small number of internationally funded local and international contractors. IFES assessment from last quarter’s report still holds: *“The ECN has yet to digest all the components of the continuous voter registration system and be attitudinally and operationally ready to produce voter lists of sufficient quality for election purposes. Until the ECN can achieve this, it would seem unwise to attempt to implement another nationwide technology based system, such as the introduction of EVMs in all polling stations. IFES is continuing to advise the ECN against doing this at this time, and for the ECN to be careful in its ultimate choice of EVM, so that its chosen EVM ensures public and political confidence in the security and transparency of voting.”*
- BRIDGE activity has been subdued this last quarter, largely due to the continuing revisions required by ECN to the scheduling and content of the 11 trainer training sessions for electoral educators. As predicted, the ECN’s ambitious training plans for this past quarter had to be cut back - from 21 workshops to 14. BRIDGE partners have now scaled back plans for the program during the remainder of 2012, due to the extended holiday season and the impact of district level electoral educator training, postponing some resource intensive workshops to early 2013. While the ECN’s strong commitment to BRIDGE as a training method is unquestionable, and its impact is clear, little progress has been made towards BRIDGE’s sustainability in Nepal without international funding and technical support. An external evaluation of BRIDGE in Nepal is planned for October/November 2012: this may suggest some options for sustainability.

## **National Democratic Institute (NDI) Quarterly Report**

### **I. SUMMARY**

With the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (CA)/Parliament on May 27, 2012, Nepal has been without an elected government for four months. The crisis is further complicated by a high trust deficit between the caretaker government and opposition parties. While the major political parties decided in mid-September 2012 to hold elections for a new CA, they failed to come to an agreement on when and how the government will change and who will head a new, interim government.

Despite the political upheaval, the National Democratic Institute (NDI, or the Institute), along with subgrant partners Internews (IN) and The Asia Foundation (TAF), has continued the Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes (SPELP) program. The program promotes political party development, strengthens capacity for citizen oversight of the electoral process, and supports the institutional strengthening of legislative bodies and officials to improve their capacity to address constituent needs.

This quarter, NDI launched the second phase of the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) for 10 political parties. More than 50 party activists received training to strengthen their facilitation and leadership skills. The second phase of the Future Leadership Academy (FLA) was conducted in Kathmandu. A total of 48 young political leaders representing ten political parties graduated from the Academy. The FLA was designed to improve the leadership skills of talented young activists. NDI also conducted one national level workshop in Kathmandu and two regional workshops in Parsa and Kaski on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures. These workshops were conducted in coordination with the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN).

NDI, conducted two separate workshops on social media for Nepali Congress (NC) central committee members and Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) leaders from the party's communication department, in response to their requests. A total of 58 leaders from these two parties attended the workshops. Topics included the definition of social media, differences between social media and traditional media, and the importance and efficacy of new technology.

Similarly, following requests from the Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML), Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), and the Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), the Institute conducted separate individual workshops on Globalization and Its Impact on Democratic Politics for CPN-UML, Conflict and Transition to Peace in Northern Ireland for CPN-ML, and Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures for RPP. A total of 69 leaders, including eleven women, participated in these workshops. David Vincent Rose, visiting political expert from Northern Ireland, facilitated all these workshops.

A pilot Citizens' Open Forum (COF) was conducted in Syangja in collaboration with NDI's network of district non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Also, in this quarter, more than 2,000 citizens attended TAF's townhall meetings across Nepal.

Next quarter, NDI will support political parties to conduct replicate trainings in districts identified by each party. Parties will replicate one or more of NDI modules covered during phases one and two of the ToT. Also, the Institute will organize orientation and capacity building events for the district heads

of political parties from five districts to prepare them for the upcoming COFs. TAF will continue holding townhall meetings in different districts at the grassroots. Also, it will continue to work on the parliament's library, in coordination with the Parliament Secretariat, especially to catalog books. In addition, there is a plan for the members of the Parliament/Secretariat to visit India to observe the proceedings of the Indian Parliament.

## **II. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES**

On September 19, 2012, the three major political parties - the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), the Nepali Congress (NC), the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), as well as the United Democratic Madheshi Front (UDMF), an alliance of five Madhes based parties which are in the current government - agreed to hold fresh elections for a new CA. However, political parties have failed to reach consensus on a number of issues. Details of the elections, including the electoral system are yet to be resolved. While the NC claimed leadership of a "national unity" government to hold fresh elections, the UCPN-M, as the largest party in the dissolved CA, asserted its right to lead the unity government. Also, there was a push in some quarter for a non-partisan government to be established for the purpose of conducting the elections. Meanwhile, opposition parties, such as the NC and CPN-UML, have allied with the breakaway Maoist faction, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M), demanding Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai's immediate resignation.

NDI maintains flexibility in light of the fluid political environment, to accommodate the changing dynamics for its political party and legislative partners. With some factions splitting from their mother parties, NDI maintains contact with these factions and if viable, engages them in activities. Some Madesh-based parties, on the other hand, are working to re-unify. The splitting and reunification processes are likely to continue for some time to come, and NDI continues to engage and work with viable partners, despite their changing situations.

On September 6, 2012, six years after their entry into mainstream politics, the U.S. Department of State removed the UCPN-M and its aliases as a terrorist organization from the Terrorist Exclusion List.

An all-party meeting of the Special Committee for Supervision, Integration and Rehabilitation of Former Maoist Combatants decided to resume the process of integration by adopting a more "flexible" selection and integration process. The integration process had been stalled since early July due to controversy over age and qualification details of former Maoist combatants opting to join the Nepal Army. During the meeting, NC and CPN-UML demanded the government investigate alleged misuse of funds released from the government treasury for former Maoist combatants since 2006.

Earlier in the summer, the seventh plenum of the UCPN-M took place in Kathmandu after the hardline faction headed by Mohan Baidya split from the mother party forming the CPN-M. During the plenum, Maoist leader Prachanda was severely criticized for negotiating a "humiliating" arrangement on the integration of former Maoist combatants into the Nepal Army. In addition, Prachanda's lifestyle came under scrutiny, as well as the property and assets allegedly amassed by him and other Maoist leaders. Prachanda announced that the UCPN-M would hold its first general convention in more than two decades in January 2013 to elect new leadership.

Following its split from UCPN-M, the CPN-M submitted a 70-point demand list to the government, including a demand to repeal the unequal bilateral treaties and agreements signed between the two countries. During the month of September, the CPN-M imposed a ban on the operation of vehicles with Indian license plates and the screening of Hindi films in several districts in an attempt to end Nepal’s dependence on its powerful southern neighbor. The Nepal-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry appealed to the CPN-M to lift the ban immediately terming it as “suicidal”. The Madhesh based parties also reacted strongly to the announcement of the ban on Hindi films and songs.

### III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

#### Political Party Development

##### Future Leadership Academy Phase II

From July 1 to 5, NDI concluded the second phase of its Future Leadership Academy-Phase II (FLA-II) in Kathmandu. The five-day workshop for young political leaders, from 18 to 35 years old focused on effective communication, candidate debates, political campaigns and team building. Participants—the same who completed FLA-Phase I in early June—represented ten political parties<sup>7</sup> and came from 31<sup>8</sup> districts, including 18 districts from the West, Mid-West and Far-Western Regions. A total of 48 participants, of whom 25 were women, graduated from the Academy.

Both international and national experts, including NDI Senior Country Director Mark Wallem and Resident Program Director for Political Parties Sasha Pajevic, facilitated the sessions. Each module included interactive group work, such as mock candidate debates, which provided opportunities for participants to test their progress. Former parliamentarians from the Next Generation Parliamentarians Group (NGPG) attended the last day and conducted a panel discussion to share their experiences as first-termers.

To maintain relationships and build on their FLA experiences, the graduates created a FLA graduates Facebook group to provide a forum for dialogue and allow them to foster their new relationships.

The FLA was designed to improve the leadership skills of talented young activists. The training introduced participants to democratic procedures and equipped them with political skills to use throughout their careers. The workshop also strengthened both intra-party and inter-party networks. As one graduate said, “We may all come from different backgrounds and parties, but today we all leave here as friends.”

Topics	Facilitator
Internal and External Communications	Scott Perchall
Political Campaigning	Karen Karagheusian and Sasha Pajevic
Candidate Debates	Mark Wallem
Team Building	Organization Development Center

<sup>7</sup> UCPN-M, CPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMDP, MJF-N, MJFN-D, SP and CPN-ML

<sup>8</sup> Kathmandu, Dhading, Bara, Sarlahi, Parsa, Mahottari, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk, Nawalparasi, Tanahu, Baglung, Kaski, Gulmi, Kapilbastu, Sunsari, Khotang, Siraha, Bhojpur, Morang, Jajarkot, Dailekh, Bardiya, Rolpa, Kalikot, Banke, Pyuthan, Jumla, Humla, Kanchanpur, Kailai and Baitadi.

## Contemporary Election and Campaign Issues in the United States

On July 25, NDI facilitated two separate events on “Contemporary Election and Campaign Issues in the United States” for political party leaders and members of the Inter Party Alliance (IPA) in Kathmandu. A total of 34 political party leaders, including eight women leaders, participated in the morning workshop and 12 IPA members participated in the afternoon session. Chris Talbot, an American political expert on an U.S. embassy-sponsored visit to Nepal, facilitated both workshops. Talbot shared his extensive knowledge of campaigning, more specifically in the context of the upcoming U.S. presidential elections. He highlighted voter targeting strategies, drawing special attention to the importance of voter targeting and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) strategies. He also discussed how key national issues and priorities influence party messaging in the United States. He responded to queries of participants on fundraising, women participation in politics, and misappropriation of funds during elections.

## National Workshop on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures

From August 6-8, the Institute conducted a three-day workshop on political parties and election campaign procedures in Kathmandu. David Vincent Rose, visiting political party expert from Northern Ireland, facilitated the workshop. Mr. Rose shared his extensive knowledge on election campaign procedures, including roles and responsibilities of campaign managers and candidates. The workshop developed the capacity of participants in four key areas:

- Preparation of their organizational structures and functions for an election campaign, particularly the creation of a permanent election campaign team to oversee and manage all aspects of the election process, ensuring that all members of the election campaign team understand and implement their respective roles.
- Understanding the aims and objectives of a contemporary election campaign: identifying supporters, persuading potential voters and ensuring that supporters get out and vote.
- Ability to plan and conduct an election campaign, disseminating to the membership a common understanding of the purpose of an election campaign, the role of the campaign manager and the role of a candidate at election time.
- Implementing specific activities including voter targeting, setting a vote goal, message development, voter outreach and resource planning.

A total of 34 political party leaders, including 10 women, representing nine political parties<sup>9</sup> participated in the three-day workshop. Joint Secretary of the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) Madhu Regmi gave a presentation on current legal provisions related to election campaigning. Mr. Regmi responded to queries on the voter registration process.

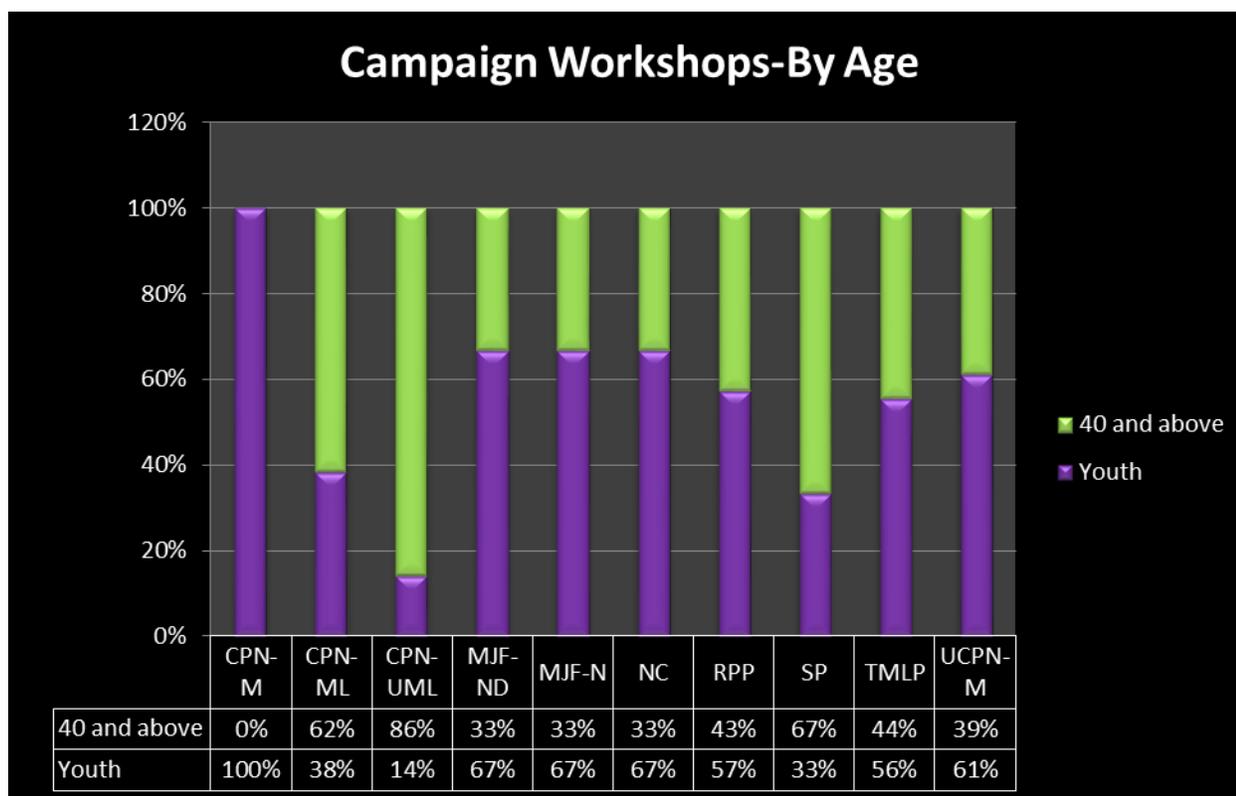
## Regional Workshops on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures in Parsa and Kaski

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<sup>9</sup> UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMDP, MJF-N, MJFN-D, SP and CPN-ML

NDI conducted a three-day regional workshop on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures in the Parsa and Kaski districts from August 12-14 and August 16-18, respectively. A total of 76 political party leaders, mostly district presidents and secretaries, participated in both events. David Vincent Rose facilitated both workshops. Additionally, the District Election Officer (DEO) representing the ECN gave a presentation on the current legal provisions related to election campaigning in each district. This was followed by a question and answer session on topics such as voter registration, citizenship, financial expenditure and code of conduct.

The graph below summarizes the breakdown of participants into different age groups from the national workshop held in Kathmandu, and the two regional workshops held in Parsa and Kaski. The term “youth” refers to 18-39 age group.



Among the participants were six NDI-trained master trainers. During the course of the workshop, NDI met with these master trainers to find out how they had been utilizing the skills learned during the first phase of the ToT, held in the summer of 2011. While some of these NDI-trained master trainers conducted trainings for their party cadres replicating NDI’s modules, others planned to conduct such trainings in the future. NDI staff reiterated the importance of communicating and recording any such training by these master trainers and distributed a form designed to capture such details. The table below summarizes the breakdown of participants by gender and the districts they represent.

Venue	Date	District	Participants	Total
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			Male	Female	
Kathmandu	Aug 6-8	Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kapilvastu, Rautahat, Saptari, Sindhupalchowk, Dhanusha, Pyuthan, Bajura, Morang	24	10	34
Parsa	Aug 12-14	Rautahat, Bara, Makwanpur	30	7	37
Kaski	Aug 16-18	Lamjung, Syangja, Mustang, Tanahu, Rupandehi, Nawalparasi	26	13	39
Total					110

### National Political Party ToT-Phase II, Kathmandu

From September 10-14, NDI conducted the ToT Phase II workshop in Kathmandu for 54 participants, including 17 women, from 10 political parties.<sup>10</sup> These master trainers represented 29 districts, including 13 districts of the West, Mid-West and Far-West regions.<sup>11</sup> Some of these participants were previously trained by NDI in voter registration programs and ToT Phase I.

The modules for the ToT Phase II were organized in a way that allowed for substantial interaction, discussion, and feedback from participants. The training focused on activities to build political parties' capacities for internal and external communications, message development and long term election planning.

Date	Modules	Trainers
September 10	Internal & External Communications	Scott Perchall
September 11	Message Development	Scott Perchall
September 12	Effective Presentation	Karen Karagheusian
September 13	Election Planning	Karen Karagheusian
September 14	Leadership in Times of Transition	Uttar Chapagain/Jay Nishaant

Following ToT Phases I and II, the Institute will provide logistical support for trainings in two districts of the party's choice to serve as a model for the larger rollout of the other district trainings, which are to be conducted at the party's own initiative. The number of participants should not exceed 25-30 in each district; parties will be encouraged to take into account women, youth, Dalits, Janajatis, and other marginalized groups when selecting participants. NDI will observe and monitor these trainings.

### Social Media Workshops

<sup>10</sup> UCPN-M, CPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMDP, MJF-N, MJFN-D, SP and CPN-ML

<sup>11</sup> Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Nuwakot, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, Bara, Siraha, Saptari, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Mahottari, Dhanusha, Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Khotang, Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Palpa, Kaski, Syangja, Banke, Baglung, Surkhet, Bardiya, Kanchanpur, Kailali, Jajarkot, Humla

On July 6, at the request of the NC, NDI conducted a workshop on social media for NC central committee members in Kathmandu. A total of 48 participants, including nine women, attended the training. On September 6, NDI conducted a similar workshop on social media for UCPN-M party activists in Kathmandu. A total of 10 party activists representing the party's communication department participated.

Scott Perchall and Karen Karagheusian, visiting political party experts from Canada, facilitated the trainings. Topics included the definition of social media, differences between social media and traditional media, and the importance and efficacy of new technology.

Perchall provided examples on the use of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube. He emphasized the growing importance of these tools in political campaigns to get the message out to voters, the press and other interested parties.

#### Individual Workshops with CPN-UML, CPN-ML and RPP

Following requests from the Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML), Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), and the CPN-UML, NDI's visiting political party expert David Vincent Rose facilitated individual workshops for these political parties.

On August 22, the Institute conducted a half-day workshop on Globalization and Its Impact on Democratic Politics, for CPN-UML. A total of 20 participants, including two women, participated. Mr. Rose responded to questions related to his experience in post-conflict Northern Ireland. During the course of the workshop, CPN-UML leaders stated that they wanted to share information on this topic with their leadership to enhance their capacity and to develop a set of contemporary party policy platforms.

Also on August 22, Mr. Rose conducted a workshop with CPN-ML central level leaders, led by General Secretary Chandra Prakash Mainali. A total of six party activists participated in the workshop, of which four are central committee members. Mr. Rose shared his experience of the Northern Ireland conflict and the country's gradual transition to peace. During the meeting, Mr. Mainali updated NDI on the various trainings conducted by NDI-trained master trainers in different districts.

On August 23, Mr. Rose facilitated a workshop for RPP on Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures. A total of 43 participants, including nine women, attended the workshop.

#### Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) Organized Training in Sindhupalchowk

On August 25, at the request of RPP, NDI delivered a two-hour presentation on political party work at the local level in Sindhupalchowk. More than 100 district and grassroots level party leaders and cadres were present in the session. The other trainers included Bhuwan Pathak and Dhan Bahadur Budha, both of whom are NDI-trained master trainers. Mahendra Lama, a youth leader, thanked NDI for the continued support and assured that the party would organize replicate training programs at the grassroots level.

#### Community Dialogue and Citizens' Open Forum

In July and August, the Institute followed up on progress from its Community Dialogue (CD) program. Below is a summary report from four of the districts:

**Syangja:** During the first round of CDs, the district of Syangja set as its target the establishment of a cold storage facility. Following the CDs, the Syangja Cold Storage Cooperative Organization was formed. On July 6, this cold storage organization signed a contract with the Cooperative Department (Government of Nepal) to build a cold storage facility in the district. As the first installment, the organization received \$28,409 (2.5 million Nepalese Rupees). On July 12, following the agreement, the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and the Registrar of Cooperative Department visited Syangjato inspect the site proposed for the cold storage facility..

**Dhankuta:** On July 10, NDI held a meeting with former parliamentarian and State Minister of Finance Hari Raj Limbu to explore ways to further implement CDs in Dhankuta. Mr. Limbu suggested the continuation of CDs as they proved to be an effective forum for citizens to interact with their elected representatives.

**Nuwakot:** On July 18, the Institute held a meeting with former parliamentarians of Nuwakot, Jagdishwor Narsingh KC (NC) and Govinda Nepali (CPN-UML). The meeting focused on 1) updates of the target set during the first round of CDs, and 2) discussion of the strategies to be adopted in the context of the changed political situation. The former parliamentarians stated that they were in close contact with the Department of Cooperatives on the status of the proposal forwarded by the district for the establishment of a cold storage facility. In addition, they suggested that the dialogues be restructured in view of the dissolution of the parliament to enhance the role of the district political party leaders.

**Siraha:** On August 10, NDI met with former parliamentarians of Siraha District, Raj Lal Yadav and Jaya Ghimire to plan the implementation of CDs in the current political context. The parliamentarians expressed interest in continuing their involvement in the program regardless of the dissolution of the CA. The parliamentarians also proposed visiting tourism sites of Siraha collectively with representatives of Nepal Tourism Board and Archeological Department.

**NDI, Pro Public and District NGO Partnership**

On August 13, the Institute met with Pro Public to discuss details of the CD and COF workshop scheduled for August 27-30. During the meeting, as per the recommendation of the former parliamentarians, NDI and Pro Public decided to replace NGO partners in three districts of Dhankuta, Nuwakot and Siraha. During the meeting, NGO partners were also identified for the six additional districts where the Institute will conduct COF - Achham and Baitadi in the far-west; Baglung in the west; Makwanpur and Mahottari in central region; and Khotang in the east. The districts are carefully selected so that there is a geographic, ethnic and political balance maintained with a tilt towards the mid-west and far-west regions which have historically received less attention from the state.

<b>Region</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Name of the NGOs</b>
Far West	Achham	Walk Nepal
	Baitadi	Human Rights and Social Service Center
West	Baglung	Four Star Youth Club

Central	Makwanpur	Nepal Samaj Uthan Manch
	Mahottari	Nepal Samabeshi Samaj
East	Khotang	Himali Club
Central	Nuwakot	CARDSAN Nepal
East	Dhankuta	Good Governance Club Coordination Committee
	Siraha	Sanskar Mithila

### Refresher and Reorientation Workshop

On August 27-30, NDI, in coordination with Pro Public, organized a refresher and reorientation workshop on CDs and COFs in Kathmandu for 15 district NGO representatives, including former parliamentarians, national moderators and those serving on district monitoring committees. Altogether, 48 participants attended the event.

	Male	Female	Total
NGO Representative	18	6	24
District Monitoring Committee	8	-	8
Former MPs	8	2	10
Moderators	3	3	6
	37	11	48

Day one focused on three major areas: achievements, lessons learned and feedback on the CD program to date. NDI solicited the opinion of former parliamentarians regarding the role of the district monitoring committees established after the conclusion of the dialogues in each district. The CDs will



*NGO representatives during orientation in Kathmandu*

continue in nine districts: Dhankuta, Siraha, Bara, Nuwakot, Syangja, Kapilvastu, Surkhet, Dailekh and Doti.

Day two focused on orienting participants on the concept and importance of COF. A session was conducted for national moderators to interact with the district representatives to enable them to gain a better understanding of each district as well as identify district-specific issues.

On day three, simulation sessions of the COF were held to test the skills of the moderators and to solicit feedback for improvement. The Institute will conduct COFs in 11 districts: Achham, Baitadi, Surkhet, Baglung, Syangja, Kapilvastu, Makwanpur, Bara, Mahottari, Siraha and Khotang.

COFs will provide two-way communication between the political party heads and the people of the districts. The public will be informed through local radio, newspapers and pamphlets about the event

and they will be allowed to ask questions or make comments on any topic. NDI has created a pool of six moderators who are well known national radio/TV personalities (three men and three women). They are oriented on the format, organization and sensitivities associated with the forums and they will moderate the events in different districts depending on their language skills and familiarity of the region, demography and issues. It is expected that each COF will last approximately three hours and local radio stations will air the event live so that citizens who live too far to participate in person will benefit from the discussion. The Institute and the local NGO together will select the parties to be represented based on their presence and influence in the given district. It is expected that in the hill districts the number of parties would be six to seven whereas in the Tarai districts it may be eight to ten.

### Meeting with Local Development Officers (LDO)

On September 10, NDI met with the Local Development Officers (LDO) from the three districts of Dailekh, Kapilvastu and Nuwakot to brief them on the refresher and orientation workshop for district NGO representatives and coordinators of the district monitoring committees. The LDOs of these three districts are also the coordinators of their districts' monitoring committees. During this meeting, NDI updated the LDOs about the Institute's different program activities and solicited their feedback on the action plans for the CDs and follow-up activities in their respective districts.

### Citizens' Open Forum – Pilot Event

NDI, in collaboration with its national partner Pro Public and local NGO Suryodaya Club, conducted a pilot COF in Waling, Syangja district on September 22. The major objective of the event was to provide an opportunity for the citizens to discuss among themselves, and with local political party leaders, the current political situation. The Institute anticipates that the forum will build leadership capacity at the district level, inform, educate and involve the public in the district's critical issues, encourage cross-party discussion, strengthen inter party connections, and engage youth and marginalized communities.



*Party leader responding to citizens' queries and concerns*

Approximately 400 people participated in the open forum, 40 percent of them women. More than 60 percent of the participants were under the age of 40. The district presidents of UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, CPN-M, CPN-ML, Rastriya Shakti Prajatantra Party and the National People's Front participated in the dialogue as chief speakers. Well known public figure Prakash Giri moderated the event. NDI representatives outlined the objectives of the COF and encouraged the audience to engage in constructive dialogue.

The forum created an effective platform for citizens to raise local as well as national issues. Some of the local issues raised included shortage of fertilizer, lack of access to drinking water in Dalit communities, road expansion, higher education and problems related to the pensions of Indian and British Gurkha soldiers. National issues raised included federalism, state restructuring, and women's representation in all levels of political parties. The district presidents of seven political parties responded to the questions raised and explained their party's position on these issues. The leaders reiterated their commitment to resolve some of the more pertinent local issues, such as drinking water

supplies in Dalit communities and higher education facilities. The acting chief district officer clarified the administrative and legal provisions regarding the pensions of retired Indian and British Gurkha soldiers.

*“I welcome the view of women aspirants who advocate the increased representation of women in leadership positions. I wish the next district president of Nepali Congress would be a woman.”*  
-- Kamal Pangei, District President, Nepali Congress, Syangja

### Inter Party Women’s Alliance (IPWA)

This quarter, the IPWA established its 15<sup>th</sup> district subcommittee in Rolpa in Mid-West Nepal. Immediately following the formation of the subcommittee, , 40 women activists representing CPN-UML, NC, RPP and UCPN-M participated in a three-day capacity building training from June 28 to July 1. IPWA led the training utilizing an NDI manual and included topics such as state restructuring, women’s rights, women in politics, women’s leadership development and federalism. With the formation of the IPWA Rolpa district subcommittee, IPWA has established district subcommittees in 15 districts during the current program, of which seven are in the Far-West and Mid-West regions.<sup>12</sup>

## **Legislative Strengthening**

### Legislative Advisory Consultation Meeting

On August 14, NDI organized a consultation meeting with the Legislative Advisory Committee to receive their feedback on the current political environment in light of the CA dissolution. Twelve legislative analysts comprising political scientists, journalists, university professors, former parliamentarians, constitutional lawyers and representatives of civil society organizations participated in the meeting. The experts, while expressing their views on the current political deadlock, also presented suggestions on ways to move forward. Experts were divided on their desires to see fresh elections versus reinstatement of the CA. Several members were critical of Speaker Subash Nembang for his refusal to facilitate CA discussion of the various recommendations which had been put forward by the CA thematic committees.

Journalist Society for Parliamentary Affairs (JSPA) On July 19, NDI met with three executive officials of the JSPA: President Prakash Giri, General Secretary Sushil Panta and Treasurer Babin Sharma to review the workshop held on April 15-16 and to plan future activities. Representatives of JSPA stated that the workshop had been useful and suggested more skills building workshops in the future with international experts.

### Next Generation Parliamentarians Group (NGPG)<sup>13</sup>

On August 15, NDI met seven members of the NGPG to discuss future program activities. NGPG requested NDI to hold an “interaction program” – three panel presentations followed by questions and answers – to discuss the current political and constitutional deadlock and ways to strengthen the government’s accountability in times of transition. NGPG members decided to elect new officials for

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<sup>12</sup> Siraha, Saptari, Salyan, Achham, Sankhuwassabha, Okhaldhunga, Udayapur, Surkhet, Pyuthan, Rasuwa, Baitadi, Solukhumbu, Doti, Terahatum and Rolpa.

<sup>13</sup> The NGPG is a youth parliamentary group created to enhance the role of young and first term parliamentarians. The NGPG coordination committee consists of 21 parliamentarians with diverse party, gender and ethnicity profiles.

the coordination team during the next event scheduled for October 2-3, as the term of the current members is expiring.

### Supporting the Parliament Secretariat

TAF proposed to work with the Secretariat and the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs to reform procedural practices to promote greater public engagement in the legislative process prior to the inception of the new parliament. While this activity was originally envisioned for a post-constitution parliament, recent political developments indicate the formation of another legal body to complete the new constitution. In anticipation of this, the Foundation has commissioned Dr. Bipin Adhikari, a prominent constitutional lawyer, to draft an analysis report on the legal/technical reasons behind the failure of the preceding CA. Dr. Adhikari will provide a set of recommendations such that the new body will not be designed to meet a similar fate as the one it is meant to replace.

### Strengthening the Legislative Drafting Capacity of the Parliament Secretariat Staff

The workplan to develop a communication and outreach strategy for the Secretariat is as follows:

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Time</b>
1.	workshop on strategic planning for communications and formulation of media policy	November 2012
2.	training/orientation on communication strategy and policy	December 2012
3.	training on media management for senior officials of the Secretariat	January 2013
4.	upgrade parliament website's content and design	October-December 2012
5.	develop and implement media monitoring framework for the Secretariat	November 2012-February 2013
6.	production of communication material for use by the Secretariat.	December 2012-February 2012

TAF plans to provide training to the Secretariat staff on the communication and outreach policy, including media handling, conducting public hearing, preparing expert roster, and interagency coordination.

As part of the plan to strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the Secretariat staff, the Foundation and the Secretariat agreed to a 10-day exposure tour of the Indian parliamentary experience and procedures that provide effective parliamentary oversight and legislative support. The Foundation is working with Shrinivasrao Shridhar Sohoni, former Secretary General of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), and the Parliament of India to coordinate the visit of the Nepali delegation. Mr. Sohoni plans arrive in Kathmandu in November 2012 to meet with the secretary general of the Secretariat to draft an action plan.<sup>14</sup>

### Improving Parliament Library

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<sup>14</sup> Prior approval for this travel will be sought from USAID shortly.

The workplan to improve the parliament library developed during the strategic meeting is as follows:

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Time</b>
1.	redesigning the library space and identifying the necessary work to upgrade/maintain the library infrastructure	September – November 2012
2.	install library software system and catalog books	October 2012 – February 2013
3.	purchase of books, including through TAF's Books for Asia program	September 2012 – March 2013
4.	identification and commissioning a consultant to define architecture for archiving CA documents and preparation of the system (updating database, etc.)	October – December 2012
5.	purchase of equipment for archiving	January 2013
6.	hire assistants to work on database, updating website, and archiving	February – July 2013

In September, the Foundation contracted Prapti Media Pvt. Ltd. to work at the parliament library, including managing the redesigning of the library, installing the necessary library software, and cataloging the books. Prior to this, the library officials were involved in identifying the appropriate books in the library and discarding others. Prapti Media has been working with the parliament library staff and an architect/interior designer to redesign the current space to maximize utility. It is also in the process of customizing the library software to meet the needs of the parliament library.

#### Promoting Civic Awareness and Public Engagement on Legislative Process

TAF continued to work with Interface Nepal in broadcasting a 30-minute radio program "*Hamro Kanoon*" from over 30 different FM radio stations across the nation, ensuring adequate geographical coverage of all regions. Each episode introduces and discusses various aspects of the Nepali legislative processes. A total of 13 episodes were aired during this reporting period on various agendas, including: Human Body Organ Transplantation (Regulation and Prohibition) Act 2055, Essential Goods Protection Act, Disaster Preparedness, Civil Service Act 2049, Poverty Alleviation Fund, among others.

#### Building CSO Capacity to Conduct a Political Vigil on the Legislative Process

TAF continued its partnership with the Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF) to convene a coalition of five specific interest groups (Dalit, Madheshi, Women, Youth, and Janajati) to conduct legislative audits. Most of the representatives in this coalition also have a legal background, which helps in the audit of bills to study their compliance with international norms and standards, legal and statutory coherence, and other technical details of the bills. This quarter, NCF audited the following acts: Bill on Amendment of Nepal Education Act; Bill on Guaranteeing Employment to Eradicate Poverty; Bill to Control Torture or any other Cruel, Inhuman or Humiliating Treatment. Summaries of the three bill review programs are attached as Appendix I.

TAF continues to coordinate with the New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the aforementioned social audits through three print media outlets – *Spotlight* (English), *Nepal* (Nepali), and *Shichhyak* (Nepali).

## Townhall Consultations with Youth and Women

During the quarter, TAF continued working with its three partners – Samudayak Sarathi (SS), Rural Community Development Service Council (RCDESC), and Women Act (WA) – to conduct the seventh wave of townhall meetings in 45 urban locations throughout the country. Given the dissolution of the CA and as per the conversation with representatives from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and NDI, the discussion topic for this wave of townhalls was “Achievement and Failure of the Constituent Assembly and the Way Forward.” A two-day training was provided to 15 moderators on July 13-14 in Kathmandu to orient them on political developments, which was done through several presentations by prominent experts on constitutional issues. The townhall meetings were organized between July and August 2012.

Overall, 2,166 participants attended these townhall meetings. The gender composition and ethnic demographics of the participants are presented below:

### **Demographic and Ethnic Profile of Participants**

Total	Gender		Age Group		Upper Caste		Adibasi/Janajati		Dalits		Un-identified	Muslims
	F	M	16-39	40-A	Hill/Mtn	Terai/Madesh	Hill/Mtn	Terai/Madesh	Hill/Mtn	Terai/Madesh		
2166	692	1474	1704	313	1011	84	38 7	401	123	72	38	50
					1095		788		195			

The townhall participants agreed that the most remarkable achievement of the CA was in ensuring inclusiveness of the traditionally disadvantaged groups in the constitution writing process: for the first time in the history of Nepal, a significant number of women, Janajatis, Madheshis, Dalits and other under-represented groups were represented in the CA. But many also opined that the politics of a few individuals, i.e., the party leaders, had overridden the representativeness of the political system. There also was agreement among the townhall participants that the lack of consensus among political parties, particularly on the issue of federalism, resulted in the failure of the CA. On moving forward, many participants stated that a fresh election would be the best option, but there were concerns over whether the elections would be for a new parliament, a CA, or a mix of models that have been proposed. The participants also discussed what would be the proper government to hold the elections and whether all parties should first agree on the issue of federalism before the elections. The participants also urged all political parties to agree on a basic framework before contesting elections.

TAF, following a discussion with representatives from USAID and NDI, has increased the frequency of the townhall meetings from quarterly to bimonthly. As a result, the Foundation already began the eighth wave of townhall meetings in September 2012. This wave’s discussion is on the investment climate in Nepal and includes topics such as the need for foreign direct investment and the Investment Board Act and other legislation related to investment in Nepal. The Foundation closely collaborated with the staff from the Investment Board to design the training for the 15 moderators, which was conducted September 10-11, as well as session formats for the townhall meetings, which started on September 21. Staff from the Investment Board, including Chief Executive Officer Radesh Pant, are visiting select townhall meetings as resource persons.

## Election Program

### Election Observation Planning and Coordination Meeting



*Chris Talbot facilitates a session*

On August 15, the Institute met the assessment team of the National Election Observation Committee (NEOC), which is currently conducting an assessment for the development of information, education and communication (IEC) materials related to electoral education. NDI briefed the assessment team on the Institute's past electoral education activities and provided input on designing posters including layout, language and message dissemination.

On August 17, NDI attended a meeting to discuss coordination among election observation groups. Representatives from United Nations Development Programme/Electoral Support Program (UNDP/ESP), IFES, the Asia Foundation (TAF), the Carter Center (TCC) and NDI were present in the meeting. Organizations updated their observation plans, discussed TAF's observation workshop for potential domestic observation groups scheduled for the last week of September and strategy for sharing information with the ECN and donors.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

This quarter, the Institute conducted regular M&E activities, such as reflection, analysis and discussion (RAD) sessions and the ongoing process of data quality checks. NDI also piloted a data collection tool designed to measure the number of functioning IPWA district sub-committees. At the RAD session, NDI focused on data quality checks related to the IPWA tool. The section of this report on challenges and lessons learned includes a more detailed analysis of some of the challenges related to the data collection processes.

With the dissolution of the CA and in the absence of an elected parliament, the Institute has adjusted several of its program components to address the changing political situation. Following this, some indicators have been modified and some new indicators introduced. In addition, the Institute has recorded these changes in the performance indicator reference sheets (PIRS).

## IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### *Objective 1: Political parties more effectively contribute to democratic processes in Nepal.*

The FLA graduates Facebook Group is gradually developing into a platform where likeminded young politicians discuss relevant political issues. Currently, it has 329 members. Through increased contact across party lines, including through social media, young activists become more astute in their political knowledge of Nepal, and better able to contribute to democratic development.

Following the Institute's national training on "Political Parties and Election Campaign Procedures," MJF-N, at its own initiative, conducted replicate trainings in five districts; a total of 384

district-level activists were trained on long-term election planning. MJF-N has, in particular, shown increased levels of initiative in the training of party activists, enabling more of their members to effectively participate in this relatively new party, as well as the country's, democratic processes.

Approximately 50 percent of IPWA district subcommittees have effectively lobbied relevant district government departments and have been able to procure funds. In some districts, such as Baitadi, the IPWA district subcommittee has built women shelters while other districts have conducted Village Development Committee level capacity building trainings. The women of IPWA, hailing from various political parties, work effectively across party lines to accomplish goals which are relevant to the citizenry, thereby enhancing the citizenry's view of democracy's ability to deliver.

During this reporting quarter, CPN-UML, CPN-ML, RPP and MJF-N conducted replicate trainings in the districts of Bhaktapur, Parbat, Morang, Udaypur, Rolpa, Tanahu, Morang, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Chitwan, Sindhupalchowk and Ilam. A total of 2,189 party activists were trained in these districts. The total number of party activists trained by political parties replicating one or more of NDI modules is currently 3,245. The increasing reach of these replicate trainings creates a growing network of party activists trained in the knowledge of basic democratic principles, particularly related to political parties. These activists create a growing level of expectation on the part of party activists for internal party democracy and transparency.

***Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity of citizen oversight of the electoral process.***

Freedom Forum continued to operate and update the Nepal Election Channel website <http://www.nepalelectionchannel.org/>. Last quarter, a total of 172 items (from both Nepali and English site versions) ranging from news stories to interviews have been uploaded to the site. This site increasingly serves as a resource and clearinghouse, particularly for journalists, to obtain news and information on the electoral process, and in turn, enables them to more effectively report to and inform the citizenry on political and electoral issues.

The radio program *Loktantra Mantra*, which was produced by IN partner Antenna Foundation Nepal, was distributed free of cost to 90 radio stations across Nepal. The program focuses on different themes of elections and electoral issues. The program, which was aired on a regular basis across Nepal, informed citizens of their rights and obligations in a free society, with particular emphasis on their responsibility to stay involved and aware of the electoral process.

***Objective 3: The CA/Legislature Parliament more effectively fulfills its democratic functions.***

The district of Syangja received the equivalent of \$28,409 as part of the first installment for the establishment of a cold storage facility. In the first round of CDs, the district had set the target of establishing a cold storage facility. Following effective lobbying by the district, Nepal's Cooperative Department signed a contract facilitating the disbursement of funds in installments for the district cold storage facility. Through a cooperative and democratic process, leaders and average citizens of the district worked together to deliver a needed development project to their community

NDI has successfully established an institutional relationship with six additional district-level NGOs who will partner with the Institute for the upcoming COFs. NDI's expanding NGO network serves as a resource for legislative leaders and political parties to connect with citizens, gaining input

on local needs, and in turn providing the leaders and parties an avenue to convey messages to the citizens.

Six national moderators have been selected to partner with the Institute in the COF program. These national moderators are well-known public figures with previous experience in moderating such activities. The well-known moderators ensure that the events will gain prominence and attention, and also that the events will be impartially and effectively facilitated. In addition, the moderators benefit considerably by gaining knowledge of local and regional issues, helping them to be more effective in their work as journalists and civic leaders.

Following the Refresher and Reorientation Workshop on CDs and COFs, district coordinators have mapped action plans for their districts in coordination with former parliamentarians and district monitoring committee coordinators. These action plans chart out activities the nine districts will carry out in order to effectively lobby relevant government departments and officials to achieve their district targets. Through their work on the action plans, local citizens gain increased knowledge of the roles and functions of government, and how to effectively implement government-planned development programs.

NDI successfully held a dialogue between district political party leaders from seven political parties and 400 people through a pilot COF in Syangja district. Approximately 40 percent of attendees were women, and more than 60 percent were under the age of 40. The participation of a large and diverse group of local citizens provided the participants with an opportunity to question party leaders, and gain information from them on issues of importance to the community. Citizens' ability to express discontent builds pressure on leaders and political parties for change.

## **V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS**

This quarter, the Institute completed the second phase of its ToT program. While phase one of the ToT included the Institute's nine political partners,<sup>15</sup> under the political party program component, in view of the changing political context, the Institute included the breakaway faction of the UCPN-M, CPN-M, in the second phase. This party split slowed NDI's engagement with the Maoists for a time. In the wake of the split, NDI contacts within the Maoist factions remained accessible to communication but were unsure as to the way forward in terms of engagement with NDI. NDI continued to communicate with the relevant liaisons and through contacts with other party members maintained relations with both factions. Ultimately, after a short period of confusion, both parties resumed full communication and engagement with NDI and its programs.

The Institute's ToTs have had a significant impact on the parties' work at the district level. Shortly after the completion of the phase one ToT, some of the 265 NDI-trained master trainers took the skills acquired at the NDI workshops and replicated trainings for their party members at the district level. So far, political parties have reported that they have trained 3,245 party activists, replicating one or more of NDI modules in 20 districts<sup>16</sup> across the country.

This quarter, the Institute completed the second phase of FLA trainings primarily aimed at developing a pool of knowledgeable and skilled young leaders equipped to provide substantive contributions to

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<sup>15</sup> UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMDP, MJF-N, MJFN-D, SP and CPN-ML

<sup>16</sup> Parbat, Udaypur, Rolpa, Tanahu, Kalikot, Banke, Sunsari, Dhading, Rupandehi, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Dang, Sindhuli, Bhaktapur, Morang, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Chitwan, Sindhupalchowk and Ilam.

their party's future. Following the completion of phase one of the training, FLA graduates created an FLA graduates Facebook group. Currently, the group has a membership of over 311 youth. The Facebook group has provided these young activists a forum to raise issues/concerns of their constituencies or districts. NDI will monitor and observe the issues raised and the number of participants actively involved in these discussions.

Responding to the rapidly changing political situation, the Institute organized its first COF in Syangja in the western region of the country. The forum provided an effective platform for local citizens to share ideas among themselves, with local political party representatives, former parliamentarians and district administrative officials. The Institute, in an effort to link its various program components, coordinated closely with IPA members for the involvement of their district leaders, preferably district party presidents. Citizens highlighted many local and national issues; political party leaders and district administrative officials responded to the citizens' concerns.

Between 2010 and 2012, the Institute supported IPWA to establish district sub-committees and conduct capacity building training for women party activists in 15 districts across the country. With the formation of the district sub-committee in Rolpa in late June, IPWA has established district sub-committees in fifteen districts under this current program. In addition, IPWA has effectively established itself as a leading voice for the emancipation of women in these districts. An example of their position in the community is depicted by the fact that district administrative officials including the district development office (DDC) invites them to attend district development meetings.

The Institute contacted each of these 15 districts to explore how these subcommittees have functioned. NDI found that almost all the subcommittees have effectively lobbied district officials to receive funds the DDC earmarks for women development each fiscal year. Many of these district subcommittees function as women shelters, offering protection as well as hope for justice for women affected by domestic violence.

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

NDI will open its political party program to five new parties: Federal Sadbhawana Party, Nepal Communist Party-United, Tarai Madhesh Loktantrik Party-Nepal, Madheshi Jana Adhikar Forum Nepal-Republic and National Madhesh Socialist Party

NDI will support political parties to conduct district level trainings replicating one or more of NDI modules.

- October 3-5: MJF-N in Morang
- October 9-11: UCPN (M) in Bardiya
- October 11-13: CPN-ML in Makwanpur,
- October 11-13: CPN-Maoist in Rupandehi,
- November 8-10: CPN-ML in Mahottari

The Inter Party Alliance will convene at least once during the quarter.

NDI will host an international expert from the United Kingdom, who will meet with political party leaders, establish intervention topics, and then conduct workshops for party activists on the topics selected by the parties. At least one of the workshops will be conducted specifically for IPA members, while the others will reach broader groups of party activists.

NDI will begin its work implementing the USAID-approved Window of Opportunity activity on Voter Registration by Political Parties, conducting two national level workshops for the parties, after which the parties will replicate the trainings in selected districts, followed by canvassing of supporters and members in order to register them to vote.

NDI, in coordination with its local partner NGOs, will finalize mapping action plans for nine districts and conduct follow-up activities to achieve district specific targets set during CDs.

NDI will conduct issue-based meetings with national stakeholders and relevant ministries to enable former parliamentarians to lobby relevant ministries on district-specific issues such as the allocation of budgets for the implementation of district-level activities.

NDI will conduct at least one seminar or capacity building event for NGPG members.

NDI will organize orientation and capacity building events for the district heads of political parties from five districts to prepare them for the upcoming COFs.

TAF will begin with its coordinator, Mr. Sohini, to organize a 10-day study tour to India for the Secretariat staff.<sup>17</sup>

TAF will coordinate closely with the Secretariat to complete improving of the library, including cataloging of books (current as well as the newly acquired books), updating of library policies, and archiving of CA records.

TAF will operate in accordance to the work plan created by Writing Workshop Pvt. Ltd. to finalize the communication and outreach strategy of the Secretariat.

TAF will continue to closely work with SS, WA, RCDSC in conducting the townhall meetings on a bimonthly basis.

TAF will continue to work closely with NCF and the interest group in identifying and auditing relevant legislation in the coming quarter. Furthermore, TAF will coordinate with New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to ensure a proper dissemination of the findings/recommendations of the interest group audits through print media.

TAF will continue to work closely with Interface Nepal in identifying the relevant legislation and provide assistance in producing and broadcasting the weekly radio show.

TAF will continue to work closely with all its component partners to ensure coordination between the various activities.

## **VII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

### Appendix I – Summaries of Bill Review Programs

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<sup>17</sup> Confirmation that this activity could move forward in year three did not come in time to include it in the year three workplan.