

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



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**CEPPS Quarterly Report: April 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014**

**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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**Project Dates: August 3, 2010 to August 31, 2015**

**IFES: Total budget: \$11,282,000 Expenses to date: \$6,945,698**

**NDI: Total budget: \$15,222,000 Expenses to date: \$9,420,946**

**Total budget: \$26,504,000 Expenses to date: \$16,366,643**

**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During this reporting period, the government of Nepal completed the formation of the new cabinet and the CA/LP approved its new rules of procedures and formed committees as per the CA/LP rules. As cabinet members and CA representatives turn to their elected priorities, CEPPS engaged with its political party partners, the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN), the CA/LP, civil society, and other stakeholders to lay the groundwork for an expanded and inclusive local government elections, a further engaged citizenry, the promulgation of a new constitution, and a highly functioning and independent election commission.

Under the Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes (SPPELP) program, CEPPS seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

- political parties more effectively contribute to democratic processes in Nepal;
- strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants (CEPPS/IFES);
- civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes (CEPPS/NDI);

- the Constituent Assembly/Legislature Parliament (CA/LP) more effectively fulfills its democratic functions; and
- an international assessment mission provides impartial appraisal of the electoral environment and recommendations for future electoral processes.

During this quarter, CEPPS/IFES continued to promote inclusive electoral legal reform, strengthen the capacity of the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) to carry out elections and expand voter education outreach.

CEPPS/IFES' work this quarter on inclusive electoral legal reform focused on supporting the ECN to arrange gender interaction programs with electoral stakeholders to increase knowledge of and support for recently amended provisions to Local Bodies Election Procedure Act (LBEP), 1992 which aims to create a 50 percent candidacy quota for women in executive positions in local government elections.

CEPPS/IFES' technical assistance to the ECN focused primarily on by-election activities. These activities included: organizing capacity building workshops for poll workers and polling officers; facilitating media trainings; providing ballot design support for electronic ballot papers; checking all voting machines ahead of the election; and advising the ECN on by-election planning and preparation activities including voter registration and mock polling. Additionally, CEPPS/IFES continued to strengthen the Gender and Inclusion Unit and maintained its lead role in coordinating the 2014 BRIDGE trainings. CEPPS/IFES continues to assist the ECN in training social studies teachers and developing an "education kit" as a resource.

During this quarter, the CEPPS/IFES worked with its five CSO subawardees and their member organizations and local offices to improve access to voter registration and citizenship certificates (required for voter registration) among target groups, including Dalits, women, freed Kamaiyas and youth in selected Village Development Committees (VDCs). Simultaneously, CEPPS/IFES' sub-awardee, the National Federation for the Disabled of Nepal (NFDN), supported people with disabilities to participate in the by-elections while continuing to build capacity of target beneficiaries to engage in other civic, political and electoral processes.

CEPPS/NDI continues to work with its political party partners to determine their most pressing needs and build programming to address these issues. CEPPS/NDI and its partners focused on improving the relationship between the party organization and the parliamentary party, as well as strengthening party secretariats. To support a youth agenda in the constitution-drafting process, CEPPS/NDI held two Future Leadership Academy (FLA) regional workshops in Morang and Surkhet districts. Participants provided feedback on youth issues and suggested ways to increase youth's role in politics. Additionally, CEPPS/NDI increased its programming with party women's wings and continued its 33 percent campaign work to support women in politics.

CEPPS/NDI subgrantee Internews (IN) initiated a draft questionnaire for the third wave of national opinion polls and supported the national and regional broadcast of radio program Loktantra Mantra, which continues to air programming based on the opinion poll results. These

opinion polls present an opportunity for political leaders and government officials to gauge public sentiment on major issues, including federalism and expectations for the CA/LP.

CEPPS/NDI subgrantee The Asia Foundation (TAF) implemented its 14<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations in 45 locations throughout the country. TAF also conducted a moderators' training for the 15<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations, which will focus on local elections. In addition, TAF continued its work on improving the parliamentary library and providing technical assistance to the Parliament Secretariat on its communication and public outreach strategy, including the launch of the CA's new website.

In advance of the June 22 by-elections, CEPPS/NDI, in cooperation with its subgrantee, Democracy and Elections Watch (DEW-Nepal), provided refresher training to short-term and long-term observers who would be monitoring the by-election. Overall, 120 stationary and 30 mobile observers participated in DEW's observation effort. In the period surrounding the by-elections, CEPPS/NDI and DEW-Nepal conducted a voter registration information campaign (VRIC) that reached approximately 12,000 individuals in five districts.

At the conclusion of the CA election, CEPPS/NDI began preparations for a series of regional and national electoral reform workshops designed to review current election laws and provide reform recommendations based on lessons learned from the November 2013 election. CEPPS/NDI and CEPPS/IFES will partner on these workshops to utilize the expertise of both organizations. Although the dates for local elections have yet to be announced, these workshops will play an important role in identifying needed reforms and creating an implementation strategy.

## **II. PROGRAM CONTEXT**

Though the past few months have been marked by a lack of coordination between members of the newly CA/LP, most political parties agree on the importance of promulgating a constitution by the January 22, 2015 deadline. With that in mind, several relevant developments occurred during the last quarter including ongoing deliberation over contentious constitutional issues and the successful conduct of the CA by-election.

The government of Prime Minister Sushil Koirala has enhanced its outreach to the opposition, led by the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), to further promote the promulgation of a new constitution. The government also appointed UCPN-M as the chair of the CA Committee on Dialogue to give opposition parties the opportunity to lead consultations on the constitution drafting process. The first draft of the constitution is expected by mid-October 2014, while the new constitution will be promulgated by the end of January 2015.

After its first meeting on February 22, 2014, the CA focused on reviewing the rules of procedure (RoP) and forming thematic committees. With the finalization of the new RoP and the formation of the five CA committees, the CA conducted over 50 full house sessions. In addition, the CA concluded its discussions on two contentious issues: state restructuring and forms of government. However, these positive developments were eclipsed by the failure of the government to carry out its regular work, such as appointing ambassadors, giving full shape to constitutional bodies, and nominating the 26 appointed members of parliament (MPs) In June, President Ram Baran

Yadav presented the government's annual policies to the LP, which is focused on drafting the new constitution, completing the peace process, and holding of the local polls within the next fiscal year.

The opposition UCPN-M established a five-party alliance of Maoist parties that are calling for identity-based federalism. The Maoist five-party alliance is seen as a challenge to the current CA. Although some argue that it is positive for UCPN-M to reach out to other parties outside the CA, many fear that UCPN-M's position on identity federalism could threaten national unity and political stability if it is influenced by other Maoist parties. At the same time, in the last quarter Legislature-Parliament (LP) meetings were often cancelled as opposition parties, including the UCPN-M, obstructed meetings leading to delays in parliamentary proceedings.

On June 22, the ECN oversaw successful CA by-elections in four constituencies. Electronic voting machines were used in all four constituencies, with voter turnout averaging 69.5 percent across these constituencies. NC won 3 seats, while CPN-UML won the remaining constituency. Despite the successful by-election and ECN's active push to hold local elections, the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) has determined that holding local government elections in October/November 2014 is not possible as long as the CA is busy writing the constitution and preparing for completion of a first draft by mid-November 2014. Meanwhile, during the reporting period, the ECN tabled the amendment to the Local Bodies Election Procedures Act, 1992 which sought to propose 50 percent female candidate representation in the local executive body in preparation for local government elections.

Also in June 2014, the government announced a new foreign aid policy that makes it mandatory for donors to furnish the details of their technical assistance (TA) to the government. The new policy also includes restrictions on international organizations operating in country. This level of control is expected to greatly limit the space and capacity of international groups to work in the democracy and governance sector.

As Nepal makes progress on the constitution drafting process and prepares for anticipated local elections in spring 2015, CEPPS continues to provide support to political parties, inclusion-focused legislative advice, capacity building to the ECN, and outreach to marginalized groups in order to encourage citizen engagement, support political parties in reform areas aimed at enhancing inclusion and representation of marginalized communities and improving internal democracy, adoption of inclusive electoral systems and consolidation of democratic gains.

### **III. OBJECTIVES**

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

Sub-Objective 1.A: Improve democratic political party organization structures and operations

Sub-Objective 1.B: Enhance the electoral competitiveness of political parties

**CEPPS/IFES Objective 2: Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants.**

Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthened democratic legal framework for elections

Sub-Objective 2.C: Strengthened electoral management capacity of ECN

Sub-Objective 2.D: Expanded and improved delivery of voter education

**CEPPS/NDI Objective 2: Civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes.**

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

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

Sub-Objective 3.A: Strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the legislature

Sub-Objective 3.B: Increase communication between representatives and their constituents

**CEPPS Objective 4: International assessment mission provides impartial appraisal of the electoral environment and recommendations for future electoral processes.**

#### **IV. ACTIVITIES**

**CEPPS OBJECTIVE 1: Political parties more effectively contribute to democratic processes in Nepal.**

**Intermediate Result 1.1: Political parties are more representative of Nepali citizens.**

**Intermediate Result 1.2: Political parties in Nepal more effectively implement competitive electoral campaigns.**

**Intermediate Result 1.3: Citizens have more information and analysis on the policy differences across political parties in Nepal.**

Sub-Objective 1.A: Improve democratic political party organization structures and operations.

*Sub-Objective 1.A.1: Effective Party Organizing and Outreach*

*National Training of Trainers (ToT)-Phase III*

From April 10 to 11, 2014, CEPPS/NDI conducted a ToT training in Kathmandu for 52 participants, including 14 women, from six political parties – NC, Communist Party of Nepal –

Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), UCPN-M, Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-N), Madheshi Janadhikar Forum Nepal-Democratic (MFJN-D), and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP). Master trainers representing 30 districts<sup>1</sup> attended the training, including some who were previously trained by CEPPS/NDI in earlier ToT programs. Topics included: how to be an effective party trainer, membership outreach, leadership development, policy development, the relationship between parliament and party, and election education. CEPPS/NDI aimed to equip master trainers with new skills to be utilized in each party’s internal trainings.



*Senior leaders and master trainers during Phase III of the National ToT*

### *Follow-up Consultations with CEPPS/NDI Party Partners*

After the National ToT in April, CEPPS/NDI held follow-up consultations with the six political party partners that received training. The meetings focused on: how internal party trainings should be part of the overall strategy of party strengthening from the grassroots to the national levels, the relationship between the party organization and parliamentary party, and how to strengthen the party secretariat to function as the party’s main coordinating body. CEPPS/NDI provided technical support that focused on communication between national and local levels of the party and shared international examples on the role of the secretariat in strengthening the party organization.

### *Meeting with Future Leadership Academy (FLA) Planning Committee Members*

CEPPS/NDI met with the FLA planning committee in March 2014 to organize a series of regional workshops and develop continued cross-party youth engagement and cooperation on a youth agenda. During these meetings, committee members prepared a questionnaire to gather youth opinions on policy issues and priorities that can later be used to lobby young CA/LP members, garner support from civil society, and form the basis of a national multi-party youth agenda (see Appendix I for the questionnaire). The youth questionnaire serves



*FLA Planning Committee members meet with political party consultant Roy Lakey*

<sup>1</sup> Dang, Palpa, Kathmandu, Banke, Kailali, Jhapa, Morang, Kaski, Rautahat, Lalitpur, Chitwan, Syangja, Dailekh, Bardiya, Sunsari, Jajarkot, Surkhet, Sindhuli, Kanchanpur, Dolpa, Nawalparasi, Bara, Rupandehi, Achham, Makawanpur, Kalikot, Jumla, Parbat, Dolakha, and Dhanusha

two additional purposes: 1) to systematically gauge youth views on pressing issues, and 2) to show young leaders one tool for interacting and soliciting information that can be a basis for developing policy development to better address the needs of citizens.

In addition, planning committee members met with political party consultant Roy Lakey on May 23, 2014, to discuss the role of the party secretariat, party membership, and the future of youth in Nepali politics. Roy shared his experiences as a young politician in the Labour and New Labour party in the United Kingdom and encouraged youth to be more proactive in politics. The meeting allowed FLA members to share their experiences as youth politicians and challenged them to examine their reasons for being involved in politics and how they can influence their parties in paying attention to youth issues in their platform.

### *FLA Regional Workshops in Eastern and Mid-Western Region*

In April and May 2014, CEPPS/NDI, in cooperation with the FLA planning committee, organized two FLA regional workshops in Morang district (eastern region) and Surkhet district (mid-western region). A total of 126 youth leaders representing 12 political parties<sup>2</sup> and 18 districts<sup>3</sup> attended these workshops. In Morang district, women represented 16 of the 73 participants, while in Surkhet, women accounted for 16 of the 53 participants.

*"The workshop provided us an opportunity to develop a cross-party network among youth politicians and work collectively to solve youth problems. We will do more internal homework and create pressure on senior leaders to be more serious on the youth agenda within our party"*  
- Bhim Bahadur Rawat, NC, Surkhet district

Eight NDI-trained master trainers delivered presentations on youth and leadership, the role of youth in the constitution-making process, internal democracy and youth, team/network building, and conflict resolution and negotiation. The workshops also included group discussions, where participants shared concerns about youth challenges in their region and brainstormed potential solutions (*see Appendix II for a table of challenges and solutions*). During these workshops, participants completed a questionnaire to provide feedback on policy priorities that can be used to lobby young CA/LP members and form the basis for a national multi-party youth agenda.

### *FLA Planning Committee Discussion with Civil Society Youth*

On May 13, CEPPS/NDI, in coordination with PACT World and Safer World, held a discussion with FLA planning committee members and youth from civil society organizations (CSOs) in Surkhet district. Twenty (20) participants, comprised of four FLA members and 16 leaders active in local youth programs, attended the event.

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<sup>2</sup> NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, MJFN-D, Madheshi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal (MJF-N), Terai Madhesh Democratic Party, Sadbhavana Party, RPP, RPP-Nepal, Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist, Rastriya Janamorcha Party, and National Madhesh Socialist Party

<sup>3</sup> Eastern region: Morang, Sunsari, Siraha, Saptari, Dhankuta, Illam, Jhapa, Udayapur, and Terahthum; Mid-western region: Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Salyan, Dailekh, Humla, Kalikot, Jumla, and Dolpa

During the program, youth participants discussed issues of concern to local youth, while FLA members shared their experiences as youth politicians and identified ways to incorporate the youth agenda in the constitution making process. FLA members distributed a questionnaire to the participants to gather feedback on policy priorities and role of youth in the constitution-drafting process. This was the first time FLA members directly interacted with youth from civil society to gain a better understanding of the challenges they are facing. The feedback from this discussion will be incorporated in a final youth policy document to be developed when the regional FLA events are completed.

### *Consultant Roy Lakey's Meetings with Political Parties*

During this quarter, political party expert Roy Lakey met with five of CEPPS/NDI's political party partners (RPP, RPP-N, MFJN-D, UCPN-M, and CPN-UML) to discuss best practices for improving parties' internal structures. Topics included: the relationship between local party branches and the party secretariat, inclusion in party organizations, and policy making processes for the upcoming local elections. In consultations with senior party members, the discussions focused on: internal democracy, creating more inclusive party processes, strengthening relationships with local branches, policy development, and effective external policy communication. The discussion also highlighted the vital role that a party secretariat plays in managing party processes, emphasizing that the stronger the secretariat, the stronger the party organization is, leading to better performances in elections.

In the consultation with UCPN-M, participants focused on the challenge the party faces in its internal process of transforming the party from its conflict-based roots into a strong political organization. CEPPS/NDI will provide UCPN-M with examples of other organizations that have successfully transformed themselves from an armed group to a political party.

### *Political Party Strengthening Workshops*

In May 2014, Mr. Lakey held workshops for four partner political parties,<sup>4</sup> focusing on the party secretariat and the role of central committee members in strengthening the party at the national and local levels. During each workshop, Mr. Lakey emphasized the importance of maintaining party membership and volunteer databases and the role of the party secretariat in shaping new strategies and organizational initiatives.

NC: Eleven (11) staff members, including the chief secretary, attended the workshop, which analyzed the NC's post-election performance to analyze the progress of policy implementation. The discussion focused on the role of the secretariat versus the role of political leaders and representation of the secretariat in party decision-making structures. Participants also discussed internal communication, common party rules and regulations, and the roles and responsibilities of local branches.

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<sup>4</sup> NC, RPP, MJFN-D and UCPN-M

**RPP:** At the RPP’s workshop, 18 central committee members (CCMs), including three women, discussed the role of CCMs in strengthening the party branches and organization, developing a plan for strengthening the party secretariat, involving the party central committee in policy development, and conducting candidate and campaign manager trainings for upcoming elections. The workshop also addressed the party needs in developing training strategies for its local branch officials, women and youth wings, and developing a specific strategy on how to engage and involve the party influential leaders in the local community.



*Party leaders and secretariat staff during party strengthening workshops with Roy Lakey.*

**MJFN-D:** Participants included 37 national and district secretariat staff, including four women, representing 25 districts.<sup>5</sup> They discussed organizing local policy forums to serve as a venue for membership engagement and encourage the party to identify potential political issues for future work. The national and district secretariat also developed a draft code of conduct for party secretariats. During a side discussion with MJFN-D Chairman Hon. Vijaya Kumar Gachhadar, participants addressed challenges and improvements to district secretariat management and the development of a membership and volunteer database.

**UCPN-M:** 18 senior leaders, CCMs, political bureau members and secretariat staff discussed the role of the secretariat, policy forums as a tool for generating new ideas, and internal party trainings in preparation for local elections. CEPPS/NDI provided international examples of successful transformations from armed group to political party.

### *Presentation and Discussion of National Opinion Poll Results*

During this reporting period, CEPPS/NDI presented the findings from the post-election national opinion poll – conducted by IN and Interdisciplinary Analysts (IDA) – to four political parties (MJFN-D, NC, RPP, and UCPN-M). The second wave of national opinion polls focused on citizens’ expectations for the constitution-drafting process. Participants expect the constitution to address a wide range of issues, with the majority of those surveyed expecting the constitution to: address issues of gender equality, inclusion, and fundamental rights; guarantee peace; and tackle corruption.

Party representatives noted that the survey results are useful for internal party strategic discussions. CEPPS/NDI discussed specific survey results in an effort to encourage political

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<sup>5</sup>Bara, Parsa, Sarlahi, Kanchanpur, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Jhapa, Kailali, Dhanusha, Siraha, Rautahat, Bardiya, Mahottari, Morang, Sunsari, Dang, Kapilbastu, Kalikot, Surkhet, Udayapur, Saptari, Kavre, Nawalparasi, Bhaktapur, and Banke

parties to improve internal processes and be attentive to citizens’ issues and concerns, particularly in light of each party’s efforts to refine their policy platforms.

### 33 Percent Campaign

On May 13, CEPPS/NDI, in collaboration with four women NGOs,<sup>6</sup> organized a roundtable discussion that focused on how to achieve 33 percent women’s representation in the CA/LP through the June 22 by-elections and the cabinet nominations of 26 MPs. More than 70 representatives from 12 political parties, CSOs, CA/LP members, and media attended the event. Hon. Neelam K.C. of the Ministry for Women, Children and Social Welfare emphasized the importance of women’s roles in all spheres of life. Constitutional expert Kashi Raj Dahal, UCPN-M leader Lila Mani Pokhrel, NC MP Hon. Ramesh Lekhak, CPN-UML MP Hon. Astha Laxmi Shakya, and Inter Party Women’s Alliance (IPWA) representative Neelam Verma highlighted the importance of ensuring 33 percent women representation in all state mechanisms.

CEPPS/NDI also provided technical advice and logistical support to the four women’s NGOs for their campaign to draw attention to the importance of women being nominated as candidates for the by-elections and the 26 appointed members of the CA/LP. The advocacy campaign developed and published advertisements in five newspapers to increase pressure on political parties to field women candidates in the by-election, encourage Nepali citizens’ to vote for women candidates in the by-elections, and encourage political parties to nominate the maximum number of women candidates.

*“It is a wonderful feeling to observe women organizations coming to a collective agreement for a common agenda. Hopefully, we will achieve the milestone of a 33 percent representation and that woman organizations will work collectively for women issues.”*  
 - Babita Basnet, President, Media Advocacy Group



*Newspaper advertisements for the 33 Percent Campaign*

The advertisement generated substantial momentum amongst women’s organizations, such as Sankalpa, Shantimalika, and Tewa, which offered to contribute funds to re-publish the advertisement in five different national newspapers to widen the campaign’s reach. On May 17,

<sup>6</sup> Media Advocacy Group (Mag), Saathi, Sancharika Samuha, and Didi Bahini

the campaign ran the advertisement in five Nepali dailies: *Nepal Samachar Patra*, *Annapurna Post*, *Naya Patrika*, *Commander Post*, and *Rajdhani Daily*. A total of 20 women’s organizations contributed to the cost of these advertisements.

### *Political Party Poll Watchers’ Training*



*Reviewing EVMs*

From May 28 to 30, 2014, CEPPS/NDI conducted party poll watcher training in Chitwan, Kailali, Bardiya, and Kathmandu districts in preparation for the June 22 by-elections. The objectives of these trainings were to equip party agents with the needed skills to observe and represent their party and candidates effectively. The training brought together 210 party activists representing 10 political parties, including 40 women, and focused on the rights, roles, and responsibilities of polling agents; voting and counting procedures; and proper procedures for irregularities, with a special focus on the use of

electronic voting machines (EVMs). In cooperation with ECN district elections officials, CEPPS/NDI held a special mock-poll session to familiarize participants on EVMs.

CEPPS/NDI provided a pocket manual that includes details of the rights and duties of polling agents, and briefed participants on election day forms, including observers’ checklists and critical incident forms.



*Participants at poll watchers’ training*

In Kailali district, NC District President Nara Narayan Shah participated in the training to share the skills gained on EVMs when providing training to party cadres at the ward level. He organized a subsequent polling agent training for 150 party cadres in Kailali.

**Table 1: Participants of Party Poll Watchers’ Training**

<b>District</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Chitwan	43	11	54
Kailali	38	11	49
Bardiya	49	11	60
Kathmandu	40	7	47
<b>Total</b>	170	40	210

### *Support to Political Party Women’s Wings*

In April and May 2014, CEPPS/NDI met with the women’s wings of three parties – MFJN-D, RPP, and NC – to discuss and identify barriers to women’s participation, suggest recommendations and identify long term strategies to increase women’s representation within the party, including 50 percent women in the local elections. These meetings also focused on CEPPS/NDI’s possible assistance to women’s wings in the future.

CEPPS/NDI worked with each of five political party women’s wings<sup>7</sup> to conduct a day-long workshop on identifying barriers and solutions to securing women’s representation in politics. A total of 214 women leaders attended the workshops in April and June 2014 (*see Table 2*), which discussed the existing legal framework for women’s representation and potential ways to increase women’s representation in politics and party decision-making. Participants also began to develop a new strategy for 50 percent women’s in the local elections.



*Women’s representation workshops with party women’s wings*

Additionally, the UCPN-M’s women’s wing organized two meetings with CCMs and women delegates to discuss their six-point strategy for increasing women’s representation. Women’s wing leaders agreed to secure 33 percent women’s representation at the local level and provide 25 percent women’s representation from the district to the central committees. As a result of the women’s wing’s lobbying efforts, the new UCPN-M central committee elected 23 women out of 151 members, which was a significant improvement from the original 14 women in the previous Central Committee.

**Table 2: Workshops with Political Party Women’s Wings**

Date	Party	Number of Participants
April 6, 2014	UCPN -M	53
April 10, 2014	RPP-Nepal	60
April 29, 2014	RPP	30
June 11, 2014	MJFN-D	21
June 13, 2014	NC	50
<b>Total</b>		<b>214</b>

The workshops with MJFN-D and NC created timelines for future activities and identified an action plan to increase and secure women’s representation in politics. Participants created a list of challenges that women face, including: lack of confidence, gender discrimination, insufficient knowledge of party statutes, lack of political knowledge, and less women’s representation at higher levels. The action plans sought to improve leadership training opportunities for women and increase the budgets for women’s wings activities. Both parties discussed working together with other parties’ women’s wings to present a unified agenda for change.

<sup>7</sup> NC, UCPN-M, MJFN-, RPP-Nepal and RPP

### Sub-Objective 1.A.2: Cross-Party Consensus Building

#### *Multi-Party Workshop for Women's Wings*

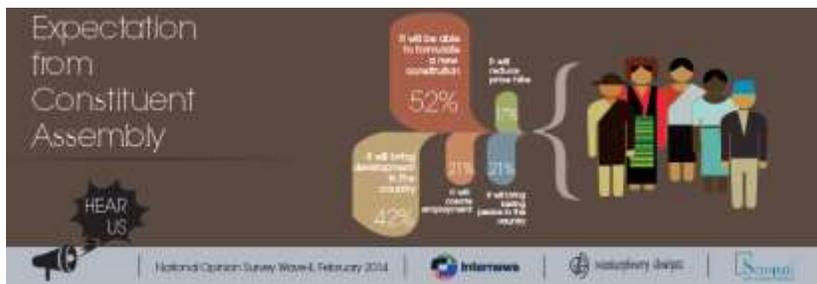
On May 14, 2014, CEPPS/NDI conducted a multi-party workshop for women's wings from six political parties<sup>8</sup> to identify challenges and barriers for women in politics. A total of 23 women attended the workshop. CEPPS/NDI political party consultant Roy Lakey shared international experiences on how women had achieved equal representation in their parties. He emphasized that if women wanted to secure equal representation, they should focus continuously on trainings, recruitment, and women's empowerment.

The women identified common challenges across all political parties and agreed that parties need to focus more on training women members and ensuring that women in the party receive extra support as candidates for office. Participants highlighted the need for parties to identify and train potential candidates to run in the local elections.

### Sub-Objective 1.B: Enhance the electoral competitiveness of political parties

#### *National Opinion Polls*

During this quarter, IN and its partner IDA prepared to launch the third wave of the "Hear Us" national opinion poll (see Appendix III for the map of selected districts). IN partnered with Setopati, a popular Nepali and English language news portal, to provide the Nepali public with



*Infographic published on Setopati.com*

infographics developed from the results of the first two waves of the national opinion poll. Setopati currently has over 400,000 daily visitors (see Appendix IV for full list of infographics).

The objective of this infographic project is to increase public awareness of major political issues in the hopes that it will guide the country's political directives. Infographics, data analysis, and research methodology are published in both Nepali and English.

### **CEPPS/IFES OBJECTIVE 2: Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants.**

**Intermediate Result 2B.1: Improved legal framework that ensures transparent electoral procedures that promote genuine and competitive elections.**

**Intermediate Result 2B.2: Legal framework is a product of inclusive, public dialogue.**

<sup>8</sup> NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, RPP-N, MJFN-D, and RPP

## Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthened Democratic Legal Framework

### *Technical Assistance*

During this quarter, CEPPS/IFES further reviewed local electoral laws and discussed opportunities for reforms with the ECN. One potential area of reform is in the current Ward-level electoral block vote system, which requires more than 40,000 different ballot designs and, in most cases, allots all seats in the local council and executive to the largest party. CEPPS/IFES discussed the benefits and drawbacks of proposing a proportional representation system and abolishing the appointed members in order to address these issues. These efforts were complemented by input from election expert Kåre Vollen, who is working under IFES' Norwegian-funded Support to Legal Electoral Reform in Nepal project. Drawing from international best practice, Mr. Vollen's contributions have included proposing alternatives to the electoral current system to increase representation of excluded groups at the grassroots level as well as simplifying the election system. CEPPS/IFES is closely coordinating its regular in-house assistance to the ECN with Mr. Vollen's work.

### *Legal Framework Capacity Building*

CEPPS/IFES, working with the ECN, arranged gender interaction programs with electoral stakeholders to increase knowledge of and support for recently amended provisions to Local Bodies Election Procedure Act (LBEP), 1992 which aims to create a 50 percent candidacy quota for women in executive positions<sup>9</sup> in local government elections.

The first interaction on April 3 included 18 members of the Gender and Inclusion Coordination Committee (5 women and 13 men). The second meeting on April 7 brought together female CA members, political party leaders and the ECN Gender Committee. Sixteen of the 30 participants in this second meeting were women. Finally, a meeting was arranged among 44 participants (16 men, 28 women) including ECN officials, secretaries from



*Gender and Inclusion Roundtable Discussion*

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<sup>9</sup> These executive positions include Ward chair of VDCs/Municipalities, VDC Chair/Vice Chair, Mayor/Deputy Mayor of the Municipality; and DDC Chair/Vice Chair /Area members.

three key ministries (Law and Justice, Home, and Women and Social Welfare), senior political party leaders and other CA members. This final meeting allowed female political party members to raise consciousness about the importance of the new provisions.

CEPPS/IFES also provided logistical support to an ECN-led meeting that brought together 24 women from the diplomatic corps, donor agencies and senior ECN female officials to discuss the ECN's Gender and Inclusion policy and the proposed amendment to the LBEPA. As stated by the participants, this meeting was not only an eye-opener for most on the ECN's gender and inclusion policy, but also with the support of the provided background documentation, a means to promote the proposed amendment within their respective environments. Following review by the Ministry of Home and the Ministry of Law and Justice, the amended Act was submitted to the CA.<sup>10</sup>

**Intermediate Result 2C.1: Percentage of citizens reporting confidence in the integrity and capacity of the ECN**

**Intermediate Result 2C.2: Number of benchmarks met in the implementation of the ECN's strategic plan**

Sub-Objective 2.C: Strengthened the Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN

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

During this quarter, CEPPS/IFES hired a ballot designer for the ECN to design the electronic ballot papers for the electronic voting machines (EVM). Although CEPPS/IFES' past ballot production support increased the ECN's capacity for ballot design, production of the EVM ballots for the four by-election constituencies required particular technical capacity as the ballots had to be adapted to the EVM voting unit.

Additionally, in May, with USAID Nepal's assistance, CEPPS/IFES transferred ownership of the Webtech Xplore printing press, which was used in the November 2013 CA election, to the ECN. The ECN committed to overseeing continued maintenance of the printing press to ensure its utility for future elections.

CEPPS/IFES' local staff provided continuous technical assistance to the ECN for the planning and implementation of the June 22 by-elections. Assistance included testing EVMs ahead of the elections; implementing a mock-polling exercise using the EVMs for voters in the four by-election constituencies; and conducting voter education outreach. As a result of CEPPS/IFES' efforts, 322 out of 324 EVMs were in good working condition on by-election day. Additionally, CEPPS/IFES CSOs' door-to-door voter education campaigns helped familiarize voters with the EVMs for proper use on polling day. Voters interviewed on by-election day reported that they found it easier to vote with EVMs than with paper ballots (*see Appendix V for by-elections report*). CEPPS/IFES also provided help desk support during the voter registration period at the

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<sup>10</sup> The LBEPA was recently sent back to the ECN for review of a disputed provision, which would allow the voter to mark *None of The Above (NOTA)* on the ballot should they not want any of the presented candidates.

District Election Offices and the District Administration Offices, which led to the successful registration of 12,032 additional voters on the voter roll.

CEPPS/IFES continued to meet with ECN Commissioners and senior officials to provide programmatic updates and assess opportunities to provide additional assistance. CEPPS/IFES' Country Director met with UNDP-ESP as well as ECN Commissioner Ila Sharma – both of whom are leading the strategic planning effort – to discuss the drafting process of the ECN's Five-Year Strategic Plan (2014-2019) and identify areas for CEPPS/IFES contributions. As a first step, CEPPS/IFES joined the special strategic planning task force. CEPPS/IFES also helped organize meetings with district level election officials to discuss problems related to communications, electoral dispute resolution and opportunities to strengthen existing election-related committees at the district, VDC and Ward levels. These discussions highlighted the need to: improve internet communication systems between the local EMBs and the ECN headquarters to allow the sharing of data; implement IT training for local operators; and increase returning officers' responsibility for electoral dispute resolution. A discussion is underway on stronger collaboration between subawardee-supported District Election Networks (DENs) and VDC Election Networks (VENs) and the existing ECN voter education committees.

### *Activity 2.1 Implementing a Program of Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) Training*

CEPPS/IFES, in partnership with the ECN and the ECN's BRIDGE partners, UNDP-ESP and International IDEA, continued to implement the 2014 BRIDGE calendar of activities. On June 1-3, CEPPS/IFES co-funded and organized a three-day workshop in Kathmandu on Electoral Administration and Management for 21 participants (including 11 women) from 11 different CSOs. Six of the CSOs were IFES sub-awardees. Results of pre- and post-tests conducted at the BRIDGE workshop revealed a 55.8 percent increase in participants' understanding of principles of election management. The training was co-facilitated by a CEPPS/IFES staff member who, following the training, received final accreditation to become a full BRIDGE facilitator.



*Gender and Elections BRIDGE Training*

CEPPS/IFES designed and provided training materials and facilitation support to the ECN for the UNDP-ESP funded BRIDGE workshop on Gender and Elections. Participants represented various CSOs working with marginalized groups (Dalits, people with disabilities, women,

Janajatis and Muslims). The workshop was held in Dharan, in the Sunsari district from May 5-7 with a total of 23 participants (including 9 women). Pre- and post-tests conducted at the BRIDGE workshop revealed a 46.1 percent increase in participants' knowledge of gender implications in the electoral process.

Additionally, CEPPS/IFES helped customize and translate BRIDGE materials and provided facilitation support for the UNDP-ESP and International IDEA funded three-day BRIDGE workshop on Election Security and Risk Management. The objective of the workshop was to strengthen stakeholders' capacity to manage security during the election cycle through a clear understanding of the division of responsibilities among security agencies and improved coordination mechanisms at the local, regional and national levels. The workshop drew from International IDEA's electoral risk assessment tool. Participants identified the need to institutionalize particular mechanisms to address the risks and create a comprehensive election security plan.

### *Activity 2.2 Organizational Capacity Building*

In this quarter, CEPPS/IFES' technical assistance to the ECN focused mainly on by-election activities including capacity building workshops for voter educators and polling officials, as well as briefing sessions for ECN officials and the media. CEPPS/IFES organized a training of trainers for voter educators to conduct district level outreach on the voter registration process and the proper use of EVMs in the June 22 by-election. CEPPS/IFES contributed financial and technical assistance to the development of manuals and curriculum to train 21 election commission officials on April 21 in Kathmandu. Additionally, CEPPS/IFES provided logistical support for two district-level trainings for voter educators on April 24-25. These trainings strengthened the capacity of 122 voter educators (89 women) to organize local level mock polling events using EVMs, group discussions and other voter education activities to educate and motivate voters to participate in the by-election.

CEPPS/IFES helped develop the content and agenda and provided financial support for a one-day orientation program on May 13 on the by-election process and code of conduct for returning officers, assistant returning officers and DEOs. In addition CEPPS/IFES conducted an orientation for 31 media representatives on June 13. At the ECN's request, CEPPS/IFES also organized a training of trainers Polling Officer training for 20 Master Trainers on June 10 who then went on to conduct their own regional level trainings. CEPPS/IFES worked with the ECN's Electoral Education and Information Center (EEIC) training staff to develop the training manual and curriculum for the training sessions. Following the June 10 training, the 20 participants trained an additional 657 Polling and Assistant Polling Officers (including 57 women), strengthening their capacity to use EVMs and effectively manage the 324 polling centers in the four by-election constituencies.

In addition to trainings, CEPPS/IFES is developing a booklet on Gender and Elections for ECN staff at the request of the ECN's Gender and Inclusion Unit. The booklet will be finalized and distributed in the next quarter. CEPPS/IFES is providing an international gender expert to guide the Gender and Inclusion Unit in developing its first strategic and action plans.

## **Intermediate Result 2D.1: Percentage increase in citizens' knowledge about electoral processes following USG supported voter education**

### *Sub-Objective 2.D: Expanded and Improved delivery of voter education*

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

During this quarter, CEPPS/IFES continued to provide in-house capacity building to the ECN and the EEIC, playing an integral role in the development of the ECN's voter education and outreach plans and products. CEPPS/IFES assisted in designing a series of by-election voter education materials including a poster on how to use an EVM; a polling location flex banner showing the sample ballot paper; an FAQ booklet on EVMs; and design of an ECN logo for the recently procured ECN/EEIC voter education vehicle. As part of the ECN's voter education outreach, CEPPS/IFES also continued to develop and translate the ECN's website content and support the ECN in designing and publishing 33,000 copies of the ECN voter education wall calendar including important election-related dates for Nepali Year 2071. CEPPS/IFES printed all of the calendars and assisted with their distribution in the local districts (*see Appendix VI for calendar*).

CEPPS/IFES strengthened the ECN's capacity to train social studies teachers and develop an education kit, including a pocket-sized handbook and hand-out brochure for teachers to use in the classroom. The Social Study Teachers' Trainings, conducted twice a month, aim to enhance the ability of secondary level social studies teachers to engage students on democracy, elections and electoral stakeholders. During this quarter, the EEIC provided four trainings on electoral education and trained a total of 102 teachers (including 32 women) from a total of 95 public (49) and private (46) schools.

#### *Material and Broadcasting Support for Voter Education Campaigns*

Working with the ECN and CEPPS/IFES' six sub-awardees (5 voter education sub-awardees and NFDN), CEPPS/IFES supported the development and production of numerous voter education products related to voter registration, the by-election process – including how to cast a ballot and the relevance of the by-election in completing the CA election process – and obtaining citizenship certificates. CEPPS/IFES assisted its six sub-awardees in producing and broadcasting four one-minute radio public service announcements (PSAs) to publicize voter registration drives at both the District Election and the District Administration offices in the four by-election constituencies. Three of the PSAs were in Nepali and one in Tharu language. The PSAs were broadcast through FM stations in three By-election districts outside Kathmandu, totalling 400 spots over a period of eight days.

In addition to the radio PSAs, CEPPS/IFES also designed and produced leaflets on voter registration and the by-election process as well as brochures, leaflets and a flipchart explaining the process for obtaining citizenship certificates, and the benefits of doing so (*see Appendix VII for flipchart*). The citizenship certificate materials will be used by partner CSOs to conduct outreach to marginalized and excluded groups in an effort to expand their access to citizenship certificates.

CEPPS/IFES' disability project also supported the design, production and dissemination of electoral education leaflets in Braille and large fonts for the National Convention of people with visual impairment.

The following table lists the voter education products designed, developed and/or produced in this quarter.

**Table 3**

Voter Education Products/Materials	Description of Products/Materials	Quantities/Numbers	
		For ECN	For CEPPS/IFES' CSOs
Radio PSAs on Voter Registration for by-election	3 Radio PSAs in Nepali and 1 in Tharu languages to inform and motivate voters for voter registration for by-election	-	4
	Broadcasted each PSA for 8 days in 3 by-election districts (with different air time slots)	-	400 broadcasts
Leaflets on voter registration for by-election	Voter education information and motivation to register for by-election in 4 constituencies	-	75,000
Leaflet on by-election	CEPPS/IFES designed and developed content and layout for the leaflet; ECN produced and disseminated in the 4 by-election constituencies	1	-
By-election materials designed by CEPPS/IFES supported consultant for ECN (Himalaya Gautam)	Branding for EEIC's voter education vehicle	2 vehicles	-
	Voter education poster on how to use EVM to vote	1	-
	Large sized flex banner used at all polling locations showing sample of EVM ballot unit	1	-
	EVM FAQ Booklet	1	-
Ballot paper design	Sample ballot papers for each constituency	4	-
	Actual ballot papers for each constituency	4	-
	"Nibida" (Proxy) ballot papers for each constituency	4	-
ECN Annual Voter Education Wall Calendars	Delivered to ECN and CSOs, with 50 copies retained for records	30,000	2,700
Flipchart on the Citizenship Certificate process	Produced and disseminated to CSOs, and shared a few copies with partners (UNHCR & FWLD).	-	1,000
Brochure on Citizenship Certificate benefits	Completed design and content and completed procurement process for production	-	20,000

Leaflet on Citizenship Certificate	Completed design and content and completed procurement process for production	-	156,000
Leaflet on Electoral Education	Designed and produced in Braille inscription for people with visual impairment for the National Association of the Blind, National Convention		500
Leaflet on Electoral Education	Designed and produced in large fonts for people with visual impairment National Association of the Blind, National Convention		300

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

Based on the successful implementation of the 2013 CA election voter registration drive and related civic and voter education campaigns, IFES’ five voter education CSO sub-awardees applied for and were each awarded a new 15-month sub-award in April. During this quarter, the sub-awardees – the Dalit National Federation (DNF), the Janaki Women’s Awareness Society (JWAS), the Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization (NNDSWO), the Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA) and Youth Initiative (YI) – began implementing their workplan in 26 districts (see Annex 1) through their member organizations and branch offices. A sixth CSO partner working under IFES’ disability project, the National Federation for the Disabled of Nepal (NFDN) and its partner organizations continued to build the capacity of target beneficiaries to engage in other civic, political and electoral processes and promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the June 22 by-election.

**Project orientation to CSO teams at the central and district level:**

Following a CEPPS/IFES-facilitated CSO capacity building workshop at the end of March, DNF, JWAS, NNDSWO, NNSWA and YI organized and facilitated 6 training events for their 127 project team members (69 men and 58 women). The purpose of the initial trainings was to orient field level CSO staff to the new sub-award objectives, activities, reporting requirements, monitoring and evaluation systems and respective responsibilities. Participants included community facilitators, district coordinators, board members and volunteers all working under the new 15-month project on “Voter Registration, Electoral Participation and Citizenship Certificate Support to Marginalized Communities.”



*CSOs Conduct Voter Registration*

**Continuous voter registration support and citizenship certificate support:**

With CEPPS/IFES support, the five sub-awardees made significant progress in conducting voter registration and citizenship certificate outreach through help-desk support and mobile camps.

Working with District Election Offices across 18 districts, the five sub-awardees set up 124 help-desks in District Administration Offices to inform people about registering on the voter list. The sub-awardees' efforts contributed to the addition of 11,764 people to the voter list, of which 4,689 were women. Additionally, District Election Offices organized 109 Voter Registration Camps in Kailali, Bardiya, Banke, Dang and Kathmandu. NNSWA and YI set up help desks and provided voter education information to the public. A total of 7,083 people (3,730 men and 3,353 women) received voter registration assistance through these camps, many of whom were from marginalized communities. Finally, through five joint mobile camps, NNDSWO and NNSWA supported a total of 1,954 people (1,148 men and 806 women) from marginalized communities in Banke, Bajura, Bajhang, Dang and Kanchanpur to receive citizenship certificates and to register on the voter list.

#### **Household survey on citizenship certificate status of the target communities:**

From mid-April until the end of June, four partner CSOs conducted household visits in 22 districts.<sup>11</sup> The objective was to collect data on the citizenship status of targeted populations. Community facilitators visited 63,659 households reaching a total of 152,328 people (74,651 women). Data identifies the citizenship certificate status of all the family members of each household and, for those without a certificate, the reasons for not having one. During the household survey, community facilitators also informed people about how to obtain a citizenship certificate and the benefits of having one. The information collected from the survey will be compiled, analyzed and shared with the relevant stakeholders in the upcoming quarter to further inform program design and implementation.

#### **Stakeholder interactions:**

CEPPS/IFES CSOs took an active role in organizing district-level stakeholders meetings in Rupandehi, Jajarkot, Rautahat and Baitadi to discuss the possibilities of forming a network on voter education and electoral issues. Stakeholders included representatives of the District Election Office, the District Administration Office, the District Education Office, media and CSOs. Similarly, 10 VDC-level stakeholder coordination meetings were held in Rautahat, Surkhet, Rupandehi and Nawalparasi to discuss the possibility of creating a community level platform on voter education and electoral issues. Stakeholders included VDC secretaries, volunteers, community leaders and CSO groups. The purpose of the prospective network would be to keep people interested in the electoral process and citizenship issues between elections.

#### **Support for CA By-election:**

In Kathmandu, Kailali and Bardiya, three partner CSOs – Youth Initiative, NNDSWO and NNSWA – supported their respective District Election Offices to conduct EVM demonstrations and mock polling events. Through 13 EVM demonstrations and 16 mock polling events, the subawardees reached a total 1,922 people (1,015 men and 907 women). Additionally, NNDSWO and NNSWA visited 2,029 households in 8 VDCs and 1 municipality to inform people about the June 22 by-election and motivate them to vote. CSOs also disseminated 70,000 voter registration

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<sup>11</sup> Youth Initiative postponed this activity due to time constraints but is expected to complete in the next quarter.

leaflets produced by CEPPS/IFES and broadcast by-election-focused radio PSAs in Nepali and Bhojpuri on 5 FM radio stations.

### **Disability Project:**

NFDN, CEPPS/IFES' disability project sub-awardee, continued to strengthen the capacity of the Community Advocacy Forums (CAF) and District Advocacy Forums (DAF) to work for the civic and political rights of people with disabilities in their respective geographic areas while also bringing people with disabilities closer to mainstream governance structures. The CAFs and DAFs are local-level forums comprised of 20 community members, representing both people with disabilities and people without disabilities. During this quarter, 6



*Civil Society Capacity Building Training*

Disabled People Organizations (DPOs) partnered with CEPPS/IFES sub-awardee NFDN trained 1,165 CAF members (including 497 women) and 77 DAF members (including 33 women) to enhance their leadership and advocacy skills.

Throughout the quarter, the CAFs convened once a month and identified issues that require advocacy actions to promote the participation of people with disabilities in civic, political and electoral processes. In light of these discussions, the CAFs conducted 68 advocacy events targeting government and local authorities to promote participation and inclusion of people with disabilities in community activities and organizations. Additionally, with NFDN support, CAF and DAF members oriented 8,529 members (including 4,754 women) from 239 community groups on principles of democracy, an inclusive society and the civic and political rights of people with disabilities. Community groups included forest user groups, women's groups, school management committees and micro-finance/cooperative groups, among others.

Members of CAFs and DAFs and partner DPOs also improved access to basic services for people with disabilities. As a result of CAF and DAF advocacy, 42 people with disabilities (including 15 women) obtained their Disability Identification Card, 7 obtained Citizenship Certificates (including 2 women) and 127 (including 46 women) were inducted as members of community groups and organizations. Similarly, 160 children with disabilities (including 68 girls) were enrolled in primary schools and 11 (including 2 girls) received a waiver on admission fees from these schools as a result of advocacy initiatives on behalf of CAF members for free education for students with disabilities. Ninety-four people with disabilities (including 38 women) registered on the voter list, 703 people with disabilities (281 women) received voter education on the use of EVMs and 655 people with disabilities (206 women) cast their vote in the by-election in Bardiya-1 constituency.

Finally at the national level, the NFDN initiated a workshop to discuss and design an advocacy action plan aimed at promoting electoral participation and inclusive electoral practices in Nepal. In the upcoming quarter, based on this advocacy plan, NFDN will reach out to the ECN and relevant stakeholders to advance their goal of a disability friendly electoral process.

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

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

During this quarter, the focus of the ECN was mainly to organize the 22 June by-elections, leaving little other attention to give to electoral reform. CEPPS/IFES reported to stakeholders on the progress of electoral related developments. Bi-monthly reports on program activities and analysis of the political and electoral environment were provided to U.S. Embassy officials and USAID. CEPPS/IFES launched a 2-page monthly newsletter highlighting partner CSO activities to share best practices amongst implementing partners, encourage emulation and inform other stakeholders on CEPPS/IFES civic and voter education activities.

### *Provision of News Clipping Service*

CEPPS/IFES continued to deliver its daily news clipping service on the evolving political and electoral situation in Nepal throughout the reporting period, targeting 22 national and international partners and election stakeholders. News reports were taken from the major news outlets in Nepal, including the *Republica*, *Kathmandu Post*, the *Himalayan Times* and *Ekantipur*.

## **CEPPS/NDI OBJECTIVE 2: Civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes.**

**Intermediate Result 2.1: Non-partisan election monitoring efforts are more comprehensive and systematic.**

**Intermediate Result 2.2: Media are better informed to cover election related issues at the national and district levels.**

### Sub-Objective 2.A: Enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor elections.

#### *Support to Democracy and Elections Watch (DEW-Nepal)*

CEPPS/NDI provided a no-cost extension to sub-grantee Democracy and Elections Watch (DEW-Nepal) for the period from April 1 to June 30, 2014. During this quarter, DEW-Nepal conducted a study of invalid votes in four districts; held a national ToT on election observation and voter education; facilitated a strategic planning workshop for DEW-Nepal members and secretariat staff; and observed the CA by-elections in four constituencies.

#### *Consultative Workshop on the Methodology of Study of Invalid Votes*

On April 24, DEW-Nepal held a consultative workshop in Kathmandu related to its invalid vote study; 16 participants attended the event. Former Chief Election Commissioner Dr. Bhoj Raj Pokharel provided valuable input on the draft methodology and shared his insights on improving

the process of studying invalid votes. He stressed the need to study the trend of invalid votes from four consecutive elections to make concrete analyses in identify the underlying causes. Following the workshop, research consultant Bharat Mani Sharma incorporated participants' comments and finalized the survey methodology and questionnaire for focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews.

#### *Assessment of Invalid Vote in Four Districts*

In May 2014, DEW-Nepal carried out field assessments in four districts: Jhapa, Sunsari, Saptari, and Baitadi. The main objective of the assessment was to identify factors that governed vote invalidation and suggest policy implications to reduce invalid votes in future elections. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- identify the type of voters whose votes were invalid;
- find out voters' reasons for invalid votes;
- assess other external factors that caused vote invalidation; and
- provide recommendations to reduce the number of invalid votes in the future elections.

DEW-Nepal held four FGDs in each of the four districts to gain an in-depth understanding and analysis of their views regarding invalid votes. DEW-Nepal selected constituencies with a high percentage of invalid votes to hold the FGDs. Similarly, DEW conducted 35 key informant interviews (KIIs), including 21 interviews with district level informants and 14 interviews with constituency level informants. Respondents included chief election officers, election officers, chief district officers (CDOs), CA candidates, political party leaders, teachers, village development committee (VDC) secretaries, social workers, and CSO representatives.

**Table 4: FGDs and KIIs for Study of Invalid Votes**

	District	Constituency	VDC/ Municipality	FGD				KIIs	
				Advantage Group		Disadvantage Group		District	VDC
				Male	Female	Male	Female		
1	Jhapa	5	Satashidham, Saranamati	2	-	-	2	6	4
2	Sunsari	6	Prakashpur	1	1	1	1	5	3
3	Saptari	1	Terahuta	1	1	1	1	5	3
4	Baitadi	2	Dehimandu, Dasharathchand	1	1	1	1	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>

#### *ToT on Election Observation and Electoral Education*

From June 4 to 10, 2014, DEW-Nepal conducted a residential national ToT on election observation and electoral education in Kathmandu for 25 regional level master trainers. DEW-

Nepal received 82 nominations from 58 DEW-Nepal district committees and selected 25 participants, including 12 women. These master trainers will train the new observers for all future DEW-Nepal election observations. Topics included: methodology, international principles for election observation, election code of conduct, the role of voters in free and fair elections, and civic education.

#### *DEW-Nepal Long Term Observation (LTO) Training for By-Elections*

On May 17, 2014, DEW-Nepal conducted a refresher LTO training for 12 district committee members and district coordinators in Kathmandu. The participants, including four women, came from four districts and conducted practical exercises interviewing stakeholders to analyze the pre-election environment. In addition, participants visited the Electoral Education Information Center (EEIC) at the ECN where they took part in an electronic voting mock election. EEIC Director Komal Dhamala gave a presentation on the EVM and the voting process. These trained LTOs later observed the pre-election process for a month in their respective constituencies before the June 22 by-elections.

#### *DEW-Nepal Short Term Observation (STO) Training for By-Elections*

On June 15 and June 20, 2014, DEW-Nepal conducted constituency level training for 140 STOs in Kathmandu-2, Chitwan-4, Bardiya-1, and Kailali-6 to orient them a mobile application being used in the observation process. During the Kathmandu training, Rooster Logic, the contracted software agency, presented the mobile survey software technology, utilizing elements of DEW-Nepal's election day checklist. Representatives from the district election office conducted mock polling in order to familiarize participants with the EVM in all four districts.

#### *By-Election Observation in Four Constituencies*

On June 22, DEW-Nepal observed the by-elections in four constituencies by deploying 120 stationary and 30 mobile observers. Based on the observation findings, DEW reported that the by-elections in all four constituencies were held in a peaceful manner. The ECN used EVM for the first time during the by-elections and some voters did not have adequate information on the EVM. Unfortunately, DEW-Nepal was unable to complete its observation as the ECN revoked their accreditation in the afternoon citing a violation of the code of conduct. Though under adverse circumstances, DEW-Nepal honored its observation commitment and released a press statement on their findings.

#### *Strategic Planning Workshop*

From June 15 to 17, 2014, DEW-Nepal conducted a strategic planning workshop for 12 CCMs and secretariat staff to develop a strategic plan for DEW-Nepal for 2014 to 2016. The workshop provided an opportunity to review DEW-Nepal's goals and objectives based on current perspectives. Based on the recommendations of DEW-Nepal committee members and staff, consultant Prahlad Mali prepared a strategic plan for 2014-2016.

#### *Voter Registration Information Campaign (VRIC)*

## Orientation for DEW-Nepal Volunteers

On May 6 and 7, 2014, CEPPS/NDI carried out a two-day orientation program for select DEW-Nepal district volunteers in support of the VRIC. The 50 participants represented five districts: Baitadi, Jhapa, Kaski, Lalitpur, and Sunsari. These districts were selected based on high levels of invalid votes and low voter registration. Out of the selected participants, 26 were women and 41 were under the age of 40.

The participants received information from ECN officials and NDI experts on the importance and process of voter registration. During this event, participants initiated the development of campaign activity workplans most relevant to the districts and the marginalized communities they intend to target. Participants visited the EEIC at the ECN, where they took part in an electronic voting mock election. Rooster Logic, a software agency contracted by CEPPS/NDI, presented its mobile survey software technology, utilizing elements of the NDI baseline questionnaire to be implemented by the participants in their districts. Participants from this orientation will be working as district VRIC volunteers during the months of May, June and early July 2014 to encourage marginalized communities to register to vote and better understand the voting process.



*DEW volunteer collecting data from a female head of household in Sunsari district.*

## VRIC Baseline Survey

This quarter, CEPPS/NDI worked with the 50 above-mentioned DEW-Nepal volunteers to conduct a VRIC baseline survey in five target districts using Android-based mobile phone software and technology. The volunteers aimed to collect data on voter registration and public understanding of the electoral process to develop additional VRIC community activities and as a way to determine the program's impact upon its conclusion. Volunteers surveyed 7,582 people (4,161 women and 3,411 men; 10 identified themselves as third gender); 36.78 percent from indigenous groups, 20.98 percent identified as Chhetri, 19.98 percent as Brahmins, 18.57 percent from marginalized groups and 3.69 percent Muslims.



*VRIC community event*

The findings from the baseline survey showed that, of the people who had not registered, the majority were youth aged 18-24. Based on this finding, CEPPS/NDI requested the campaign drama groups to incorporate a youthful central character who young audiences could better relate to. In addition, the survey showed that marginalized and indigenous groups comprised the largest percentage of respondents who had neither registered nor had complete information about the registration process. With this in mind, the community events were targeted in VDCs with large

marginalized and indigenous populations. Another finding from the survey was that an overwhelming percentage of the respondents said radio was the primary source of information for them, followed by television. Posters were cited as one of the least helpful sources of information. Based on these findings, CEPPS/NDI developed a radio and television public service announcement (PSA) to ensure higher outreach. In lieu of posters and flyers, CEPPS/NDI designed informative calendars for the events.

### VRIC Community Events

As of July 4, CEPPS/NDI and DEW-Nepal had carried out VRICs in 155 locations covering 121 VDCs and 10 municipalities. The campaigns reached approximately 12,000 community members in four out of the five target districts. Events typically included street drama and musical performances specifically developed for each district. The script and lyrics of the performances covered the importance of voter registration and the electoral process. In addition, volunteers distributed calendars that contained infographics on the voter registration process provided by the ECN.

### *Election Observation Coordination Group (EOCG) Meeting*

From April to May 2014, CEPPS/NDI continued its collaboration with the National Election Observation Committee (NEOC) and organized two monthly coordination meetings and one special meeting: May 2 at DEW-Nepal; June 13 at NEOC; and a special meeting on May 9 at NDI. During the EOCG meetings, participating organizations (*see Table 5*) shared programmatic and operational updates and discussed topics of mutual interest. These coordination meetings focused on post-election scenarios, final observation reports, and post-election activities, including by-elections, local elections, the nomination of 26 members to the CA/LP, and the future strategy of EOCG. The discussions also confirmed future cooperative activities, such as the presentation of observation findings to ECN leadership and observation of the voter registration process. The May 9 meeting culminated in developing consolidated recommendations from the findings of the observation reports submitted by various domestic and international observer groups. At the June 13 meeting, EOCG members discussed their deployment and coordination plans for the June 22 by-elections.

**Table 5: EOCG Membership**

<b>Domestic Election Observer Groups</b>	NEOC General Election Observation Committee (GEOC) Constituent Assembly Election Observation Joint Forum (CAEOF) Election Observation Coalition Nepal (EOC-N) Alliance for Election Observation Nepal (AEON) Sankalpa (Women’s Alliance for Peace, Justice, and Democracy) News Club of Nepal DEW-Nepal
<b>Implementing Agencies</b>	The Asia Foundation (TAF) IFES United Nations Development Programme’s Electoral Support Program (UNDP/ESP)

### *Electoral Reform Dialogues*

During this quarter, CEPPS/NDI met with ECN officials, Joint Secretary Maheshwor Neupane and EEIC Director Komal Dhamala, to finalize the agenda and other details of the regional electoral reform dialogues. On April 11, ECN Acting Chief Commissioner Hon. Dolak Bahadur Gurung postponed the dialogues since all of the commissioners and ECN officials participating in the dialogues were out of the country. After several meetings to reschedule the dialogues, the ECN and CEPPS/NDI agreed that CEPPS/NDI would move ahead with the events independently.

In June 2014, CEPPS/NDI and CEPPS/IFES began planning the electoral reform dialogues through a more substantive partnership, including cost sharing and creating tools and methodologies for the dialogues. The CEPPS partners agreed to work together on five regional electoral reform dialogues and one national conference; the dialogues will begin in August 2014.

### Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthen the capacity of media to report on the electoral process.

#### *Media Programming on Polling*

This quarter, CEPPS/NDI subgrantee IN, its partner Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN), and five regional partner stations produced and broadcast radio programming to discuss the results of the national opinion polls. The selected radio stations are listed below.

- [Saptakoshi FM](#), Sunsari (Eastern Development Region)
- [Krishnasar FM](#), Banke (Mid-Western Development Region)
- [Narayani FM](#), Parsa (Central Development Region)
- [Vijay FM](#), Nawalparasi (Western Development Region)
- [Shuklaphanta FM](#), Kanchanpur (Far Western Development Region)

AFN designed and produced the *Loktantra Mantra* program using a FGD format, with 10-12 local citizens voicing their opinions on the program topic. In total, 515 people (326 men and 189 women) participated in the program. Of the total participants, there were 300 Brahmins/Chhetris, 94 Janajatis, 49 Dalits, 11 Muslims, six Madhesis, and eight from other ethnicities. Participants included members of the general public, government agency representatives, political party activists, students, teachers, social activists, human rights activists, civil society representatives, and concerned stakeholders. Each station assigned two producers to produce the show in coordination with AFN. *Loktantra Mantra* incorporated summaries of the results from



*FGD in Dukuchap VDC, Kathmandu*

the national opinion polls and synthesized outcomes of the discussion into white papers on a weekly basis. (*Please see Appendix VIII for a map of radio stations and Appendix IX for key issues discussed in radio programs this quarter.*)

### *Community of Practice Website*

From April to June 2014, IN's Nepali partner Freedom Forum uploaded and updated 255 articles, news articles, and opinion pieces covering elections, electoral issues and political party reform to the NepalElectionChannel.org website (*see Appendix X for the list of uploads*). Four English newspapers and eight Nepali newspapers were uploaded daily to provide up-to-date information on political, electoral, and constitutional developments. Although local elections have yet to be announced, the website continues to serve as a resource for journalists to remain informed of recent developments on election-related news.

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

**Intermediate Result 3.2: MPs incorporate constituent input into legislative processes.**

**Intermediate Result 3.3: CA/Legislature Parliament proceedings are more transparent.**

Sub-Objective 3.A: Strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the CA/Parliament.

Sub-Objective 3.A.1: Strengthening the Legislative Drafting and Oversight Capacity of Parliament

### *Consultation Meetings with Senior Parliamentary Party Leaders*

During this quarter, CEPPS/NDI had formal meetings with parliamentary party leaders of six party partners – NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, MJFN-D, and RPP. CEPPS/NDI briefed these leaders on CEPPS/NDI's parliamentary support program and discussed parties' technical assistance needs. CEPPS/NDI also offered to collaborate with parliamentary party offices/groups to provide tailored programs for youth and women MPs.

CEPPS/NDI Governance Program Director visited Nepal from May 11 to 17, 2014 to meet with parliamentary partners and ensure that the overall parliamentary support program implemented by CEPPS/NDI and its subgrantee TAF is well targeted and effective. During his visit, he met with the speaker, deputy speaker and secretary general of the LP and visited the parliamentary library being renovated under a CEPPS/NDI subgrant to TAF. He also met with UCPN-M Chair and Parliamentary Party Leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda), NC Chief Whip Hon. Chinkaji Shrestha, and CPN-UML Parliamentary Party Group Coordinator Hon. Bishnu Paudel. These meetings and consultations proved crucial in preparation for roundtable discussions on executive-legislative relations and the role of opposition parties.

During this reporting period, CEPPS/NDI met with a number of MPs from the Finance Committee and sub-committee to inquire about the possibility of organizing a roundtable discussion on the procurement act. MPs requested that CEPPS/NDI compile comparative procurement acts to review in preparation for the amendment to the procurement act. In addition,

CEPPS/NDI shared a copy of the review of the procurement act completed under the CEPPS programs with the subcommittee members.

### *CA/Parliamentary Support Coordination Meeting*

On April 17, 2014, CEPPS/NDI participated in a coordination meeting with international organizations supporting the CA/LP. To share current and future initiatives and activities to avoid duplication of efforts, UNDP, UN Women, International IDEA, TAF, and CEPPS/NDI representatives provided a brief overview of their program components related to the CA/LP and shared their publications on the works of CA/LP.

### *NC Parliamentary Group Workshop*

On April 26 and 27, 2014, CEPPS/NDI, in coordination with NC Parliamentary Group, organized a workshop on the role of MPs in the budget and government economic policy. The workshop aimed to enhance the knowledge of first-time parliamentarians. NC senior MP Mr. Ramesh Lekhak moderated sessions on roles of MPs, parliamentary ethics, and the relationship between parliamentary group and party office. Dr. Shankar Sharma, former vice chair of the National Planning Commission (NPC) and former Nepali Ambassador to the United States, and Prof. Dr. Bihwambher Pyakuryal facilitated sessions on the budget making process in Nepal and the government's economic policy.

*“As the leading democratic party in the country, NC needs to learn skills and serve as a role model for other parties.”*  
- Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, April 26



*Prime Minister Sushil Koirala delivering his opening remarks at the NC workshop.*

MPs brought forward concerns such as the unequal distribution of the budget for districts and the trade deficit with India. Experts provided practical examples of how the budgetary and economic issues could be resolved and how MPs can play their roles effectively in the parliament.

Altogether, 92 MPs, including 31 women, attended the workshop. The event received significant coverage on national television and in major national newspapers, including *Kantipur*, *Nagarik* and *Rajdhani*.

### *Needs Assessment Survey with Youth MPs*

During this reporting quarter, CEPPS/NDI conducted a needs assessment survey with 48 youth MPs aged 40 and below, including 35 women. These MPs represented the three major parties (NC, CPN-UML, and UCPN-M) as well as 11 smaller parties. The survey aimed to identify the needs of youth MPs in order to design targeted, tailored assistance programs for them. The questionnaire requested information on areas of policy interest, desired skill and capacity building trainings, and their familiarity with and use of technological tools and social media for communication and organization.

CEPPS/NDI is consolidating and summarizing the information based on the administered survey questionnaires to analyze the findings and plan for a technical assistance program with MPs.

### *Roundtable Discussions*

On May 14 and 15, 2014, CEPPS/NDI organized two separate roundtable discussions with MPs from government and opposition parties, respectively, on executive-legislative relations and the role of the opposition. Sixteen (16) MPs from the government parties (NC and CPN-UML) and 14 MPs from the opposition parties (UCPN-M, MJFN, MJFN-D, and Federal Socialist Party), including nine women, engaged in substantial discussion with NDI's Director of Governance Programs on the challenges they have in their daily interactions with the government and each other and the limitations they face in impacting the decision-making process. Drawing on CEPPS/NDI's parliamentary strengthening programs worldwide, NDI shared best practices in strengthening executive-legislative relations and tools for structuring effective communication and coordination between the parliamentary group, the party and the government. NDI highlighted international norms and standards as outlined in the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) guidelines on the rights and duties of the opposition in parliament, emphasized the importance for the opposition to focus on outlining constructive alternatives to government policy, and ensuring effective communication to their constituents, public opinion, and the media about their work in parliament.



*Roundtable discussion on the role of opposition parties*

On June 13, in response to a request from youth MPs, CEPPS/NDI convened a roundtable discussion with targeted youth MPs and Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma, expert and former vice chair of the NPC. The MPs shared views about the government's minimal vision for youth mobilization and development and discussed means and opportunities where they could influence policy makers. They stressed the need for reforming the Youth and Sports Ministry and the formation of the Youth Council as outlined in National Youth Policy. Participants recommended that the government should allocate more of its fiscal budget towards job creation and infrastructure projects. Eight youth MPs, including three women, three Madheshis, and four Janajatis, attended the event. These MPs represented NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, CPN-ML, MJFN, and Nepal Pariwar Dal. The event helped participating MPs in developing a specific agenda for ongoing pre-budget discussions in the LP.

### *Budget Briefings*

On May 26, 2014, CEPPS/NDI organized a budget briefing session with MPs representing MJFN-D and RPP. Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma facilitated the interaction. Seven MPs, including three women, engaged in a substantial discussion on the role of MPs in the budgetary process.

MPs also learned about the importance of pre-budget discussions and suggested areas where they could raise concerns and provide feedback on the upcoming fiscal budget.

On June 9, in response to a request from women MPs, CEPPS/NDI organized a briefing session for women lawmakers that focused on the budget and budgetary processes. The briefing included the different stages and procedures of budget making in Nepal. Participants received briefings on the concept and objectives of a pre-budget discussion and how they could creatively participate in the upcoming discussion in the LP. Thirty-two (32) women MPs representing 10 political parties attended; out of those participants, 24 were from Dalit, Janajati, or Madheshi communities. Based on his practical experience working in the NPC, Dr. Sharma shared challenges to the country's economic growth and highlighted some key priority areas for the government and the lawmakers to focus on in order to improve the economy.

On June 12, CEPPS/NDI organized a briefing session with youth MPs on pre-budget and budgetary processes to increase awareness on the pre-budget and budget-making process in Nepal and the role of different government agencies in the process. Dr. Sharma highlighted the issues that MPs could raise during the upcoming pre-budget discussion in the LP. Nineteen (19) MPs, including 12 women, participated in the event. Participants represented five parties – UCPN-M, CPN-UML, CPN-ML, Sanghiya Sadbhawana Party, and Nepal Pariwar Dal. CEPPS/NDI distributed presentation materials for the MPs to use as a reference document during pre-budget discussions.

#### *Citizens' Assemblies on the Local Self-Governance Act*

In June 2014, CEPPS/NDI, in partnership with SAATHI, organized citizens' assemblies in Lalitpur, Jhapa, Sunsari, Baitadi and Kaski districts to enable marginalized groups to provide input to LP on the proposed amendment to the Local Self Governance Act (LSGA). At each event, 25 district-level leaders from marginalized groups reviewed the LSGA and identified ways to advocate the outcomes of the assemblies to women CA/LP members. In Lalitpur and Sunsari respectively, Under Secretaries of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development Mr. Shanker K. C. and Mr. Ramesh Prasad Adhikari briefed the participants on the LSGA currently tabled in the parliament. Recommendations included having 50 percent women's representation at the local level and ensuring that gender budgeting provisions be incorporated in the LSGA. Of the total number of participants, women comprised 72 percent; 37 percent were from indigenous groups, 10 percent were Dalit and 5 percent were Muslim.



*Discussion at a citizens' assembly*

#### *Supporting the Legislature in Achieving Rapid Implementation of the New Constitution*

During this quarter, CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF started working with its partner National Constitution Foundation (NCF) to conduct a compliance analysis of existing laws in relation to certain immutable principles of the interim constitution: republicanism, secularism, federalism,

and inclusion. TAF plans to hold four workshops to identify 20 key statutes that will be legally reviewed to identify provisions within the pre-existing statutes that require amendments when examined through a framework of analysis based on the above-mentioned immutable principles.

Starting with the principle of secularism, on June 20, 2014, NCF conducted a workshop that brought together key stakeholders from the legal sector, judicial sector, political sphere, and other concerned parties. The workshop focused on the principles inherent in the concept of secularization, including the principles of freedom of opinion, freedom of religion, and right to culture (*see Appendix XI for a program description*).

### *Improving the Parliamentary Library*

On April 2, 2014, following clarification from CEPPS/NDI that the library improvement plan does not fall under “construction work,” TAF began working with the Parliament Secretariat library and the contractor to facilitate the library upgrade work.

### Sub-Objective 3.B: Increase communication between representatives and their constituents.

#### *Sub-Objective 3.B.1: Supporting Greater Public Awareness and Engagement in Work of Parliament*

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

#### Support to the Parliament Secretariat

On April 19 and 20, 2014, in response to a Parliament Secretariat request, the Writing Workshop Pvt. Ltd (TWW) supported the Secretariat to plan and organize an orientation on parliamentary reporting. This orientation was part of the Secretariat’s communication and public outreach strategy, developed with the support of TWW under the CEPPS program. CA/LP Chairperson



*Orientation on parliamentary reporting*

Subash Chandra Nemwang inaugurated the workshop. Twenty (20) Secretariat staff, including senior officials and support staff, and 28 journalists attended the orientation. Joint Secretary Mukunda Sharma moderated the sessions. (*Please see Appendix XII for a complete list of sessions and participants.*)

At the orientation, the Secretariat presented the draft accreditation policy and requested that a small group of journalists work with them to finalize the policy. However, the journalists could not come to an agreement on who would comprise this group. TWW is exploring the possibility

of finalizing the draft in conjunction with the Secretariat and the Parliamentary Affairs Journalist Society.

At the request of the Secretary General, TAF started the process of providing each parliamentary committee with a heavy-duty printer to support the capacity of committees to disseminate relevant information in a timely manner. The printers will enable the committees to disseminate information in bulk, conduct press conferences, and improve record management. TAF procured and installed two air conditioners in the Secretariat's media center to make it usable during extreme weather despite its basement location.

### CA/LP Website

The CA launched its new website, [www.can.gov.np](http://www.can.gov.np), on June 27. The technical officer on temporary assignment to the Secretariat worked with the spokesperson's office and a website design company contracted by TAF to facilitate the redesign of the Secretariat's website, transfer of data and information for the website content. Initially, the technical officer focused on the redesign of the LP website ([www.parliament.gov.np](http://www.parliament.gov.np)). During the process, the Secretariat directed the team to focus on the CA website first and then later work on linking the LP's website (*see Appendix XIII for a screenshot of the new landing page of the website*).

### Radio Programming

TAF worked with Interface Nepal to broadcast a weekly 30-minute radio program. *Hamro Kanoon*. The program, which ran on over 30 different FM radio stations across Nepal this quarter, introduced and discussed various aspects of Nepali legislative processes. A total of 13 episodes on various issues aired during this reporting period, including: labor policy, the budget making process, senior citizens and the CA, forms of governance, and fundamental rights. With the recent formation of the second CA, many episodes focused on issues related to the formation of the CA. (*For a complete listing of the episodes and guests invited, please see Appendix XIV.*)

In order to strengthen the radio program, Interface Nepal held a capacity building workshop in Biratnagar, Morang district, on April 19. The participants in the workshop consisted of Interface Nepal's radio partners from the eastern region. The training focused on building the capacity of local partners at the district level on how to leverage existing tools, such as the radio programs, to disseminate information on legislative proceedings to the public. (*Please see Annex XV for a list of participants.*)

### *Building CSO Capacity to Monitor the Legislative Process*

TAF and NCF convened a coalition of five specific interest groups (Dalit, Madheshi, women, youth, and Janajati) to conduct legislative audits. Most of the representatives in this coalition have a legal background, which helps in the audit of bills to study compliance with international norms and standards, legal and statutory coherence and other technical details. This quarter, NCF and the coalition audited "Provisions Adopted in the Draft Penal Code 2067 Regarding Offences Relating to Human Body (Murder)." TAF is also coordinating with NCF to conduct audits on the procedural compliance of the ongoing legislation in parliament.

Following each social audit, TAF coordinated with the New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the audits through three print media outlets – Spotlight (English), Nepal (Nepali), and Shichhyak (Nepali). (*A summary of the bill review program is provided in Appendix XVI.*)

### *Public Consultations with Youth and Women on Transitional Legislation*



*Lalit Kala Gurung, Nepal Trade Union Congress-Independent; Director Rudra Prasad Poudel, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labor and Employment; Hansa Ram Pandey, Director, FNCCI at the press conference.*

On April 2, 2014, TAF partners Samudayik Sarathi (SS) and Women Act (WA) organized a press conference for the synopsis report of the 12th wave of public consultations on the proposed labor bill. The event was attended by various stakeholders from the media, CSOs, and the legal sector, and included a presentation of the findings of the public consultations across the 45 districts. Lalit Kala Gurung from the Nepal Trade Union Congress-Independent and Hansa Ram Pandey from the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) represented labor and employers’ groups at the event. The synopsis report (*see Appendix XVII*) highlighted the

importance of framing a more pragmatic and timely legislation regarding labor issues, as the current Labor Act 2048 is not sufficient to address present day realities. The report also highlighted the role of relevant government stakeholders in bringing together the grievances of labor and employers while drafting the legislation. During his speech, Rudra Prasad Poudel, director of the Department of Labour at the Ministry of Labour and Employment, endorsed the synopsis report and committed to share the findings of the report with his ministry.

From April to June 2014, TAF, SS, and WA completed the 14<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations in 45 urban locations throughout the country. The 14<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations focused on issues related to the Social Practices Reform Bill, 2068. In each of the public consultations, a brief presentation was followed by moderated discussions on four key questions pertaining to what social practices should be included and excluded in the bill, provisions required for the efficacy of the proposed act, government bodies responsible for the effective implementation of the bill, and future challenges in implementing the provisions of the bill, especially in the context of rapid societal and political transformation in Nepal. Overall, 2,358 participants attended this wave of public consultations. The gender composition and ethnic demographics of the participants are presented in the table below. On June 6, SS and WA organized press conference for the synopsis report (*see Appendix XVIII*) of the 14<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations; in attendance were CA members Hon. Ram Narayan Bidari, Hon. Rita Shahi, Hon. Kamala Ghimire, and Mr. Suryabansh Kandel, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs.

### **Table 6: Demographic and Ethnic Profile of Participants**

Total	Gender			Age Group			Upper Caste		Adibasi/Janajati		Dalits		Un-identified	Muslims
	F	M	3rd	16-39	40-A	Not mentioned	Hill/ Mtn	Terai/ Madesh	Hill/ Mtn	Terai/ Madesh	Hill/ Mtn	Terai/ Madesh		
2,358	1,068	1,290	0	1,755	524	79	1,201	301	473	114	147	33	70	19

From June 16 to 18, the implementing partners conducted a three-day moderators' training for the 15<sup>th</sup> wave of public consultations on the Local Bodies (Elections Procedures) Amendment Bill 2070. The 15<sup>th</sup> wave of consultations started with a program in Dhading on June 28.

WA held four advocacy meetings this quarter to present the synthesized public responses and reactions of the public consultations held on various bills to relevant MPs. For this purpose, WA formed an advocacy team comprised of MPs and representatives from various political parties. The team includes nine parliamentarians (*see Appendix XIX for a list*) with legal background who are key influencers in the legislative process. The advocacy meetings focused on initiating a discourse with the parliamentarians to share the public opinion on various bills discussed in the public consultations<sup>12</sup> across the country under the CEPPS program. WA's advocacy meetings covered the Bill to Manage the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation and Disappeared Citizens, the Land Acquisition Bill, the Labor Bill, and the Social Practices Reform Bill, 2068. On average, 15-20 MPs attended each advocacy meeting.

**CEPPS OBJECTIVE 4: International assessment mission provides impartial appraisal of the electoral environment and recommendations for future electoral processes.**

As local elections have yet to be announced, CEPPS did not hold any activities under this objective during the reporting period.

**V. RESULTS**

**CEPPS OBJECTIVE 1: Political parties more effectively contribute to democratic processes in Nepal.**

Sub-Objective 1.A: Improve democratic political party organization structures and operations

***IR 1.1: Political parties are more representative of Nepali citizens***

*Indicator 1.F: Number of individuals who receive USG-assisted political party training*

- This quarter, 718 individuals received party training and assistance from CEPPS/NDI. Four CEPPS/NDI political party partners (NC, UCPN-M, MJFN-D and RPP) received technical knowledge on role of party secretariat and building up party local organizations.

<sup>12</sup> These include public consultations held during the period when Nepal did not have a parliament, from May 2012-January 2014.

- A total of 214 women leaders from five of CEPPS/NDI's political party partners (NC, UCPN-M, RPP-Nepal, MJFN-D, and RPP) received assistance and resources on developing strategies, identifying barriers and solutions to securing women's representation in politics.
- Fifty-two master trainers, including 14 women and representing six political parties (NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, RPP-Nepal, MJFN-D, and RPP), received technical knowledge from CEPPS/NDI on training techniques, membership outreach, leadership development, policy development, the relationship between parliament and party, and election education.
- A total of 126 youth leaders from 12 political parties received assistance and resources on youth agenda, leadership development, negotiation, team building and internal democracy.
- CEPPS/NDI provided technical knowledge to 210 party poll watchers from 10 political parties, including 40 women, to represent their party during the June 22 by-elections.

Sub-Objective 1.B: Enhance the electoral competitiveness of political parties

***IR 1.3: Citizens have more information and analysis on the policy differences across political parties in Nepal***

- IN and IDA began preparations for the third wave of national opinion polling.
- IN produced a series of infographics on Setopati.com, a popular news portal, to highlight findings from the previous opinion polls.

**CEPPS/IFES OBJECTIVE 2: Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants.**

Sub-Objective 2B: Strengthened democratic legal framework for elections

***IR 2B.1: Improved legal framework that ensures transparent electoral procedures that promote genuine and competitive elections***

*Output Indicator 2B.1.2.a: Number of Laws or Amendments proposed to ensure credible elections drafted with USG technical assistance (F Indicator, GJD 3.2)*

- Two amendments to the Local Self Governance Act, 1999 and the Local Bodies Election Procedures Act, 1992 were drafted by the ECN. CEPPS/IFES provided technical support to improve knowledge of and dialogue around these draft amendments, including among CA members, politicians, donors and implementing partners. As a result, both draft laws now include provisions for female candidates, including a call for 40 percent female candidates through the Local Self Governance Act, 1999 and 50 percent female candidates in the Local Bodies Election Procedures Act, 1992.

***IR 2B.2: Legal framework is a product of inclusive, public dialogue***

*Impact Indicator 2B.2.1: Percentage of relevant recommendations from USG-assisted stakeholder consultations that are incorporated into the legal framework*

- Activity has been postponed to August and September 2014 due to delays related to the ECN MOU with NDI on this event. CEPPS/IFES and CEPPS/NDI plan on proceeding independently, without the ECN's direct involvement.

Sub-Objective 2C: Strengthened electoral management capacity of ECN

***IR 2C.1: Strengthened institutional capacity of the ECN to manage the electoral process***

*Outcome Indicator 2C.1.1: Number of electoral administration procedures and systems strengthened with USG assistance (F Indicator, GJD 3.2)*

- CEPPS/IFES provided technical support to the ECN to develop two training procedures, one for Voter Educators (*Nirwahan Sikhya Karyakarta* or Ni.Si.Ka. volunteers), and one for Polling Officers and Assistant Polling Officers, to prepare for the CA By-election.. Both trainings were conducted at the central and district levels. As a result, CA By-elections were held very smoothly and effectively in all 4 constituencies.

***IR 2C.2: Increased professionalism and competence of election officials***

*Outcome Indicator 2C.2.3: Number of electoral officials trained with USG assistance (F Indicator, GJD 3.2)*

- A total of 951 electoral officials (17 percent women) were trained with CEPPS/IFES technical and/or financial assistance.
- For the BRIDGE training modules training the effectiveness was assessed:
  - Per the results of pre- and post-tests conducted for the Electoral Administration and Management BRIDGE workshop for CSOs, the knowledge gained/increased as a result of the training is by 55.8 percentage points. The pre-test results were 11.6 percent and post-test results were 67.3 percent.
  - Per the results of pre- and post-tests conducted for the Gender and Election BRIDGE workshop for CSOs, the knowledge gained/increased as a result of the training is by 46.1 percentage points. The pre-test results were 37.8 percent and post-test results were 83.5 percent.
  - As a result of the election security BRIDGE workshop, security was adequately and effectively organized and managed during the By-election.

*Output Indicator 2C.2.4: Number of training materials for electoral officials developed with USG assistance*

- Two sets of training materials were produced this quarter: 1) A draft booklet on gender inclusion and elections for the Gender and Inclusion Unit of the ECN and 2) Training manuals for the voter education and polling and counting trainings.

Sub-Objective 2D: Expanded and improved delivery of voter education

***IR 2D.1: Increased understanding of the electoral process among stakeholders and voters***

*Outcome Indicator 2D.1.2: Percentage of citizens reporting an increase in knowledge of the electoral process as a result of voter education*

- Sub-grantee CSOs conducted 269 voter education events at the community level. Pre- and post-event tests were conducted with 2,138 participants. The level of knowledge increased was 39.8 percentage points. The pre-test results were 46.9 percent and post-test results were 86.6 percent.

*Output Indicator 2D.1.3: Number of people reached by USG-assisted voter education (F indicator, GJD 3.2)*

- Through various events organized by partner CSOs:
  - 12,653 people (7,703 men, 4,950 women, 63 people with disabilities) were registered in the voters list through CSOs' help desk at the DEOs and DAOs.
  - 7,083 people (3,730 men, 3,353 women, 48 people with disabilities) were registered in voters list at voter registration camps prior to by-election.
  - 1,954 people (1,148 men, 806 women, 63 people with disabilities) from marginalized communities obtained their citizenship certificate at joint mobile camps.
  - 2,795 people (1,453 men, 1,342 women and 106 PWDs) were educated on how to use EVMs through 45 mock polling events with EVM demonstrations conducted by CSOs.
  - 152,328 (77,677 men, 74,651 women, 384 person with disabilities) people were reached through household visits made to obtain the status and to educate target populations on citizenship certificates.
  - 206 people (118 men and 88 women) obtained citizenship certificate with the support of CSOs.
  - 4,447 people (1,431 men, 3,016 women, 58 people with disabilities) were oriented on voter education through 175 events of group orientation.
  - 10 village election networks (VEN) were established as a result of 25 interaction events conducted at VDC level with the key stakeholders. 616 people (348 men, 268 women and 14 people with disabilities) participated in the events.
  - 47,000 people were reached through voter education leaflets during by-election.
  - 1,165 (43 percent women) members of Community Advocacy Forum (CAF) and 77 DAF members (43 women) were trained to enhance their leadership and advocacy skills by six partners Disabled Peoples Organization (DPO).
  - 42 people with disabilities (15 women) obtained their Disability Identification Card, 7 obtained their Citizenship Card and 127 people with disabilities were inducted as members of community groups and organizations as a result of DPOs advocacy and awareness raising efforts.
  - 160 children with disabilities received enrollment in primary schools with coordination support from CAF members whereas 11 received a waiver on

admission fees from these schools, as a result of advocacy initiatives of CAF members for free education for students with disabilities; and, 8,529 members of 239 community groups such as forest user groups, women's groups, school management committees, micro-finance/cooperative groups, etc. were oriented on democracy, inclusive society, civic and political rights of people with disabilities.

- 655 people with disabilities cast their vote in by-elections in one constituency of Bardiya district.

***IR 2D.2: Increased local capacity in providing voter education***

*Output Indicator 2D.2.3: Number of local CSOs strengthened that promote political participation and voter education (F indicator, GJD 3.2)*

- A total of 21 national level and/or local level CSOs were engaged in promoting political participation and voter education in marginalized communities.

**CEPPS/NDI OBJECTIVE 2: Civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes.**

Sub-Objective 2.A: Enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor elections

***IR 2.1: Non-partisan election monitoring efforts are more comprehensive and systematic***

*Outcome Indicator 2A.1.2.1/GJD 2.3.3-11: Number of domestic election observers (and/or party agents) trained with USG assistance*

- DEW-Nepal trained 140 STOs and 12 LTOs in four districts to observe the by-elections in four constituencies.

*Outcome Indicator 2.1.2.3: Number of individuals familiar with the citizen observer group post-election recommendations*

- DEW-Nepal distributed its comprehensive election observation report to all 61 districts where DEW-Nepal has district offices. The report, which detailed the observer group's recommendations, was shared with all 198 member NGOs of DEW-Nepal and with related government officials.
- The VRIC efforts to the selected districts offered local communities direct engagement with the DEW-Nepal network. The campaigns consisted of a number of activities, including the distribution of 38,000 informative calendars, broadcast and televised PSAs, as well as the more traditional drama and singing activities.

Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthen the capacity of media to report on the electoral process

***IR 2.2: Media are better informed to cover election related issues at the national and district levels***

*Outcome Indicator 2.2.1: Increased number of locally relevant election stories developed by national journalists*

- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee IN, its local partner AFN, and five regional partner radio stations aired 66 half-hour radio programs at the national and regional levels. In total, 515 local residents participated in the radio discussions.

**CEPPS Objective 3: The CA/LP more effectively fulfills its democratic functions.**

Sub-Objective 3.A: Strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the CA/Parliament

*Indicator 3.F: Number of national legislators and national legislative staff attending USG sponsored training or educational events*

- CEPPS/NDI provided training to 92 parliamentarians, including 31 women.
- CEPPS/NDI conducted a needs assessment survey for 48 youth parliamentarians, including 35 women.
- CEPPS/NDI, roundtables and discussions, organized in coordination with the government and opposition parties, included 96 MPs; 47 were women, and at least 25 were youth under 40. Madheshi, Janjati, and Dalit MPs also participated.

Sub-Objective 3.B: Increase communication between representatives and their constituents

***IR 3.2: MPs incorporate constituent input into legislative processes***

*Indicator 3.2.1.2: Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which national legislators and members of the public interact*

- 2,358 people, including 1,068 women, participated in CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF’s 14<sup>th</sup> round of public consultations.
- MPs attended six TAF-sponsored forums to interact with their constituents.

**CEPPS Objective 4: International assessment mission provides impartial appraisal of the electoral environment and recommendations for future electoral processes**

No results this quarter.

**VI. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE INDICATORS**

Foreign Assistance Indicators	IFES	NDI	Quarter Total	FY11 Total	FY12 Total	FY13 Total	FY14 Total	Award Total
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<b>Foreign Assistance Indicators</b>	<b>IFES</b>	<b>NDI</b>	<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>FY11 Total</b>	<b>FY12 Total</b>	<b>FY13 Total</b>	<b>FY14 Total</b>	<b>Award Total</b>
Number of individuals who received USG-assisted political party training.	N/A	718	718	975	1,370	4,761	909	8,733
Number of domestic election observers and/or party agents trained with USG assistance.	N/A	0	0	0	0	1,256	432	1,688
Number of laws or amendments to ensure credible elections drafted with USG technical assistance	2	N/A	2	0	0	0	2	4
Number of USG-assisted public sessions held regarding proposed changes to the country's legal framework	0	N/A	0	6	2	0	3	11
Number of local CSOs strengthened that promote electoral reform and/or improvements in the electoral system.	0	N/A	0	29	18	0	0	47
Number of electoral administration procedures and systems strengthened with USG assistance.	2	N/A	2	3	5	11	5	26
Number of local CSOs strengthened that promote political participation and voter education	21	N/A	21	18	21	23	22	105
Number of election officials trained with USG assistance	951	N/A	951	88,199	345	645	3,392	93,352

<b>Foreign Assistance Indicators</b>	<b>IFES</b>	<b>NDI</b>	<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>FY11 Total</b>	<b>FY12 Total</b>	<b>FY13 Total</b>	<b>FY14 Total</b>	<b>Award Total</b>
Number of national legislators and national legislative staff attending USG sponsored training or educational events.	N/A	273	273	273	123	122	435	1,226
Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which national legislators and members of the public interact.	N/A	6	6	18	11	5	5	45

## **VII. EVALUATION**

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

This quarter, CEPPS/NDI worked with senior leaders of its political party partners to assist political parties in gaining a better understanding of what each party should focus on in efforts to strengthen the organizations internally and to perform better in elections. These consultations allowed CEPPS/NDI to deliver more tailored assistance through multi-party trainings or individual party assistance. CEPPS/NDI also brought in international experts to provide new ideas and experiences, which gave parties fresh ideas on how they can improve their own work. Overall, CEPPS/NDI engaged with partner parties to identify joint issues where the party would like to improve and where CEPPS/NDI can provide assistance. The parties have good ownership over this process, which gives CEPPS/NDI a good base to move forward with parties to discuss and identify actions for parties to improve their organizational capacity.

During the national multi-party ToT training, CEPPS/NDI facilitated an outcome reflection session to document participants' experience and perceived benefits of the ToT program in terms of individual benefits, perceived benefits for the party, and observable changes within the party. Participants noted that increased self-confidence or growth in capacity (individual benefits) often resulted in benefits for the party. When participants improved their capacity as effective trainers, they were able to bring some changes into the organizational structure of their respective parties. Following the different phases of the ToT, political parties now have a dedicated pool of trainers who provide trainings on a regular basis on relevant topics. Participants reported improvements in their leadership skills and noted a growing trend of consensus-building discussions on vital issues within their party organizations. This indicates that the ToT conducted by CEPPS/NDI has had a positive impact on the parties and remains a good foundation for CEPPS/NDI to continue engaging and further developing the training capacity of its partner political parties.

The ToT training will further equip the parties with necessary skills that will strengthen political parties as representative and inclusive organizations. CEPPS/NDI has received requests from the parties on the development of party specific training manuals and to conduct more training for the parties' master trainers so that the parties can utilize them (with or without CEPPS/NDI support) in internal training efforts in the party, which is an indication that parties see the need to continue internal capacity building of it officials and members.

CEPPS/NDI's work with women's wings highlights the cultural and structural barriers to women's participation in the political parties. Through CEPP/NDI's assistance this quarter, the UCPN-M women's wing secured better representation in the party structure. The development of a six-point strategy for increased representation and strategic lobbying efforts, enabled UCPN-M women to secure a more than 100 percent increase in representation in the UCPN-M central committee. This success proved that improving internal strategies can lead to better representation.

CEPPS/NDI continued FLA regional training this quarter to equip youth with training skills to use in future FLA meetings. This has enabled the youth to take on more responsibilities during the activities and has given them more confidence. The use of questionnaires to solicit information on youth political issues and concerns showed young politicians how to collect information as a base for policy development. Information on policy priorities that the FLA collects will be used to lobby young CA/LP members and form the basis for a national multi-party youth agenda. It also will serve as another way for youth to show that they are adding value to political processes.

To assist the parties in the observation of the June 2014 by-elections, CEPPS/NDI trained party agents. The agents were able to collect information as well as disputes and complaints from the candidates/parties were recorded after the by-elections. However, there is still work to be done both with the parties and the ECN to engender a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the polling station party agents on election day.

Parties positively received the national opinion poll results, although information directly related to citizens' views of the parties was not always well-received. Senior party leaders reported that this feedback is very useful for party internal strategic planning. The parties have expressed interest in gaining more information and including more issues about the performance of political parties in upcoming surveys to better understand the perception of political parties among citizens.

## **CEPPS/IFES OBJECTIVE 2: Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants.**

While the CA works to meet its January 22, 2015 deadline for a new Constitution, CEPPS/IFES continued to provide technical assistance and capacity building support to the ECN to strengthen Nepal's democratic legal framework. Through direct interaction between IFES-Nepal staff and the ECN, as well as through the provision of international consultants, the close working relationship between CEPPS/IFES and the ECN allowed CEPPS/IFES to advise the ECN on some of the key questions that must be addressed, including discussions about a proportional

representation system and issues related to gender and inclusion in Nepal's electoral processes. In the coming quarters, CEPPS/IFES anticipates that this close working relationship will be essential to enable CEPPS/IFES to continue to support ECN's capacity to interact with the CA. The CA's ongoing debates over federalism and election reforms need to be closely followed to address the real threat of political exclusion. The process of including marginalized groups in a substantive manner remains a serious challenge and will directly impact Nepal's social and political stability.

The ECN demonstrated an improved electoral management capacity with its successful organization of the CA by-elections on June 22. The impact of years of support by CEPPS/IFES could be seen through well-trained ECN officials and civic educators effectively implementing pre-election trainings; preparing and using EVMs; and monitoring the political campaigns. CEPPS/IFES provided critical assistance throughout the preparation and implementation of the By-elections, including extensive training and capacity-building workshops for election administrators. The satisfaction that voters expressed with the experience at the By-election is a result of well-trained, professional election administration that will enhance the overall credibility of the ECN. But as local elections are planned for 2015, the ECN could further benefit from a modified, more independent structure. The next few months offer an exceptional opportunity for the ECN to promote and advocate for its own increased independence, including financial autonomy and the power to control the hiring of its staff. This independence is vital for the sustainability of the capacity building efforts that have been made. CEPPS/IFES will work closely with the ECN to develop a comprehensive strategy to encourage and support this effort.

Just as the ECN's electoral management capacity will be vital for successful local elections, so too will CEPPS/IFES' efforts with the ECN and partner CSOs to deliver expanded and improved delivery of voter education. CEPPS/IFES worked closely with the ECN in the development of voter outreach strategies and implementation for the By-election, including through direct public information campaigns and civic and electoral education initiatives. CEPPS/IFES' partnership with CSOs focused on inclusion of marginalized populations in Nepal, and through cascade trainings and CSO networking was able to reach significant portions of these communities. The decentralization of political power and resources from the government to locally elected representatives is the key to grassroots development. For this to be successful, the targeted communities need to be well prepared, not only to understand the significance of their choice of candidates, but also their role as engaged citizens within the local governance system.

**CEPPS/NDI OBJECTIVE 2: Civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes.**

This quarter, CEPPS/NDI continued to support subgrantee DEW-Nepal to train and deploy 140 STOs and 12 LTOs to observe the by-elections in four constituencies. Given the switch to a technological voting method, observers needed additional training regarding the new VRM process in order to carry out an informed and effective observation. For the first time in Nepal, observers recorded their observations through a mobile application, which increased the efficiency of the observers by reducing the time taken to record observations and transcribe them electronically. This method also made it possible to access the results of the observations in real time and make timely analysis.

CEPPS/NDI, in partnership with DEW-Nepal, carried out VRIC community events in 117 VDCs and six municipalities in the five target districts of Baitadi, Jhapa, Kaski, Lalitpur and Sunsari. Approximately 12,000 local residents watched the street dramas and *dohori* (a traditional Nepali musical performance), which provided information regarding the voter registration process and highlighted the importance of citizen participation in elections to safeguard democracy. DEW-Nepal volunteers disseminated informative calendars outlining the voter requirements and registration processes. In several of the community events, residents asked campaign volunteers specific questions regarding the registration process. DEW-Nepal volunteers, who received CEPPS/NDI training earlier in the quarter, clarified misunderstandings regarding the process and directed people to where they could register their names on the voters' list. Through these community events, CEPPS/NDI reached individuals at the grassroots level, who often are not covered by national level information campaigns. The program design, which incorporated entertainment as a way to spread information, proved successful as the public were notably attracted to the events due to the music and the drama; they then stayed on to watch the remainder of the program, receiving key voter registration messages in the process.

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

This quarter, CEPPS/NDI strengthened its relationships with senior parliamentary leaders of NC, CPN-UML, UCPN-M, MJFN-D, and RPP. CEPPS/NDI promptly responded to requests for assistance on party and parliamentary party office coordination, as well as organizing budget in preparation for discussions about the state budget in the CA/LP. The parliamentary party offices of NC, MJFN-D, and RPP initiated trainings for their respective MPs on parliamentary processes, which provided MPs with relevant and important information for them to fulfill their roles in the LP. Based on a long term relationship with political parties and their parliamentary party offices, CEPPS/NDI capitalized on the relationship and trust built over the year in order to respond to timely and concrete requests for technical assistance. A high degree of candid debate took place within the governing parties about the importance, process and approach to coalition coordination, and amongst parties of the opposition on the constructive role they should play in parliament. CEPPS/NDI's in-house governance expert provided expert advice and suggestions to help further these discussions.

The series of briefings on the budget and budget processes generated additional requests from youth and women MPs for similar briefings. In addition, youth MPs requested a roundtable to discuss a youth-focused budget and the importance of allocating budget lines to job creation, the establishment of a youth council, and other issues of relevance to youth. Youth MPs also requested CEPPS/NDI's support to the finance subcommittee in organizing a roundtable discussion on the procurement act and to prepare the subcommittee members for a targeted discussion on amending the procurement act using comparative procurement acts from different countries as a reference.

CEPPS/NDI completed a needs assessment survey with youth MPs to determine parliamentarian priorities for future technical assistance programs. The survey focused on youth and women MPs, two of the country's historically marginalized groups; the results of the survey will provide

a basis for CEPP/NDI to design tailored programs for these groups. The survey results will be shared with all of the 93 youth MPs, with year five programming updated to reflect these results.

In several of the citizens' assemblies, participants mentioned that discussions on draft legislation were almost non-existent at the local level. Given this current lack of local input into the legislative processes, the citizens' assemblies provided a much needed platform for locals to provide input to ongoing legislative work. This platform also served as an opportunity for key government officials to present their work on the LSGA to participants and receive their feedback/input. The consolidated report and recommendation from the five citizens' assemblies will be presented to relevant women MPs reviewing the LSGA through a national level roundtable discussion in the next quarter.

In a meeting with participants of its capacity building workshop for local radio partners, CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF and its partner Interface Nepal observed a deepened conceptual understanding of legislative and political processes amongst the local radio partners. This will enhance the role of the radio media and increase support for greater public awareness and engagement on the legislative process. Further follow-up discussions held with the participants illustrated that such trainings have been helpful to identify cross-cutting synergies between the role of media and legislative efforts. It was also expressed that using media such as the radio to promote legislative debate forums is crucial to enhancing legislative discourses and increasing the demands of political accountability among a sizable section of the Nepali population.

## VIII. SUCCESS STORIES

**Successful use of Electronic Voting Machines in the 2014 Nepal By-election:** The June 2014 CA by-elections took place in four constituencies of Nepal (Kathmandu-2, Chitwan-4, Bardiya-1 and Kailali-6). CEPPS/IFES provided technical, financial and logistical support to: conduct Master and regional trainings for Polling Officers and Assistant Polling Officers on operating the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and managing polling centers in these four constituencies; and conduct EVM briefings and mock polling exercises for media personnel and Chief and Assistant Returning Officers. Following the Master level training, two regional training events for occurred, providing voter educators with the knowledge they needed to carry out household visits and mock-polling activities using the EVMs.

On the day of the by-election, 69.5 percent of voters turned up to cast their vote. A polling officer who participated in the electronic polling and counting training in Chitwan stated that "the practical training modality has made me confident," while another polling officer stated that "this was the best



*Women Conduct EVM Training*

of all the training events" he had attended to date. Through these trainings, CEPPS/IFES trained 20 Master level trainers who further trained an additional 657 Polling and Assistant Polling Officers on effectively managing the 324 polling centers in the four By-election constituencies.

CEPPS/IFES watched operations on By-election Day in 36 (out of 39) polling locations of Kathmandu-2 and found that polling officials were able to conduct polling effectively. There were two minor incidents of EVM malfunction in two polling centers, but both were resolved within an hour. CEPPS/IFES also interviewed voters, who appreciated how "easy and simple" it was to cast their vote using the EVMs, with some of them stating that EVMs should be used throughout the country in future elections.

**Women's Representation:** While the first CA elections in 2008 ushered in a record number of elected women, fewer women achieved representation in the November 2013 CA elections. A lack of a unified approach by women across all political parties was one of the reasons cited for this low representation. To empower parties to formulate a common agenda to strengthen women's representation, CEPPS/NDI is working with the women's wings of major political parties, and women politicians have assembled in individual party forums to formulate targeted action plans to address the challenges and barriers to women's representation.

Prior to the national conference in May 2014, the UCPN-M organized an intensive two-day workshop with women CCMs in Kathmandu. During the workshop, members drafted a six-point strategy that aimed to increase women's representation and create a sustainable approach to maintaining equality within the party. Women politicians presented the six-point strategy to delegates at the national convention, which approved the three points listed below.

- 1) Agreement by the leadership to ensure 33 percent women's representation at the local level. If the required percentage is not met, then the position will remain vacant until it can be filled by a woman.
- 2) Agreement by the leadership to ensure 25 percent women's representation at the district and central committee levels. A written memo of this agreement will be circulated to all departments and committees of the party.
- 3) Agreement by the leadership to ensure 25 percent women's representation in the central committee as stated clearly in the party constitution.

While the low representation of women in politics is not unique to a specific country, what sets this story apart is the remarkable degree of ownership demonstrated by the UCPN-M women politicians. They have created a platform where women politicians openly discuss their internal strengths and weaknesses as well identify measures to address them. Inclusive dialogue and participation has helped raise awareness on women's issues, which would have been sidelined had the women CCMs not been determined in their demand for women's empowerment. UCPN-M also made it possible for women leaders to have more buy-in from party leaders in party operations; leaders are left with very little choice when presented with a thoughtful strategy for inclusiveness and mass participation.

**Public Consultations:** With the formation of the CA/LP, TAF and its partners are finally able to work on presenting the synthesized findings of the public consultations on the draft bills to relevant members of parliament. During this quarter, TAF held advocacy meetings that focused on sharing the findings and recommendations of the public consultations with MPs. These meetings have created a space for sharing the concerns and interests of women and youth on specific draft bills with various lawmakers. By inviting parliamentarians to public consultations, the CEPPS program facilitates interactions between the public and lawmakers for a more transparent, participatory, and politically accountable legislative process.

**Infographics:** The infographics designed by IN have been shared more than 800 times through social media. These infographics depict findings from the national opinion polling on respondents' perceived direction of the country. The infographic pertaining to trust towards different institutions and mechanisms also has been shared more than 800 times.

## **IX. CHALLENGES**

- Internal factions and inter-party conflicts remain a challenge to CEPPS/NDI's political party programming. Additionally, the centralization of decision-making within parties has sometimes hampered the implementation of new ideas identified during CEPPS/NDI-facilitated workshops.
- Due to CPN-UML's national convention and leadership elections, CEPPS/NDI conducted fewer activities the party during this quarter. CEPPS/NDI has been cautious in engagements with CPN-UML during this period to maintain its objectivity.
- As reported in the last quarter, the parliament has yet to elect committee chairs, though a few bills have been introduced. As a result, it was not possible to organize a committee hearing this quarter. In absence of a formal committee leadership, CEPPS/NDI has approached parliamentary party leaders, chief whips, and even some influential committee members of specific committees – such as the finance committee – with offers of technical assistance and support.
- Due to the lack of progress in the CA/LP and the busy schedules of the MPs, CEPPS/NDI was unable to initiate constituency outreach activities this quarter. Likewise, due to the change in FNCCI leadership, the first quarterly policy dialogue with FNCCI was postponed. CEPPS/NDI and FNCCI are in discussion to plan the first policy dialogues with youth MPs and politicians early next quarter.

Internal communication challenges at the ECN resulted in a delay of the organization of the regional electoral reform workshops planned by CEPPS/NDI. Following more than three months of coordination, ECN eventually suggested that CEPPS/NDI implement these workshops independently. The CEPPS partners will therefore be jointly organizing these events.

- CEPPS/NDI partner TAF planned to facilitate a study tour for a group of Secretariat senior officials in April or May 2014. Given the hectic schedule of the Secretariat with providing support for consecutive meetings of the CA/LP, this activity has been put on hold. The

Secretary General expressed that although the Secretariat officials need the planned a study tour, they would need to wait for a time when there was a break in the sessions. TAF will continue to coordinate with the Secretariat to find an appropriate time for the study tour.

- With the announcement on April 16 that by-elections would be held on June 22, IFES' greatest challenge was to adapt its anticipated activities quickly to provide quality technical support to the ECN, enabling it carry out a successful By-election. While CEPPS/IFES was able to leverage its technical expertise to provide trainings, mock-polling events and adapted voter education and voter registration outreach, previously scheduled trainings, progress on electoral legal reform and future strategic planning were postponed until after the June 22 election. This was in part because, given the demands of the By-election, ECN commissioners and senior election decision makers travelled frequently during this period. Travel schedules challenged CEPPS/IFES' ability to carry out target activities, such as expanding the ECN's contribution to the CA drafting of the constitution. This also impacted IFES' burn rate.
- In addition to timeline adjustments, a second challenge for CEPPS/IFES was ECN's resistance to CEPPS/IFES' CSO programming, specifically the CSOs' establishment of election networks at the district and VDC levels, which aim to keep the population informed on electoral and democracy related topics. The ECN expressed its concern that this could be a duplication of existing multi sectorial civic education committees that have been formally installed at the district, VDC and ward levels. However, given that these ECN committees are not yet functional, CEPPS/IFES assessed that these ECN committees could benefit if merged with the CSO program. In the next quarter, CEPPS/IFES will organize a meeting between the head of the EEIC and CSO representatives to identify a common solution in which CEPPS/IFES is able to support CSOs' efforts to expand voter education while also supporting the ECN's intention to invigorate its stalled civic education committees.
- Another challenge that emerged during this quarter was the decision by the ECN to exclude teachers as resource people for polling, which had an adverse impact on efforts to increase the participation of women in trainings. The ECN decided that teachers were not an apolitical group, ruling out a group with a high proportion of women. CEPPS/IFES continued to insist on higher participation rates for women in the training programs managed by its CSO sub-awardees.
- Finally, CEPPS/IFES identified the need to improve collaboration with UNDP-ESP in areas where each organization's objectives and activities overlap. These include support to the ECN's 2014-2019 strategic planning process and possible election dispute resolution activities. Given its successful experience collaborating with UNDP-ESP to implement far-reaching and effective BRIDGE training programs across Nepal, CEPPS/IFES is confident that it will be able to increase collaboration across other areas. As a first step, CEPPS/IFES is working with UNDP-ESP to identify opportunities for CEPPS/IFES to contribute to the ECN's Strategic Planning Process in the fall of 2014.

## **X. LESSONS LEARNED**

- Following four phases of FLA, 13 members formed a planning committee to strategize for future programming and conduct additional activities in the development regions. The committee regularly held meetings, coordinated within their political parties, and conducted two regional workshops. The FLA members facilitated the workshops and helped youth participants to collectively identify challenges, create a youth agenda for their particular region, and clarify the role of youth in the constitution making process. FLA members also aim to travel to districts and some villages to conduct such types of interaction with the youth of political parties and civil society. CEPPS/NDI will be able to strengthen the ownership among youth in defining the youth agenda, leading multi-party work, and broadening responsibilities within their parties.
- Moving forward, CEPPS/NDI will capitalize on its VRIC efforts, specifically by partnering with the DEOs to ensure that there are means for citizens to actually register their name on the voting lists at the campaign events. This will be a feature of future VRIC activities.
- CEPPS/NDI partners IN and AFN will repackage phase one of the *Loktantra Mantra* radio program and will devise a new set of questions via consultations for the final quarter of the project. This will include plans to place program content online so that radio stations can easily access this information and can rebroadcast the show anytime during future local or national elections. The program will be adopting a new model based on the inputs provided by content advisors who were consulted during the current quarter.
- Despite its commitment to advancing inclusive elections, the ECN has made slow progress in implementing key elements of this initiative. Following the ECN's decision to develop a Gender and Inclusion policy in 2011, two years passed before the draft Gender and Inclusion policy was finalized and a Gender and Inclusion Unit was created. Given this slow progress, and the importance of integrating gender throughout the electoral process, CEPPS/IFES seized the opportunity to work with the ECN to make gender and inclusion issues a priority throughout the last quarter. By combining pressure with targeted support, CEPPS/IFES was able to help build the foundation for the Gender and Inclusion Unit's work, ensuring that gender priorities were incorporated in the electoral process and that the unit itself was inclusive in its membership. In March 2014, the Gender and Inclusion Unit announced the establishment of a high level Gender and Inclusion Committee. This provided CEPPS/IFES with an opportunity to directly engage Committee members in strategic developments. Seeking to maintain momentum behind the Committee's work, CEPPS/IFES provided a wide spectrum of support. At the request of the ECN, CEPPS/IFES provided an international gender expert to work directly with the Gender and Inclusion Unit in developing a Strategic and Gender Action Plan. At the end of the reporting period, the gender expert was in Kathmandu carrying out this initiative. Additionally, to provide effective integration of gender priorities throughout the electoral process, CEPPS/IFES is developing a comprehensive "Gender and Elections" handbook to be distributed widely to ECN staff, especially at the local level. CEPPS/IFES also organized a series of gender interactions to bring together CA and Ministry representatives, ECN officials and other electoral stakeholders to raise awareness about the Gender and Inclusion Unit and its role in advancing inclusive elections. These and other activities highlight CEPPS/IFES' understanding that, absent targeted and consistent support, gender work is at risk of becoming sidelined.

- Additionally, CEPPS/IFES and CEPPS/NDI took steps in this quarter to strengthen coordination on activities related to electoral reform and constitutional developments, addressing an issue raised in USAID’s project evaluation. This past quarter, the two CEPPS partners increased their interactions through establishment of regular planning meetings and identified key opportunities for collaboration in Year 5. Pending USAID’s approval, CEPPS/IFES and CEPPS/NDI will implement a joint program to work with stakeholders to gain acceptance and broad consensus on the draft political party law and the consolidated electoral law. CEPPS/IFES and CEPPS/NDI also aim to implement a joint training on election dispute resolution for local-level political party leaders and other electoral stakeholders.

## **XI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

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

- CEPPS/NDI will continue to work with its party partners to develop tailored assistance for each party’s main priorities and issue areas. This will include a specific focus on the role of the secretariat candidate identification and selection processes for the local election, local policy development and strengthening local party branches.
- In preparation for their national conference, CEPPS/NDI will provide technical support to MJFN-D.
- CEPPS/NDI will continue its meetings with the FLA planning committee and will hold additional FLA regional workshops in the upcoming quarter.
- CEPPS/NDI will work with its partner women’s wings to provide targeted assistance where feasible and assist them in drafting a new strategy that can be presented and supported by party leadership.
- CEPPS/NDI will organize a multi-party workshop for women’s wings and will specifically focus on identifying women candidates for the local elections and the need to train the women to prepare them to run for office.
- CEPPS/NDI will hold consultations on the draft political party law in each of the five development regions.
- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee IN will begin the third wave of national opinion polls in July 2014.

### **CEPPS/IFES OBJECTIVE 2: Strengthen institutions involved in electoral processes, either as actors or participants.**

For the next quarter, CEPPS/IFES plans to focus on the following activities to inform inclusive, democratic legal reforms; assist the ECN in building its capacity to advise the CA on electoral

reforms and prepare for local government elections; and continue civil society outreach and capacity building. Some of these activities are based on the assumption that a Constitution will be promulgated by the January 15, 2015 deadline, paving the way for local government elections soon after.

### **Sub-Objective 2B: Strengthened Democratic Legal Framework for Elections**

- Provide technical guidance to the ECN to develop policies, regulations and directives necessary to conduct local government elections;
- Provide technical expertise to the ECN on electoral law reforms related to the constitution writing process;
- Promote stakeholder consensus on an electoral legal framework for the local government elections;
- Promote stakeholder consensus on the draft political party law and the consolidated electoral law (in collaboration with CEPPS/NDI);
- Support the ECN's efforts to promote its new amended Local Bodies Election Procedure Act, 1992 introducing a provision for 50 percent women candidacy quota; and
- Support the organization of regional and national fora on the proposed revised Political Party Act (in collaboration with CEPPS/NDI).

### **Sub-Objective 2C: Strengthened Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN**

- Assist the ECN in preparing to host the fifth meeting of the Forum of Electoral Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) from October 31 to November 5, 2014;
- Provide technical assistance to the ECN's planning department in consolidating the post-election review sessions' reports;
- Work with the ECN to develop their 5-year Strategy Plan (2014-19), including the incorporation of valid feedback from the consolidated post-election review reports;
- Implement BRIDGE trainings;
- Build the capacity of ECN and DEO staff on financial management and reporting, procurement and logistics;
- Conduct a needs assessment of DEO capacity to prepare for and conduct local government elections;
- Complete training for ECN staff to manage the ECN website effectively and independently;

- Work with the ECN to implement the Training Information Management System (TIMS);
- Assist the ECN Gender and Inclusion Unit to prepare a Strategic Plan and an Action Plan; and
- Finalize the booklet on Gender and Elections in coordination with the Gender and Inclusion Unit.

### **Sub-Objective 2D: Expanded and Improved Delivery of Voter Education**

- Advise the ECN/EEIC in planning, strategizing and implementing voter education and outreach activities;
- Provide technical assistance to and develop materials for ECN/EEIC to ensure the successful implementation of electoral education for social studies teachers trainings;
- Assist CSO sub-awardees in developing and producing voter education materials and conducting outreach activities with marginalized communities;
- Form pilot District Election Networks and Village Election Networks of election stakeholders and DEOs in selected districts;
- Provide voter registration help desk support to DEOs and DAOs, as needed;
- Complete a survey on the status of citizenship certificates in marginalized communities and design programs and activities to address findings from the survey;
- Develop, publish and disseminate information materials for the citizenship certificate program;
- Coordinate with relevant stakeholders to plan and conduct joint mobile camps for citizenship certificate dissemination and voter registration for targeted marginalized communities;
- Support District Advocacy Forums and Community Advocacy Forums to implement advocacy plans; and
- Publish Disability Election Access Monitoring (DEAM) report and disseminate findings with relevant stakeholders.

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

- Provide ongoing analysis to the U.S. Embassy, USAID and other stakeholders on preparations for local government elections, the constitution writing environment and identification of key issues

**CEPPS/NDI OBJECTIVE 2: Civil society initiatives more effectively contribute to transparent electoral processes.**

- CEPPS/NDI will continue VRIC community events and will air PSAs on local FM stations in four districts. In addition, CEPPS/NDI will conduct an impact survey to gauge the effectiveness of the campaign.
- In partnership with SAATHI, CEPPS/NDI will hold a roundtable discussion with women parliamentarians to present a consolidated report and recommendations from the five citizens' assemblies on the LSGA, thereby ensuring that the input from the local level is communicated to the lawmakers.
- CEPPS partners NDI and IFES will jointly hold five regional electoral reform dialogues and one national conference.
- CEPPS/NDI will hold additional discussions with CEPPS/IFES on electoral dispute resolution activities targeting political parties and engaging them on issues such as the code of conduct.
- CEPPS/NDI and other EOCG members will meet with the ECN to submit common input on the electoral process with the conclusion of the two recent elections.
- CEPPS/NDI partners IN and AFN will continue production and broadcasts of the Loktantra Mantra radio program with five regional radio station partners. IN will continue to disseminate infographics and poll data through Setopati.com and Setopati.net.

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

- CEPPS/NDI will organize two capacity building trainings, one each for the chair/committee members and staff members of the LP committees.
- CEPPS/NDI will support the finance subcommittee with the organization of a roundtable discussion on the procurement act.
- In partnership with FNCCI, CEPPS/NDI will organize a quarterly policy dialogue for youth MPs and politicians.
- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF will carry out a number of activities with the Parliament Secretariat: parliamentary workshops on the immutable principles of republicanism, inclusion, and federalism; upgrading the parliamentary library space; partner with TWW to implement activities based on the approved outreach and communication strategy; and design a school visit program.
- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF will continue to work with SS and WA to conduct public consultations in 45 urban locations on a quarterly basis.

- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF will work with Interface Nepal to identify relevant legislation and provide assistance to produce and broadcast the weekly radio show *Hamro Kanoon*. In the coming quarter, Interface Nepal will provide training to key staff at each radio stations
- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF will work with NCF and interest groups to identify and audit relevant legislation in the coming quarters. Furthermore, TAF will coordinate with New Spotlight to ensure a proper dissemination of the findings/recommendations of the interest group audits through the print media.
- CEPPS/NDI subgrantee TAF will continue to engage with the advocacy team and conduct advocacy meetings with the CA members of the various political parties to ensure larger outreach of the public opinion and concerns on the bills discussed in the public consultations across the country.

**CEPPS OBJECTIVE 4: International assessment mission provides impartial appraisal of the electoral environment and recommendations for future electoral processes.**

- Local elections will not be held in the next quarter, so there will be no activities under this objective.

**XII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- Appendix I – FLA Survey Questionnaire
- Appendix II – FLA Regional Workshops’ Challenges and Solutions
- Appendix III – District Map of “Hear Us” National Opinion Poll
- Appendix IV – Infographics uploaded to Setopati.com and Setopati.net
- Appendix V – By-election Report
- Appendix VI – ECN Voter Education Wall Calendar
- Appendix VII – Citizenship Certificate Flipchart
- Appendix VIII – Map of Radio Stations Broadcasting *Loktantra Mantra*
- Appendix IX – List of *Loktantra Mantra* Program Issues
- Appendix X – List of Uploads to NepalElectionChannel.org
- Appendix XI – Secularism Workshop Program Description
- Appendix XII – Sessions and Participants at the Orientation on Parliamentary Reporting
- Appendix XIII – Screenshot of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal Website
- Appendix XIV – List of *Hamro Kanoon* Programs
- Appendix XV – List of Participants at Radio Program Capacity Building Workshop
- Appendix XVI – Summaries of Bill Review Programs
- Appendix XVII – Synopsis Report of the Public Consultations, Proposed Labor Bill (Nepali)
- Appendix XVIII – Synopsis Report of the Public Consultations, Social Practices Reform Bill (Nepali)
- Appendix XIX – List of CA Members in the Advocacy Team