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LOOSE NETWORKS

A How-To Guide

September 2019

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Loose networks strengthen existing federalized governance structures by creating a platform for community representatives and civil society to forge links between the various levels of government and citizens.
This guide provides program teams, civil society organizations and organized community groups a step-by-step process for setting up, strengthening, operationalizing and maintaining Loose Networks.

Governance in Nepal

In 2015 the Nepal Government restructured from a unitary system to a federal system, with major shifts to the function of government departments at the community levels. Prior to 2015, Nepal was a unitary state divided into five developmental regions and fourteen administrative zones. The new federal structure has seven provinces, each divided into multiple districts for a total of 77 districts. These districts are divided into 753 municipalities, which are further divided into 6,743 wards and then settlements.

Nepal successfully conducted its first local elections in 20 years in 2017, leading to widespread changes in representation at the ward and settlement levels. While this transition ushers in opportunities for more representative and accountable local institutions, it also brings ambiguity and challenges in the short term. Although the recent elections filled the leadership and accountability vacuum at the local level, the transition introduced significant confusion around government service providers' institutional arrangements, operational modalities, policy implementation and community engagement.

PAHAL and the Loose Network Approach

This transition occurred mid-way through implementation of PAHAL, a five-year project to build resilience in vulnerable communities in Mid- and Far- Western Nepal. In line with its resilience approach and philosophy of adaptive management, PAHAL adjusted to the changing political landscape mid-stream, reaching out to newly elected representatives to support fledgling governance structures, raise their awareness of participatory planning, and connect them with PAHAL-supported civil society structures. The PAHAL team quickly noticed the existence of a key gap in the new decentralized structure. **In this new federal system, the role of newly established wards is dramatically elevated and their mandate expanded.** The majority of district office functions had been transferred to municipalities and rural municipalities while the municipal and village development committee functions were transferred to the newly reestablished wards. This resulted in a significant gap between the community level settlements and the new ward level governments with no formal bridging mechanism.

FIGURE I: CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The PAHAL team realized that, although ward level governments now have increased ability to plan, budget and implement directly, the gap between wards and settlements has left individual communities with reduced voice in the local governance system.
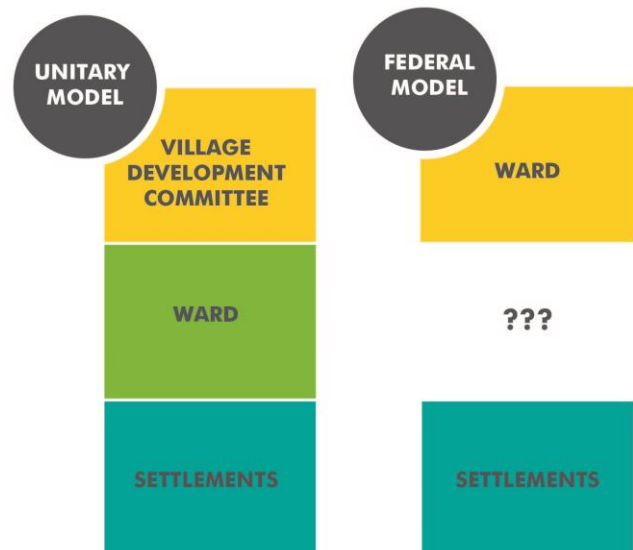
To address this, the governance team initiated the simple, yet innovative process of creating "**loose networks**" at the sub-ward level to facilitate the linkage of settlements to ward level structures.

What are LOOSE NETWORKS?

To form the Loose Networks, wards were divided into four to six different clusters. All local groups (committees, community groups, CBOs) from within that cluster were invited to send one to two representatives to form that cluster's Loose Network. The Loose Networks play three overarching roles:

⟩ facilitate an inclusive planning process;
⟩ disseminate knowledge and information to communities, particularly to marginalized households; and
⟩ aggregate community voice for collective advocacy and to hold government accountable.

Loose Networks therefore act as a platform for communication and dialogue and as a means for information sharing.

To date, Loose Networks are active in 84 of the 151 wards where PAHAL is active. There are currently 1975 Loose Network members, 1230 of them female. Women make up 51% of leadership positions in Loose Networks. Networks receive training in participatory planning, social accountability, the *Right to Information Act* and good governance practices. Trained members of Loose Networks then share this knowledge with their respective groups. Although the loose network system is still in its early stages, it has received an overwhelmingly positive response from local communities and governments. Loose Network members who received training have proactively engaged in local planning processes, conducted group level social audits, developed community group plans, and submitted updates to the ward for further process. Some wards have already allocated development budget funds to

FIGURE II: LOOSE NETWORKS FILL A CRITICAL GAP IN THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE

address community needs articulated through the loose network process against plans submitted by groups. PAHAL is working closely with the wards to share best practices and advocate for the replication of Loose Networks in other areas.
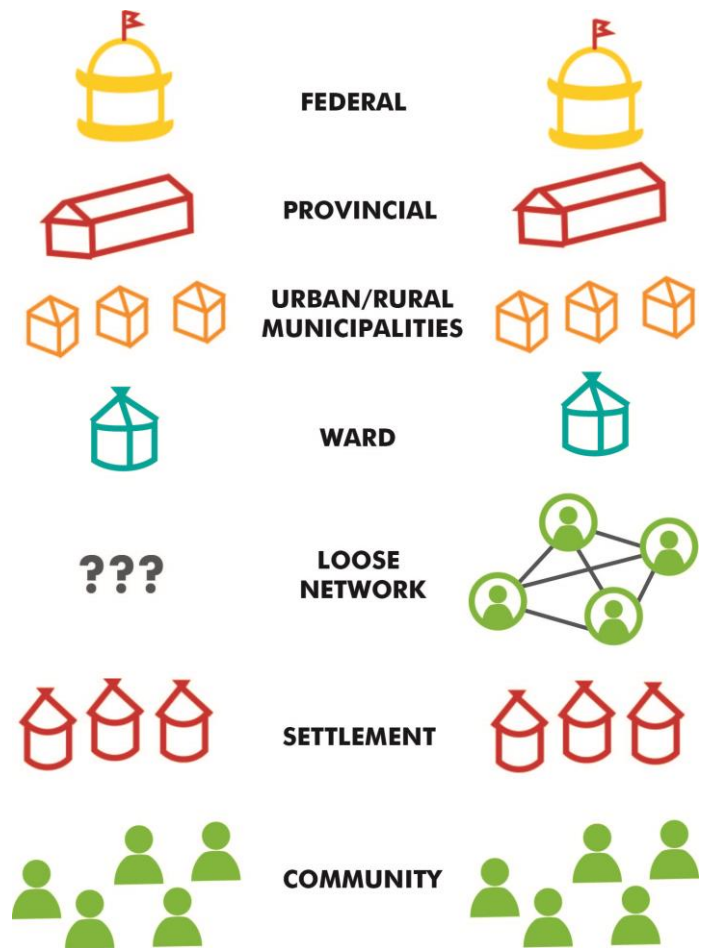
Tole Development Organizations (TDOs) and Loose Networks

The Government of Nepal has recently mandated the formation of Tole Development Organizations (TDOs), which will be government mandated membership organizations that will require membership from each household. As TDOs will be the lowest level of the government structure, it is important to clarify how the roles of TDOs and Loose Networks may overlap, differ, and evolve over time.

Loose Networks are independent, non-governmental platforms with representatives from specific community groups. Each Loose Network is a convening platform for community groups to represent their sectoral interests; coordinate on behalf of the community; represent the community's interests to government actors; and contribute to the continued transition, or federalization, process. Currently the formation of TDOs is very nascent, and Loose Networks can support the formalization process of the TDO.

Once TDOs are established and functioning, some of the roles currently fulfilled by the Loose Network may be institutionalized by the TDOs, such as local development planning. As this federalization process matures, the role of the Loose Network will evolve.

PART 1: Starting a Loose Network

The program team must draft and send a letter which asks for permission to introduce the Loose Network to the Rural Municipality/Municipality. The purpose of the letter is to start engagement with the authorities and it should include a brief introduction and request for a consultation meeting with their Executive Team to discuss the Loose Network. The team needs to prepare by going through the materials included in the presentation deck, along with other IEC materials that will be used to facilitate the consultation meeting.

TIP: Help the Municipality and Executive Team identify incentives for their participation and/or support for the Loose Network throughout the process. One incentive that has been identified is the increased workload as a result of the federalization process whereby the team goes from 47 elected representatives (each VDC had 9 wards and each of those wards had 5 elected members, plus a VDC Chair and Vice-Chair) down to a team of 5. The Loose Network helps to temporarily alleviate this shortfall by helping to fill the gaps between the different levels of government created as a result of the federalization process. Hence this short-term role can be a great incentive to collaborate.

STEP 1: Consultation with Rural Municipality/Municipality

The Goal of the consultation is to introduce the authorities and seek their support for the formation of a Loose Network. Their support[1] is crucial for the uptake of the approach by the stakeholders concerned. Depending on the receptivity of the RM/M the team might need to have multiple consultation meetings. Following are the details of the consultation process.

1. **Introduce the Loose Network approach**, its origin and its overall rationale utilizing the appropriate IEC materials[2].

2. **Discuss their role** in the success of this process, the leadership structure, the composition of the network and its overall management. Seek their feedback.

3. **Get their support** in writing: Letter of Support[3]. One of the immediate next steps would be for them to inform the Ward Executive committee of their endorsement and direction to support the Loose Network formation process.

4. Be sure that **feedback provided by the RM/M is acknowledged** and acted on, if it requires follow-up.

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[1] It is important to bring the various government institutions into the process as early as possible and to make them active partners in the process, rather than to give them authority over it. While the Loose Network works directly at ward level, it is important to follow government protocol/ hierarchy (as ward level officials answer to the Municipalities) and make sure government stakeholder at all levels are involved.

[2] See PAHAL Governance video, presentation/charts, etc.

[3] Annex 2 - Letter of Support

STEP 2: Consultation with Wards

Following the consultation meeting with the RM/M and after securing their endorsement via a Letter of Support ideally, the next step is to arrange and conduct a similar consultative meeting with the Executive members of the Ward. Follow a similar consultation process to the RM/M meeting. This step might take more than one meeting as there is likely to be more detailed discussions relating to the Loose Network formation process and scope of responsibilities.

1. **Introduce the Loose Network approach**, its origin and its overall rationale utilizing the appropriate IEC materials. Share the key points from RM/M level meeting.

2. **Discuss the ward's role** in the success of this process, the leadership structure, the composition of the network and its overall management.

3. Discuss the members' **nomination process, leadership and capacity development plans.** For more information, refer to PART III.

   o Determine the number of Loose Networks (sub-ward level or ward level) that will be formed.

   o Identify and vet the communities/settlements which will contribute to the Loose Network.

4. Identify the potential **area for partnership and collaboration** between Loose Network and ward level government.

5. Continue to **reinforce stakeholder incentives** for participating in the Loose Network.

6. Be sure any feedback provided is **acknowledged and acted on**, if required.

7. **Document all decision** (drawing from the minutes) and **submit for endorsement** by the Ward Committee before proceeding to the next step.

STEP 3: Meetings with Community

After getting the endorsement of the Ward Committee, reach out to the identified communities/settlements via either the Ward Committee, existing local contacts or through a local partner organization. Arrange for a multi-day engagement workshop. Invitations should be sent out through the Ward Committee targeting members of existing community groups[4]. This includes community-level committees and CBOs. Ensure that the meeting is scheduled to allow for maximum participation from each of the representatives of the community groups.

1. Visiting the respective communities/settlements identified with the RM/M and ward levels. Organize **consultation meetings with each of the identified groups**. It should be important that before meeting each individual groups the team should inform the community leaders.

2. **Introduce the Loose Network** approach, its origin and its overall rationale utilizing the appropriate IEC materials.

3. **Discuss their role** in the success of the Loose Network, the leadership structure (see Part II), the composition of the network and its overall management.

4. Following the consultations, **ask each group/committee/CBO to select two members**[5] to represent their group in the Loose Network.

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[4] Community groups include Formal Groups Community Forest User Groups, Farmer Groups, Savings Groups, Water User Groups, Mothers Groups, Local Clubs, Market Planning Committees etc.

[5] Criteria for choosing the representatives: There should be good mix/balance of male and female, should have a proven record of representing the interest of the group, should have good knowledge of the groups vision/function, should not hold an active leadership position in the government, should not be an elected into office (actively involved in politics), etc

TIP: Set contextually appropriate diversity targets. At least half the Loose Network participants (50%) should be women. Vulnerable groups and youth must have adequate representation. This includes vulnerable castes if the wards and municipalities represented by the Loose Network include vulnerable caste communities. The PAHAL program aimed for participation that was at least 50% female, 28% ethnic minorities and 9% Dalits.

5. Once all members are selected, **convene a joint meeting**. This will be the first convening of the proposed members of the Loose Network.

6. **Re-introduce the Loose Network**, its objectives, roles and responsibilities, and its purpose in the changing context of Nepal (using IEC materials).

    a. Discuss the Loose Networks' structure, composition and its formation process.

    b. Use the endorsements from the RM/M and the Ward Committee to influence and generate confidence amongst the participants.

7. Once participants understand the objectives of the Loose Network and their roles and responsibilities as members, **invite them to be part of the Loose Network formation process**.

8. Seek feedback and acknowledge the input provided by the participants.

STEP 4: Formation of the Loose Network

Once the representatives from the community groups have been oriented and agree to form a Loose Network, **the next step is formalization**. At this stage, the members of the Loose Network will agree to a shared Terms of Reference (TOR) and governance structure for the Loose Network.

1. Invite the Loose Network participants to **nominate a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer**. Make sure that at least two of these people are women.
2. Once the leadership has been established, **facilitate the development of the TOR** for the Loose Network. Use this sample TOR template[6] to help guide the process.
3. **Decide on a name for this Loose Network**. Once the Loose Network has a name and a TOR has been finalized, it must be approved by majority of participants.
4. **Copies of the TOR are shared** with the Ward Committee, the RM/M and any other relevant local government functions.

STEP 5: Work Planning

Once the TOR is finalized and shared with key stakeholders, the Loose Network will develop a work plan based on its TOR. The work planning process should be facilitated by the Executive Leadership Committee, and with active participation of the Loose Network members. The work planning should utilize the Participatory Rural Appraisal process outlined below.

A work plan is an evolving document that includes a concrete plan for implementation of projects. The work plan includes activities, budgets, roles, responsibilities, and a monitoring and evaluation plan.

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[6] Annex 3 – Loose Network Terms of Reference (TOR) Template

This is also a good opportunity to consider the resources required to make your implementation plan a reality. What resources will come from the community? From development actors? The government and/or other sources? Other actors, including the private sector and local government, may have community development funds that could support the community's projects.

When formulating activities, think about how to incorporate targeted opportunities to build relationships and trust across diverse community groups and sub-populations. By engaging communities in projects that benefit a broad range of people, community members will experience first-hand the positive impact of collective action that crosses traditional barriers.

Think about how the work plan can fit into or link with the broader local development planning and budgeting processes. In some cases, ward officials can be actively engaged throughout the process, or can help bring the Loose Network work plan in line with local government requirements for development planning.

Work Plan Process and Template[7]

Create a work plan template based on the TOR. Some Loose Networks will be able to develop a complex, multi-year plan at the outset, and some will develop simpler plans. The objective of this exercise is to formulate how the community Loose Network will fulfill its role and promote the activities they have prioritized over the next year. Concrete actions to address issues should be established, along with defined roles and responsibilities, and the materials or resources required for completion.

Revisit each of the activities/interventions prioritized through the Impact/Effort Matrix Activity[8]. For each prioritized activity, ask Loose Network members to discuss what actions and resources are needed to implement this activity, who will undertake each action, and by when (see template below)[9]. Keep in mind that, especially in the early phases of the planning process, several of the tasks may involve searching for more information. The Loose Network may not know all the options that are available and may need to gather more information.

The work plan acts as a way to anticipate the general areas where Loose Network members see a need for intervention. You can also include more specific tasks within the plan that can take place around the most immediate interventions. The other interventions can be addressed incrementally, or on a rolling basis, as some activities get underway and people feel comfortable in taking on additional responsibilities.

When creating your plans, begin thinking about how the Loose Network will monitor and evaluate their progress. When creating activities, brainstorm what success looks like and how we will know if we have gotten there. What information can tell us if the community is making progress towards the goals, objectives and activities in our action plan? Next, determine the methods you will need to collect the information. What are the most relevant and accessible methods we can use to get the information we need? See the monitoring and evaluation section for more information on methods for participatory reflection and evaluation.

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[7] Annex 6 – Loose Network Work Plan Template
[8] Annex 4 – Impact/Effort Matrix Template
[9] Annex 6-Loose Network Work Plan Template

The work planning exercise is not meant to produce a rigid, "complete" document that sits on a shelf somewhere. It should evolve as the Loose Network moves through the process and gathers additional information. Therefore, it needs to be revisited through continued engagement with members.

STEP 6: Capacity Building

As the work plan is developed, take time to assess the capacity of the Loose Network to fulfill their role toward achieving the goals set in the work plan. A capacity building strategy can be incorporated in the work plan at this stage. To identify the capacities needed, conduct a rapid capacity assessment using the rapid Organizational Capacity Index tool kit[10]. The findings should inform a capacity development objective in the work plan. The capacity assessment should focus on more general topics such as leadership and facilitation along with relevant technical topics. Here are some of the most commonly identified capacity needs:

〉 Participatory planning
〉 Evidence-based advocacy
〉 Implementing social accountability tools (Social Audit, Public Audit, Public Hearing)
〉 Gender Equality and Strengthening of Inclusion (GESI)
〉 Judicial information

Make sure that capacity building is thoughtfully targeted, sequenced, tailored to specific roles and stages of the TOR, and meets the network members where they are. There are many ways to build capacity: training, mentoring, coaching, technical assistance, accompaniment, general awareness raising, etc. Often harder, technical skills are prioritized over softer skills like conflict management, good governance, etc. Good capacity building is usually balanced and builds both soft and hard skills.

Finalize the Work Plan

Once all the information (TOR and capacity building) has been included in the work plan revisit with the Loose Network make sure there have been no changes in the context that will affect implementation like severe weather events, further changes in the government structures, or changes in the community itself, including Loose Network members. Ensure there is adequate resourcing for the implementation phase. Gather information about:

〉 Potential changes in resources,
〉 Possible contributions from the community,
〉 Opportunities to engage local development funds or the private sector

Revisit the details of the work plan to make sure activities are properly resourced, roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated, and that all objectives, outputs and activities are clearly linked with indicators and a basic monitoring and evaluation plan.

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[10] Annex 5

PART II: Loose Network STRUCTURE

The Loose Network is made of members drawn from each of the community groups. This includes community-level committees, groups and CBOs. Two members of each community group join the Loose Network. Once the Loose Network is formed, they elect an Executive Committee from among the members. The Executive Committee includes a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer. Below are the terms and conditions that define their membership.

Members

〉 Set contextually relevant diversity targets. Members should be representative of all sexes, castes, socio-economic status, language, ethnicity, race and religion, as well as any other contextually relevant vulnerability.

〉 Each member will agree to participate in the Loose Network for a term of one year and the replacements will be elected/nominated in their respective community groups during a yearly social audit event. Each community group is mandated to have an annual social audit.

Executive Committee

〉 The Executive Committee will consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer. They will be selected from amongst the members of the Loose Network through a nomination/election process.

〉 Their tenure will be for a year.

〉 No one person will be elected to the same executive position twice.

〉 At least 50% representation in Executive Committee should be women and should be inclusive in terms of caste and gender.

〉 It is pertinent for the Loose Network to inform the Ward of the elected Executive Committee after the process has been completed.

Changes of Member and Executive Committee

〉 If the members of the Executive Committee are not fulfilling their leadership responsibilities or are underperforming, members can call a special meeting at any time to ask for justification and decide to either change the leader or to allow them to continue. This must be done in the presence of the Ward Chairperson.

〉 If any members fail to attend two consecutive meetings without a justification, the other network members (under the leadership of the Executive Committee) will call a meeting and identify the reason behind the absence and inform their respective community group for necessary action. The Executive Committee will give the member a week to respond.

〉 If any position within the Executive Committee falls vacant, an emergency meeting of all Loose Network members should be called as early as possible by the remaining members of the Executive Committee to fill the vacant position. The replacement will be decided by majority. The outcomes of the meeting should be shared with the Ward Chairperson
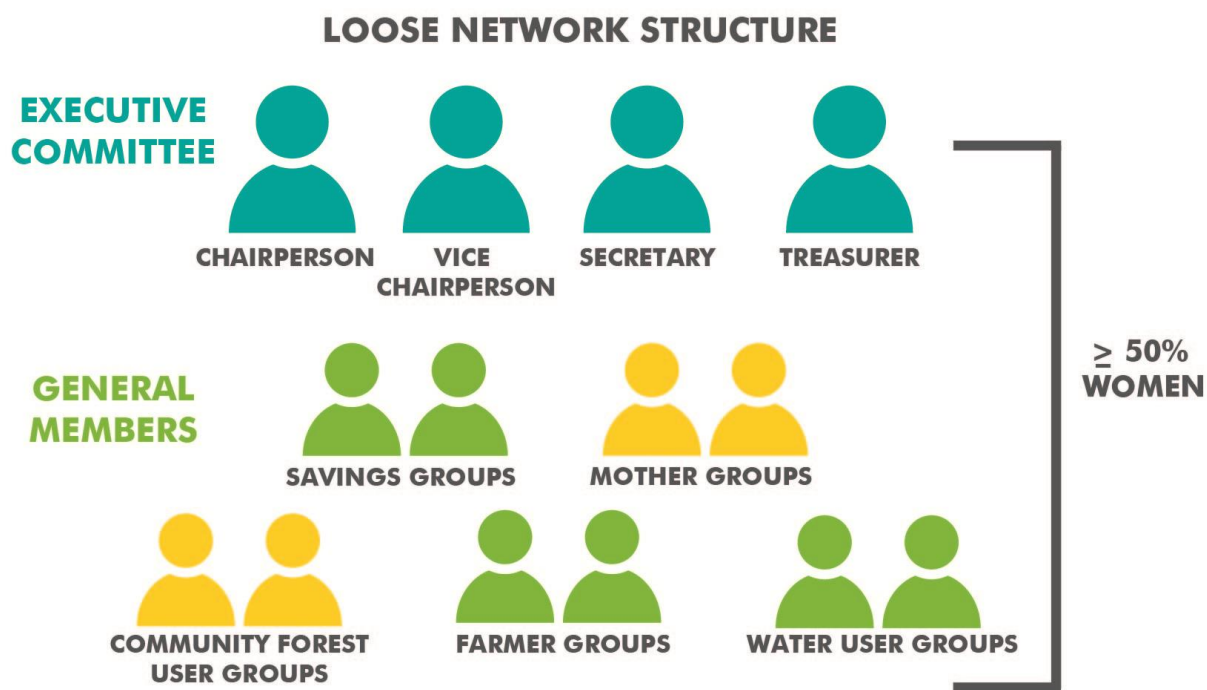
LOOSE NETWORK STRUCTURE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON | VICE CHAIRPERSON | SECRETARY | TREASURER

GENERAL MEMBERS

SAVINGS GROUPS | MOTHER GROUPS

COMMUNITY FOREST USER GROUPS | FARMER GROUPS | WATER USER GROUPS

≥ 50% WOMEN

FIGURE III: LOOSE NETWORK MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

PART III: The Future of Loose Networks

With the federalization process moving forward, governance structures will evolve which will have implications on the role of the Loose Network. As the Tole Development Organizations (TDOs) formalize and establish, they may absorb some of the activities currently implemented by Loose Networks; like organizing communities for local development planning or bridging the gap between the government structures and the community[11]. The Loose Network will play a crucial role in helping these Tole Development Organization become functional. As more of these functions are institutionalized, Loose Network may evolve into a more independent, representative body for the communities. Loose Networks will represent their interests and act as an accountability partner to these government structures. In addition, the Loose Network will continue to play the bridging role between the Ward, Settlement and the Tole Development Organizations.

One remaining gap, that has yet to be mandated within the constitution are representative bodies or platforms like the Ward Citizens Forum or the Citizens Awareness Centers that were dissolved as a part of the federalization process. This has left a gap in government-recognized platforms that allow citizens to interact with local government on an equal footing, or to act as an accountability partner. The Loose Network is designed to fulfill this critical role.

Along with these structural considerations within the wider framework of the federalized structure the Loose Network in itself should work on building the capacities around the work plan and key sustainability considerations (below) so that they remain agile enough to evolve into their new role as an accountability partner to the government.

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[11] Annex 1 – Loose Networks and Tole Development Organizations (TDOs) graphic

There is a tendency for bodies like the Loose Networks to be registered as a part of the sustainability plan, but this is likely to restrict the Loose Network's ability to evolve with the changing context and respond to needs as they arise. It will be very difficult for the Loose Network to maintain its independence, which will limit its role. Below are some key considerations for the sustainability and the continued relevance of the Loose Networks moving forward.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

〉 Members are from existing formal institutions who possess specific skills and knowledge.
〉 Members are from within the community and nominated through a fair and open process as outlined in the guidance above.
〉 Members have the ability to mobilize resources and productive utilization.
〉 The Loose Network is part of the government-led annual participatory planning process.
〉 The local government takes on the network as a supporter to disseminate information, as well as to address social issues.

MOTIVATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

〉 The Loose Network has access to local government authorities and the decision-making process.
〉 They play a key role in dissemination of information to the community and transferring of information from the community to the government.
〉 Members have a say in government-led participatory planning processes.
〉 Community concerns addressed by ward/municipal authorities as a result of the Loose Network's collective action.
〉 Loose Networks have increased visibility and influence in decision making processes.

CAPACITIES DEVELOPED

〉 Multi-sectoral cross learning through various knowledge sharing and capacity building initiatives/trainings between members and from outside sources.
〉 Clear understanding of participatory planning process, resource mobilization and implementation.
〉 Knowledge of social accountability, the various tools and its use.
〉 Group management, community and social mobilization, leadership development capacity.
〉 Knowledge of judiciary provisions, GESI, GBV, DV and their respective referral mechanism.
〉 Accountability partners in local development with the aim of minimizing the monopoly/influence of local government in decision making.

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ANNEX 1 – Loose Networks and TDOs

Once the TDOs are fully established, they will be primarily focused on the organizing function at the "*tole*" level (tole roughly translates to a *locality* and is a collection of contiguously located households that are under a settlement. Each settlement will have numerous toles that are represented by a Tole Development Organization - TDO), hence the TDO will be the lowest formal governance structure. The TDOs will be made up of members from each household within the tole/locality and will be registered with the government. The TDO will fulfill a crucial role in local development planning and forming the connection between the community and the government at the local/household level.

With the establishment of the TDOs, the Loose Network will continue to function as an independent platform that will allow representatives from specific community groups[12] to have access to ward level government and act as an additional link between the ward and settlement levels hence facilitating advocacy, access and influence. The Loose Network will further act as accountability partners to the various governance bodies (the municipalities, wards, settlement and TDOs) holding them accountable to their function in collaboration with civil society and advocacy organizations. They will continue to build the capacity of the TDOs and mentor them to successfully fulfill their function around in participatory development planning, organizational management etc. The Loose Network will also facilitate the linkages between the different TDOs within the settlement and beyond. The Loose Network member community groups will act as resources to the TDOs in terms of information related to their specific sector.

Overall, the Loose Network will continue to play a crucial role in facilitating and fulfilling a holistic development agenda.

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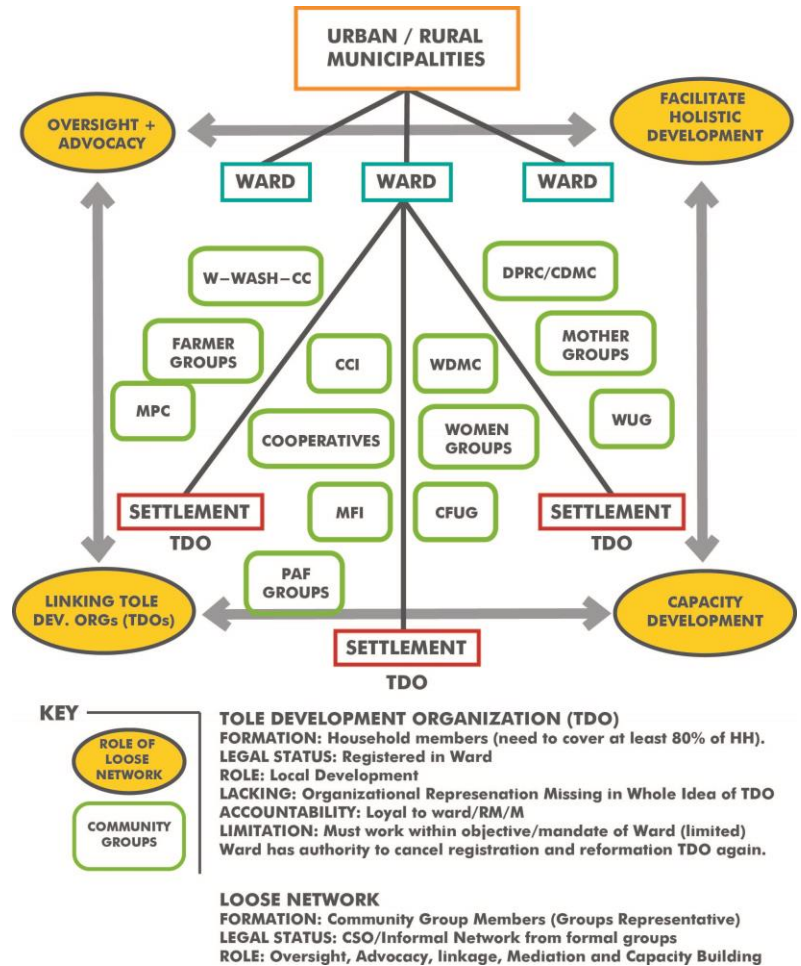
[12] W-WASH-CC, Famers Group, MPC, CCI, Cooperatives, MFI, PAF Groups, WDMC, Women's Groups, CFUG, WUG, DPRC/CDMC

ANNEX 2: Letter of Support from the RM/M

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We the members of the_____ Rural Municipality/Municipality have been briefed on the Loose Network and would like to request the Ward Committee to go through the orientation on the Loose Network and assist in the formation of the same.

Thanking you in anticipation

Rural Municipality/ Municipality   Dated:_____

ANNEX 3: Loose Network Terms of Reference

Name of the Loose Network:

Address:

The primary goal of the Loose Network is empowering citizens and communities by connecting community groups into a platform to actively engage in local governance processes and act as accountability partners to the government. We hope to fulfill this goal with the following objectives:

- To disseminate knowledge and information to communities, especially the marginalized
- To aggregate voices for collective advocacy and hold local government accountable.
- To facilitate inclusive planning processes by assisting the formation and functioning of government mandated local organization like the Tole Development Organization (TDO).

To reach these objectives the Loose Network will play the following roles:

- Working closely with the TDO, facilitate a participatory planning process and assist in mobilizing communities in carrying out their local development plans.
- Act as a platform for community groups/organizations to connect with one another and with local government agencies.
- Use these connections to disseminate sector specific information to each community group representative with the aim that these representatives will further disseminate this information amongst their respective groups and community members.
- Collect information from government agencies and disseminate this information amongst the groups and communities they represent.
- Act as an accountability partner to the government agencies by facilitating the effective use of existing social accountability tools and processes such as social audits, public audits, public hearings, citizen charters, right to information etc. (instituting them where absent) in partnership with local government.
- Mobilize the community to understand their role/responsibility in holding decision makers accountable by effectively using social accountability mechanisms.
- Support local judicial committee to transform social norms, values and practices like *chaupadi*, untouchability, early marriage etc. that limit to marginalized groups' access and decision making.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Executive Committee Members: This committee will be the managing body of the Loose Network in close coordination and consultation of the other Members[13]. The committee will comprise of various Executive members who will fulfill specific leadership roles.

Chairperson:

- He/she will be the head of the Loose Network and will be in charge leading the Loose Network on a day to day basis in close collaboration with the rest of the executive members.

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[13] For composition and structure see the Loose Network Structure section

- He/she will preside over all meetings and will sign off on all correspondences and undertakings of the Loose Network.

Vice-Chairperson:
- He/she will fulfill all the duties of the Chairman in his absence.
- Support Chairperson to effectively implement planned activities.

Secretary:
- He/she will maintain the meeting minutes
- He/she will draft all internal and external correspondences
- He/she will play the role of the resident sergeant at arms for all meetings

Treasurer:
- He/she will maintain any financial record related to the Loose Network.
- He/she will be responsible for answering any finance or resources related matters

Members:
- Their Primary role of a member will be to represent their respective community groups in the Loose Network.
- He/she will actively participate in all the meetings and activities of the Loose Network.
- He/she will report back to their respect community groups the necessary information/outcomes from the Loose Network meetings.
- He/she will communicate information from their respective community groups to the Loose Network.

Tenure:
- The tenure of each member would be ideally for one year and can be continued for maximum of another one year with the formal nomination process from the respective group.

Regular Meetings:
- The Loose Network work will hold regular meeting once every fortnight.
- Each of these regular meetings are presided by the Chairperson.
- Minutes from the meetings are captured by the Secretary in a minute book which will be signed by each of the all members present at the end.
- At the start of each meeting the minutes form the last meeting will be read by the Secretary.
- An agenda will be set prior to the meeting based on the inputs from all members. They will get an opportunity to add more agenda items at the start of the meeting.
- The meeting should run between 60 to 90 minutes.
- There will be a general annual meeting once a year. Social audit of the LN would be conducted prior to the general annual meeting.

Extra Ordinary meetings:
- In case of an urgent matter the Executive Committee in consultation with the members can call an extra ordinary meeting

Voting rights:
- All types of members have equal voting right. Every members vote will be counted as one vote.
- All votes must be anonymous
- In case of a tie the chairperson will get the deciding vote.

ANNEX 4: Impact/Effort Matrix

Purpose: The Impact/Effort Matrix is a helpful tool that can be used to help a group decide where to focus efforts when there are many possible actions that can be taken. For each potential activity, Loose Network members will consider the potential impact (high impact vs. low impact) and the amount of effort the activity will take (difficult vs. easy). This exercise is intended to remind Loose Network members to be strategic and realistic in solution generation. It can be useful for explaining resource limitations and programmatic constraints to prevent communities from prioritizing projects or interventions that are not feasible.

Using the Tool: It is important to start the exercise by developing a common understanding of the terms "impact" and "effort" to ensure all Loose Network members are using similar criteria to judge whether activities will be high/low impact or difficult/easy. Ask Loose Network members to develop common definitions, write them down and post them so everyone can see, and revisit them throughout the matrix activity.

Using the list generated in the Visioning and Problem Solving exercise, create a numbered list of all the potential activities. Taking one intervention at a time, ask the community to indicate how much effort they think it will take to accomplish that activity. Then ask

Figure 8: Impact/Effort Matrix Example

how much impact that activity will have on the Loose Network's overall goal(s). Write the activity number in the location on the matrix that represents the intersection of the effort and the impact for that item.

Clusters of activities that end up in the "A" quadrant are those that will make the most difference for the least amount of effort, and should be prioritized in action plan development. Conversely, those interventions in quadrant "D" will make the least difference and take the most effort, and should be cut as the Loose Network proceeds with planning.
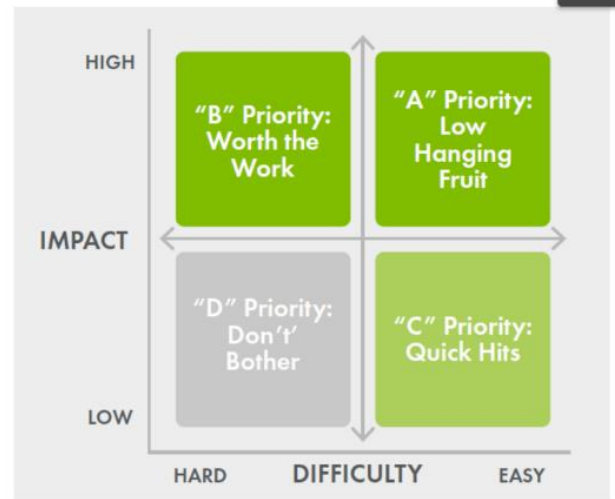
ANNEX 5: Organizational Capacities Index for Loose Network

Introduction

This tool is used to measure three organizational capacities in the Loose Network.

- **Strategic Leadership/Management:** *Strategic Planning, Good Governance, Sustainability and Resource Mobilization*
- **Information Systems:** *Monitoring and Evaluation, Reporting and Organizational Learning*
- **External Relationships:** *Public Relations, Networking, Stakeholder Input (Participation) and Advocacy*

The OCI asks value neutral (i.e., objective) questions that focus on accepted or standard organizational practices and systems, which, if in place, should *ideally* set the Loose Network on a healthy, sustainable track. The OCI does not, therefore, judge a Loose Network's performance in terms of quality, as assessors may use too much subjectivity in their analysis. Furthermore, the true quality of a Loose Network's work performance will be measured in terms of their ability to advance its goals.

The OCI accesses weaknesses in key organizational capacity areas that can be corrected through the adoption of missing systems, policies and/or procedures and changes in management practices. The questions in the OCI illicit either "yes" or "no" answers and are weighted equally—i.e., either the Loose Network does or does not have in place the policy, procedure or system. The overall score of all sections combined is never as telling as the score of each section. For example, a Loose Network might have strength in External Relationships, but need extensive work on Strategic Leadership/Management.

The results of the initial use of the tool will form the baseline data for each Loose Network's current organizational capacity in each of the three areas. In addition, the Loose Network will work develop and implement a Capacity Building Plan addressing each weakness, or "no" answer, in the results. The scores are indicative while the specific answers to the OCI questions are specific.

The final page of this document contains an analysis of points per section and percentage of each section towards the whole.

1.0 Strategic Leadership/Management: *Strategic Planning, Good Governance, Sustainability & Resource Mobilization*

Indicator	Questions	Data Source	Weight
1.1 The presence of a work plan that charts the Loose Network TOR and overall goals.	1.1.1 a. Does the Loose Network have a Goal statement? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network have clearly stated Objectives? (1 point) c. Is there a work plan in place in place that charts the future course in service TOR and goals? (1 point) d. d. Is there a practice of incorporating a variety of stakeholder views? (1 point)	1. Loose Network TOR 2. Loose Network Workplan 3. SWOT Analysis, if available 4. Stakeholder surveys, if available	**4 points**

Indicator	Questions	5. Data Source	Weight
1.2 Presence of an active Executive committee that contributes to the following: **1) *Role Setting, Resource mobilization,* 2) *Strategic Direction Setting,* 3) *Leadership accountability* 4) *External Relationship Building***	1.2.1 a. Is there a system of governance in place that contributes significantly to the accomplishment of the Loose Network's goal? (1 point) b. Is part of the Executive Committee's role contributing to the development of Loose Network's roles and responsibilities? (1 point) c. Is part of the Executive Committee's role in resource mobilization for the Loose Network and its activities? (1 point) d. Does the Loose Network annually assess the performance of the Executive committee? (1 point) e. Does the Executive Committee approve activities of the Loose Network before implementation? (1 point) f. Does the Executive Committee approve activity reports? (1 point) g. Does the Executive committee practice cultivating key external relationships in support of the organization? (1 point)	1. Loose Network's TOR 2. Loose Network's action plans and minutes with evidence of resource mobilization 3. Performance review of Executive Committee 4. Executive Committee approving meeting minutes and other documents	**7 points**
1.3 Presence of a system of leveraging resources at the community level, and with development actors, private sector and local government	1.3.1 a. Does the Loose Network have in place a practice of raising community contributions, either in-kind or cash, for development projects? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network practice approaching the local government to contribute in either kind or cash to development projects? (1 point) c. Does the Loose Network approach private sector and development actors for contributions to the organization's development projects? (1 point)	1. Resource mobilization plan 2. Activity Reports	**3 points**
1.4 Presence of an organizational practice of promoting self-sufficiency among community groups	1.4.1 a. Does the Loose Network promote self-sufficiency among its community groups? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network promote resource mobilization in their activities? (1 point)	1. Community group interview 2. Activity monitoring and evaluation reports	**2 points**

1.5 The presence of a diverse resource mobilization strategy to ensure sustainability (in support the implementation of the work plan)	1.5.1 a. Does the Loose Network have a diverse resource mobilization plan in place aimed at ensuring sustainability of their activities?	1 Resource mobilization Plan 2 Activity Reports	**1points**
1.6 Inclusion of a capacity building objective (usually in the work plan) analyzing and planning for needs/fulfilling capacity gaps in relation to strategic direction.	1.6.1 Is there a capacity building objective within the work plan that highlights the development needs in relation to the strategic direction of the Loose Network? (1 point)	1. Work plan 2. Executive Committee members interviews	**1**

1.7 Presence of a system for Executive Committee's selection/ nomination	3.7.1
	  a. Does the Loose Network recruit executive members based, in part, on their commitment to helping the Loose Network accomplish its goal? (1 point)
	  b. Do Executive Committee members have defined TORs? (1 point)
	  c. Do the Executive Committee members get orientation in their roles and responsibilities? (1 point)
	  d. Is there a system in place for holding the Executive Committee members accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities?
		1. Executive Committee and Loose Network members interviews
		2. Executive Committee TOR
			4 points

Total Points Strategic Leadership/Management: 22

2.0 Information Systems: *Monitoring and Evaluation, Reporting, Organizational Learning*

Indicator	Questions	Data Source	Weight
2.1 Presence of free-flowing internal information system	2.1.1 a. Is there a system in place to keep notes on Loose Network members (e.g., meetings, memos) (1 point) b. Is there a mechanism in place whereby non-Executive Committee members can share their feedback with the Executive Committee?	1. Meeting minutes 2. Reports 3. Loose Network member interviews	**2 points**
2.2 Presence of monitoring and evaluation systems	2.2.1 Does the Loose Network: a. Collect baseline data? (1 point) b. Develop indicators? (1 point) c. Measure progress against indicators? (1 point) d. Evaluate its programs? (1 point) e. Does the organization use participatory methods in monitoring its projects and programs? (1 point) f. Does the organization use participatory methods in evaluating its projects and programs? (1 point)	1. M&E reports 2. Minutes of meetings 3. Revised plans 4. Staff interviews	**6 points**
2.3 Demonstrated effective management action to modify work plan based on findings in monitoring and evaluation reports	2.3.1 a. Does the Loose Network take action to revise the work plan based on findings in monitoring reports? (1points) b. Does the Loose Network take action to revise activities and based on evaluation results? (1 point)	1. M&E reports 2. Review 3. Activity audit report 4. Revised plans	**2 points**
2.4 Presence of reporting systems	2.4.1 a. Does the Loose Network prepare regular (at minimum quarterly) activity reports? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network maintain detailed minutes of each meetings? (1 point) c. c. Does the Loose Network share these reports to all the other members in a timely manner? (1 point)	1. Program reports 2. Town Council or Council of Elders Reports 3. Donor reports	**3 points**
2.5 Practice of teamwork	2.5.1 Does Executive committee/ Loose Network promote teamwork? (1 point)	4. Loose Network management meetings 5. Regular coordination meetings with Loose Network members	**1 point**
	Total Points Information Systems:		**14**

3.0 External Relationships: *Public Relations, Networking, Stakeholder Input (Participation), Advocacy*

Indicator	Questions	Data Source	Weight
3.1 Presence of communication mechanisms to stakeholders, including CBOs/communities, government agencies and community groups	3.1.1 a. Does the Loose Network regularly communicate (includes meetings) with its community-based constituency? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network regularly communicate with the government? (1 point) c. Does the organization regularly communicate with its donors? (1 point)	1. Letters 2. Meeting Minutes 3. Newsletter 4. Notes of conversations 5. Sample interviews of stakeholders	**3 points**
3.2 The presence of a network or coalition of strategic alliances that enhances work towards accomplishment of mission/programs	3.2.1 Does the Loose Network work with other networks or coalition of strategic alliances that enhances its work towards the accomplishment of its goals/programs? (1point)	1. Interviews with claimed alliances. 2. Reports on the results of their work 3. Joint plans or Strategic Plan (indicating the alliance's purpose and direction)	**1 point**
3.3 Evidence of a practice of collaborating with government of (transparency and partnership)	3.3.1 a. Does the Loose Network make it a practice of working with local government officials (TDO) in its planning exercises? (1point) b. Does the Loose Network make it a practice to include local government officials (TDO) in monitoring activities? (1 point) a. Does the Loose Network make it a practice to include local government officials (TDO) in its activity/project evaluations? (1 point) b. Does the Loose Network make it a practice of collaborating with local government technical staff (from line ministries) in the implementation of projects? (1 point)	1. Interviews with local government officials at the TDO, ward and the municipality level. 2. Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Reports 3. Work Plans 4. Assessment reports	**4 points**
3.4 Evidence of a practice of collaborating with other organizations inter- and/or intra-sectorally at the community level and/or inter-communally on	3.4.1 a. Is there a practice of holding coordination meetings with other organizations to share approaches and lessons learned? (1 point) a. b. Is there a practice of collaborating with other organizations to ensure integrated approach to development? (1 point)	1. Meeting minutes 2. Project reports 3. Interviews with agencies	**2 points**

related development issues			
3.5 Evidence of a practice of building relationships with development actors	3.5.1 a. Does the Loose Network study development actors to understand their priorities? (1 point) b. b. Does the Loose Network contact development actors whose funding priorities are in line with its priorities? (1 point)	1. Management interviews	**2 points**
3.6. Evidence of collaborating with the private sector in the same geographic area	3.6.1. Does the Loose Network regularly collaborate with the local private sector on its activities? (1 point)	1. Interviews with private sector entities	**1 point**
3.7 Demonstrated will to advocate on behalf of their constituents on issues affecting them	3.6.1 Does the Loose Network work on key advocacy issues on behalf of its communities?	1. Activity reports that mention advocacy actions 2. Advocacy campaign documents	**1 point**

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Total Points External Relationships: **14**

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Summary of Points

Capacity Area	Points	Percentage
Strategic Management/Leadership	22	44%
Information Systems	14	28%
External Relationships	14	28%
Total All Categories	**50**	**100%**

ANNEX 6: Loose Network Work Plan Template

Goal:

Objective #1:

Indicator for Objective #1:

	Activity	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Resources needed
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Objective #2:

Indicator for Objective #2:

	Activity	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Resources needed
1				

2			
3			
4			
5			